

# Call of Khalris

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Short Gamebook Fiction

You are a wandering warrior, keen to make your name in the world. Your travels have recently brought you to the dry, dusty decrepit outpost of Qis, located on the edge of the Dryden Desert. Its inhabitants seem to have a haunted, hopeless look about them. In an attempt to find employment, you frequent the taverns, but no one is in need of your services. However, a group of loud young men tell you about the ancient city of Khalris, located somewhere in the desert. Legends about it say that it was a home to the gods of the ancient myths – cruel monsters who would wreak havoc upon the land to satiate their desires. Other legends state that it is full of tombs of powerful sorcerer kings who were buried with great treasures and secrets long forgotten guarded by unsleeping monsters. Your interest is piqued. You visit the local wise woman and keeper of legend and ask her where you could find this city in the desert. She reluctantly gives you the location of the city – a good month’s trek from Qis – but warns against going, citing some of the bloodier legends. You politely listen to her, all the while thinking that you have never fought man nor beast that hasn’t perished from your cold steel. Magic users do not worry you either – their spells are usually just trickery or alchemy, for few can control the raw elemental power needed to be true threats. You are unable to resist the call of a lost city full of untold riches. The call of Khalris.

Excited at the prospect of your adventure and exploration, you head to the market to buy equipment...

## Character creation

### Hero points

You start your adventure with 7 hero points. These points represent your resolve, determination and level of courage. Things that reduce your hero points include injury, acts of cowardice, tempting fate so that you need good luck to survive, attempting tasks that are mentally and physically draining, and hunger and thirst. Achieving great deeds is the main way of increasing your hero points score. Methods of healing can also increase your hero points score if you have had them reduced through injury. Your hero points score can go above 7 and has no upper limit. If your hero points score reaches 0, then your resolve has been totally drained and you must follow the instructions in the paragraph.

## Your background

Your character is a battle hardened warrior. However, you must choose their background which will determine other skills that they may have. Your background may also determine whether you get hero points for certain actions.

***Tribal*** – You come from one of the barbarian tribes of the plains where warriors fight and slay giant beasts for honour and shamans commune with the spirits of your ancestors for guidance. You are the peak of physical perfection with excellent survival skills. Civilised folk would call you a savage but you are clever in the ways of the wild and have a sense of honour that means you should defend your comrades no matter what their background.

***Mercenary*** – After learning the art of war as a soldier, you left the army to sell your services to the highest bidder. You learnt to haggle and socialise with people of all cultures and you have become widely travelled. Great causes hold no place in your heart and you have seen many good warriors throw their lives away for some zany ideal. As long as you are richly rewarded for your skills, you care not for such things.

***Educated*** – You spent your formative years learning the liberal arts in preparation for further study. However, what fascinated you were the stories of the travellers who frequented the taverns that you visited. One day, you left on a ship, never to return. You have decided that you must learn the truth of humanity's purpose and existence, and that this truth would be found out in the world and not from a dusty book. During your journeys, you learnt to fight to survive and encountered many creatures and people who would threaten your existence, but that did not put you off from your search for the truth.

***Religious*** – You are a member of an order of sacred knights tasked to uphold the tenets of the One Religion, protect the weak and slay the evil. From childhood, you zealously followed the One Religion and read its sacred books from end to end several times over. As you grew up, you saw much evil in the world and decided that you would take up arms to eradicate it. As well as being a warrior, you are also a preacher and leader. You have inspired many to take up arms and you have led them to many victories in the name of the One God.

## Equipment

You start your adventure with a bare minimum of equipment but you may find or buy other items later on. You currently own a sword and you are dressed in sturdy travelling clothes. You have just bought a camel and loaded it with a tent, a bedroll, some firewood and enough food and water to get to the temple and back. You have also bought several torches and a flint and tinder with which to light them. After making your purchases, you

have 50 silver pieces remaining to buy other items. It will be best to spend as much of it as you can as there will be no other opportunity to do so. You may only buy one of each item with the exception of the first aid kit as you buy any number of first aid kit uses. You may buy any of the following equipment:

Hunting knife	3sp	Lodestone	8sp
Bow and arrows	15sp	Parchment, quill and ink	4sp
Shield	6sp	Lucky charm	7sp
Firepowder	20sp	Viewing lens	12sp
First aid kit (per use)	3sp	Holy water	12sp
Rope, 15m	2sp	Silver crucifix	20sp
Grapple	5sp	Lockpicks	20sp
Hammer and iron spikes	6sp	Crowbar	2sp

The first aid kit consists of bandages, alcohol, healing herbs and a small knife. It may be able to restore some hero points lost through injury. If, when you are told to lose hero points, you see an asterisk (\*), you may deduct any number of uses from your first aid kit in order to reduce the loss of hero points by that number.

### Notes

This is where you record notes and codewords you may obtain after taking certain actions.

### Your journal

At certain points in your adventure, you will be asked to write an entry in your journal. You will also be asked to think about certain questions in your entry. Write about what your character would be thinking or feeling at this particular point.

### Cheat score

I caught you doing it. You were just reading a paragraph that you hadn't been told to turn to. You also forgot to pay for that firepowder because you also wanted the lockpicks and the bow and arrows.

Everyone cheats in gamebooks but you may not know just how big a cheater you are. Well, the cheat score is an optional way of keeping track of how big a cheater you are. Keeping this score is completely voluntary, but if you decide to do so, then you can only really count surviving the adventure as genuine if you have a cheat score of 0. i.e., you played it completely honestly.

The following actions increase your cheat score:

<u>Action</u>	<u>Cheat score</u>
Reading a paragraph that you shouldn't have read	+1
Continuing as if you have an item/background/codeword when you don't	+1
Continuing as if you don't have an item/background/codeword when you do	+1
Not reducing your hero score when you are instructed to	+2
Giving yourself extra hero points	+1 per point
Visiting a location when you aren't allowed to	+2
Changing your decision after realising that it will kill you	+3
Changing your decision if it won't kill you	+2
Thinking about another gamebook whilst reading this one	+2
Reading another gamebook whilst reading this one	+3

Use your cheat score to find out how much of a cheater you are

<u>Cheat score</u>	<u>Cheater type</u>
0	You're probably a corpse, but at least you're an honest corpse. If you survived with a score of 0, then well done!
1-5	You probably cheated for convenience because you died near the end.
6-10	You can't be bothered to play this book again so you avoided all the deaths.
11-15	Next time just forget hero points or your own mortality.
16-20	You just want all the items and immortality.
21-25	Did you follow any of the rules?
26-30	Were you even playing or just reading random paragraphs until you found the winning one?
31-35	I'm never giving you my credit card details.
36-40	You are very naughty and you should be punished.
41+	This is just gratuitous cheating. This isn't Crypt of the Sorcerer, you know.

Character sheetHero pointsCharacter backgroundMoneyCheat score*Initial*      7

Current

Personal equipmentNotes

Sword

Torches

Flint and tinder

Journal

Entry 1

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Entry 2

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Entry 3

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Entry 4

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Entry 5

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Entry 6

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## Background

Once you have bought your supplies, you stable your camel at the inn you have been staying at and spend one more night there. Your dreams are filled with adventure – slaying star-spawned monsters, finding treasure and exploring long forgotten ruins under the desert sky. You awake at dawn with the sun streaming through the window. You spend the whole day in the tavern and wandering the outpost, waiting for the blazing Sun to set so that you can travel under the cool desert night under the uncanny glow of the Pole Star. The moment cannot come too soon. Eventually, as the Sunset brings a soft pink glow to the outpost, you gather your belongings and set out across the desert.

