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# City of the Dead

by Stuart Lloyd

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## Introduction

In this adventure, you are a simple villager sent on a quest to discover secrets long forgotten. Before you do, you must discover your strengths and weaknesses.

### Your character

#### The first five attributes

Your character has five attributes which determine their strengths and weakness and also affects other attributes. They are:

**Strength:** This is how strong your character is. It affects how easily you can hit an opponent in combat and how much damage you do. It also affects how much damage you can take.

**Endurance:** This is how tough you are. It affects how easy it is for you to withstand extreme conditions such as heat and cold. It also affects how much damage you can take.

**Reflexes:** Reflexes includes how nimble your character is and how good they are at dodging blows. It is also related to how stealthy they are. Reflexes affects how hard it is for a character to be hit.

**Wits:** Wits is a measure of your character's intelligence and strength of will. Wits affects how easily your character shrugs off psychic attacks.

**Aura:** This is a measure of your characters force of personality. A character with a high aura is good at persuasion and intimidation. This affects the strength of your character's psychic attacks.

Each value for these attributes begins at 4, which is below average for a human (the average is 5). You have 10 points to distribute amongst your attributes any way you wish. The maximum score for any attribute is 9.

For example, Gurthak wants to be a mighty fighter. He puts three points into strength and endurance, two into reflexes and 1 into wits and aura. Gurthak now has a strength value of 7, an endurance value of 7, a reflexes value of 6, a wits value of 5 and an aura value of 5.

Thanatos, however, wants to be a priest who holds sway with powerful sermons. He puts no points into strength or endurance, two points into reflexes and four points into wits and aura. Thanatos now has a strength value of 4, an endurance value of 4, a reflexes value of 6, a wits value of 8 and an aura value of 8.

### Combat attributes

Your character also has an attack, defence, Damage infliction and damage reduction value.

**Attack:** Your attack value determines how hard it is to hit an opponent in combat. Your attack value is equal to half your strength value, rounding fractions up.

**Defence:** Your defence value is how hard it is for you to be hit in combat. It is equal to 6 plus half your reflexes, rounding fractions up. Your defence value may increase if you pick up a shield.

For example, Gurthak's attack is equal to half his strength. Since he has a strength of 7, his attack value is 4 since he rounded up.

Thanatos's strength is 4, so his attack value is 2.

Gurthak's reflexes is 6, so his defence value is equal to half of that  $(3) + 6$ . This makes his defence 9. The same is true for Thanatos.

**Damage bonus:** If you hit an opponent in combat, you add your damage bonus value to the damage done. This value depends on the weapon you are using.

**Damage reduction:** If you are hit in combat, the damage reduction value is how much you can reduce the damage by (however if this value goes below 0, you cannot gain health points!). It starts off at 0, but you can increase it if you find armour.

### Psychic attributes

**Psychic attack:** This is how good you are at bluffing, persuading and intimidating living creatures. There is nothing truly sorcerous about this value. It reflects the force of your personality. Rumour has it that some magic users can use their psychic attack to drive people mad, or bend them to their will, but you have never seen this. Your psychic attack is equal to half your aura score, rounding fractions up.

**Psychic defence:** This represents your force of will and how well you can spot deceit in an opponent. It is equal to  $6 + \text{half your wits score}$ , rounding fractions up.

Gurthak's psychic attack is 3 (his aura score is 5. divide it by 2 and round up) and his psychic defence is 9 (his wits score is 5. divide it by 2, round up and add to 6.)

Thanatos's psychic attack is 4 (his aura score is 8. divide it by 2) and his psychic defence is 10 (his wits score is 8. divide it by 2, round up and add to 6.)

### Health and willpower

Finally, are two attributes which, if they reach 0 mean that your adventure is over.

**Health:** This is a measure of how many wounds you have taken in your adventure. If your health is at its maximum score, you are essentially unscathed. If it reaches 0, your body has given up the ghost and your adventure ends there. Your health value is determined by your strength + your endurance + 2.

There will be precious few opportunities to restore your health. Magical healing is very rare and you will probably only be able to restore your health through periods of prolonged rest. Unlike some books, eating meals do not restore health. Food and water only prevents you from losing health at certain points.

**Willpower:** The city you will enter is full of trickery and strange beasts. Your willpower reflects your grip on your sanity. It can be reduced through fear, sorcery or merely discovering something that is too much for you to know. If your willpower reaches 0, you have been driven irrevocably mad by your experiences and your adventure ends. Your willpower is determined by your wits + your aura + 2.

You will have few chances to restore willpower. Some herbal preparations have been known to give peace of mind as well as prolonged periods of meditation or divine inspiration. However, few people experience such events.

Gurthak's health is equal to his strength (7) + his endurance (7) + 2 = 16. His willpower is equal to his wits (5) + his aura (5) + 2 = 12.

Thanatos's health is equal to his strength (4) + his endurance (4) + 2 = 10. His willpower is equal to his wits (8) + his aura (8) + 2 = 18.

### Skills

As well as your attributes, you also have skills to help you in your quest. You can pick **two** of the following skills to help you.

**Literacy:** You have learnt to read and write in your language – a rare and valuable skill. You have used your abilities to make copies of the legends of the past and in doing so, you have gained much knowledge of the follies of the ancients. You used the power of hindsight to advise your village chief on many matters and the wisdom in your counsel has led the more ignorant villagers to accuse you of sorcery. This skill will prove invaluable if you find ancient tomes in the Lost City.

