

Visitations of Glory

An APA for the World of Tékumel
Issue 11



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Magic Items

by Barry Blatt

The Infinitesimal Point of Thazai

Created by one of the lesser known Undying Wizards, this initially appears to be an unremarkable dagger with a plain black sheath and a brass guard.

The blade is however quite unusual. It is an inch wide and four inches long and is a slightly iridescent grey in colour. It appears to fade away at the edges and toward the point; it is not transparent as such, just not entirely there. When moved it appears to be reflecting something in its surface, but not any object actually anywhere near it, and when viewed edge-on it disappears entirely. Viewed point on the blade appears as a tiny glittering point of light.

A scholar with knowledge of planes and portals will recognise that the blade is in fact a variety of interplanar aperture and is set askew to the rest of the material universe in one of the mystical directions. It gives a prickling 'static'-like feeling when near naked skin and it does appear to be a narrow hole in the fabric of space-time through which small objects may be inserted. The point is extremely sharp and very hard to see – anyone investigating the properties of the blade must roll vs Dexterity or accidentally prick or stab themselves.

Used as a weapon the blade has the same characteristics as a stiletto with an additional x1 damage. It totally ignores all armour and most magical defences, only spells that guard against demons and other planar magic will deflect it.

Magicians who recognise the nature of the blade and practise with it can make a Ritual Magic skill roll after a successful hit, reduced by the target's magic resistance. If this succeeds then (success margin x5) points are taken from the target's magical energy pool in 'soul damage'. If the pool is reduced to zero in this way no further damage can be done.

Being immaterial the blade is useless for parrying and all defence rolls are at -4, and any attempt to use Attack Weapon is at -6, except against shields. It is highly suitable for Deceptive Attacks and any such attack made is at +1.

The blade can penetrate any material, but only to a depth of four inches, and as it has no sharp edge as such it cannot be used to slice. For example, it would be possible to use the knife to carve a hole through a door, but making an inch long hole with each stroke it would take a while to make one big enough to climb through.

If the blade is taken though a Nexus Point all kinds of unfortunate interactions are possible. The usual one is that the point of the blade becomes a transdimensional lens, sucking in any material object nearby and diffracting it in the fourth dimension, turning it inside out. It leaves the non-corporeal parts of the object intact; the now disembodied soul(s) of the knife's wielder can get a good view of the own innards as they are whisked off into by the winds of limbo to the wastes beyond the Ultimate Pylon...

The blade is also useless against Mihalli. They can see the blade for what it is and can use their Spheres of Immediate Eventuation to destroy it. A particularly vindictive Mihalli may take the risk of creating a Nexus Point in front of the blade by way of a shield.

Thazai designed these daggers as a defence against demons, which are often insubstantial, invisible and/or incorporeal and immune to weapons of quotidian materials. It is not known how many of these blades were made. One is on sale at Gijj and Sons in Dlásh at 45,000 kaitars, another is owned by the Temple of Grugánu (though where they have put it

or who is carrying it they aren't saying) and it is thought one of the Emperor's personal bodyguards carries one in case of demonic assault.

Resources: 250pts.

Sshurg Juice

The doughty warriors of Shényu never put to sea in the Deeps of Chanayaga without at least a small amount of this marvellous substance. The natural resinous secretions of the Hlüss set like rock, but Sshurg juice slowly dissolves and softens them, making it handy for those trying to recover gems from the exoskeletons of fallen Hlüss warriors and seeking to free prisoners who have been bound in Hlüss-resin cuffs and coffles.

It is also a very useful weapon against Hlüss hive-ships and the Hlüss themselves. Shén warships fire barrels of the stuff from catapults, and though it takes a couple of hours to have a serious effect on the structure of the hive ship it does make the Hlüss panic and start trying to wash it off rather than fight.

The juice is harmless to Shén and is used to treat scale mite infections. It is mildly caustic to humans, causing a rash like that caused by a stinging nettle, but the Hlüss hate it, it makes them itch madly all over and irritates their eyes as well as making their weapons and buildings dissolve. A Hlüss affected by Sshurg juice must make a Will save or make all attack, defence and skill rolls at -1. The juice does 2d10 damage to Hlüss-resin weapons per round and reduces the armour multiplier of Hlüss carapaces by 1 in five rounds.

The juice is squeezed from a plant that only grows in the swamps of Morchaptla and is usually used in a diluted form. A phial of 5ml of juice can make a litre of Hlüss-repelling solution, and costs 200kt.

It is usually available in ports in Shényu, and is occasionally found for sale in the coastal cities of Livyánu and Tsolyánu. Beware fake versions made from ordinary nettle juice.

Lucky Kuruku Foot

At 5 hlásh these are a bargain for anyone who wants good luck, happy times and general freedom from unpleasantness, and for the nobility a special gilded version with lacquered fingernails is available for a mere 3 kaitars.

Once a week the owner can take a +1 bonus in any skill roll, save or other circumstance where luck might be a factor. Each time this luck is invoked there is a one in ten chance that the foot's other, unadvertised, power becomes manifest. At some point in the next few days or nights the foot will disappear, taking with it the most valuable object the person owns that can be fitted into its paw, teleporting it back to the Kuruku Foot vendor.

The secret of making these 'lucky' pieces is known only to an itinerant clan of Salarvyani ne'er-do-wells, the Braided Beard clan.

The Pechani know all about these rogues, and say anyone who thinks they have got a bargain out of a Salarvyani is 'lucky as a Salarvyani Kuruku' and confidently expect the deal to go very bad very quickly.

Chnau Maggots

The chnau is a swampland creature somewhat resembling a giant centipede, somewhat like a snake and something like a ragworm, renowned for its toxic bite. It lays its eggs on it deceased victims, and these hatch into chunky pale pink maggots about three inches long that glow faintly in the dark. At this stage they non-toxic and edible by humans if cooked (though they taste awful), and are regarded by Ahoggyá as a delicacy, especially when

sprinkled with ground copper sulphate crystals.

The eggs can be stored for some weeks, and Ahoggyá in the Shuruna lowlands and Shikel swamps gather them and sell them to Ahoggyá traders in the city who hatch them out on suitable fresh corpses and sell them on street corners. While walking in the foreigners' quarter one may sometimes observe Ahoggyá notables scoffing live chnau maggots out of paper cones made of recycled City Ordinances as they go about their business.

The maggots love rotting meat that is just on the turn and can smell it from miles away. Human grave-robbers buy chnau maggots and let them loose in Necropoli at night, following the glowing pink maggot to freshly made graves and just sealed tombs giving them first go at despoiling the deceased. The Tomb-Police are well aware of this stratagem and if they find chnau maggots loose in their graveyard they immediately sound the alarm.

Sadly meat that is too far gone or too dry just does not appeal to them and attempts to persuade them to attack Mrur and Shedra will not work. It is unknown if they are partial to Jajgi.

The city guards also make use of chnau maggots to search for corpses where it is suspected murder victims have been hidden, though in many areas of the city iffy meat is sadly all too common and all too often they go off the trail and end up snooting around in the kitchens of the cheaper caterers clans. A few conscientious market officials use the maggot when inspecting butchers stalls, but it is generally felt that the beasts are a bit too sensitive and many of the joints they appear too like will not do too much harm to human customers if roasted properly with the right combination of pungent spices.

The maggots can be found anywhere where there are Ahoggyá, but the further away from the Shuruna lowlands you are the more expensive they become. Base price in Jakálla is 2 hlásh each, and you can get a bag of eight for 15 hlásh. They will last only a day away from rotting meat and will undergo their first moult at 5-10 days. At this stage they gain poisonous spines, grow to a foot long and they become more inclined to go for living flesh if disturbed. It is not considered wise to keep them beyond this point, even by Ahoggyá.

Chkt'kt (Happy Stick)

Communication between Pé Chói and humans can be hampered by the inflexibility of the Pé Chói's chitinous face and the difficulty they have in replicating human expressions. This leads some to regard Pé Chói as at best inscrutable and at worst possessed of a mocking and disdainful attitude to humans. Among the cultured and educated Pé Chói of Béy Sü it is currently the fashion to carry a Chkt'kt, a square or polygonal rod about two feet long painted with anywhere up to sixty coloured emblems based on meshqu plaque designs. When the user is in conversation with a human the Pé Chói brandishes this stick with his finger under the symbol indicating his current mood and emotional state. In the course of intense negotiations the stick can be whirled around at quite a speed.

It does not solve all the problems of interspecies communication however. The Pé Chói do not see colours in quite the same way as humans, finding it hard to distinguish orange and red and recognising two shades of ultra-violet, kch and tkcht, which look white to human eyes. Thus a Pé Chói may confuse Understandable Depression (red and blue vertical stripes) for Mild Jocularly at Bad Luck of Another (orange and blue stripes), or a human may see Awe at Inspired Rhetoric (white and red concentric circles) where his Pé Chói interlocutor is in fact indicating Boredom and Irritation at the Witless Prattling of Simians (kch and red concentric circles).

Some models of the Chkt'kt have a stout bronze ferrule weighted with lead for when

civilised communication breaks down entirely.

A Pé Chói may become familiar with Chkt'tk use quite quickly, and if they make a roll against the average of their DEX and INT they may use the stick to counteract the -1 CHA penalty they suffer when using communication skills with humans. If they have to use the other function it is used with Mace or Brawling skill, has +2 Initiative, -1 Acc and does x3 damage. Cost varies, the cheapest and most crudely painted versions go for 10 kaitars, elegant colourful ones with enamel symbols and a really stout club on the end are 500kt plus.

Planet Stones

There are seven different types of these charming little magical stones, each corresponding to a heavenly body in the Tekumeli sky.

When held up in front of the users face and released with a twist they spin off an orbit his head with a periodic cycle related to their planet – thus a Kashi stone will whiz round your head every 1.5 seconds, but a Ziruna stone will take 17 minutes to do the same trip.

Planet	Appearance	Effect
Kashi	Orange tetrahedron with yellow marbling	Adds +1 to spell casting rolls for magic that causes physical damage to a target
Gayel	Opaque green rhomboid	Gives +1 to any spell casting rolls of Mind group spells
Uletl	Brown cube with golden flecks	Gives +2 to resist Mind group spells
Riruchel	Red spindle made of two cones joined at base	Gives +1 to spell casting rolls for Energy spells
Tuleng	Transparent dodecahedron	Gives a straight +1 magic resistance
Shichel	Opaque turquoise octahedron with white marbling	Gives +1 to any spell casting rolls for Body group spells
Ziruna	Deep purple sphere with opaque black marbling	Gives +1 to casting of Planar and Necromancy spells

Each use drains 1 charge from the stone, and each starts with 1d100 charges. When exhausted the stone becomes grey and apparently lifeless and unable to orbit, but there is a ritual spell that enables the caster to store 1d10 magic points in such stones. Use of a full set gives an additional +1 magic resistance over an above any bonuses from individual stones and costs no charges. You can have more than one stone of a given type orbiting at any one time, but this does not increase the bonus gained, just the number of charges available for use.