*Before you start, fill out the first entry in your journal. Think about the following questions*

*What do you think will happen in your adventure?*

*What is your greatest fear about crossing the desert to the city of Khalris?*

*What do you hope to bring back from Khalris?*

Turn to 1...

## 1

For two weeks, you journey across the desert with only a camel for company. You don't know whether it's worse that you only have a camel for company or whether the smelly, wilful, bad tempered camel is not the worst company you've ever had. You walk during the night and doze under your tent during the day.

On the fourteenth night of your travels, you come across a group of tents scattered around an oasis. They belong to the muscular white robed horse nomads who travel the grassland and desert. Their lookouts hail you as you approach the tent and insist that you stay with them to swap stories of what's happening in the world. After two weeks of loneliness, you gladly join them for a feast of horse meat and tea around a blazing campfire. You talk of the civilised north and they talk of the savage south. **If you have the mercenary background, turn to 78.** If you do not, turn to 54.

## 2

You place the amulet in the indentation and the door swings open. However, the amulet is stuck! You do not have time to try to remove it as the temple is collapsing around you (*cross the eight pointed star amulet from your adventure sheet*). You rush through the front door, just as the temple collapses into rubble. However, there is no time to catch your breath as you are standing before a silent crowd of corpses. They extend their arms and head towards you, wanting you to join their ranks. How are you going to escape this?

If you are wearing an amulet with an eight pointed star, turn to 100.

If you are not wearing an amulet with an eight pointed star, but you are wearing a crescent moon amulet, turn to 71.

If you are not wearing a crescent moon amulet, but you are wearing a circular amulet, turn to 16.

If you do not have any amulets, but you do have a crucifix, turn to 68.

If you do not have any amulets, you must attack the horde of corpses. Turn to 43.

## 3

You study this scroll more closely. You do not know the language, but you use your knowledge of grammar and logic to discern patterns in the glyphs. As you noticed earlier, the eight pointed star is a very prevalent symbol in the language. The papyrus seems to have a crude map of the city on it with an eight pointed star at the centre. It seems that something very important lies in that place. *Add the codeword/location to your adventure sheet.* Turn to 70.

## 4

You leap up, flinging snakes off you. However, they panic and you feel sharp fangs sinking into your arms, legs and torso. You desperately rip the snakes off, but then you feel your blood burning with poison. Unless you have a magical healing potion and drink it now (*remove it from your adventure sheet*), you die an agonising death as your organs fail from the huge amount of poison in your blood. If you survive, you are shaken by your near death experience. *Lose 2 hero points. If you now have 0 or fewer hero points, turn to 15.* If you wish to head back to your camp, turn to 27. If you want to go down the marble stairs, turn to 67. If you have a rope and grapple, you could climb up into the next level of the tower. turn to 59.

## 5

You journey through the bizarre city until you reach the eastern tower. It is made from black stone and as you approach it you feel cold despite the blazing sun above it. You light a torch and enter the tower. The stairs going up have collapsed but there are stairs going down. You follow a tunnel until it opens up into a wide corridor lined with statues of ancient kings and priests. The light from your torch makes the shadows flicker all over the place. Warily, you walk between the statues looking for signs of movement. Eventually you come to a stone door which you push open to find a crypt. There is a sarcophagus in the centre of the room. It is surrounded by pots, boxes, mummified people and mummified cats. There is even a boat leaning against one wall. Will you open the sarcophagus and take a look inside (turn to 13)? Or have a look at the items in the crypt (turn to 32)?

## 6

Hang on, you think. It's not windy. A green viper then shoots out of the sand, fangs bared, ready to bite you. You jump back, narrowly avoiding it (*lose 2 hero points as 'payment' for your luck unless you have a lucky charm. If you have a lucky charm, lose 1 hero point*) before you draw your sword and hack off its head. You check that no more sand moves before composing yourself and entering the tower. Turn to 47.

## 7

Your strike makes the creature howl in pain but it still punches, kicks and bites with astounding speed and ferocity. You fight, desperately trying to stave it off or kill it, but the ape's attack is relentless. *Lose 3 hero points (If you have an enchanted weapon, reduce the loss by 1. If you have a shield, reduce the loss by 1). If your hero points score is now 0, the ape man's assault is too much. The last thing you see is it bringing its arms*

*down upon your skull. Your adventure ends here.* If you survive the ape man's assault and you want to continue to fight it, turn to 38. If you flee, turn to 27.

## 8

The whispering in your head is replaced with a roar. The roar of a lion. The roar of rage. You cannot help but to take the hammer and smash the altar. You feel like a helpless onlooker, watching yourself pummel the altar in an uncontrollable rage, foaming at the mouth. The roar in your head takes over. The altar cracks. As it does green smoke shoots out of the jade altar and engulfs you but you still cannot stop smashing it with the hammer. As the smoke dissipates, you see the pillars and walls crumble but you still smash the altar. The roar in your head is soon replaced by the roar of collapsing masonry. The roaring only stops when you are buried beneath tons of rock. You have destroyed the temple, but you have not killed the Old God. It still sleeps beneath the ground. Put your final thoughts in the next empty entry of your journal. Think about:

*Was destroying the temple worth losing your life?*

## 9

After a day's travelling, you pitch your tent and get ready to sleep. As you take your tunic off, you notice green scales are growing on your arm! You touch them. They feel leathery and dry. A bit of dry scale comes off on your finger. What on earth is happening to you? You sleep very little that day. After a few hours, you pack up your belongings and continue, the whole time wondering if you will be able to cure this affliction in the lands of humanity. Turn to 19.

## 10

You open the bottle and sniff the green liquid. It smells of herbs. You take a sip of the liquid and a warm feeling spreads through your body. You then notice a small cut on your finger heal up. You have found a magical healing potion. *Add the healing potion to your equipment list. You may use this potion any time you could use a first aid kit. When you do, restore all hero points lost from that encounter and add the codeword healed to your adventure sheet.* Turn to 44.

## 11

As you move towards the exit, you see something move in the corner of your eye. You turn around to see the headless corpse of the snake twitch and then violently thrash around in the crypt. You see it just in time to dodge out of its way. Then you see the snake's head hopping along the floor towards you, mouth open. You dash out of the crypt while you still have the chance and head back to your camp as fast as you can. *Gain 1 hero point for surviving the crypt. Turn to 46.*

## 12

The ape creature vanishes just before it hits you. Just another illusion. Warily, you may either start to explore the tomb (turn to 35). Or quit this place before anything else happens (turn to 46).

## 13

You push the lid of the sarcophagus off and it lands on the floor with a huge *crash*. You nervously look around but nothing happens. Looking in the sarcophagus, you see that it has a visitor. The corpse of a young man is lying on top of the original corpse, a look of complete terror on his face. Lifting him out, you see that underneath him, the mummified corpse has been crushed by the man's weight. It probably wasn't the corpse that did this, then. *Looking through the man's backpack, you find a hammer with iron spikes, a hunting knife, a crowbar and a crucifix (you may add any of these to your equipment list).* Your thoughts are interrupted when you spot movement from the corner of your eye. Turn to 83.