**Herbalism:** You can identify the effects of plants of the human body and harvest them to make best use of them. You also start the adventure with a herbalist's kit - some small cutters, an iron pot and pouches to store your findings. As well as knowing the common herbs which bring relief or which are mild poisons, you know the effects of many rare plants which can knock a man unconscious or heal his wounds in seconds. You learnt the art from the village wise man and you have witnessed many spectacular effects from the plants. You once prepared a concoction which paralysed a huge violent traveller from afar. You can use the plants of the land to aid you in your mission.

**Berserk:** You can unleash a mighty rage which you can use to overcome your opponents with a flurry of relentless blows. You do sacrifice your own safety to unleash this anger, but sometimes the mere sight of a berserk maniac is enough to make your opponent's flee. You have slain many wild beasts and dangerous bandits with your berserk rage and gained the respect and fear of your fellow villagers. You may become berserk at the beginning of every combat. If you do, increase your attack and damage bonus by 1 and reduce your defence by 1 for that combat. Letting your mind wander into madness has its dangers. At the end of each combat in which you have become berserk, roll 1 die. If you roll a 4-6, reduce your willpower by 1. If you roll a 1-3, you do not need to deduct any willpower points.

**Hunting:** You have spent many days in the wild and learnt the habits and nature of the beasts and men of your land. You are able to track most living things and have no trouble finding food in the wild. You have earned the respect of your fellow villagers by bring them meat on many an occasion.

**Intimidate:** You have a way with words that allow you to get people to do what you want, either with promises of damnation from the gods or just by your presence. With this ability you are able to use your psychic attack to get people to do what you want and you have risen to much power in your village with this and people daren't question your words.

Gurthak wishes to be the lead warrior in his village through use of his skill and by scaring the competition so he picks the berserk and intimidate skills.

Thanatos is a quiet but hard working priest who has risen to be chief acolyte to the village wise man. He picks the literacy and herbalism skills.

### Combat

The land you live in is dangerous and often the only options are to kill or be killed. Here are the rules for combat.

Step 1: Roll 1 die for your opponent. This is your opponent's initiative.

Step 2: Roll 1 die for yourself. This is your initiative.

Step 3: If your initiative is higher than your opponent's, you strike first. Proceed to step 4. If your opponent's initiative is higher than yours, your opponent strikes first. Proceed to step 6. If your initiatives are the same, go back to step 1.

Step 4: Roll two dice and add them to your attack score. This is your attack strength. If the result is higher than or equal to your opponent's defence score, you have hit your opponent. Proceed to step 5. If it is lower than your opponent's defence score, you have missed. Proceed to step 6.

Step 5: You need to calculate the amount of damage you have done. Subtract your opponent's defence score from your attack strength. Add your damage bonus to this value. Subtract your opponent's damage reduction from this value. Reduce your opponent's health score by this amount. If your opponent's health has been reduced to 0, they are dead. Proceed to the next paragraph. If they have not been killed, proceed to step 6.

Step 6: Your opponent attacks you. : Roll two dice and add them to your opponent's attack score. This is your opponent's attack strength. If the result is higher than or equal to your defence score, your opponent has hit you. Proceed to step 7. If it is lower than your defence score, your opponent has missed. Proceed to step 4.

Step 7: You need to calculate the amount of damage your opponent has done. Subtract your defence score from your opponent's attack strength. Add your opponent's damage bonus to this value. Subtract your damage reduction from this value. Reduce your health score by this amount. If your health has been reduced to 0, you are dead and the game ends here. If you have not been killed, proceed to step 4.

When you and your opponent have both had one attack against each other, you have gone through one round of combat.

### Psychic attacks

The term psychic does not necessarily refer to any magical power. It refers to your strength of will and mental well being. Sometimes, if someone else is trying to bluff, curse or intimidate you, they will make a psychic attack. You can try to resist it with your psychic defence. If the attack works, you may be forced to take an action against your will and may lose willpower points. You may also make psychic attacks against other creatures in an attempt to scare them or persuade them. The process for a psychic attack is to roll two dice. Add it to the attacker's psychic attack score. This is the attacker's attack strength.

If it is higher than or equal to the defender's psychic defence, then the attack has succeeded and you proceed to the paragraph you have been instructed to go to. If it is equal to or lower than the defender's psychic defence then the attack has failed. Go to the relevant paragraph.

For example, Gurthak is trying to bully a villager into letting him stay at his hovel for the night. The villager has a psychic defence of 9. Gurthak has a psychic attack of 3. Gurthak rolls a 7 for his attack, giving him an attack strength of 10. The villager acquiesces and lets him stay.

### Psychic combat

The sorcerers of old once knew how to lock minds and try to destroy each other's sanity. It is unlikely that you will ever take part in psychic combat, but some creatures may use sorcery to take over your mind. If you find yourself locked in combat for your soul, here is how you resolve the combat.

First of all damage bonuses from weapons, damage reduction from armour and defence bonuses from shields do NOT count in psychic combat. However, some magical items may increase your stats and will count.

Step 1: Roll 1 die for your opponent. This is your opponent's initiative.

Step 2: Roll 1 die for yourself. This is your initiative.

Step 3: If your initiative is higher than your opponent's, you strike first. Proceed to step 4. If your opponent's initiative is higher than yours, your opponent strikes first. Proceed to step 6. If your initiatives are the same, go back to step 1.

Step 4: Roll two dice and add them to your psychic attack score. This is your attack strength. If the result is higher than or equal to your opponent's psychic defence score, you have hit your opponent. Proceed to step 5. If it is lower than your opponent's psychic defence score, you have missed. Proceed to step 6.

Step 5: You need to calculate how much of your opponent's sanity you have chipped away. Subtract your opponent's psychic defence score from your psychic attack strength. Add your damage bonus to this value. Subtract your opponent's damage reduction from this value. Reduce your opponent's willpower score by this amount. If your opponent's willpower has been reduced to 0, they have been driven mad and you are victorious. Proceed to the next paragraph. If they have not been driven mad, proceed to step 6.