The big disadvantage of these stones is that they can be easily stolen or lost. All an opponent has to do is reach out and grab them; doing this in combat requires a Sleight of Hand skill roll at +2, or a save vs DEX. Grabbing the fast moving Gayel and Kashi stones is at an additional -1, the slow Ziruna and Shichel stones are at +1. Consequently the owners of such stones usually only get them out for special occasions (parties and such), or when they are accompanied by a fair number of bodyguards.

Each stone is worth 1000kt plus 10kt per charge left (if known, otherwise add 250kt) and a

full set starts at 8000kt. Their functions and use are detailed in the text 'The Marvellous Planet Stones of Kurua hiYtletel', a late Engsvanyali volume found in Temple libraries with comprehensive magic sections and in the hands of a few private collectors. The edition with the appendix detailing how to use the stones to store magical energy is rarer, and 'The Secret of the Planet Stones' in which Kurua hiYtletel tells how to make them is only known from one edition in a secret archive of the Temple of Hnalla.

The Egg of Reptilian Discord

These are hand-sized spheroids of an ancient metal, usually painted with glyphs in Llyani and Duruob, with a sliding button on one end.

When activated this device creates a psychic field five meters radius which aggravates that part of a Shén's brain which controls aggression against their own species. This section of brain is usually only stimulated by the pheromones given off during the mating season and by rival egg-groups. Any Shén within the area of effect must save vs Will each round or immediately feel as though any Shén nearby are about to assault them. Each round within the field the save is reduced by 1, until all the Shén are attacking each other.

These devices were produced during the Latter Times by the predecessors of the Llyani Empire to combat Shén invasions. They use one charge each use plus 1 per minute of activation and each has up to one hundred charges.

There are probably dozens hidden away among the armouries of the Temples of the Shadow Gods, and a few more in the hands of the Shén.

The metal is all but indestructible, and the only way the Shén have found to put them beyond use is to throw them into volcanic vents and into deep oceans. Shén scholars keep a few to try and fathom how they work and whether this magic can be used to suppress the same violent urges and thus unite all Shén in one state.

The price should one come on the market is 8000Kt.

Amulet of Peace Among the Servitors of Ksáru (See original Empire of the Petal Throne)

There are several different varieties and grades of this most useful amulet. It is a small purple gem mounted on a tarnished silver arm ring and has up to 100 charges. It is designed to protect against those underworld creatures originally created by the priests of Ksáru. Roll on the following table to see how powerful each amulet is.

The base range is 6 meters, which can be extended by 2 meters per extra charge used up to 12m and has a duration of 3 minutes, plus 1 minute per extra charge used.

% Roll	Type of Amulet
1-40	Affects 1d6 Mrur, plus 1 per extra charge used- will not affect Mrur under the control of a Sarku priest or in a Sarku holy place.
41-70	As above and also affects one Qol plus one per charge 71-85 As both above, and affects one Hrá per 3 charges 86-92 As all above and affects Biridlu for 3 charges, but target gets +2 magic resistance
93-98	As all above and affects Marashyalu for 5 charges, but target gets +2 magic resistance

% Roll	Type of Amulet
99-00	As all above plus affects Tsu'uru for 7 charges, but target gets +3 magic resistance

The bearer can use more conventional methods to negotiate safe passage, alliances etc once the target creature has been calmed, but he/she must be able to speak the language of the target or have spells suitable to achieve such communication.

The amulet can be recharged by using a specialisation of the Azure Scarab spell.

The lowest grade of amulet is worth 1000Kt plus 10Kt per charge, doubling in value for each higher grade – thus the most powerful version is worth 64 000Kt plus 640Kt per charge.

The Amulet of Finding Treasure in the Underworld (See original *Empire of the Petal Throne*)

This amulet is sacred to Okh, The Warder of Devices, an aspect of Grugánu. It is a small carved scarab beetle that when activated with a magic word will begin to glow and to scuttle off through the underworld toward the nearest cache of gold, gems or silver within 100 meters. It appears to make no distinction as to the size of the hoard – it may lead you to a cheap tinsel necklace or to solid gold vases packed with diamonds, all a matter of what happens to be closest.

Its effectiveness also depends on the religion of the user. Grugánu worshippers have a 90% chance of finding something, and a 5% of suffering ill-effects should it fail; Ksárul and Durritlamish worshippers 80% and 5% chance respectively; Sarku, Hrü'ü and Wuru 70% and 7%; Vimuhla, Dlamelish, Hnalla, Thumis, Avanthé, Karakan and their cohorts and Belkhanu 50% and 10%; for Qon worshippers it is 30% and 20% chance of ill effects.

If the amulet does not work it scuttles off into the darkness and its light fades away, or it may just run around in a circle of lead the user into a dead end. If it goes wrong, all kinds of things can happen; it can lead people into traps and ambushes, lead them into a well guarded shrine of Grugánu or even transform itself into a demon servitor of Lord Qu'u and attack. The worst fate of all is to be led through a nexus point to Okh's favourite temple on the planet Ziruna.

Each amulet can only be used once and costs 200Kt. It is possible that many on sale are fake, or are designed as booby traps, designed to lead the unwary into prepared traps and ambushes laid by the pernicious priests of Grugánu and their underworld friends.

The Amnion of NiHrá

This is a beautifully made set of crystalline vessels with polished brass lids and numerous tubes and valves to connect them. This is in fact a miniaturised version of the tanks used by the priests of Ksárul to create Hrá. To use it requires numerous expensive materials prepared by skilled alchemists, including extracts of human blood, pituitary glands and amniotic fluid, all best taken fresh from human sacrifices.

If used correctly one can grow a variety of small monsters from globs of dead tissue sewn together and reanimated by a version of the Necrofacture spell. Nourished by the hormone rich nutrient bath this material achieves a kind of synthetic life and becomes a living homunculus, the form of which is only limited by the users imagination – and the kind of people who use such devices have pretty lurid imaginations.

There is only one of these devices known; it is in the private collection of Hakuru hiTleslu of the Cloak of Azure Gems Clan of Béy Sü. He is a lay-priest of Ksárul and noted sorcerer, and has been experimenting with the possibilities of this device. He has made a few entertaining little beasts, including a three-legged hunchbacked homunculus with a face modelled on the Usurper Dlich'une, but he cannot get them to live beyond a few minutes outside the tank. He does not know what the missing reagent or spell is, and he is not held in high enough esteem by the temple to get any hints from their experts on Hrá. It is possible that this miniature version is the last functioning Hrá tank in Tsolyánu – the temple of Krasul are not known to have created any new Hrá for centuries, not that they ever widely advertised their exploits in this field.

Price for an Amnion should one come on the market is unknown, but is likely to be very high. The manuals on Hrá creation that presumably go with the tank would also be worth a great deal.

There are a few tiny Hrá kept in the Temples of Ksárul, Hrü'ü and Grugánu that were presumably originally created in such a device.

Quill of Prevention of Pettifoggery

Sacred to Khalesh the Decider, an aspect of Thumis who is patron of administrators and bureaucrats, this amulet is designed to ease dealings with the civil service. The Talisman is made of silver and is shaped like a small kaika-quill pen. Its enchantment is used on a scroll to imbue it with the ability to teleport and self-heal.

Anyone who puts the document in a pile will find that however many other chits, docketts and other materials are placed on top of it, the enchanted one always moves to the top of the pile. If filed in a scroll rack the next scroll to be removed from that rack will always be the magic document. If an official tears the scroll up or burns it, it will reappear on his desk later that day miraculously whole.

If he scribbles on it, it will be clean and readable when next seen, which will not be long, as anyone leaving an office where this document resides carrying a scroll will find that their document has strangely turned into the enchanted one.

The only way of getting rid of such a document is to pass it on to a higher ranking official or to act upon its request or instruction oneself.

This is a very powerful item and is worth 3000Kt, not that the priests of Khalesh are willing to let just anyone get one and magically mess around with their time honoured and traditional procedures and protocols for looking busy and competent while actually wasting time. Some priests regard the creation of such objects as blasphemous; the endless waiting in queues, losing of documents, filling out of meaningless forms and acquisition of official stamps and seals are all spiritual lessons set by Khalesh to strengthen the petitioners character and to prepare their soul for the bureaucracy of passport control in the Isles of Teretane.

Moonberries

These glowing green berries are allegedly native to the moon Gayel and are thus sacred to Dlamelish and Hrihayal. They can be sacrificed to these deities for favours and also eaten as a very powerful aphrodisiac, adding +4 to any sexuality rolls. However, the user must also make a save vs the average of Str and Will or lose 1 Str point for 1d3 weeks. It is possible to become addicted to these berries; such unfortunates usually expire of heart failure. They can be bought outside most Dlamelish temples for 20-50Kt per berry.

Circlet of Rapid Transmission

These are golden circlets set with blue gems and are used by long range telepaths in the service of the Imperium and Temples. While wearing the circlet the cost of casting Ascertainment spells is halved.

The Dial of Digital Discernment

This is a beautifully crafted object of silver, gold, platinum, brass and iron which consists of two filigreed prongs attached to a three inch wide dial with a long spinning needle. When pointed at an object, person or animal the needle moves across the face of the dial, which is engraved with the numbers 1-9 in elegant Engsvanyali numerals. The number shown depends on the value of the target's name, reduced to its essentials through the technique of Averal, as detailed in the book Tsolyani Numerology.

This number depends on the True Name, not the given name. This can sometimes be useful in spotting spies whose pseudonyms do not numerically correspond to their real names, but is of most usefulness when dealing with demons. The clues gained from the Dial can enable an experienced Demonologist to work out the possible true names of the demon, and to thus gain power over the creature.

Knowing the Averal number enables magicians to know which kinds of magic a given person or object are most susceptible to, though it does require a thorough grounding in Numerology to make any practical difference.

These objects are works of art in their own right and worth 1500Kt.

"The Eater in Shadows"

The ancient predator of the Tinaliya.

Smuggled to Tékumel before the Time of Darkness for use as a weapon of terror, its burrowing attacks into Tinaliya colonies are stories used to frighten the children. The long lapses of activity are attributed to decades-long hibernations.



Hard At Work, Or . . .