## 14

You throw your knife straight into the snake's eye (*cross the hunting knife off your equipment list*). It hisses in agony as the knife strikes its mark but then darts for you. You leap out of the way to avoid being trapped in the snake's giant maw and draw your weapon to kill the giant snake. You strike its scales, then kick away the tail as the snake tries to wrap itself around you. You desperately hack away at the snake, trying to kill it while the snake crushes you and bites you. With a mighty blow, you eventually cleave its head off. The head goes flying across the crypt and bounces off a wall before landing on the floor. You are wounded and tired. *Lose 4 hero points\* (if you have an enchanted weapon, reduce the hero points loss by 1. If you have a shield, reduce the hero points loss by 1). If your hero points score is now 0, you succumb to your injuries and lay down in the crypt unable to get up again.* If you now want to leave the crypt, turn to 11. If you want to get more treasure, turn to 39.

## 15

You have had enough of this place. You are not cut out for exploring long lost tombs with animated corpses and vicious traps. You immediately head straight back to your camp and load yourself up with as much food and water as you can carry before setting out across the desert and back to the lands of humans where the foes can be slain and the treasure is not tainted. In the month you spend crossing the desert, you have a good long think about whether you still want a life of adventure and travel. *If you have the codeword scales on your adventure sheet, turn to 19. If you do not have the codeword scales but you do have either or both out of the codewords healing or artefact on your adventure sheet, turn to 9. Otherwise, read on.*

Fill out the next entry of your journal. Think about these questions:

*Are there any parts of your expedition that you would like to forget?*

*Was your expedition worth it?*

*Do you still hold the beliefs that you had before you came to Khalris?*

## 16

The corpses see the amulet around your neck and immediately reach out to take it, advancing even faster. You are going to have to fight them. Turn to 43.

## 17

You dream that you are floating above the city. You dive down and fly amongst its streets and buildings, marvelling at the strange geometries and Eldritch atmosphere. Then you see a figure standing atop one of the jagged spires of the city. You fly up to it to see that it is the spirit of your grandfather. You remember the shamans telling you that your ancestors would visit the dreams of someone in great need to give them advice. At first, your grandfather just stares at you, his body twitching as if he is fighting some great force within him. Eventually, he manages to speak. Each word comes out as if dragged out by the labour of a hundred men.

'Leave...this...place...great...darkness.'

You tell your grandfather that you are here to gain honour for yourself and your tribe. Upon hearing this, a single tear runs down his face. He opens his mouth again.

'Beware...the...shifting...sand.'

You are about to ask him what he means by this before you witness a startling transformation. Your grandfather's skin turns green and scaly, fangs grow out of his mouth and his eyes become orbs of blackness. The scaly beast leaps off the tower towards you, fanged mouth open and ready to sink into your neck.

You awake. It is now dark outside. You prepare yourself for exploring the city but the dream stays with you, nagging you from within. *Write the codeword sand on your adventure sheet.* Once you have gathered your things, you begin your exploration of the city. Turn to 49.

### 18

You uncork the bottle and throw holy water over the corpse's face. Nothing happens and the corpse still continues towards you. You throw the bottle at the corpse which smashes and splashes holy water all over it but nothing happens (*remove the holy water from your equipment list*). The corpse is almost upon you, arms outstretched, determined to drag you to an early grave or worse. You must fight it hand to hand. Turn to 34.

### 19

However, for you, even returning to the lands of humanity may be asking too much. The mutation is spreading. Scales are now growing all over your arms, legs and torso and inside your mouth you feel fangs growing with your ever more increasingly forked tongue. Even the way you see things is different. If you return to any town, you will be lynched and burnt. You don't know how far your mutation will go.

Fill out the last entry of your journal. Think about these questions:

*What do you think your future life will be like, now that you are mutating into some kind of snake beast?*

*Do you think that you deserve this?*

*What are you going to do with yourself now?*

## 20

You enter the tower ready to explore it. There is no way down so you head up some yellow stone stairs. The rooms on each level are lined with books and scrolls. You spend several hours looking at the material only to find it indecipherable. You do, however, notice the prevalence of eight pointed stars and several pictures of giant animal/humanoid hybrid giants walking amongst people and causing havoc. **If you have a viewing lens you may take a closer look at the pictures. Turn to 29.** There are also pictures of such giants sleeping beneath the earth, dreaming of such times again. You may take one of the books if you wish. **If you take a book, add the ancient book to your equipment list and add the codeword artefact to your notes list.** When you have finished, you return to your camp, proud that you have survived a tower of this cursed city. *Gain 1 hero point.* Turn to 46.

## 21

You push the door open. The last thing you see is an axe flying out of the darkness and the last thing you hear is a *thunk* as the axe buries itself into your head. You are dead before you hit the floor.

## 22

You dream of exploring the ruined city. You walk between the bizarre buildings, looking for entrances to the dungeons beneath the city. You find a dark door which you enter to find a tomb full of sarcophagi. You walk towards one and lift the lid. Inside is a mummified corpse. Its eyes flick open and it stares at you. With clawed outstretched hands, it then reaches for you.

You awake. It is now dark outside. You prepare yourself for exploring the city but the dream stays with you, nagging you from within. Once you have gathered your things, you begin your exploration of the city. Turn to 49.

## 23

You draw your weapon to kill the giant snake. You strike its scales, then kick away the tail as the snake tries to wrap itself around you. You desperately hack away at the snake, trying to kill it while the snake crushes you and bites you. With a mighty blow, you eventually cleave its head off. The head goes flying across the crypt and bounces off a wall before landing on the floor. You are wounded and tired. **Lose 5 hero points\* (if you have an enchanted weapon, reduce the hero points loss by 1. If you have a shield, reduce the hero points loss by 1).** **If your hero points score is now 0, you succumb to your injuries**



*and lay down in the crypt unable to get up again.* If you now want to leave the crypt, turn to 11. If you want to get more treasure, turn to 39.

#### 24

You loose off an arrow into the darkness, but you do not hear it hit anything made of flesh. Instead, you hear a dull thud as it hits a wall some way off. The creature is still shuffling towards you. If you charge at it, turn to 40. If you throw a torch in its direction to see what it is, turn to 77. If you have a hunting knife and wish to throw it at the creature, turn to 58. If you wish to retreat and head back to your camp, turn to 27.

#### 25

You brandish your crucifix at the shadows, but they continue their advance. You prepare to do something else, but chilling hands grasp you and paralyse you. You can only watch as the shadows engulf you, dragging you to the cold, dark void where you will languish for all eternity.

#### 26

You fire an arrow straight into the snake's mouth. It hisses in agony but then darts for you. You leap out of the way to avoid being trapped in the snake's giant maw and draw your weapon to kill the giant snake. You strike its scales, then kick away the tail as the snake tries to wrap itself around you. You desperately hack away at the snake, trying to kill it while the snake crushes you and bites you. With a mighty blow, you eventually cleave its head off. The head goes flying across the crypt and bounces off a wall before landing on the floor. You are wounded and tired. *Lose 4 hero points\* (if you have an enchanted weapon, reduce the hero points loss by 1. If you have a shield, reduce the hero points loss by 1). If your hero points score is now 0, you succumb to your injuries and lay down in the crypt unable to get up again.* If you now want to leave the crypt, turn to 11. If you want to get more treasure, turn to 39.