Step 6: Your opponent attacks you. : Roll two dice and add them to your opponent's psychic attack score. This is your opponent's psychic attack strength. If the result is higher than or equal to your psychic defence score, your opponent has hit you. Proceed to step 7. If it is lower than your psychic defence score, your opponent has missed. Proceed to step 4.

Step 7: You need to calculate the amount of damage your opponent has done to your sanity. Subtract your psychic defence score from your opponent's attack strength. Add your opponent's damage bonus to this value. Subtract your damage reduction from this value. Reduce your willpower score by this amount. If your willpower has been reduced to 0, you have been driven mad and the game ends here. If you have not been driven mad, proceed to step 4.

When you and your opponent have both had one attack against each other, you have gone through one round of combat.

### Tasks

Sometimes you will be required to perform a certain task. If you do, you will be told the attribute (strength, endurance, reflexes, wits or aura) that the task requires and the difficulty of the task. To see if you succeed in the task, roll two dice and add it to the attribute you are using. If the result is higher than or equal to the difficulty, then you have succeeded. If the result is lower than the difficulty, then you have failed.

For example, Thanatos is trying to decipher an ancient scroll. This task requires a roll against his wits and has a difficulty of 13. Thanatos has a wits of 8 and rolls a 5. Since he has a value of 13, he deciphers the scroll's message.

Sometimes, there are modifiers to the difficulty of a task. For example, wearing heavy armour increases the difficulty of tasks requiring reflexes (see below).

### Equipment

You start your adventure with a few items of equipment, but you may find or buy other items during your adventure. You start with the following items:

Club (damage bonus +2) (put this in the weapons table)

Backpack (put this in your equipment list)

Waterskin (put this in your equipment list)

2 meals (note these in the provisions box)

10 silver pieces (put these in the silver pieces box)

10-30 copper pieces (roll 1 die, divide the result by 2, rounding fractions up then multiply by 10. Put the result in the copper pieces box)

Furthermore, if you have the herbalism skill, add a herbalist's kit to your equipment list.

### Weapons

Each weapon you carry has a damage bonus, which is what you add to the damage you inflict on an opponent if you hit them. You begin your adventure with a crude club with a flint head which has a damage bonus of +2, but if you are lucky, you may find other weapons along the way.

You may carry a maximum of three weapons. If you find another weapon that you want to take with you and you already have three weapons, you must leave one behind.

<u>Weapon</u>	<u>Damage bonus</u>
Unarmed strike	+0
Dagger, arrow	+1
Shortsword, club, quarterstaff, crossbow bolt	+2
Longsword, axe, mace, warhammer, spear	+3
Two handed sword, battle axe, huge club, pike	+4

### Armour

Armour is useful in two ways. First of all, suits of armour are useful for absorbing damage from blows. If you are wearing a suit of armour, you can reduce any damage done to you by its damage reduction value. However, be aware that heavier armour will impede your movement or clank loudly and so it will increase the difficulty of some tasks, mainly those that require reflexes (see the table).

Secondly, shields can be used to block blows in combat and so add to your defence score. The defence bonus a shield grants depends on its size.

You begin your adventure with no armour or shield, but if you are lucky, you may find some along the way. Armour made of metal is extremely rare as the art of making it is only known by a few very skilled armourers. If you find some metal armour, consider yourself very fortunate.

You may wear one suit of armour and carry one shield. If you find a suit of armour you want and you are already wearing one, you must leave the old suit behind. Also, if you find a shield you want and you are already carrying one, you must leave that shield behind.

<u>Armour</u>	<u>Damage reduction</u>	<u>Increase to task difficulty</u>
Padded	1	+0
Leather	2	+0
Chainmail	4	+1
Half plate armour	6	+2
Full plate armour	8	+3

<u>Shield</u>	<u>Defence bonus</u>
Buckler	+1
Small shield	+2
Large shield	+3

### Provisions

You have started out on a long and arduous journey so make sure you use your provisions wisely. You may be told in the text that you must eat a meal or lose 1 health point. If you eat a meal, reduce the number of provisions by 1. If not, lose 1 health point through hunger.

### Silver pieces and copper pieces

Silver and copper pieces are the main currency of your land. Ten copper pieces have the same value as one silver piece. You may be able to trade these coins for something that may aid you in your adventure.

### Notes

Your actions will have consequences for good or for ill. You will sometimes be instructed to note down a codeword to represent something you have done as it may have consequences later.

### Name

Think of a name for your character and add it to the box.

### Profession

You may think of a profession for your character based on their attributes and skills if you desire. This has no bearing on the game. For example, Gurthak's profession would be warrior, while Thanatos would be a priest.



## Adventure Sheet

Name..... Profession.....  
Strength:..... Attack (strength/2):.....  
Endurance:..... Defence (6 + reflexes/2):.....  
Reflexes:..... Psychic attack (aura/2):.....  
Wits:..... Psychic defence (6 + wits/2):.....  
Aura:.....  
Health (2 + strength + endurance):..... Willpower (2 + wits + aura):.....

Weapons	Damage bonus	Armour	Damage reduction
1.....		.....	
2.....			
3.....		Shield	Defence bonus

Equipment	Skills
.....	.....
.....	.....
.....	.....
.....	.....
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Provisions:..... Silver pieces:..... Copper pieces:.....

### Background

It was announced at your village harvest. Kendris, the high druid required volunteers for a dangerous mission. You remember that over the years, the hermit had kept wild animals at bay and increased your village's crops. The headman even claimed that Kendris had banished a demon. So, in the hope of paying him back, you began the week long journey to his cave. When you arrived, many people from the surrounding land had come to take up the mission that he had announced. You all spent the night at the foot of the high druid's mountain. In the morning, you begin the long arduous climb to hear the words of the high druid. Eventually, you reach his cave.