By Krista Donnelly

Author's Introduction

I've used the *Tékumel: Empire of the Petal Throne* rules, Middle Way campaign type, Medium magic level. The spell, the Inimitable Defense of Habitations, is my own creation, as is the group nature of its casting and the rules surrounding the group casting. For those paying attention to such things, the cost of the spell is not included in the initial costs of creating the characters. It's assumed to have been learned during the characters' time at the Temple.

The scenario is inspired by a reading of the section on diseases in *Swords and Glory, Volume 1* (including the fact that encephalitis is still around), and idle musing on how ironic it would be for priests from Keténgku, the Temple of healing and physicians, to be present during an epidemic and yet utterly unable to help.

I first ran this scenario at the 2006 U-Con in Ann Arbor, Michigan. We didn't manage to make it to the following morning, but there was much delightful intrigue surrounding Omél and discovering his condition. I've revised the scenario fairly substantially since then.

At the end of the scenario, I've appended the rules cheat sheet that I hand out at my sessions.

GM's Introduction

The characters concluding the project they've been assigned to, the construction of a hunting lodge for the Sea Blue clan. They're a disparate group of characters, all chosen by their Temple for their high status and lackluster work ethics (not to be confused with ambitious scheming to get ahead). In this way, the Temple and Sea Blue hope to hide the true nature of the lodge, that it is a new, secret outpost for the Emperor, to help him keep secure the northern border without drawing attention to the effort. For the most part, the Temple chose wisely, and the characters are none the wiser. With the construction of the lodge completed, they only need to cast the Inimitable Defense of Habitations. What they don't know is that their leader is completely incapacitated, a plague is raging through the laborers and local fauna and a conniving clan elder is about to pay them a surprise visit.

Players' Introduction

One year ago you arrived here, in the middle of nowhere in the hills north of Avanthár, between the Missúma River and the Sakhé road which runs from Avanthár to Thri'íl. Béy Trántis Peak towers off to the east. The Temple of Keténgku was commissioned by Sea Blue to build them a rural retreat, a hunting lodge to which weary clan members could retire and enjoy themselves. Set upon a bluff overlooking the river, laborers sweated and groaned over the fine imported granite and marble, working furiously under the lash of their foremen.

Your lot is more pleasant, as befitting your station. Emerald Girdle outdid itself in its political maneuverings to secure your appointments. For the first year, you enjoyed yourself in Béy Sü, leisurely working up plans for the lodge with all the resources and staff of the temple at your beck and call. In the meantime, excavations were dug, the materials imported and all made ready for your arrival on site. You traveled there in comfort on your

palanquins. The one disappointment of the trip being that you never met your leader Omél hiKetkolél of Might of Gánga. He never emerged from his palanquin while in your company and immediately ensconced himself within his rooms upon arrival at the site. All communication has been through his capable majordomo Adlár.

At last, the lodge has been completed. At dinner that evening as you relax on your mats, sipping wine and engaging in idle conversation, Adlár stands up and commands your attention. “Omél hiKetkolél has been informed that the construction is finished. Consequently, prepare to cast the Inimitable Defense of Habitations upon our handiwork tomorrow at noon, in accordance with the traditions of our ancestors and the wish of the Builder of the Worlds.”

Just as Adlár sits down again, there is a knock at the door of the dining hall. A servant opens it to reveal a messenger standing there, clad in the symbols of Emerald Girdle. A hurried whisper later, the servant turns and announces, “A message for Shekkára hiJarásh, to be delivered privately.”

Background: The Lodge

This is far more than a simple rural hunting lodge for the Sea Blue clan. Located in the valley along the route to Thri’íl, it will double as a redoubt should trouble arise again on the northern border. In the meantime, it provides aid and comfort to spies sent to Tsolyánu’s northern borders. Sea Blue is building, staffing and maintaining the lodge as a favor for the Emperor. Its unofficial nature enhances its effectiveness, since a low profile preserves the element of surprise should it ever be needed. It is being kept in a state of readiness through the services of half a company of ex-soldiers from the crossbow legion Legion of the Wind of Iron. They also happen to belong to Scarlet Planet of Knives and were hunters before their military service, providing a perfect cover for their being at the lodge.

Sea Blue coordinated its plans with several carefully chosen architects in the Temple of Keténgku. Highly skilled but hailing from medium status clans, these architects drew up the plans for the secret areas of the lodge while providing the guidance that was given to the players in Béy Sü. They went to desired region and selected the limestone cliffs overlooking the Missúma River. They oversaw the early work of carving out the limestone caves to create caverns for storage of foodstuffs, armor, weapons and disguises for the spies. Once the caverns were finished and stocked, the team of laborers from Open Hand were executed and buried in a cavern to preserve the secret. A suitable sum was paid to the clan in compensation, and another team imported to build the lodge proper. In a similar manner, with the secret work accomplished, the true architects returned to Béy Sü, and the project was handed over to a new team, the player characters and Omél hiKetkolél. This team is here to misdirect attention. When the project is completed and praised publicly, it will be their names that are praised. Their lack of an architectural reputation will ensure that no one looks closely at the lodge. Additionally, their interests and proclivities should mitigate against their noticing anything unusual going on. And by giving Emerald Girdle members such preference, the clan now owes the Temple a favor to boot.

Above ground, the lodge follows a fairly standard Tsolyáni pattern of a central structure surrounded by outlying support buildings. The roofs of all the buildings sport gardens, growing every conceivable exotic plant. Somewhat unusually, Airá grass (used as an anaesthetic) and Lisútl bushes (roots are used as the universal birth control agent) adorn that of the central structure. A 6 meter wall has been built around the perimeter at 100 meters out, except for the edge overlooking the river. The wall is stunning. A beautiful mosaic of the Sea Blue emblem adorns the gate. Mosaic march around the circumference of the wall, depicting scenes of the hunt of such creatures as Jakkóhl, the Zrné, and even,

improbably, a Sérudla. The color scheme of the lodge itself replicates those of the Sea Blue emblem: shades of blue with hints of silver and red.

Beyond the wall, the forest reigns supreme. Only a simple trail leads out to the Sakké road several miles away. It is not uncommon to hear the cries of wild creatures if you stroll outside among the buildings at night.

Communication

There is a regular courier service to Thrí'íl modeled on the imperial messenger service. Once a week, one arrives to carry messages and small packages back to the city. It's a minimum of two weeks to send a message and receive a reply.

Once a month, a regular supply caravan arrives to deliver furnishings for the lodge and stock (or restock) the luxury perishables. It takes around two to three weeks to reach Thrí'íl by chlén cart.

The date after tomorrow marks both the weekly arrival of the courier and the monthly arrival of the caravan.

Transportation

Since this was a long term assignment, the Temple deemed it unnecessary for the players' palanquins and their teams of bearers to remain idle at the work site. The caravan leader returned them to Béy Sü with medium status architects who oversaw the initial work.

Currently, there are only two travel palanquins which belong to Omél and Adlár. There are numerous "city" palanquins for use in the immediate vicinity of the lodge and traveling to and from hunts. The outdoor staff can double as palanquin bearers.

Staffing

- **Major Domo:** Dijáya of Scarlet Mantle. A plain woman with a no nonsense bearing.
- **Kitchen Mistress:** Sáyi of Scarlet Mantle. A harpy. Insecure in handling her responsibility and feuding with the chef Núromen.
- **Mistress of the Body Servants:** Chashána of Scarlet Mantle. A serene and competent woman who punishes any lapses severely.
- **Master of the Hunters:** Bálesh of Scarlet Planet of Knives (see NPC listing)
- **Master of the Laborers:** Zagár of Open Hand (see NPC listing)
- **Apothecary:** Pí'ur of Staff of Beneficence (not arrived yet)
- **Assistant apothecary:** Jesékh of Broken Reed. Unassuming. Has minimal training dealing mostly with caring for physical injuries. Is in charge of stocking the supplies that Pí'ur sends up with the monthly caravan. The apothecary is well stocked.
- **Chef:** Núromen of Granite Lintel. A frustrated prima donna. Tries to undermine Sáyi's authority in the kitchen by commandeering her staff to aid in food preparation.

Each heads the staff in their bailiwick, and all answer to Dijáya. Dijáya in turn consults daily with Adlár.

Background: The Plague

To provide themselves entertainment, the Open Hand laborers caught some local Jakkóhls (fox-like animals), pitted them against each other in fights and bet on the outcome. It was a harmless enough past time until Qárras became involved (see his character sheet). The increasing frequency of the fights meant more Jakkóhl had to be brought in on a weekly basis. Unfortunately, the local Jakkóhl population has become infected by ticks carrying a viral encephalitis infection.

This infection is spreading rapidly. The laborers who handle the Jakkóhl became infected several days ago. Qárras was infected yesterday and will start to exhibit symptoms. A Hyahyú'u ("Whooper") pack that recently came into the area and began feeding on the Jakkóhls has become infected and is displaying symptoms. Symptoms in the Jakkóhl themselves are hard to distinguish from the reaction to the general mistreatment to which Qárras subjects them.

Early Symptoms

Early symptoms of encephalitis are similar to those of a flu and usually include fever, headache, nausea and vomiting, muscle aches, and lethargy.

Most of the infected Open Hand laborers are in this stage.

Symptoms of Full-Blown Encephalitis

- Behavioral and personality changes. [This will go unnoticed in Qárras since he behaves so oddly in the first place.]
- Sensitivity to light
- Vomiting
 - Lethargy and reduced consciousness
 - Seizures
 - Memory loss
 - Stiff neck and back
 - Confusion
 - Coma
 - Death

Possible Additional Symptoms.

Severe general weakness

- An inability to coordinate voluntary muscle movements
- Tremors
- Partial paralysis
- Difficulty in hearing, seeing, or speaking
- Difficulty in swallowing

There is no cure for encephalitis short of sorcery (Greater Alleviation). Once the plague is discovered, the best course of action is to prevent future infections: kill all the Jakkóhl,

burn the carcasses, and burn the meat in the kitchen. If the characters are true to Tekumelyáni sensibilities, the best course of action is to quarantine the Open Hand infected and simply let them die. The work, after all, is done.

To save Qárras and any other high status person who becomes infected, there aren't many options. The Temple of Keténgku is the temple of healing. Hopefully there will be a moment of irony as everyone curses the fate that sent only architects out to the site. The good news is that the disease progresses so fast, there's no possibility they could accidentally take it back and infect the clan house in Béy Sü. The bad news is that there's no time to summon help either. The only hope is Omél's collection of inscribed spells. His clan despairs of him acquitting himself honorably and gives him every crutch they can imagine to prevent him from disgracing their name. Among them are three copies of each type of Healing spell. Thus, three people can be saved from the plague. Choose wisely!