#### 27

You are not going to slay monsters and win treasure, glory and knowledge if you flee at the first sign of danger! *Lose 1 Hero Point. If your hero points value is now 0, turn to 15.* Otherwise, turn to 46.

#### 28

You immediately spring back, just in time to see a green viper shoot out from the sand, fangs bared, ready to bite you. With one swift motion, you draw your sword and hack off

its head. You check to make sure that the sand is no longer moving and thank your grandfather before you enter the tower. Turn to 47.

### 29

Looking through the viewing lens, you can see the pictures in more detail. You look at the fearful faces of the people as they are scattered by the Old Gods. Then, you notice a picture of the city is actually a detailed map. You notice that a building in the centre of the city is labelled with an eight pointed star. It seems to be an important location. *Add the codeword/location to your adventure sheet.* You also notice that there is a figure who is entering the building from the top and a figure who is entering the building on the ground floor, but this figure is painted red and he has a cross over his head. You then see a figure by the tower and drop the viewing lens when you see that it has your face! Looking back through the book, you see that the positions of the people have changed. What kind of sorcery is this? Return to 20.

### 30

As you approach the coffer, the whispering gets louder. You open it and look inside to see nothing. Not just an empty coffer, but the total blackness of the void. Then you see a being floating towards you. Your eyes fix upon it. You are unable to tear yourself away from the sight of such an indescribable monster. Then you hear its inhuman call. The call of madness. The call of oblivion. The call of Khalris. As your eyes and ears are assaulted by the sights and sounds of these chthonic abominations from the eldritch abyss, your fragile sanity is shattered for good.

### 31

You raise the copper star to the corpse and it stops in its tracks. You show the star to the stationary corpse while you carefully back out of the room. Turn to 70.

### 32

You have a look at all the valuables in the crypt. *You may take one of the following:*

A bag containing 100 ancient gold coins.

An gold amulet shaped like an 8 pointed star.

A gold amulet shaped like a square.

A jewelled sword.

When you have selected one item, your search is interrupted when you spot movement from the corner of your eye. Turn to 83.

## 33

You journey through the narrow twisty alleyways to the Great Temple. **Fill in the next entry of your journal. Think about the following things:**

*Why are you going to the Great Temple?*

*Do you think the Old Gods are real entities?*

*What do you expect to find at the Great Temple?*

On your way, you see your camel down a side road. It has its back to you and seems to be investigating a door. 'Don't go near it!' warns Garrod. 'No animal lives in this city - only the undead and demons!' If you approach your camel and take it back to your camp, Garrod will not follow you. Turn to 63. If you heed Garrod's warning and head for the temple turn to 51.

## 34

You strike the corpse with your weapon, but you only succeed in slowing it down and not stopping it. The corpse grabs, claws and punches you with inhuman strength. You fight in order to get yourself in a good position to retreat. Eventually, and after taking several cuts and bruises, you have your back to the door. You disengage from the corpse and flee up the stairs and out of the tower. You catch your breath outside the tower, waiting to see if the corpse emerges, but it doesn't. You have been injured by the corpse's blows (*Lose 4 hero points\**. *If you have a shield, you may reduce the loss by 1. If you have an enchanted weapon, you may also reduce the loss by 1*). Turn to 70.

## 35

Eagerly, you run amongst the scores of sarcophagi and admire the horde of treasure that you can stuff into your backpack. Then you hear a creaking noise. You turn around to see that the lids of ALL the sarcophagi are slowly opening and that the corpses inside them are sitting up. As one, they slowly turn their heads and look at you. Then they start to get out. If you want to make a grab for something and escape, turn to 55. If you want to take your time and put lots of treasure in your backpack, turn to 84.

## 36

You drag Garrod's corpse back to your camp and start to dig into the sand. A few hours go by before you have made a hole big enough for the corpse. You put him in it and pile

the sand on top of him. You mark his grave with a pile of stones found near the city. *Gain 1 hero point for giving a man a decent burial.* You are too exhausted to return to the city and explore the southern tower, so you decide to rest. Turn to 46.

## 37

You count fifty ancient gold coins into your purse. The heads of such coins depict a man wearing a headdress not unlike the one on the sarcophagus. The tails depict an eight pointed star. They are going to pay your way for a long time to come. *Add 50 ancient gold coins to your money.* Turn to 44.

## 38

You battle on with the ape. You worry as you are starting to tire, but the ape is still assaulting you with unstoppable fury. You finally get in a blow to the head. The ape screams in agony. And then it vanishes. The beast was another illusion. However, your wounds are still real. *Lose 2 hero points\*. If your hero points score is now 0, you are too drained to carry on. As blood flows from the wounds in your body, you can do nothing else but join the other corpses in the tomb. Your adventure ends here.* If you are still clinging onto life, you may explore the tomb. Turn to 35. Or quit this place before something else happens. Turn to 46.

## 39

You move towards the sarcophagus. Too late, you see some movement in the corner of your eye. You turn around to see the headless snake's tail smash into your face, knocking you over. The tail then starts to thrash around violently, lashing out at you. You then see the snake's head hopping towards you, mouth open so that you can see the wall behind it. Forgetting the treasure, you desperately flee the snake's tail and head in order to escape. *Gain 1 hero point for surviving the crypt.* Turn to 46.

## 40

With a battle cry, you run at your unseen foe and then suddenly, your foot touches nothing. You look down, just in time to see your foot pass through the illusionary floor before you fall into the pit. A few seconds later, the floor rushes up to you and you hit it with a *crunch*. You lie in pain for several minutes before trying to get up. However, when you do an agonizing pain shoots up your left leg. You have broken it. Your only hope is a magical healing potion. *If you do not drink a magical healing potion, you lie in agony for several days before thirst overtakes you and you finally, mercifully, black out forever.* If

you have the healing potion, you drink it (*cross it off your equipment list*) and you feel the pain subside. You can walk again as if you had never broken your leg. Then thoughts turn to escape. The walls are smooth and impossible to climb. **If you have either a rope *and* grapple or a hammer and iron spikes, you may get out of the pit. Otherwise, you have no choice but to wait for the thirst to overcome you before you die.** If you manage to survive this ordeal, turn to 65.

## 41

These people did not worship the One God, but from its prevalence, you can tell that the holy symbol of this religion is the eight pointed star as it is painted all over the walls and appears on the sarcophagus. With this in mind, you pick up a copper star with eight points on a leather cord. It may be worthless in the cities but religious symbols are priceless to their followers. You remember that One Church uses cross shaped indents as locks so that only those who carry the cross of the One God may enter. The copper star may serve a similar purpose. **Add the copper star to your equipment list.** Return to 47 and choose your item.