The old man in green and brown robes stands before you in the cave. He is old and regal. Despite his age, he gives off an aura of strength and vitality.

'My friends' he addresses the group of barbarians in front of him of which you are one. 'Long I have kept vigil over your homes and I have asked for nothing. However, what I have discovered may not just benefit me, but all across our land. You all know of the tales of the old kings. Great sorcerers who built mighty cities and commanded powerful beings. The greatest of these sorcerer kings was Zharos. He ruled the city of Penagon and began building the Great Tower of Penagon to store all the knowledge of humanity. He wrote his own book, the codex of Zharos, which contains all his magical knowledge. But then the great cataclysm came. Storms ripped the tower down and earthquakes devastated great parts of the city. Much knowledge was lost and humanity was plunged into a dark age. We have slowly begun to rebuild our civilisation, but the process is slow. However, a month ago, my animal messengers came to me, telling me that they had found the ruins of Penagon in the mountains. If we could find the Codex of Zharos, we could restore this land to its former glory.'

A large, muscular man from the Village of Nord speaks up. 'We are with you, Kendris. For many years, you have blessed our crops and performed rituals to keep demons from cursing our village. We will find the Codex for you.'

Kendris, the druid nods and smiles. 'Thank you, my friends. The ruins are north of here, but spread out for many miles. It would be best if you all make your own ways into the city as you will cover a bigger area. I will be staying at the Village of Waterbridge for the next few weeks. Come and find me there if you get the book'

And so, with what few possessions you have, you leave the cave of Kendris. You head back to Waterbridge and tell your fellow villagers of Kendris's words. Then you prepare for your journey. The next day, the villagers are all out to wish you luck as you leave and begin your search for the Codex of Zharos.

Turn over...

1

For several hours, you walk along the well known trail between Waterbridge and Haven. You should reach the village by dusk. It is the northernmost outpost of civilisation. Very little is known about the mountains north of Haven. Explorers have set out into the mountains, but few have returned and those few have refused to speak of what they saw. You even doubt the existence of ancient cities, past civilisations and hordes of magical treasure.

The land you are traversing is rocky and bleak. Patches of bracken and grass are the only vegetation to break up the desolate landscape. The sky is grey and overcast. It is starting to drizzle and you wrap your cloak around you as you trudge on to your destination. If you have the hunting skill, turn to 25. If not, turn to 50.

2

As you put the scroll in your back pack (*add the scroll to your equipment list and note that it has 20 lines of runes*) you hear a rattling sound. Turning around, you see the skeleton getting off the altar. It is now walking towards you, arms outstretched. It gnashes its teeth as it approaches. You stand, helpless as you cannot believe that a dead man is walking towards you. *The skeleton has a psychic attack of 3. If you defend yourself from this (the skeleton's attack strength is lower than your psychic defence), turn to 40. If not, turn to 58.*

3

You are able to recognise some of the runes. The writing is a very old language which has long fallen out of use amongst your people. However, you notice that some words are similar to words you use today. You can also link the meanings of these words to the pictures. The most important picture is the picture of a man holding an object that looks like a small metallic diamond. A blue glow is coming from the diamond. The word 'weapon' is inscribed above the metallic diamond. Around the man stand two shorter figures. They stand up to the man's chest. They have large grey heads, shaped like upside down tear drops. On these heads, they have big black eyes, thin bodies and spindly arms. Instead of mouths, they have small rectangular slits and instead of noses, they have two small holes. Above these figures is the word 'demon'. The two grey figures around the man are being struck by blue light which comes from the diamond. They look like they are being knocked over. An inscription near the man says that you need to press two of the top faces of the diamond and order the demons to leave by the power of the Nine Great Gods. Next to this scene, another grey figure is holding a small rectangular object. He is pointing it at another man. A multicoloured ray leaves the object and strikes the man. The man has his eyes closed and has strange and bizarre monsters above his head. From the inscription, you can make out that the demons have much power that man can use, but they must be controlled carefully or something bad will happen. You cannot discern anything else from that. *Note the codeword prophecy on your adventure sheet. Also note that the incantation to banish demons requires calling on 9 Great Gods.* If you have the herbalism skill, turn to 21. If not, you decide your next course of action. If you haven't already done so, you can investigate the shaft (turn to 15) or leave the caves (turn to 63)

4

The danger brings you back to your senses. You prepare for combat. *Spores and holy water do not work against the doll.*

DOLL

ATTACK: 2

DEFENCE: 10

DAMAGE: +0

DAMAGE REDUCTION: 0

HEALTH: 5

If you win, turn to 9

5

You bear your teeth, raise your arms and growl back at the wolf. *The wolf has a psychic defence of 7. Perform a psychic attack against the wolf. If you succeed, you wolf backs down and lopes away, tail between its legs. You continue your journey. Turn to 48. If you fail, you enrage the wolf even further and it attacks. Turn to 67.*

6

You remove the rubble and find an arm sticking out. By removing more rubble, you uncover a small boy, barely conscious. After a rest and some water, he looks better. 'Charlie's the name.' he says. 'Come with me!'