NPCs

Omél hi Ketkolél, Might of Gánga Leader of the Keténgku Priests

Omél is a disgrace to his clan. Descended from one of the most illustrious lineages in the empire, he is utterly irresponsible. His entire career has been made possible only through the extremely active support of his clan. His chamberlain Adlár has consistently carried out any of the assignments given to him that have been completed.

Omél is concerned with only two things: prepubescent girls and intoxicants. His burning desire is to become a zu'úr addict in order to feel the heights of sexual ecstasy they are said to experience. He has not obtained any mainly because Adlár refuses to help him. In a misguided attempt to replicate the effects of zu'úr, he paid a shady lay priest to cast Mindbar upon himself and command him to act as a zu'úr addict would. He did this immediately prior to leaving on this assignment, taking with him three of his "specials" [young mute illiterate girls] so that he could 'enjoy' the effects. As almost anyone other than himself could have predicted, the priest could mimic the outward aspects of the disease but not the sexual ecstasy. Consequently, he has spent the past year as a barely conscious, incoherent, drooling idiot. His confinement to bed has naturally led to the weakness and pallid appearance of an addict. If he is ever released from this condition [Disenchant will do it], he will be pathetically grateful and will attempt, for a short time, to turn over a new leaf.

Omél's inscribed spells: Inimitable Defense of Habitations, Healing (all attributes) x3, Alleviation x3, Greater Alleviation x3, Disenchantment x3.

Adlár, Chamberlain

Adlár is skilled at covering for Omél, having years of practice. However, this assignment has been his worst, and he's at his wits' end. While the project continued, he could maintain business as usual, receiving the reports of Zagár and consulting with Réshmel as needed. But he is not a sorcerer and cannot take Omél's place in the casting of the Inimitable Defense of Habitations. Nor can he allow Omél to be shamed by not participating. In Omél's quarters can be found several dispatches from the Sea Blue overseer Tsodlán informing Omél that the schedule has been accelerated. Sea Blue wishes the lodge to be completed yesterday. The latest message informs him that Tsodlán will be arriving this month, and he expects to be able to inspect a completed lodge. If it is not ready, he will assume supervision of the project until it is completed.

Adlár knows that if he informs Might of Gánga of Omél's predicament, he will be fired and sent back to his clan in disgrace. So he sent a message to his own clan, Victorious Globe,

asking them to contact the lay priest and persuade him to travel to the site and reverse whatever he cast. Victorious Globe's council of elders debated this in closed session and deemed it too expensive for the clan. He has in his possession a reply from them instructing him to inform Might of Gánga and ask for their aid. Adlár is furious that he is being set up to take the fall for Omél's senseless behavior. In desperation he decided to help himself by skimming off considerable amounts from the project. He then sent a message to the lay priest himself, offering to pay 10,000 káitars to reverse his spell. He has in his possession an answer from the priest, stating that he will arrive on tomorrow's date. Adlár fears that Tsodlán will arrive with the caravan on the day after tomorrow. Thus he has gambled on the priest's arrival and announced that the spell will be cast tomorrow.

Osumétlu hiKutonyál, Emerald Girdle Clan Elder

The newest and youngest of the clan elders of Emerald Girdle, Osumétlu is only 30 years old. Dark rumors float about him in the clan, whispering that ugly things happen to those who get in his way. All the player characters are aware of his reputation.

He was contacted by the Ksárul lay priest and told that he could get the temple in his debt by making a special trip out to the lodge site. He does not know it, but one of the bearers of his palanquin is the Ksárul lay priest. Osumétlu was not one to turn down an opportunity like this. His ostensible reason for visiting is to propose to that renowned beauty Shekkára hiJarásh and add her as one of his wives. He suspects that after such a confinement in the sticks, she may be sick of Temple life and ready to link her destiny with a rising star within the clan.

He will not be aware of the Ksárul priest's plans for him until he is slipped the scroll and told what to do.

Tsodlán hiKetkolél, Sea Blue Representative

The Sea Blue overseer of this project is Tsodlán hiKetkolél. Tsodlán often travels between cities, relaying sensitive opinions and information between clan houses in the various major cities of the center and north. He is fully informed of the true nature of the lodge and the reasoning behind the choice of the current Keténgku overseers. He has sent messages to Adlár with almost every courier, inquiring about the status of the project and pushing up the completion date. He will be arriving the day after tomorrow with the monthly caravan. As he told Adlár, if the project is not completed when he arrives, he will supervise its completion himself.

Knowing why the Keténgku overseers were chosen, he will project an image of a bored aristocrat who can't be bothered to work and will not berate any displays of incompetence or mismanagement on the part of the characters (as he holds Adlár responsible for the real work). Plague and murders will sail blithely passed him. What will anger him will be if the Inimitable Defense of Habitations spell is not properly cast, if the Scarlet Planet of Knives "hunters" contract the plague or if someone has discovered the caverns and asks questions about them.

Tsodlán currently has two wives and is not overly attached to either of them. They are both marriages of necessity and politics. On his last visit he had a fling with Shekkára for the usual reasons – he was bored, and she was available and beautiful. He wouldn't be adverse to having a wife who was willing to travel with him. If he discovers how fragile Shekkára's health is, he will be much more open to a marriage proposal. Given what can happen on the road, he anticipates that she wouldn't survive more than several years and would conveniently die before he tires of her. In general, he will respond to her charms but will not initiate anything.

Ksárul priest

His name is unknown. He is not a lay priest, but a high ranking priest within the Temple. He will arrive as a bearer of Osumétlu's palanquin. Without revealing himself to Adlár, he will slip into the lodge and use the servants' passages to reach Omél's room. There he will take the káitars and the scroll with the Inimitable Defense of Habitations. He will slip the scroll to Osumétlu and explain that he is conveying a message from the priest of Ksárul: His clan's workers here will not receive the glory of a successful project unless he steps up to fill the role abdicated by Omél as leader of the project and caster of the Inimitable Defense.

Once the spell has been successfully cast, he will return to Omél and free him from the Mindbar.

The players will not wish to let it be known that a lay person helped cast a Temple spell, so they will be in Osumétlu's debt.

Omél will not wish to let his failure be known, so he will be in both the players and the Ksárul priest's debt.

Adlár and Osumétlu will be in the priest's debt.

The priest will be able to study the lodge and learn its true nature.

The lodge will be completed and ready with neither Sea Blue nor the Emperor none the wiser of the Ksárul temple's involvement.

All in all, a complete victory for Ksárul. If all proceeds as he wishes.

Feel free to make as powerful as you wish, but if he's revealed, don't have him simply overwhelm the characters with his sorcery. What's the fun of that? If things are going badly with regards to the plague, you may want him to be able to cast Greater Alleviation.

Zagár, Open Hand Foreman

Zagár is not aware of the true fate of the first group of workers. Open Hand did not agree beforehand that the first team could be executed. They were, in fact, lied to, told that the workers died in a freak accident when part of the structure collapsed. To silence any skepticism, the clan was paid a more than adequate compensation. The Open Hand patriarch decided that his sublime patrons need answer no questions on the matter.

Zagár has not had an easy time. The Temple set a very ambitious timeline for finishing the lodge which has caused him to work his men very hard. The "freak accident" also weighs heavily upon him. There was no rubble to clean up when he arrived with the replacements. Since this is a hunting lodge, he suspects that there is some kind of truly dreadful predator lurking in the woods that attacked and ate the previous crew. This is also how he explains the large numbers of hunters already employed by the lodge.

Zagár is harassed, impatient and rather cruel. He fears what will happen to him should he fail in this assignment. His stress is only compounded by the obviously incompetent Keténgku supervisors. The only one he has any trust in is Réshmel. He barely manages to be civil to them. He will punish anyone he views as malingering with shouts, blows, and whippings, in proportion to their offense.

He does not see the Jakkóhl fights as a problem. He sees them as a valued and needed source of stress relief. He will resist efforts to shut them down unless it's proven that they are the source of the infection.

Bálesh, Scarlet Planet of Knives Lead Hunter

Bálesh is a charismatic leader. His men follow him unquestioningly in peacetime, just as they did in war. They are all ex-military, from the Legion of the Wind of Iron. They are proficient in the heavy crossbow, medium crossbow and long sword. Though Bálesh only reached tirrikámu in the legion, he was the de facto leader of all 50 of these men. Bálesh is completely devoted to the Emperor and to Sea Blue and its representative, Tsodlán. Along with Tsodlán, Bálesh is the only person here who knows the true nature of the lodge and the history of the first crew. Neither he nor his men feel any remorse at their secret execution of the Open Hand workers. They know that they are merely the hands of Sea Blue and will be protected from any retribution should the truth come out. Being veterans of the war and then the civil war, they are in sympathy with the reasons for the founding of this outpost.

Bálesh is laconic, competent and rather grim. He does not encourage people to talk to him, and tends to look them in the eye silently until they leave him alone. Most find this unnerving and more than a little insulting coming from one who's from a Very Low status clan.

Gayán, Suspicious Open Hand worker

Gayán lost all seven of his brothers to the “freak accident.” He's frustrated that there were no bodies or a gravesite. He once asked a hunter, and was told that they were buried in a mass gravesite. With no evidence of one around, he's concluded that the lodge was built over the site. He believes that without the bodies receiving the proper attention from the priests of Belkhánu, their souls will wander forever in search of the Isles of Teretané.

Not long ago, his lover Nélel discovered one of the secret passages in the servants' halls leading down to the limestone caverns. He spent much of his time sneaking away to dig at random spots in the caves. By chance, he has just located the mass grave. Despairing of collecting all the skeletons or identifying his brothers, he is digging wildly, scattering the bones around him, and trying to collect all the skulls. With the project drawing to a close, he knows time is short. He also wonders whether the workers will all be killed again. (It's obvious that the workers died due to crossbow bolts to the head.)

All the Open Hand workers, including Zagár, know that he has found the graves and is digging up skulls. No one has bothered to mention this to anyone outside the clan. The general feeling is that he's not quite right in the head due to his great loss, and it's no one else's business anyway. The other workers will try to cover for him if a player inquires after him. If there's a direct accusation and the clan seems in trouble over his actions, they'll plead his case based on insanity.

Nélel, Pretty Kitchen Girl

Nélel is Gayán's lover and also the girl Drakóhl hired to deliver the drugged wine to Adlár and seduce him. She did so without questioning. Adlár will be able to identify her on sight, though he doesn't know her by name. She will freely give up all information in her role in this little deception, figuring it to be some affair of her superiors and none of her concern. If she is threatened, Gayán will become very upset. She is in love with Gayán and willing to help him excavate the skulls.