## 42

You thrust your torch into the shadows. The light and heat from your torch does nothing to them but the cold and darkness extinguishes it. You are plunged into darkness. Nothing happens. You laugh with relief. Then you feel a hand grab your leg from behind you. Desperately, you strike out at the hand and run towards where you remember the exit to be. You stumble and run through the darkness and do not stop until you have run up the stairs of the tower and put a good distance between yourself and that cursed building. Relieved that you have survived, you return to your camp. **Gain 1 hero point for surviving the crypt.** Turn to 46.

## 43

This is it. You are trapped and have no means of escape, no one to help and no hope but you are not going to go down easy. You draw your weapon and charge into the horde, furiously hacking at the corpses. Limbs fly here and there, but eventually, the rotting horde drags you down and pile on top of you. You are crushed and suffocated beneath a pyramid of rotting corpses. Soon you will rise again, damned to wander the city as one of them.

## 44

As you pick up your chosen item, you hear a creaking sound coming from behind you. Your fears are confirmed when you see the sarcophagus open to reveal an emaciated mummified corpse. Its left foot jerks upwards and then moves forward. Then it takes a slow step with its right foot. The corpse lurches towards you. For a moment, you cannot move, not believing that a corpse could be moving until the rotten stench of decay hits your nostrils and rouses you into action. The corpse stands between you and the stairs so you cannot just run away. If you have a bow and arrows and wish to loose off an arrow at the corpse, turn to 97. If you have holy water and wish to douse the corpse in it, turn to 18. If you have a silver crucifix and wish to show it to the corpse, turn to 56. If you have a copper star and wish to show it to the corpse, turn to 31. Otherwise, you are going to have to fight the corpse hand to hand. Turn to 34.

## 45

You dream. You dream of overcoming the animated corpse in combat by cutting it into pieces and crushing them until they are dust. Then you get all of the treasures of the tomb. You then look inside the sarcophagus to see if the corpse had anything of value in there. Instead, you see nothing. Not even the back of the sarcophagus. Just blackness. You reach into the sarcophagus to see if you can touch the back of it but you touch nothing. The void feels icy cold. Then it starts to spread. The blackness creeps out of the sarcophagus and surrounds you, enveloping you and pulling you into its cold, silent vacuum. You cannot resist until you are surrounded by the void. You float for what seems like an eternity. Then a voice pierces the silence. It is a powerful voice that makes your whole body shake in terror. 'In this city of the dead, I lie dreaming, waiting to be free.'

You awake. You are shivering from the cold of the night. You look for your blanket but you cannot find it. Did the camel make off with it? You could have sworn that you had it before you went to sleep, or were you too exhausted to notice?

You decide that with dwindling food supplies you should think about such things later and explore the city more. When you scoured the city, you found four towers in the city placed around the centre at the four cardinal directions. Which tower do you want to explore?

The north tower? Turn to 88.

The south tower? Turn to 74.

The west tower? Turn to 53.

The east tower? Turn to 5.

## 46

You return to your camp to rest. *If you have either the codewords **healed** or **artefact** on your adventure sheet and you have not done so already, turn to 94. Otherwise, read on.*

After your rest, you reflect on your explorations. Complete the next entry of your journal. Think about the following questions:

*How well do you think you dealt with the challenges of the tower you explored?*

*Are you happy with what you found in the tower?*

*What do you think of the city of Khalris?*

When you have finished your journal, you consider the next stage of your journey. **If you have now visited two towers, turn to 79.** If you have visited one tower, you may explore another tower that you have not already explored. Which one will it be?

The north tower? Turn to 88.

The south tower? Turn to 74.

The west tower? Turn to 53.

The east tower? Turn to 5.

## 47

The inside of the tower is cool in sharp contrast to the blazing hot desert. The stairs going up have long since crumbled away but there are stairs going down. You descend the dark depths into what is a richly decorated crypt. A golden sarcophagus stands at the centre of the room in the shape of a person wearing a headdress with arms crossed. Several items are scattered around the crypt. There is a locked iron chest, a long papyrus scroll, a sharp sword with an emerald in the hilt, a box of gold coins, a bottle containing a green liquid and a silver statuette of the One God. *If you have the religious background, turn to 41. If not, read on.*

You must decide on one item that you want to take. If you wish, you may try to open the iron chest. *You can pick the lock if you have lockpicks or you can prise it open if you have a crowbar or hunting knife (however, this will bend the hunting knife and make it unusable - cross it off your equipment list).* If you want to and you can, you open the chest. Turn to 57.

If you cannot or do not want to open the chest, you must pick another item and turn to the appropriate paragraph.

The papyrus scroll? Turn to 99

The sharp sword? Turn to 82

The gold coins? Turn to 37

The green liquid? Turn to 10

The statuette? Turn to 76

#### 48

If you want to head for the great temple, turn to 93. Otherwise, return to 79 in order to leave this wretched place.

#### 49

The city is huge. You decide to probe the surface first before exploring any of the buildings. After one night of exploration, you have seen much of the city's alien geometries. You rest for a short time during the day, mindful that your provisions limit your time here. Once the heat of the midday Sun has passed and the air is cooler, you head out to a different portion of the city. You do this for six days, each day exploring a different part of the deserted necropolis. You notice that nothing grows or lives here - not a single plant or animal.

If you have a parchment, quill and ink, you draw a map of the city and write down locations of entrances to interesting buildings or places that may lead underground. *If you have parchment, quill and ink, add the codeword map to your adventure sheet.*

Eventually, you decide that it's time to explore some buildings. You head across the city to a tower where you had seen an open entrance. When you get to the tower, you light a torch and prepare to enter it. As you approach the portal, the sand starts to shift as if a breeze is blowing it across the surface of the desert.

**If you have the codeword *sand* on your adventure sheet, turn to 28.** Otherwise, turn to 6.



## 50

You climb upon the roof to see an iron ring on a stone trapdoor. You pull the ring to open the trapdoor, light a torch and jump down into a dry, cool, corridor. After following it down for a while, you come to the front door, which you notice is connected to an axe trap. If you would have opened it, the axe would have flown into your head. You disarm the trap so that you can leave the temple safely through the door. Then you see a lever, which you pull. A stone door opens before you. As you take your hand off the lever, it starts to close slowly. This is a problem. If you go through the door and deeper into the temple, it will be closed when you get back. You don't see a lever on the other side, just a small indentation in the shape of an eight pointed star. **If you have the codeword *companion* on your adventure sheet, turn to 81.** If not, you head through the door. Turn to 60.

## 51

You round a corner to find yourself in a small square packed with silent standing corpses. Upon seeing you, as one they all take slow steps forward. You turn around to run but see other corpses piling into the street you just came from. They are slowly advancing on you and you have no escape. **If you have the codeword *map* on your adventure sheet, turn to 98.** Otherwise, you will have to face the silent horde.

If you are wearing an amulet with an eight pointed star, turn to 92.

If you are not wearing an amulet with an eight pointed star, but you are wearing a crescent moon amulet, turn to 71.

If you are not wearing a crescent moon amulet, but you are wearing a circular amulet, turn to 16.

If you do not have any amulets, but you do have a crucifix, turn to 68.

If you do not have any amulets, you must attack the horde of corpses. Turn to 43.

## 52

You sprint back to your camp as fast as you can. ***Lose 1 hero point for your cowardice. If your hero points score is now 0, turn to 15.*** Otherwise, turn to 46.