The boy takes you to a nearby house where his father lives. Upon hearing the story, his father cannot thank you enough. He gives you seven sheets of paper with runes on them. He also gives you 6 silver pieces and some bear meat. *Add 7 sheets of paper, 6 silver pieces and 1 meal to your adventure sheet. You continue to the tower. Turn to 16.*

7

You come to a large lectern with a huge book standing on it. Taking a look, you realise that it is an index of all the books in the tower. You look for the Codex and find its location. It takes you hours of walking and climbing to actually get the book. *You must eat a meal or lose 1 health point. However, you find it. It has thirteen strange humanoid creatures on the cover. Add the book to your equipment list and note that it has 13 humanoids on the front. If you wish to read it, turn to 24. If you just want to leave, you may search the tower further (turn to 49) or leave the tower (turn to 82).*

8

The tablet has moss and fungus growing around it. You reach out and try to dislodge it from the wall. *This task requires wits and has a difficulty of 14 unless you have the herbalism skill. If you have the herbalism skill, the task has a difficulty of 11. If you succeed, turn to 27. If you fail, turn to 79.*

9

Leaving the remains of the doll, you make haste to leave the tower. And go to another part of the city. Turn to 92.

## 10

On top of one of the piles, you see a small metal diamond, like the one portrayed on the tablet. You snatch it off the pile and ask Gravax how much it is. He stands there for a minute, looking up. He obviously makes up the price for all of his items. 'It's a pretty little thing, isn't it? 2 silver pieces.' Decide whether or not you will want to buy it or haggle with Gravax. *This task requires aura and has a difficulty of 10. If you have the intimidate skill, you automatically succeed (Gravax is very cowardly). If you succeed, Gravax will lower the price to 1 silver piece. If you fail, he will raise the price to 3 silver pieces. If you buy the metal diamond, add it to your equipment list and turn to 47.*

## 11

As you brush past a bush, you look down and notice a herbal plant. The leaves of such a plant have healing properties, so you eagerly collect them. *Add the herbal leaves to your equipment list. You may use them on any paragraph apart from a paragraph with a combat. They will restore 2 health points. Turn to 75.*

## 12

The villagers hiss at your attempts to turn them round. They seize you. Kendris tells them that you have been possessed by a demon in Penagon and the villagers promptly burn you at the stake. Your adventure ends here.

## 13

The weaponsmith stands over an anvil, hammering a blade. He is a burly, bald man. 'I've got axes. They're going for 5 silver pieces.' If you want to buy an axe, which has a damage bonus of 3, you can pay 5 silver pieces. Or you can haggle with the weaponsmith. *This task requires aura and has a difficulty of 12. If you succeed, the weaponsmith will lower the price to 4 silver pieces. If not, you have to pay 6 silver pieces.* You can also sell a silver dagger or silver candlestick if you have one. If you do, you haggle over the price. *This task requires aura and has a difficulty of 12. If you succeed, the weaponsmith will pay 6 silver pieces for the dagger or candlestick. If you fail, he will pay 4 silver pieces for the dagger or candlestick.* When you have finished your dealings with the weaponsmith, turn to 36.

## 14

Word of your rescue has spread and the villagers are overjoyed to see you. They feed you until you are stuffed and give you more food for your journey. *Add 1 meal to your adventure sheet.* The village wisewoman takes a look at your wounds. *Restore 4 health points.* You then stay the night at Ravan's hovel. In the morning, you bid the villagers a fond farewell and head back to your village. Turn to 41.

## 15

Before you climb down the shaft, you want to see how deep it is. You throw a stone down it and hear the *clank* of it hitting the bottom quite quickly. It doesn't seem that deep and it seems to be dry at the bottom. You throw your torch to the bottom to see where you are climbing. As the torch hits the floor, you get to see the bottom of the pit. You see a young man, curled up on the floor. He seems to be asleep. 'Oi!' you shout. The young man stirs. His face looks pale and gaunt. 'Are you Ravan?' you ask. He nods. 'I can't climb up. I've broken my ankle.' He croaks weakly. 'I'll come down to get you.' You reply.

The sides of the shaft are rough and it is easy to climb down to the bottom of the shaft. You get the boy to put his arms around your neck and climb to the top of the shaft. You let the boy down at the top and give him some water. He looks better after that. You go down again to get your torch.

'Thank you.' Says Ravan. I slipped on the water and fell down the shaft. I had broken my ankle and couldn't get out. I just want to go home now.' *Not down the word saved on your notes box.* If you return to the village with Ravan, turn to 94. If you have not already done so, you can explore the rest of the cave first. Turn to 70.

16

You eventually reach the tower and gaze in awe at its magnitude. It is huge. You find a small entrance to the tower and are amazed to see that you are in a corridor where the walls are just full of books. There are candles lying on the floor, so you pick one up. Immediately, it lights itself. You wonder at the sorcery of such things. The books here seem very well preserved, even after thousands of years. Somehow, the air here is cold and dry. You can hear a faint humming sound, but you do not know what is making it. As you walk along the book lined corridors, which seem to twist and turn and go on forever, you notice that occasionally you see a small metallic doll lying on the floor. You wonder what they were for. If the Codex of Zharos is anywhere in the city, it is here, amongst the huge volumes on the endless shelves. You begin your search. If you have the literacy skill, turn to 7. If not, turn to 87.

17

Kendris's body lies before you. It starts to spasm and then black smoke flies out of its mouth. It stops and Kendris's body is still.

Eventually, the villagers return to the square and you tell them what happened. You bury Kendris by the great oak in the village square. After the ritual of passing, the villagers go back to their lives. But you cannot. Wanderlust has gripped you, so you pack your bags and start another adventure...