Status Ranking of the Servants

- Victorious Globe – Adlár, Omél's chamberlain
- Broken Reed – Jesékh, the assistant apothecary

- Open Hand – Zagár, Master of the Laborers
- Scarlet Mantle – Dijáya (Major Domo), Sáyi (Mistress of the Kitchen), Chashána (Mistress of the Body Servants)
- Scarlet Planet of Knives – Bálesh, Master of the Hunters
- Granite Lintel – Núromen, the chef

Events

The Messenger

The messenger has been tasked to deliver his message to only Shekkára. If Shekkára is not being played as a player character, feel free to have her either pass the information along to Adlár or announce it to the group. The message is as follows:

Our illustrious clan elder, Osumétlu hiKutonyál, wishes it to be known that he will arrive here tomorrow, not long after the sun. He longs to gaze upon your beauty and rejoice in the glory that your labors have obtained for all those born to Emerald Girdle.

The message is verbal. The messenger is allowed to wait as long as an hour if Shekkára (or someone else) wishes to send a message back with him. If questioned, he can relate the following information:

Osumétlu is several hours travel away, at a Sakbé road camp. He is traveling with a small entourage of only 30 people.

- He is not happy about being ordered to run ahead to deliver the message nor about his return trip in the dark. This is wilderness once you're away from the Sakbé road, and he fears being attacked by wild animals.
- Doesn't know if the other elders, the Temple or Sea Blue is aware of Osumétlu's surprise visit.

Several minutes after the messenger leaves:

You hear screams from outside, shouts of alarm and odd, eerie whooping cries. The door crashes open as one of the filthy laborers races in. He falls on his face before you and screams, "Help us! They're attackin'! They're tearin' us apart from limb to limb!"

Hyahyú'u ("Whooper") Attack

A scene of carnage greets your eyes. Bodies lie scattered around a fire pit, blood splattered everywhere. The workers are screaming, running for the nearest building. Some are scrambling about for something to use as a weapon against the Whoopers. The savage six-legged animals are everywhere, darting through the crowd, tearing off arms or legs and dashing for the trees. Then a trumpet blast rings out from above you and a fusillade of crossbow bolts rains down from above. The remaining Whoopers flee and gradually calm returns, punctuated by the groans of the wounded.

This is a pack of 50 Whoopers. Five are killed in the initial fight. Normally, they are highly skilled in pack tactics, but the encephalitis has robbed them of this ability.

Whooper

Strength 5, Dexterity 5, Intelligence 2, Psyche 2, Will 4, Charisma 3

Initiative 9, Combat 7, HP 60, Shock Value 12, Magic Resistance 1, Pedhétl 1

Fangs: damage x 3, High Penetration (decreases armor)

Investigating the Whooper Attack

Background

The Whoopers have been eating the local Jakkóhl and are infected with the encephalitis virus, causing their odd behavior. This is helpful to the players in that their pack tactics are highly degraded (they can't use any Team points). It's dangerous because they've lost their normal judgment and inhibitions, hence the attack on a group of humans.

They entered through the gate which was left open by the weakened guard. After being driven off, most left through the gate, but some got lost. They've settled down in odd spots throughout the complex to eat their food (mostly arms and legs). They will be in darkened areas and will have vomited after eating and will be lethargic if found.

If they are not found in the next couple of hours:

- One will die in his sleep.
- Two will wake up and try to find the pack. They are confused and will wander about drunkenly. When they're spotted, one will have a seizure.
- The disease is less advanced in the fourth one. It will head toward the gate, but is highly irritable and will attack anyone who is nearby.

Investigation

A pack of Whoopers is known to live in the area (source: Open Hand or Scarlet Planet).

The wall around the complex should have kept them out (source: Open Hand or Scarlet Planet).

They shouldn't have attacked such a large group of humans. They usually choose smaller creatures such as hmélu. The workers were roasting hmélu.

Several Whoopers were downed by the crossbow bolts. It will be possible to examine the bodies. Anyone examining them will notice ticks jumping onto them.

If Zagár is questioned, he will blame the gate-keeper for letting them enter.

If the wall is examined, burrows near the wall will be found. Anyone who's clumsy or fails a Dexterity stat check will trip in holes that have been dug. This is the work of Jakkóhl and Kité in the area.

Going to the gate will show the gate to be wide open and the guard slumped against the wall beside it. [The latest entries were when the hunters returned for the day, shortly before dinner.] If he's questioned, he will be disoriented and then aggressive, but will be shaking so hard that he can't actually do anything.

Outside the gate is the forest with the path to the Sakbé road winding through it. Anyone walking out on it will hear movement in the woods and then catch a glimpse of a Nráishu, a "six-legged, deer-like herbivore, black or dark brown, with a long-snouted face. They see well in the dark and are often active at night or twilight."

If Adlár is present as Omél's representative, he will be angry and order the guard whipped with 100 lashes (a death sentence). Adlár will blame the guard's behavior and condition on an overdose of some sort of drug.

If Bálesh, the Scarlet Planet of Knives hunter is questioned:

He took his men to the roof to investigate and ordered the crossbow bolts when he saw the attack. He will attempt to gloss over why they all had crossbows at the ready and why they thought to go to a strategic overlook rather than rushing into the heart of the action. If pushed on this, he will admit to some military service.

He will warn that Whoopers should not be underestimated. They live and hunt in packs and can be formidable enemies, though this is uncharacteristic of them.

He'll suggest that they lay out baited traps rather than trying to track them down.

He can point out that they can jump quite high, though they rarely do more than lie on the lower branch of a tree. The wall should have been high enough to stop them.

He can point out that the Whoopers may not have left through the gate. Some could still remain within the walls.

Qárras

Keep track of how many hours are passing and occasionally pass Qárras' player notes about symptoms that he's experiencing. For example:

“You suddenly feel nauseous and must vomit.”

“ You fall to the floor in a seizure.”

“ You are too weak to perform that action.”

Whenever Qárras is exposed to light (e.g. walking inside from the outdoors, a candle or lantern being lit in his presence), it will be painful to his eyes.

Depending on the player and the circumstances, you can introduce the memory loss and personality change symptoms.

If Qárras is making a serious effort to carry out a murder, don't use the symptoms to such an extent that this is impossible for him. On the other hand, unless Qárras has isolated himself, use them enough that at least some of the other players realize that something's happening to him. In no case should he be able to participate in the Inimitable Defense casting if nothing has been done to help him.

Events Occurring During the Evening and Night

- Nirún should notice Gayán scurrying furtively from the lodge to a worker dormitory with a large sack slung over his shoulder.
- A laborer will climb up on the ledge surrounding the roof on one of the buildings and calmly walk off. If a player character isn't around to witness it, Zagár will bring it to someone's attention.
- Gayán will furtively scurry back to the lodge with an empty sack over his shoulder. (Repeat his comings and goings approximately every hour.)
- As the laborers' conditions worsen during the night, Zagár will approach Réshmel, Drakóhl, Shekkára, Mórusai, or Nirún, in that order, for help. Under no circumstance will he approach Qárras. He will be desperate, begging for healing, appealing to the sympathies of the god they worship.
- If no one is helping the Open Hand laborers, then during the night Jesékh will open up the apothecary to them and bring them into the lodge, setting up a secret clinic. He is a fervent worshipper of Keténgku and will see nothing wrong with this. If this activity is not stopped, he'll start converting nearby guest suites into a makeshift hospital. By

morning, the floor of that wing will be occupied by the sick and dying. Activity outside the lodge will diminish considerably as the healthy come in to help tend the sick.

- One of the mute girls will leave Omél's rooms to see what is happening. She is shy, with big eyes and a habit of flinching whenever someone gestures in her direction. She is illiterate as well as mute and thus unable to communicate. If anyone tries to approach Omél's rooms in her presence, she will shake her head and try to dissuade them.
- Appearance of a sick Whooper, if the hunters haven't already taken care of them.
- Jakkóhl fight. The fights normally take place in pit dug in the middle of one of the dormitories. Cages for Jakkóhl fill this dormitory, surrounding the sleeping mats. The animals within are starving and suffering from various injuries sustained in the fights. Too many of the workers are ill for them to hold a fight unless Qárras bullies them into it.

Jakkóhl

Strength 1, Dexterity 9, Intelligence 2, Psyche 1, Willpower 4, Charisma 1

Initiative 13, Combat 6, HP 25, Shock Value 5, Magic Resistance 2, Pedhétl 1

Fangs: damage x .5 (round up)

The Plague

The plague is spread by the infected ticks on the Jakkóhl and on the laborers who participate in the fights, by the blood of infected person and by eating the meat of an infected animal. Each time a character has a chance to be infected, they must make a Strength stat check. If the character fails the check, they are infected. You can mention symptoms, but in the timeframe of the scenario, they should be mild for everyone except Qárras.

By morning, half of the laborers will be incapacitated by the encephalitis. All will bear scars from the fight and be tick-infested. If the connection hasn't been made by now, Qárras can make an Intelligence stat check to figure it out. Anyone else can make a check with a -1 modifier (Slightly Difficult).

Morning: The Arrival of Osumétlu

Osumétlu cannot be dissuaded from arriving in the morning. He is both bolstered by his mandate from the Ksárul priest and somewhat in fear of disobeying him. He'll take precautions if warned of the disease, but not to the extent of respecting a quarantine. He will claim concern for his clan members as his overriding motive.

Once he arrives, he will concentrate his attention on trying to get alone with Shekkára and propose to her.

He is conscientious enough that he will attempt to solve any problems brought to him by the characters.

He is ambitious and crafty enough that he will not hand over the Inimitable Defense scroll without having first obtained some personal gain for himself.

The Ksárul Priest

He will attempt to carry out his mission quickly and quietly. Give him Stealth checks with a Stealth 2 and a relevant Stat of 3. Anyone who's been paying attention to the activities of

the servants (probably Nirún) should get a +1 to the roll. Anyone who's helped the Open Hand laborers will be told of his presence.

The Arrival of Tsodlán

Tsodlán had been travelling with the caravan until they were passed by Osumétlu's group. He's intensely suspicious about where an Emerald Girdle clan elder is going, and left the caravan behind to follow Osumétlu at a quicker pace. He should show up at some dramatically appropriate moment, either right before or after the Inimitable Defense has been cast.