## 53

The west tower is a beautiful marble building with a giant stone snake coiled around it. It almost seems like it shouldn't belong amongst the alien geometries of the strange city. You enter the tower which does not have any stairs going up for some reason but it does have a stone trapdoor with an iron ring and some rope dangling down. There are also marble

stairs heading down. If you wish to pull the rope on the trapdoor, turn to 85. If you wish to head down the marble stairs, turn to 67.

#### 54

You enjoy the feast of horse meat and tea with the nomads while you swap stories of your travels. They ask you where you are headed. You tell them of your plans to explore the dead city of Khalris. When the nomads hear you mention that name, their faces turn grave.

'You must stay away from there. Our tribes never go near the place, for it is cursed and haunted. Many say that there are countless treasures in Khalris but all the gold and jewels in that city are not worth facing the wrath of the gods that sleep beneath it.'

You insist that you are more than prepared, but the nomads still try to get you to turn back. When they see that you are adamant, they give in. Eventually, you take your leave. You thank the nomads for their hospitality, bid them farewell and continue your journey. Turn to 66.

#### 55

You make a grab for something and then run for the exit before the corpses overwhelm you. You hear a moan of dismay as you escape their clutches and run up the corridor, remembering to leap over the disguised pit and out into the open. The daylight hurts your eyes for a moment, but you welcome the heat of the desert. You inspect the item you grabbed. **You may add one of the following to your adventure sheet:**

A bag containing one hundred ancient gold coins.

A decorated and jewelled ceremonial dagger (it can also count as a hunting knife).

A gold crescent moon shaped amulet.

An emerald ring.

A gold amulet in the shape of an eight pointed star.

When you have made your choice, you head back to the camp, happy that you survived and overcome the horrors of the tomb. **Gain 1 hero point.** Turn to 46.

#### 56

You remove the crucifix from your jerkin and brandish it at the corpse which continues its advance. The corpse is now upon you, arms outstretched, ready to drag you to an early grave or worse. You must fight it hand to hand. Turn to 34.

57

You open the chest to find a steel warhammer with images of lions carved into the head. As you pick it up, you feel the tingle of magic run up your arm. *Add the enchanted warhammer to your equipment list.* Turn to 44.

58

*Cross the hunting knife off your equipment list.* You throw your hunting knife, but you do not hear it strike flesh; instead, you hear it clatter to the floor some distance off. The creature is still shuffling towards you. If you charge at it, turn to 40. If you throw a torch in its direction to see what it is, turn to 77. If you have a bow and arrows and wish to loose off an arrow at it, turn to 24. If you wish to retreat and head back to your camp, turn to 27.

59

You climb up into the next level, wary of snakes. Except there are none. The room you are in has a huge tapestry going all the way around the wall and an eight pointed star on the floor. You look at the tapestry depicting creatures that look like crosses between human and snake battling humans and living in the city. Then you see something shocking - a message in your own language. How could that be? It reads '*In this house, the dead gods await, dreaming.*' The message points to a tower showing you that the way in can only be from its flat top. *Add the codeword location to your adventure sheet.* Bemused, you climb down the rope. If you wish to head back to your camp, turn to 27. If you want to go down the marble stairs, turn to 67.

60

You walk down the cold corridors. As you travel towards the temple, you start to hear whispering. *If you have any of the codewords scales, healed or artefact on your adventure sheet, turn to 64.* Otherwise, turn to 69.

61

You cannot escape. There is a roar as the temple collapses upon your fragile body, crushing it to dust. You have destroyed the temple, but you have not killed the Old God. It still sleeps beneath the ground. *What are your last thoughts? Put them in the next empty entry of your journal. Think about:*

*Was destroying the temple worth losing your life?*

## 62

You slowly follow the passageway for an hour, all the time kicking the stone before you so that you will know if there are any other pit traps. None present themselves to you, however, and you make it into a cavernous chamber, lined with many rectangular sarcophagi. There are also piles of weapons, jewellery and armour around each sarcophagus and around the walls of the tomb. However, before you can pick any of them up, you hear a growling sound. You spin around and draw your weapon. Before you stands a white haired humanoid creature, half man, half ape. It bears its teeth at you before charging with a howl. There is no time for ranged weapons. If you strike it as it charges, turn to 7. If you let it charge into you, turn to 12.

## 63

You approach your camel as quietly as you can, not wanting to startle it. When you are just behind it and ready to grab its lead, its head turns around on its neck. At first, it looks like it is craning its neck to look at you, but then the head turns even more until the camel is staring straight at you, looking behind you. You leap back as you see that the head is rotting and that its eyes are glowing red. Before you can move, the camel lashes out at you with its hind legs, sending you flying. You land on the ground, painfully. When you get up, you see the camel galloping off, an unearthly scream emanating from its decaying mouth. You are hurt and shaken. *Lose 2 hero points. If your hero points score is now 0, turn to 15.* Otherwise, you head on to the Great Temple, not wanting to tarry any longer. Turn to 51.

## 64

The whisperings turn to screams. There is a powerful thumping in your head. You fall to the ground, dropping your torch. You can see the green scales are spreading all over your skin. You feel your teeth growing into fangs and your tongue splitting into a fork. In a few minutes, you begin your new life as a snake.

## 65

You finally haul yourself out of the pit. You can still hear the shuffling noise but you still cannot see anything. It must also be an illusion. You pick up some rubble and put it in your pocket. You also start kicking a rock along the floor to make sure that you don't fall into any other illusionary pit traps. Turn to 62.

## 66

After two more weeks of hard travel across the desert, the city of Khalris comes into your view. Its structures are like nothing you have ever seen before. Jagged spires loom over spherical constructs and other weird cyclopean architecture. As you get closer, the strangeness of the place becomes more evident. Some of the buildings have no windows; others have stairs that come out of the roof and twist upwards into the air but lead to nothing. It takes another day to finally reach the outskirts of the city. Your camel refuses to walk between the buildings, so you pitch your tent on the edge of the city and decide to explore it in the night after you have had some sleep. After you have eaten some cheese and dried fruit, you lie on your bedroll and go to sleep. If you have the tribal background, turn to 17. If you do not, turn to 22.

## 67

You descend the stairs to find yourself in an opulent marble crypt. A richly adorned sarcophagus lies at the end of the room which has pillars with coiled snakes around them supporting the ceiling. You walk towards the sarcophagus and marvel at the treasures around it. **You may take one of the following items:**

- An golden amulet shaped like a circle.**
- A box containing 200 ancient gold coins.**
- A golden amulet shaped like an eight pointed star.**
- An ornate shield decorated with a snake emblem.**
- A golden headdress with a jade snake on the top.**

When you have selected your item, turn to 86.

## 68

You show your crucifix at the corpses, but it does nothing to slow them down. You are going to have to fight them. Turn to 43.