18

You pull out a piece of meat jerky and throw it to the wolf. It devours the meat swiftly, before you can even move away. The wolf then focuses on you again and growls. You quickly throw it another piece of meat, which it swallows whole. You take out all your food and throw all the pieces at the wolf (*Subtract 2 meals from your provisions list*). It descends upon the feast swallowing the repast as you try to sneak away. *This task requires reflexes and has a difficulty of 12. If you succeed, turn to 48. If you fail, the wolf looks up and pounces on you. You must fight. Turn to 67.*

19

You find a hidden compartment in a wall. You open it and a snake's skeleton falls out. Obviously a trap. However, behind the skeleton, you notice a silver dagger which you eagerly take. *Add the silver dagger to your weapons list. Since it is made from a soft metal, it has a damage bonus of 0, but it may be useful against demons and undead.* Turn to 73.

20

It is five miles to the tower in the centre of the city so you start your trek through the city streets. The carefully pick your way through the ruins, on the look out for more wild beasts. As you are walking past the rubble of a collapsed building, you hear a faint cry for help. If you dig through the rubble to look for the source of the noise, turn to 84. If you carry on to the tower, turn to 16.

21

Using your kit, you may be able to collect some spores of catatonic fungus to use against an enemy. You have heard that the hallucinations confuse warriors in battle and make them miss their opponents in combat. However, you will risk breathing in more spores if you attempt this. If you want to try this, turn to 31. If not, you decide what to do next. If you haven't already done so, you can investigate the shaft (turn to 15) or leave the caves (turn to 63)

22

You place the book in Kendris's shaking hands. He looks through it in excitement, but then his face falls when he realises that there are pages missing. 'Have you got the missing pages?' he asks. If you have the codeword *scraps* on your adventure sheet, turn to 43. If you do not, turn to 93.

23

Gorm shows you many wooden and stone carvings of animals and other religious symbols. He tells you the effects of many of these charms. He then picks up a skull carved from white rock. Gorm tells you that it's magical power will protect you against demons. *Gorm's psychic attack is 4. He performs a psychic attack against you. If Gorm succeeds (his attack strength is equal to or greater than your psychic defence), turn to 33. If he fails, turn to 44.*

24

You look on the first page of the book. Immediately, images of screaming demons enter your head, knocking you backwards. You scream back at them, telling them to go away. *Roll 1 die and divide the result by 2, rounding fractions up. Lose that many willpower points. Add the codeword nightmare to your adventure sheet.* You immediately put the book in your bag and leave. If you wish to search the tower further, turn to 49. If not, turn to 82.

25

As you wrap your cloak around you, you glance down and notice some strange tracks. Upon closer inspection, you see that they are wolf prints and they are heading in the direction that you are. You change your course to avoid the predator. Turn to 48.

26

You can see the city in a nearby valley. It is huge collection of buildings of many shapes and sizes. Many spires reach upwards from the valley. In the centre of the city, you see a huge tower rising up from the city almost like a huge artificial mountain. The base of it must be two miles in diameter and the structure must be a mile high. However, you see that the top of the tower is missing. Either the tower was unfinished or it was destroyed. You wonder at what force could have toppled such a huge building. The sight takes your breath away. As you approach the city, you imagine the ancient civilisation that lived in it and their many wonders. Then you wonder about what destroyed such a mighty city.

It is late afternoon when you get to a part of the city's wall. You climb over some rubble through a breach in the wall to find yourself standing on a cobbled street. If you have the hunting skill, turn to 56. If you do not, turn to 72.

## 27

Before you touch the slab, you get a flash of realisation. The black fungus is known as Catatonic fungus. Its spores can cause hallucinations and madness. Armed with this knowledge, you are careful not to touch the fungus as you remove the tablet. *Add the stone tablet to your equipment list.* If you have the literacy skill, turn to 3. If not, turn to 54.

## 28

This is beyond belief. Your mind reels. *Roll 1 die. If you roll a 1-3, lose 1 willpower point. If you roll a 4-6, lose 2 willpower points.* The doll stabs you in the food with the dagger. *Lose 1 health point.* This brings you back to your senses. You prepare for combat.

DOLL

ATTACK: 2  
 DEFENCE: 10  
 DAMAGE: +0  
 DAMAGE REDUCTION: 0  
 HEALTH: 5

If you win, turn to 9

## 29

You hear a scream and an old man dressed in a loincloth and wielding an huge axe charges at the bear. He sinks the axe in the bear's back. *Subtract 7 points from the bear's health. Continue the fight, but at the end of every round, the old man hits the bear, causing 7 health points of damage. Remember to deduct all the health points from the bear's initial score of 24.*

BEAR:

ATTACK: 5  
 DEFENCE: 8  
 DAMAGE: +3  
 DAMAGE REDUCTION: 0  
 HEALTH: 24

If you win the fight and you were berserk during the fight (i.e. you used the berserk skill) turn to 77. If you were not berserk, turn to 88.

## 30

'Thank you, my friend.' Says the old man. He gives you three torches, some tinder and a two pieces of flint. *Add 3 torches, flint and tinder to your equipment list.* He then tells you that his son was going to explore a cave two mile north of the village. The villagers have long believed that a witch lives in the cave and blights the village. 'I donna believe that. Some girl went missing ten years ago but if she's a witch, I'm the king of the mountains. If there's anything in that cave, it's a wild beast.'

The man's words do not give you much confidence, but you assure him that you will find his son. Turn to 42.



## 31

Carefully, you try to get an unburst spore bag into a pouch. *This task requires reflexes and has a difficulty of 11.* If you succeed, you collect some spores. *Add the catatonic fungus spores to your equipment list. You may use them at the beginning of any combat against a living creature. If you do, cross them off your equipment list and reduce your opponent's attack score by 2.* If you fail you do not get any fungus as the fungus explodes in your face, but at least you are ready for it. *Roll 1 die. If you roll a 1-3, do not deduct any willpower points. If you roll a 4-6, lose 1 willpower point.* After you attempt to get the fungus, you decide what to do next. If you haven't already done so, you can investigate the shaft (turn to 15) or leave the caves (turn to 63)

## 32

You read the scroll out loud. As you finish speaking the last syllable, the demon stops in its tracks and starts to shake. It shakes more and more violently until it falls apart into thousands of strange metallic pieces.