Casting the Inimitable Defense of Habitations

A minimum of four casters are required to be able to cast this group spell. Casting a ritual spell is a complex, precise act. Anyone who attempts to do so while:

Under the influence of any sort of drug: -4 to the spell difficulty modifier

- Exhibiting milder symptoms of encephalitis: -4 to the spell difficulty modifier
- Exhibiting severe symptoms of encephalitis: Not possible to participate

If Qárras has not been cured, it will be impossible for him to participate in the spell. Likewise for Omél. Mórusai will need to either have Alleviation cast on him or cease partaking of drugs for 2 hours prior to the casting to avoid the -4 modifier.

Adlár has calculated where they need to scatter throughout the building to cover the entire structure. The minimum four casters will cover the entire lodge.

If there is reason to suspect sabotage during the spell, then two Scarlet Planet of Knives hunters will attempt to accompany each caster. "Sabotage" could simply mean the sick getting loose from the infirmary, or a servant choosing this moment to beseech the character for some aid.

There is a tunkél gong on the top of the lodge that will be rung to signal the start of the spell. It's assumed, as part of their magic training, that they know exactly when to start after hearing the ringing of the gong. If enough of them are forcibly delayed or choose not to cast the spell that the four caster minimum is not met, then the spell will fail, but the Energy Points will still be spent.

The gong will ring for the 10 minutes of preparation time. When the last ring dies away into silence, then it's time for them to start.

Victory (or Consolation) Lunch

If anyone wants to eat afterwards, Núromen has prepared a meal featuring a local delicacy made with Jakkóhl meat. If anyone is foolish enough to eat it, have them make a Strength stat check to see if they are infected by the encephalitis.

Drakóh hiBurusá

26 years old, 12th Circle, Emerald Girdle, Keténgku Scholar Priest

Description: Calm and confident

Character Stats	Combat Values	Magic & Other
Strength: 4	Initiative: 8	Pedhétl: 6
Dexterity: 4	Combat: 4	Magic Resistance: 6
Intelligence: 5	Health Points: 40	Energy Pool: 35
Psyche: 6	Shock Value: 8	Respect: 0
Charisma: 4		Teamwork Pool: 0
Willpower: 4		

Skills	Target Number	Attributes	Defects
Language (Tsolyáni)Spoken 2 & Written 1	7 (Spoken), 6 (Written)	Attractive (Charming voice)	Distractible 1
Knowledge (Béy Sü) 2	7	High Pedhétl 2	Bad Days 1
Etiquette (High Clan) 1	6	High Lineage	Combat Limitation 2
Etiquette (Temple) 2	7	Magic Ability 1	
Ritual (Keténgku) 1	6	Older 2	
Theology (Keténgku) 1	6		
Magic, Ritual 1	6		
Energy Management 2	8		
Calligraphy 1	5		
Charm 2	6		
Scholar (Architect) 1	6		
Subculture (High Clan) 2	6		
Subculture (Temple) 2	6		
Deception (Familiarity)	3		

Spell	Cost	Target	Range	Area	Duration	Notes/Variants
Inimitable Defense of Habitations	90	One building	Touch	60 meters radius	5 years	It has a -10 difficulty modifier. This is a group spell.

Notes: 1. +2 to Charm checks involving your voice

2. -1 to Planning checks

3. -2 to attack and defense rolls (you freeze up at the thought of blood)

4. Make a Willpower check every 5 minutes to concentrate on dull tasks.

5. If your first roll of the day is a 9 or 10, you are having a Bad Day. On Bad Days, a 10 is an automatic critical failure, and all critical successes are treated as normal 1s.

You know how to work the system. Before you left to join the temple, you ingratiated yourself as much as possible with the clan patriarch and elders. And once you joined the temple, you toadied up to your superiors in that effortlessly charming fashion that you have. It's a matter of knowing not just how to flatter, but who to flatter. In this manner, you have reached quite a high Circle with remarkably little work. (Though to be fair, your jealous colleagues will occasionally remark upon it.)

This latest assignment presented you with an interesting dilemma. It's a commission from Sea Blue, and therefore high profile and good for one's career. But being involved with it meant an extended period away from the Temple and all the contacts to be made and maintained there. You decided to concentrate on making the acquaintance of Omél hiKetkolél, the scholar priest from Might of Gánga (a Very High status clan!) who heads up your group.

Omél has not made this task easy. He kept his distance the entire journey here, rarely emerging from his palanquin. Upon arrival, he ensconced himself within a luxury suite along with his concubines and slaves. His capable chamberlain, Adlár (Victorious Globe, a mere Medium status clan), conducts all his interactions with others.

Last month, sensing the end of the project, you were desperate to make his acquaintance. So you "borrowed" some brown powder from Mórusai, mixed it with wine and bribed an attractive kitchen girl to deliver it and herself to Adlár "compliments of Shekkára." Shortly afterwards, Adlár was under the influence of the drug, drowsy and peaceful, and very much preoccupied. You then slipped in to see Omél.

You didn't make Omél's acquaintance. He was unconscious in bed with three of his concubines. For someone who's been overindulging for almost a year, he's looking pale and drawn. Still, you used the opportunity to rifle through his papers and found an inscribed version of the Inimitable Defense of Habitations spell that he needs to cast on the completed lodge. You pocketed it and left. Casting this spell is the finishing touch to all of the important Temple of Keténgku construction projects. It's a closely guarded Temple secret, a complex ritual spell that requires a minimum of four casters. It's the only spell that you and your fellow scholar priests have been taught, and it's a great honor to know it. Obviously the Temple doesn't trust that Omél will be able to cast it on his own, or they wouldn't have sent him with an inscribed version as a back-up.

Goals

1. Advance your career by either by retaining the inscribed spell for future blackmail or profitable use, or by stealing the glory here if Omél fails.
2. Make Shekkára's life as miserable as possible.

Your Fellow Priests (in order of status)

1. **Shekkára hiJarásh.** Not as beautiful as she believes.

2. You rank here.
3. **Mórusai hiSáika.** Owns an amazing array of powders and intoxicants.
4. **Qárras hiChánkolel.** Too brutal to be trusted.
5. **Réshmel hiKarélsa.** Desperate to advance and it shows.
6. **Nirún hiVáika.** A nobody who probably knows it.

Mórusai hi Sáika

27 years old, 7th Circle, Emerald Girdle, Keténgku Scholar Priest

Description: Always somewhat distracted

Character Stats	Combat Values	Magic & Other
Strength: 3	Initiative: 10	Pedhétl: 6
Dexterity: 4	Combat: 4	Magic Resistance: 6
Intelligence: 5	Health Points: 35	Energy Pool: 37
Psyche: 6	Shock Value: 7	Respect: 0
Charisma: 4		Teamwork Pool: 0
Willpower: 6		

Skills	Target Number	Attributes	Defects
Language (Tsolyáni) Spoken 2 & Written 1	7 (Spoken), 6 (Written)	Attractive (Hawk-like features)	Addicted 1
Knowledge (Béy Sü) 2	7	High Pedhétl 2	Clumsy 1
Etiquette (High Clan) 1	6	Magic Ability 1	Fragile 1
Etiquette (Temple) 1	6	Older 2	
Ritual (Keténgku) 1	6		
Theology (Keténgku) 1	6		
Magic, Ritual 1	6		
Energy Management 3	9		
Intoxicants 3	9		
Observation (Cultural) 1	5		
Scholar (Architect) Familiarity	4		
Streetwise (Familiarity)	5		
Medical (Familiarity)	4		

Spell	Cost	Target	Range	Area	Duration	Notes/Variants
Inimitable Defense of Habitations	90	One building	Touch	60 meters radius	5 years	It has a -10 difficulty modifier. This is a group spell.

Notes

1. You are addicted to any sort of mind-altering substance. When presented with a chance to indulge, you must make a Willpower check every 5 minutes to resist. Once you've started, you must make the same roll to stop.
2. -2 penalty to rolls relating to endurance, disease, and poisons.

You are a semi-high functioning drug addict. Fortunately, you have your habits under control. You, for instance, would never take zu'úr. Possession of zu'úr is punishable by death. Consumption of it will kill the user anyway within a matter of months. As you grow more addicted, you became a drawn, pale zombie, nearly comatose except when under the effects of the drug. No, you only indulge in the socially acceptable drugs. Everyone recognizes the generally harmless and pleasant nature of your choice of recreation. Your expertise in the field is widely recognized and often called upon when deciding the proper powders to offer at a party.

Back when you were at the clan house and without a proper income, you could not always enjoy your hobby to the extent you desired. Thus, on occasion you made forays into the less desirable parts of town and bartered some trinket or another at the apothecary to supplement your supply. Since your employment at the temple, you have been able to survive on what you can obtain with your salary.

You are careful to pay proper attention to your temple duties. You learned how to be an architect and mastered the art of casting the Inimitable Defense of Habitations spell. You know how to tailor your drug use to fit the occasion and never take an overdose. If you need to be functioning, then you simply chew hnéqu weed or sip some wine instead of taking something more potent.

Your official duties here encompass creating and maintaining the roof gardens (each building has one). You've judged Airá grass (an anaesthetic) and Lisútl bushes (roots are used as the universal birth control agent) to be greatest use to the future inhabitants of the lodge and feature them prominently in the roof garden on the lodge itself. Should you wish to obtain other plants, consult the GM to see if you have them growing somewhere.

Your Personal Stash

- Chümaz. A bluish-white powder which heightens perceptions and acts as an aphrodisiac.
- Drársha. A clear crystalline substance which causes amusing visions and distortions of the time sense.
- Hnéqu weed. A very popular mild euphoric.
- Mághz. A brownish powder which makes users feel drowsy and peaceful.
- Ntó. A fine white dust which creates volubility and giddy joy.
- Osí. A thick gray mucus which reduces tension and arouses the libido.
- Tshóridu. A liqueur. You prefer the varieties which produce odd mental effects.

Goals

1. Stay in a mind-altered state for as long as possible. Assume that each dose you take lasts for an hour. Don't worry about running out of anything.
2. Spread the love around.

Your Fellow Priests (in order of status)

1. **Shekkára hiJarásh.** Beautiful, but she knows it.
2. **Drakóhl hiBurusá.** He always finds golden threads in his skein.
3. You rank here.
4. **Qárras hiChánkolel.** Only clan member you ever saw on the wrong side of town.
5. **Réshmel hiKarélsa.** He wishes he would find golden threads in his skein.
6. **Nirún hiVáika.** Unpleasant to be around.