## 69

The whisperings in your head grow louder as you enter a modest sized hall. There are three pillars holding up the ceiling and there is a jade altar at the end of the room. At the foot of the jade altar is an ornate silver coffer, decorated with snakes. The whispering increases in volume. If you have an enchanted warhammer, turn immediately to 8. If you do not have a warhammer, but if you do have some firepowder, you may attempt to blow up

the altar (turn to 89). If you do not have firepowder or do not wish to use it, you feel an irresistible pull towards the coffer. You hear a voice in your head, a call for you to open it. You approach the silver coffer in order to open it (turn to 30)

## 70

After your encounter, you return to the camp to rest. However, when you return, you find out that your camel is missing. You curse at your own ineptitude at tying the camel to something secure. You wander around the city for an hour, looking for the camel or signs of where it went such as footprints, but you find nothing. The wind must have blown sand over the camel's tracks. Too hot and tired to continue, you return to your camp, hoping that your camel will return. You get into your tent.

*If you have the educated background and a papyrus scroll, turn to 3. If you do not, read on.*

You then reflect on your encounters. You have overcome the traps of one of the city's crypts and obtained something of value. *Gain 1 hero point.*

Fill out the second entry of your journal. Think about the following questions:

*What do you think of the item(s) you have acquired?*

*Did you find your encounter challenging?*

*What do you imagine that you will find in the rest of the city?*

When you have finished your journal, you get some sleep in preparation for another day's exploring. Turn to 45.

## 71

The corpses see the amulet around your neck and immediately reach out to take it, advancing even faster. You are going to have to fight them. Turn to 43.

## 72

You approach the building which seems quite unassuming, even normal. If you have either hammer and spikes or a rope and grapple, you may scale the wall and get onto the flat topped roof. If you wish to do this, turn to 50. There is a stone door at the base of it. If you wish to open the door, turn to 21.

## 73

You draw your weapon and, before the man has a chance to strike again, you hit him in the chest. The bearded man crumples to the ground, dead. You search him but find nothing. However, on closer inspection, you wonder if he is actually truly a man. His teeth are sharp like fangs and he has patches of green scales on his body. He looks peaceful in death and you wonder if some curse from here afflicted him. If you wish to head back to your camp, turn to 52. If you continue to the southern tower. Turn to 9.

## 74

You traverse the streets of the city with your hopes set on rich rewards from the south tower. You are walking between two spiked domes when you see some movement from behind one of them. If you investigate it, turn to 80. If you press on to the tower, turn to 90.

## 75

The southern tower has a stone door at its base. You both push the stone door open until you feel the coolness of the inside of the tower. Then there is a *click* and a weak cry from Garrod who has an arrow impaled in his chest. It's a trap! Garrod crumples to the floor. Before he dies he bids you 'Save...yourself...from...hell.' He closes his eyes. ***Cross the codeword companion from your adventure sheet.*** Garrod looks peaceful in death. If you decide to give him a burial on the edge of the city, turn to 36. If you decide to enter the southern tower, turn to 20.

## 76

This silver statuette should be very valuable to any church in civilised lands. Until you notice that the One God is being strangled by a huge boa constrictor. This is actually a depiction of the One God being killed by a snake. ***Add the silver statuette to your adventure sheet.*** Turn to 44.

## 77

You throw your torch a few metres ahead of you. The torch hits the ground and then rolls along it for a bit, revealing no creatures despite the sound of shuffling. Then your torch falls, seemingly through the floor, plunging the corridor into blackness. You light another torch and carefully edge forward. You pick up a rock and give it a push along the floor. You watch it roll along the ground before falling through it in the same place. An illusion! The shuffling sound must also be trickery as you still can see no monster. With a little

experimentation, you find out that the pit is not that wide and you jump over it with ease. *If you threw your hunting knife, you may recover it.* You pick up some more bits of rubble to help you later. You also start kicking a rock along the corridor in front of you to make sure that there are no more illusionary floors. Turn to 62.

## 78

You are on good terms with the nomads after you protected them from a bandit attack. This group know of your deeds and greet you warmly. You have a long conversation about their fellows and your plans to explore Khalris. When the nomads hear you mention that name, their faces turn grave.

'You must stay away from there. Our tribes never go near the place for it is cursed and haunted. Many say that there are countless treasures in Khalris but all the gold and jewels in that city are not worth facing the wrath of the gods that sleep beneath it.'

You insist that you are more than prepared, but the nomads still try to get you to turn back. When they see that you are adamant, they give in.

'At least take some things that may give you hope against the warped beasts and heathen brutes of the ruins. However, I fear that they will provide false hope.' says one of the nomads.

*You may add a hunting knife and/or bow and arrows to your equipment list.*

Once you have spoken with the nomads, you thank them for their hospitality, bid them farewell and continue your journey. Turn to 66.

## 79

You check your food and water supplies and find that they are dwindling. You cannot stay much longer if you want to survive the journey back. *If you have the codeword location on your adventure sheet, turn to 48. Otherwise, read on.* With a heavy heart, you load yourself up with all the food and water that you can carry and prepare the long journey back to civilisation. *If you have the codeword scales on your adventure sheet, turn to 19. Otherwise, read on.*

Over the month of travel, you think long and hard about your adventures. Have you



succeeded? Have you failed? Would you want to return here?

Fill out the next entry of your journal. Think about these questions:

*Are there any parts of your expedition that you would like to forget?*

*Was your expedition worth it?*

*Do you still hold the beliefs that you had before you came to Khalris?*

### 80

You go behind the dome where the movement came from. Nothing. You look to your left and to your right but you cannot see anything. There is a howl from above and you see a bearded man leaping at you, arms raised. He knocks you to the floor. If you attack him, turn to 73. If you tell him that you are human, turn to 95. If you run away, turn to 52.

### 81

Garrod seems to be in pain. 'I cannot go on further my friend. I feel like there is something screaming inside my head. I will be no use to you in the temple. I will stay here, look for further traps on the door and hold the lever down so that you can leave the temple.' You thank Garrod before you head to the inside. Turn to 60.

### 82

As you pick up the sword, you feel a tingling sensation run up your arm. This is the tingle of magic. *Add the enchanted sword to your equipment list. Add the word artefact to your adventure sheet.* Turn to 44.

### 83

You turn to face the statues but they are not the things moving. You then notice that the flickering shadows rise up out of the floor. They take humanoid shapes until there are a dozen 'shadow people' silently walking towards you. As they get closer, you feel an aura of freezing cold. If you wish to fight the shadow people, turn to 87. If you have a crucifix and wish to show it to the shadow people, turn to 25. If you thrust your torch at the shadow people, turn to 42.

## 84

While the corpses get out of their sarcophagi, you start piling coins into your backpack, ignoring the shuffling noises. When you have finished, you see that the corpses are surrounding you and advancing upon you, arms outstretched. You cannot go round them, so you calmly walk into the horde, only for several corpses to grab you and to start pulling at your arms and legs. Too late! You realise that this was no illusion as the corpse army tears you limb from limb.

## 85

You pull on the rope and the trapdoor opens to let a horde of green snakes fall out from the level above and pile down on top of you, knocking you down. You are lying on the rich marble floor with snakes slithering all over you. Over your face, your chest, your arms and legs. Then you feel them slithering up your sleeves and into your jerkin. How will you get out of this one? You could lie still and hope that the snakes will slither off you (turn to 91). Or you could leap up and shake the snakes off you (turn to 4).