Eventually, the villagers return to the square and you tell them what happened. You bury Kendris by the great oak in the village square. After the ritual of passing, the villagers go back to their lives. But you cannot. Wanderlust has gripped you, so you pack your bags and start another adventure...

## 33

You believe that these charms have magical power and will protect you against demons. If you wish to buy the skull, it will cost you 3sp. You may wish to haggle with him. *This task requires aura and has a difficulty of 13. If you succeed he will sell you the charm for 2sp. If you fail, he will charge 4sp.* If you buy the charm, you can increase your psychic defence by 4 against psychic attacks from demons (you will be told in the text when a demon is performing a psychic attack on you). If you want to have a look at Gorm's herbs, turn to 62. If you want him to translate some writing, turn to 96. If you wish to leave, turn to 36.

## 34

You remember that the codex protects the user from demons. There is a part of the map with a strange misshapen grey head on it. Maybe that is a demon's head. You head for that part of the tower. The corridors seem to go on forever and it takes many hours of walking and climbing to get there. *You must eat a meal or lose 1 health point.* Eventually, you get to your destination. You are immediately drawn to a book which has thirteen strange humanoids on the cover, one of which is a small grey humanoid which you saw on the map. This must be the Codex. *Add the book to your adventure sheet.* If you look inside it, turn to 24. If you just put it in your backpack and leave, you may search the tower further (turn to 49) or just leave (turn to 82).

## 35

The journey back is as hard as the outward journey. You get to the old man's hovel and knock the door. His face falls when he opens it to see that his son is not with you. You tell the old man your story and he starts weeping. You leave him and go to the inn. Turn to 60.

## 36

Walking through the city, you notice three places that might sell you useful equipment. On is a weaponsmith's. Another is the tribe's shaman who has many charms and herbs for sale. The third shop is packed with junk. You might be able to find something useful among the pile of stuff. If you

go to the weaponsmith's shop turn to 13. If you visit the shaman, turn to 57. If you go to the shop full of junk, turn to 52. If you wish to investigate another part of the city, turn to 92.

37

You awake at dawn. Sunlight is streaming in through the window. You wash in a bucket of water, get dressed and prepare to head north through the unmapped mountains. As you walk through the village square, you see a butcher's shop and a baker's shop is open. They are selling dried meat and bread for travellers. You may buy a days worth of food for 10 copper pieces (or 1 silver piece). You may buy any number of day's worth of food. When you have finished shopping, you leave Haven. Turn to 97.

38

As you walk through the rest of the tower, you wonder if any other items here could be of use. If you search the huge library quickly, turn to 49. If you just decide to leave, turn to 82.

39

You wave your club at the bear and scream a battle cry at the bear. *The bear has a psychic defence of 9 (it is higher because the bear does not normally see humans as a threat). Perform a psychic attack against the bear. If you use the berserk skill and go into a rage, add 2 to the dice roll. If you throw some catatonic fungus in the bear's face, add 2 to the dice roll. If you have already wounded the bear, add 2 to the dice roll. If you succeed, the bear stops in its tracks and steps back, a little unsure. Turn to 29. If you fail, the bear continues its charge. Turn to 81. If you became berserk or used spores against the bear, the effects will continue during the combat.*

40

You manage to snap out of your inaction and prepare your weapon. *If you use a club against the skeleton, increase its damage bonus by 1 for this combat. The skeleton is undead. Spores will not work against it.*

SKELETON

ATTACK: 3

DEFENCE: 9

DAMAGE: +0

DAMAGE REDUCTION: 1

HEALTH: 10

If you win, you flee the temple. Turn to 92.

41

You spend the day trekking back home. *Unless you have the hunting skill, you must eat a meal or lose 1 health point.* Eventually, you get back to Waterbridge to report to Kendris how your mission went. As you come to the outskirts of the village, one of the farm labourers spots you and runs to the village to herald your arrival. When you get to the village square, Kendris is standing at the centre of a throng of excited villagers. Amongst the havoc, you learn that the adventurers from the other villages were all found dead in the wilderness. 'Well?' He asks, his voice betraying excitement. 'Did you find it?'

If you have the Codex of Zharos and want to give it to Kendris, turn to 22. If you do not have the codex or do not want to hand it over, turn to 93.

42

You light a torch (*subtract 1 torch from your adventure sheet*), leave the village and start to scramble through the rocky mountains. There are no paths and you find the climb hard going while holding a torch. Sunlight would have helped, but many things can happen to the boy in the space of a night. You come to a steep slope covered in rocks, some of which come loose and fall away if you hold them. You can't get around it so you must climb it. *This is a task that requires reflexes and has a difficulty of 12. If you succeed, you reach the top of the slope unscathed. If you fail, you fall a long way and suffer cuts and bruises – subtract 1 health point. You then manage to reach the top. Turn to 86.*

43

Kendris snatches the sheets. 'Finally!' he says 'We shall begin a new age of prosperity!' He begins to chant from the book. There is a crash and a blinding white light. When you can see again, Kendris is lying on the floor, dead. Standing next to him is a small grey humanoid, about five foot tall. It's bald head is large and like an up turned tear drop. It has large black unblinking eyes. A sound comes from the small slit in its face, presumably its mouth. 'Foolish humans! You are only fit to be our slaves!' In one clawed hand, it is holding a metal cylinder. It points it at a villager. A multicoloured beam of light flies out from the cylinder and strikes the villager. He stands there, in a catatonic state. The rest of the village flees, screaming in panic at this demon. The demon points the cylinder at you and the multicoloured ray strikes you. Immediately, your head is filled with terrifying images. *The demon is performing a psychic attack against you. It has a psychic attack of 6. If you have the charm, its bonus counts for this psychic defence. If you defend yourself against the demon's attack, turn to 51. If you do not, turn to 91.*

44

You are sure that these ornaments have no magic within them and refuse to buy any of these things. You tell him that you want to buy things of value. If you want to have a look at Gorm's herbs, turn to 62. If you want him to translate some writing, turn to 96. If you wish to leave, turn to 36.