Nirán hiVáika

27 years old, 10th Circle, Emerald Girdle, Keténgku Scholar Priest

Description: Nondescript

Character Stats	Combat Values	Magic & Other
Strength: 4	Initiative: 7	Pedhétl: 6
Dexterity: 4	Combat: 4	Magic Resistance: 6
Intelligence: 6	Health Points: 35	Energy Pool: 35
Psyche: 6	Shock Value: 7	Respect: 0
Charisma: 3		Teamwork Pool: 0
Willpower: 3		

Skills	Target Number	Attributes	Defects
Language (Tsolyáni) Spoken 2 & Written 1	8 (Spoken), 7 (Written)	Older 2	Low Lineage 1
Knowledge (Béy Sü) 2	8	High Pedhétl 2	
Etiquette (High Clan) 1	7	Magic Ability 1	
Etiquette (Temple) 1	7	Good Hearing	
Ritual (Keténgku) 1	6		
Theology (Keténgku) 1	7		
Magic, Ritual 1	6		
Energy Management 2	8		
Intimidation 2	5, 6 if physical		
Negotiation 2	5		
Oratory 1	4		
Scholar (Architect) 1	7		
Observation 2	7		
Medical (Familiarity)	5		

Spell	Cost	Target	Range	Area	Duration	Notes/Variants
Inimitable Defense of Habitations	90	One building	Touch	60 meters radius	5 years	It has a -10 difficulty modifier. This is a group spell.

Notes: You get +1 bonus to any rolls involving hearing.

You don't get any respect. In the clan house, your lineage was too low status. In the temple, other factors arose. You're not that attractive. So, unlike Shekkára, you're not going to be seducing anyone to get ahead. You detest kissing up to people. So, unlike Drakóhl, you neglect to flatter the right superiors. Hard work is pointless, so you don't make a fool of yourself like Reshmél. It's obvious that you are more intelligent than them. But no one values that as they should.

When you were selected for this assignment along with your fellow clan members, you sensed the hand of Emerald Girdle behind it. It's the only way you would have gotten such a prestigious posting. When you first arrived at the lodge last year, it looked promising. Construction was well underway, and the servants didn't seem to need your help.

The unfortunate side effect was the stultifying boredom. With your companions (except for Reshmél) soon abandoning even the pretense of working, you were faced with the unpleasant prospect of actually spending time with them. In desperation, you searched for anything else to occupy your time. Any idle curiosity. For instance, why did your leader, Omél hiKetkolél, disappeared into his luxury suite with his slaves and concubines, never to be seen again? Why have you encountered the same laborer wandering around inside the lodge time and again when he doesn't seem to be working? Why do the hunters lack the proper deference dictated by their low status? You've even started paying attention to the supply caravans that trundled in each month. You've never gotten close enough to see what's in the crates, but you suspect it's not all food and furnishings. The amount of furnishings appearing in the lodge after the caravan's arrival just doesn't seem like enough.

Goals

Find a few answers.

1. Relieve the boredom.

Your Fellow Priests (in order of status)

1. **Shekkára hiJarásh.** Beautiful, seductive and the possessor of a very sharp tongue.
2. **Drakóhl hiBurusá.** The consummate flatterer.
3. **Mórusai hiSáika.** Lives in his own world. Friendly enough if you can draw him out.
4. **Qárras hiChánkolel.** His streak of cruelty causes you to steer clear of him.
5. **Réshmel hiKarélsa.** Lacks a sense of self-respect.
6. You rank here.

Qárras hiChánkolel

29 years old, 6th Circle, Emerald Girdle, Keténgku Scholar Priest

Description: Slim and muscular

Character Stats	Combat Values	Magic & Other
Strength: 5	Initiative: 10	Pedhétl: 6
Dexterity: 4	Combat: 5	Magic Resistance: 6
Intelligence: 5	Health Points: 55	Energy Pool: 36
Psyche: 6	Shock Value: 11	Respect: 0
Charisma: 2		Teamwork Pool: 0
Willpower: 6		

Skills	Target Number	Attributes	Defects
Language (Tsolyáni) Spoken 2 & Written 1	7 (Spoken), 6 (Written)	Attractive (muscular)	Brutal 2
Knowledge (Béy Sü) 2	7	High Pedhétl 2	Impulsive 1
Etiquette (High Clan) 1	6	Magic Ability 1	
Etiquette (Temple) 1	6	Older 2	
Ritual (Keténgku) 1	6		
Theology (Keténgku) 1	6		
Magic, Ritual 1	6		
Energy Management 2	8		
Animal Handling 1	7		
Bribery 1	6		
Calligraphy 1	5		
Intimidation 3	9, 8 if physical		
Streetwise 1	7		
Subculture (Hirilákte Arena) 1	3		

Spell	Cost	Target	Range	Area	Duration	Notes/Variants
Inimitable Defense of Habitations	90	One building	Touch	60 meters radius	5 years	It has a -10 difficulty modifier. This is a group spell.

Notes:

1. You lack a conscience about your behavior and commit at least one serious act of physical or emotional cruelty per day.
2. You must make a Willpower Stat check to resist provocation. You sometimes act without thinking.
3. -1 to Charm, Deception, Analysis and Planning rolls.

Life is good. Your clan landed you a job at the Temple, and your looks have helped you there afterwards. It's entirely possible that your clan bribed the Temple simply to get you away from the clan house and the children. It's certainly true that you've had a very free reign once you came to the Temple. Yes, you had the aptitude to cast the Inimitable Defense of Habitations, and you made the minimum level of effort to learn and get by. That seemed to satisfy your superiors. Ever since then, they've looked the other way with regards to your extracurricular activities. These activities are many and varied, but they usually revolve around blood. You gravitated to the arenas, at first to watch people die. But lust overcame you, and being a spectator no longer satisfied you. You had no desire to endanger yourself, however, so you turned to the animals. You have a way of breaking their spirits and turning them into vicious fighters. It fills a hole in your soul to see an animal you've molded tear the throat out of a living being.

You were furious, at first, to be chosen as part of this prestigious project for Sea Blue. What was there to do out in the country? But once you arrived, everything changed. There were forests and animals all around, and low status Open Hand clan members to cower and scrape before you. As you stalked among them, you discovered that they were keeping Jakkóhls captive and fighting them one against the other. You took over this mini-arena and expanded it. One of the dormitories is now full of cages of the animals crammed among the sleeping mats, with a fighting pit in the middle. You have carefully starved and tortured the animals to the brink of madness. There's a good fight every night. The Open Hand people bet on the fights. You feed off them.

Life would be perfect were it not for the hunters at the lodge. Fifty members of the Scarlet Planet of Knives. They're killers, every one of them. At the arenas, you've seen men who move like they do, and those men emerge victorious from the fights. You're careful to ignore them.

Goals

1. Watch the Jakkóhls fight.
2. Live the dream and actually kill a human.

Your Fellow Priests (in status order)

1. **Shekkára hiJarásh.** A true predator in the social world.
2. **Drakóhl hiBurusá.** More likely to kill you with poison.
3. **Mórusai hiSáika.** Drug addict
4. You rank here.
5. **Réshmel hiKarélsa.** Desperate to advance, may use desperate measures.
6. **Nirún hiVáika.** Smarter and more dangerous than he looks.

Réshmel hi Karélsa

26 years old, 11th Circle, Emerald Girdle, Keténgku Scholar Priest

Description: Harassed and disapproving

Character Stats	Combat Values	Magic & Other
Strength: 4	Initiative: 4	Pedhétl: 6
Dexterity: 4	Combat: 4	Magic Resistance: 6
Intelligence: 5	Health Points: 40	Energy Pool: 35
Psyche: 6	Shock Value: 8	Respect: 0
Charisma: 3		Teamwork Pool: 0
Willpower: 4		

Skills	Target Number	Attributes	Defects
Language (Tsolyáni) Spoken 2 & Written 1	7 (Spoken), 6 (Written)	Attractive (square-jawed)	Indecisive 2
Knowledge (Béy Sü) 2	7	High Pedhétl 2	Nemesis 1
Etiquette (High Clan) 1	6	Magic Ability 1	
Etiquette (Temple) 1	6	Older 2	
Ritual (Keténgku) 1	6	Aptitude 1	
Theology (Keténgku) 1	6		
Magic, Ritual 1	6		
Energy Management 2	8		
Scholar (Architect) 4	9		
Analysis 1	6		
Calligraphy 1	5		
Subculture (Temple) 2	5		

Spell	Cost	Target	Range	Area	Duration	Notes/Variants
Inimitable Defense of Habitations	90	One building	Touch	60 meters radius	5 years	It has a -10 difficulty modifier. This is a group spell.

Notes:

It's difficult and time-consuming for you to make any decision. You must retreat and think about verbal responses. Repartee is impossible for you.

You have struggled where others found smooth sailing. Your earnest efforts at weaving a perfect skein results simply in broken threads more often than not. Still, you persevere and work hard. By the sweat of your brow, you've prospered in your career. But your effort is too obvious, even you know that. Everyone sneers at you both because of your work and your need to work. Shekkára and Drakóhl barely disguise their contempt. With little effort, they're surpassing you. Your resentment seethes under the surface.

This project does seem like a tailor-made opportunity for you. The others are indifferent architects at best. You suspect that none of them are capable of even telling if the Open Hand workers are actually following all the carefully designed plans. Certainly they've never made the attempt. And so you've been doing the zrné's share of the work. The ostensible leader, Omél hiKetkolél of Might of Gánga, never emerges from his love nest in the luxury suite. You coordinate frequently with his capable chamberlain Adlár (Victorious Globe – medium status clan), perusing the reports of the Open Hand foremen, keeping track of the various projects and solving the logistical and architectural problems that arise. Adlár seems grateful for your help. Your name is frequently and prominently mentioned in the weekly reports sent back to the Temple in Béy Sü. Everything has gone well, though you can't bring yourself to relax until the guarding spell, the Inimitable Defense of Habitations, has been successfully cast and all is completed.

Goals

1. Successfully cast the spell and complete the project.
2. Keep your connection with Omél through Adlár.

Your Fellow Priests (in status order)

1. **Shekkára hiJarásh.** Arrogant but beautiful
2. **Drakóhl hiBurusá.** As deadly and slippery as an alásh snake
3. **Mórusai hiSáika.** An expert in intoxicants, lacking in ambition
4. **Qárras hiChánkolel.** Spends entirely too much time outside and away from the others
5. You rank here.
6. **Nirún hiVáika.** A supercilious idiot.