## 86

Something strikes you from behind and sends you flying. You get up in time to see that one of the giant snakes has slithered off the marble pillar and is now heading straight for you. It is about four metres long with huge teeth and glowing green eyes. If you have a bow and arrows and wish to loose off an arrow at the snake, turn to 26. If you have a hunting knife and you wish to throw it at the snake, turn to 14. If you wish to fight the snake with your weapon, turn to 23.

## 87

Your weapon passes straight through the shadows as if it was cutting through thin air. You prepare to do something else, but chilling hands grasp you and paralyse you. You can only watch as the shadows engulf you, dragging you to languish in the cold dark void for all eternity.

## 88

The north tower is a large circular windowless building with a flat top. You find the dark entrance at the base of the tower, light a torch and enter it. There are stairs both up and down. You go up first but find nothing of value - the place seems deserted. So you return to the ground floor and head down instead. You wander down a tunnel before the sound of shuffling makes you stop and draw your weapon. It is coming from in front of you but

you cannot see what it is. If you charge at the creature, turn to 40. If you throw a torch in its direction to see what it is, turn to 77. If you have a bow and arrows and wish to loose off an arrow at it, turn to 24. If you have a hunting knife and wish to throw that, turn to 58. If you wish to retreat and head back to your camp, turn to 27.

## 89

You place the packet of firepowder at the base of the altar light the fuse and run. You are down the corridor when you hear an almighty explosion. Then you see the walls crack around you and start to crumble. The whole temple is collapsing! You run as fast as you can but you are going to need all you strength, resolve and luck to survive this. ***Lose 7 hero points. If you now have 0 or fewer hero points, turn to 61.*** If you have more than 0 hero points, you make it to the stone door. ***If you have the codeword companion on your adventure sheet, turn to 96.*** If you do not, you notice an indent in the wall shaped like an eight pointed star. If you have an eight pointed star amulet, turn to 2. If you do not have one, turn to 61.

## 90

There is a stone door at the base of the southern tower. You push it open. As you feel the cool air of the interior, you hear a *click* and then a *thud* followed by an agonising pain in your chest. You look down to find an arrow protruding from it. It is excruciating to do, but you rip the arrow out, making your wound bleed profusely. ***Lose 6 hero points\*. If you have 0 or fewer hero points, the wound has been too much. You collapse on the floor and as you die, you stain the sand blood red.*** If you hero points are still above 0, you rest a while before you can move properly. If you wish to continue into the tower, turn to 20. If you wish to return to your camp, turn to 52.

## 91

You lie there motionless for what seems to be an eternity. The snakes slide and slither through your clothes and crawl all over your skin. Eventually, the snakes disperse, slithering out of the door in order to bask in the sun and search for prey. You are shaken by the whole thing. ***Lose 1 hero point. If you now have 0 hero points, turn to 15.*** If you wish to head back to your camp, turn to 27. If you want to go down the marble stairs, turn to 67. If you have a rope and grapple, you could climb up into the next level of the tower. Turn to 59.

92

Upon seeing the amulet around your neck, the corpses stop. As you warily approach them, they part before you. You slowly walk amongst the ranks of the silent, stinking, rotting horde. Your walk seems to take forever as the corpses stare at you. Eventually, you are clear of them and head towards the Great Temple. Turn to 72.

93

You journey through the narrow twisty alleyways to the Great Temple. Fill in the next entry of your journal. **Think about the following things:**

*Why are you going to the Great Temple?*

*Do you think the Old Gods are real entities?*

*What do you expect to find at the Great Temple?*

On your way, you see your camel down a side road. It has its back to you and seems to be investigating a door. If you approach your camel and take it back to your camp, turn to 63. If you ignore your camel and head for the temple turn to 51.

94

As you take your tunic off, you notice green scales are growing on your arm! You touch them. They feel leathery and dry. A bit of dry scale comes off in your finger. What on earth is happening to you? **Add the codeword scales to your adventure sheet.** Return to 46.

95

'Wait!' you yell 'I'm human!' The man stops and looks at you more closely. 'So am I,' he says 'At least I used to be.' He lifts up one of his sleeves to show you that his arms have patches of green scales all over them. You gasp in amazement and horror. 'I know. My name is Garrod. I travelled here in search of the fabled lost treasure and I thought I found it - an emerald studded arm band that granted me great strength. But its magic also did this to me. I have since rid myself of that cursed thing but my mutation continues. I want to go into the Great Temple but I fear that its monsters and traps might best me in my weakened state. If we join forces and go to the Great Temple, we might both find what we are looking for.' **Add the codewords location and companion to your adventure sheet.** I was on my way to the southern tower to find out if I could learn more about the traps in the

Great Temple.' If you wish to go to the Great Temple now, turn to 33. Otherwise, you both head for the southern tower. Turn to 75.

### 96

Garrod is there, holding the door open. You run through it, shouting at him to follow you, but before he can move, he is hit on the head by a piece of falling rock. Garrod collapses to the floor, dead. There is no time to mourn him, as you rush through the front door, just as the temple collapses into rubble. However, there is no time to catch your breath as you are standing before a silent crowd of corpses. They extend their arms and head towards you, wanting you to join their ranks. How are you going to escape this?

If you are wearing an amulet with an eight pointed star, turn to 100.

If you are not wearing an amulet with an eight pointed star, but you are wearing a crescent moon amulet, turn to 71.

If you are not wearing a crescent moon amulet, but you are wearing a circular amulet, turn to 16.

If you do not have any amulets, but you do have a crucifix, turn to 68.

If you do not have any amulets, you must attack the horde of corpses. Turn to 43.

### 97

You loose off an arrow which strikes the corpse and embeds itself deeply in its chest. The corpse staggers backwards but remains standing. Once it has regained its footing, it continues to advance upon you. You release another arrow into its chest with the same effect. Then another and another. The corpse has four arrows sticking out of it, but it is inexorably advancing. Why won't it die? This time, you aim for the head. The arrow strikes it right between the eyes and this time, the corpse topples over. However, you notice it trying to get up, so you do not tarry in this place any longer. You flee the crypt before the corpse gets up. Turn to 70.

### 98

You remember drawing something on your map in this area to do with secret doors. Looking on your map confirms this. The building to your right has a stone door that you push open. You then push open the stone back door into a back street. There are corpses here and upon seeing you, they begin to move towards you, but you know the streets and buildings too well. You immediately run off down a narrow alleyway and climb over a short wall; something you hope the corpses won't be able to do. It takes a while, but

you manage to run from, dodge and hide from the horde of corpses while getting to the great temple. Turn to 72.

## 99

The papyrus scroll is long and covered in many different glyphs. You notice that there are lots of depictions of the eight pointed star. You decide to pack away the scroll and try to decipher it later. Turn to 44.

## 100

You raise the amulet and the corpses stop advancing. You warily walk between the corpses. When you are clear of them, you run back to your camp and load yourself up with as much food and water as you can carry. Over the month of travel, you think long and hard about your adventures. You have destroyed a temple of an Old God but it still sleeps beneath the dead city, waiting to be awoken. Also many people will not believe your story. Have you succeeded? Have you failed? Would you want to return here?

Fill out the next entry of your journal. Think about these questions:

*Are there any parts of your expedition that you would like to forget?*

*Was your expedition worth it?*

*Do you still hold the beliefs that you had before you came to Khalris?*