Shekkára hiJaráš

29 years old, 15th Circle, Emerald Girdle, Keténgku Scholar Priestess

Description: Stunning, simply stunning

Character Stats	Combat Values	Magic & Other
Strength: 2	Initiative: 6	Pedhétl: 6
Dexterity: 2	Combat: 2	Magic Resistance: 6
Intelligence: 5	Health Points: 10	Energy Pool: 35
Psyche: 6	Shock Value: 4	Respect: 0
Charisma: 6		Teamwork Pool: 0
Willpower: 4		

Skills	Target Number	Attributes	Defects
Language (Tsolyáni) Spoken 2 & Written 1	7 (Spoken), 6 (Written)	Attractive – Eyes, Face, Voice	Arrogant 2
Knowledge (Béy Sü) 2	7	High Pedhétl 2	Bad Days 2
Etiquette (High Clan) 1	7	Magic Ability 1	Fragile 2
Etiquette (Temple) 1	7	Older 2	
Ritual (Keténgku) 1	6	High Lineage 2	
Theology (Keténgku) 1	6		
Magic, Ritual 1	5		
Energy Management 2	8		
Scholar (Architect) 1	6		
Calligraphy 2	4		
Charm (Seduction) 3	9, 10 if seducing		
Syle (Béy Sü) – Familiarity	5		

Spell	Cost	Target	Range	Area	Duration	Notes/Variants
Inimitable Defense of Habitations	90	One building	Touch	60 meters radius	5 years	It has a –10 difficulty modifier. This is a group spell.

Notes:

1. If your first roll of the day is over a 6, you are having a Bad Day. On Bad Days, a 10 is an automatic critical failure, and all critical successes are treated as normal 1s.
2. +6 bonus to Charm checks if you can utilize your attractive features.
3. You believe no one is more beautiful than you are. In addition to your eyes, face and voice, your body is also beyond compare. Consequently, you are boastful. You need to make a Willpower check to avoid some idiotic confrontation each week.
4. -4 penalty to rolls relating to endurance, disease, poison, etc.

You are both blessed and cursed by the gods. It's almost as if the gods had to punish you for coming so close to their level. Your beauty is unparalleled. Both men and women faint with desire when they behold you. Though you were tempted to switch to the worship of the more compatible Dlamélish, you realized the jealousy you would surely inspire in her other devotees. So you remain with stolid, traditional Keténgku, where no one can compete with you. But to balance your beauty, the gods took your health. Several times as a child you nearly died from illnesses that the other children easily shook off. However, the burden of your fragility has silenced many of those who would otherwise lash out against you.

At the age of 14, you declared Aridáni status and joined the Temple, calculating that it offered the best mixture of promise and safety. Soon, opportunities laid themselves at your feet as readily as did the men. But from the heights of the 15th Circle, you see that further promotion carries with it the risk of actual work. That's when you turned your attention to a more enjoyable challenge: marrying into a Very High status clan.

Even considering your beauty, this would be a major social coup, and you would reign supreme in Emerald Girdle. So you started to plan. Your first husband could be flawed, someone who would be rejected by his peers and overwhelmed to receive your attentions. Then, once you had secured this entrée into their elite world, you would set your sights on a man truly worthy of you. For your first husband, you set your sights on Omél hiKetkolél of Might of Gánga. He's painfully shy and enjoys the company of girls who are too young for him. When he was chosen to lead the Sea Blue project into completion, you were surprised but volunteered to take part as well.

Now you believe that Omél is beyond reach. He kept to himself on the entire journey up to the lodge and hasn't emerged from his suite since arrival. In desperation one night, you seduced Adlár, his chamberlain, and gained access to his rooms. He seemed barely conscious and incoherent. The girls in the room with him proved to be mute. For a moment you suspected zu'úr addiction and searched his room fruitlessly for the drug. You've left him alone since. If he's not dead soon, then you'll start your campaign again. In the meantime, another thread has been added to skein. Tsodlán hiKetkolél, of Sea Blue, came to visit to check up on his clan's commission. Tall, handsome and charming, he fell under your spell immediately and spent his nights with you. It's entirely possible that if he visits again before the project reaches completion that you may not have to bother with a flawed first husband. Until then, you merely have to survive co-existing with your clan cousins out here in the wilderness.

Goals

1. Marry or forge some social liaison above your station.
2. Avoid any real work or responsibilities.

Your Fellow Priests (in status order)

1. You rank above them all.
2. **Drakóhl hiBurusá.** He resents you and constantly competes with you.
3. **Mórusai hiSáika.** If you need a powder (drug), he will have it.
4. **Qárras hiChánkolel.** Attractive, but cruel.
5. **Réshmel hiKarélsa.** You're always getting him confused with Nirún.
6. **Nirún hiVáika.** You think you know which one he is.

Inimitable Defense of Habitations

This is a spell specialization of the Guarding spell.

Temple Affiliation: Keténgku

Magic: Group Ritual Temple spell

Prereq: Increased Area of Effect 1, Increased Duration 1, Resistant, Spell Defect - Inefficient

Level: 7

Prep Time: 10 minutes

Area of Effect: 60 meters radius

Duration: 5 years

This is simply a larger, longer lasting version of the Guarding spell which is unique to the Temple of Keténgku. It prevents all sorcery from entering or leaving the area of effect, although both types may operate within it. Physical beings can cross its boundaries and fire missiles through it without hindrance. Androids, automatons, creatures produced by sorcery, demons, and the undead cannot enter the protected area, but may continue functioning if inside it; they can also leave.

To effectively protect a large structure, the casters need to spread throughout the building so that the area of effect covers the entire building. The number of casters needed depends on the size of the building.

Casting a Group Spell

A minimum of four sorcerors are required. The casters combine as a unit to cast the spell. The lowest Stat (the average of Psyche and Dexterity) in the group is used. The Magic skill level equals the combination of all the skill levels of the participants. The Energy Cost is divided equally among the casters (round up). There is a +1 to the Spell Difficulty modifier for each spellcaster participating beyond the first.

Spell Cost: 90

Spell Difficulty Modifier: -10 (Based on the level, cost and type of the spell. This can be modified further by the conditions under which the spell is cast.)

Example of Casting:

5 (lowest Stat in group)

+ 6 (if 6 people who each have 1 level in Ritual Magic participate)

= 11 (Target number)

Difficulty Modifier:

-10

+ 5 (if there are 6 casters)

= -5

So, the target number is 6. If you roll less than or equal to a 6, the spell is a success.

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Stat Check (Use only if a Skill isn't relevant):

- Add a difficulty modifier to the Stat, if appropriate.
- Roll d10: Less than or equal to the Stat is successful.

Skill Check

- Add skill level and relevant stat together to get target number
- Add difficulty modifier to target number, if appropriate
- Add another -2 to -4 modifier to target number if the character lacks the necessary skill.
- Roll d10: Less than or equal to target number is successful.

Automatic Success

If you roll a 1, and this would normally fail, roll again (with no modifiers). If the second roll is also a 1, the attempt is a Marginal Success.

Automatic Failure

If you roll a 10, and this would normally succeed, roll again (with no modifiers). If the second roll is also a 10, the attempt is a Marginal Failure.

Critical Success/Failure

If you roll a 1, roll again (with modifiers). A success on the 2nd roll indicates a critical success. Same for a critical failure, except it's roll a 10 and get another failure on the 2nd roll.

Contested Attempts

If two or more characters are working against each other, each makes a check. The character with the greater Margin of Success (or lowest Margin of Failure if both fail) has the advantage.

Difficulty	Modifier	Margin of Success	Result
Trivial	+4	8 or more than target number	Overwhelming Failure
Nearly Trivial	+3	6 or 7 more than target number	Extreme Failure
Extremely Easy	+2	4 or 5 more than target number	Major Failure
Easy	+1	2 or 3 more than target number	Minor Failure
Average Difficulty	0	1 more than target number	Marginal Failure
Slightly Difficult	-1	Equal to or 1 less than target number	Marginal Success
Difficult	-2	2 or 3 less than target number	Minor Success

Difficulty	Modifier	Margin of Success	Result
Quite Difficult	-3	4 or 5 less than target number	Major Success
Extremely Difficult	-4	6 or 7 less than target number	Extreme Success
Outrageously Difficult	-5	8 or more less than target number	Overwhelming Success
Practically Impossible	-6		

Combat

A combat round lasts 5 seconds. You can:

- Perform one attack
- Defend against any attacks (cumulative -2 penalty per additional defense after the first)
- Move a few steps
- Speak, shout or scream a number of words equal to your Intelligence.

Attack: Make a Skill check [Combat Value + Combat Skill], note the Margin of Success

Melee Defense: Make a Skill check [Combat Value + Combat Skill, if appropriate]. If the Margin of Success is greater than the attack's margin of success, the defense succeeds and no damage is taken.

Missile Defense: Same as above, but with a -4 penalty against thrown weapons and a -8 against arrows. Penalties are halved if you have a shield.

Damage: Multiply the attack's Margin of Success by the weapon's damage multiplier. An attack with a success of 0 inflicts only 1 point of damage. Double the damage for a critical success.

Armour: The armour rating is subtracted from the damage multiplier. The damage multiplier cannot be reduced below 1. Light Armour: 1; Medium Armour: 2; Heavy Armour: 3; Steel Armour: +1 armour rating

Magic

- **Skill check** [Psychic Magic skill or Ritual Magic skill]
- Relevant Stat for Psychic Magic: average of Psyche and Willpower
- Relevant Stat for Ritual Magic: average of Psyche and Dexterity
- Pay the spell's cost in Energy Points*
- Add Skill level and relevant Stat together to get target number
- Apply appropriate spell difficulty modifier to target number
- Roll d10: Less than or equal to target number is a success

Spell Level	- (Level/3, rounded up)
Spell Cost	- (Cost/15, rounded up)
Temple Spell	-2

<i>Environment</i>	
Magically Barren Area	-8
Magically Semi-Barren Area	-3
Magically Fertile Area	+3
Wearing >60 grams of metal	Make a Magic Resistance roll vs spell or die
<i>Situation</i>	
Surprised	-2
Moving	-1
In combat	-2
Target is moving	-1
Target is in melee	-2
Casting past a potential target	-1 (per potential target)
Distractions (Noise, smell, weather)	-1

Resisting a spell: Resisting a spell does not take an action. You can choose not to resist.

Stat check [Use your Magic Resistance stat]

- Modify Stat by adding your Magic skill level (if any) & subtracting the caster's Magic skill level
- Roll d10: Less than or equal to modified Magic Resistance stat is a success
- The effects of successfully resisting a spell depend on the spell. Sometimes there is no effect on the target. Other times, it simply lessens the effect of the spell.

Energy costs are affected by the type of area the caster is in:

Magically Fertile area	x .5
Magically Normal area	x 1
Magically Semi-barren area	X 2
Magically Barren area	Entire energy pool, regardless of normal cost for the spell



Tossing seven sticks to make the 'High Forest'

Playing Tsahltén at The Clan of the Balanced Stone