45

You press the faces of the diamond and shout 'By the power of the Nine Great Gods, I order you to leave!' A blue ray flies out from the diamond and strikes the grey demon in the chest. It immediately stops. Cautiously, you walk over to it and push it. It falls over and smashes into thousands of strange metallic pieces. Eventually, the villagers return to the square and you tell them what happened. You bury Kendris by the great oak in the village square. After the ritual of passing, the villagers go back to their lives. But you cannot. Wanderlust has gripped you, so you pack your bags and start another adventure...

46

You start to sway the villagers. One of them shouts to Kendris 'What's this book supposed to do anyhow?' The villagers start to hassle him and boo him. Kendris starts to get more and more agitated, but nothing stops the cries of your fellows. Then the druid starts to shake. His face starts to contort into many weird and horrible shapes. The crowd goes silent. Horns start to grow out of Kendris's head and his eyes glow. 'Fools!' he shouts. 'We will take this world and you pathetic humans will be our slaves, just like this druid.' Kendris has been possessed by a demon! The villagers run away in terror. The Kendris demon faces you. 'You have thwarted our plans for a short time,

mortal, but we will prevail in the end. Just like we did over the rulers of Penagon. They dabbled in dark sorcery, just like Kendris, and it brought ruin upon the world. Now I will bring ruin upon you! If you have the metallic diamond and know what to do with it, multiply the number of great gods there are in the incantation by 10 and turn to that paragraph. If you have a papyrus scroll and know what to do with it, multiply the number of *words* (not lines) you must speak by 2 and turn to that paragraph. Otherwise, you must fight the fiend. Turn to 69.

47

The only object you find that is obviously useful is a suit of leather armour. Gravax also knows the value of armour and asks 10 silver pieces for it. He won't haggle. *However, Gravax is easily scared and if you have the intimidate skill, you can bully him into selling to you for 7 silver pieces. If you buy the leather armour, put it in your armour box. It has a damage reduction of 2. You then inspect the shop and try to identify any items you may find useful. This task has a difficulty of 14 and requires wits. If you have the herbalism skill, reduce the difficulty by 2. If you have the literacy skill, reduce the difficulty by 2. If you succeed, turn to 68. If not, you leave the shop. Make a note that you can return here to buy any of the items Gravax has on offer. Turn to 36.*

48

It is now late afternoon. The drizzle has stopped and the Sun is bringing some warmth to you. Looking down from the top of the hill, you can see the plumes of smoke indicating the position of Haven. There is more vegetation here and as you start to walk down the hill, you notice the ground becoming more grassy. There are even some trees growing here. You have been walking swiftly for several hours now and you realise that you are hungry. *Unless you have the hunting skill, you must eat 1 meal or lose 1 health point. If you have the herbalism skill, turn to 11. If you do not, turn to 75.*

49

You browse the shelves and look through the reading rooms. You also notice a silver candlestick which you can take. You can use the candlestick as a club in combat, but it only has a damage bonus of +1 because it was not made for combat. However, silver may be useful if you fight any undead or demons. *Add the silver candlestick to your adventure sheet. You leave. Turn to 82.*

50

As you are walking past a large rock, a wolf leaps out in front of you. It is looking scrawny and as it bears its teeth and growls, it drools. It is focused on you and ready to pounce. If you attack it, turn to 67. If you have the intimidate skill, you can try to scare it. To do this, turn to 5. If you try to feed it, turn to 18.

51

Using your force of will, you resist the nightmares until they subside. You face the demon. If you have the metallic diamond and know what to do with it, multiply the number of great gods there are in the incantation by 5 and turn to that paragraph. If you have a papyrus scroll and know what to do with it, turn to the paragraph with the number of *words* (not lines) on the scroll. Otherwise, you must fight the fiend. Turn to 71.

52

Gravax's Finest Emporium' is brimming with knick knacks and other objects, some of which you recognise, some of which you don't. If you have the codewords *relic* or *prophecy* on your adventure sheet, turn to 10. If not, turn to 47.

53

You dart out of the village before anyone can act. A mob starts to follow you, but you head north and manage to outpace them on the terrain you know better than the villagers. You are an exile now. You cannot return to Waterbridge and Kendris will turn other villagers against you. You have an uncertain future. Maybe you will return to Penagon and explore it further. Or maybe you will hire yourself out as a mercenary. Either way, this adventure ends here.

54

You cannot make out much from the writings, but you look at the pictures. There are humans and then there are smaller figures. They are smaller than the men and have large grey heads, shaped like upside down tear drops. On these heads, they have big black eyes, thin bodies and spindly arms. Instead of mouths, they have small rectangular slits and instead of noses, they have two small holes. Some of them hold rectangular objects. Multicoloured rays of objects emit from these objects and strike people. These people have closed eyes and weird monsters above their heads. One man is standing and smiling. He is holding a grey diamond. From this diamond come two rays of light which strike two of the grey people. You cannot make out any of the runes, but there are thirty runes on the tablet. *Note the codeword relic on your adventure sheet.* If you have the herbalism skill, turn to 21. If not, you decide your next course of action. If you haven't already done so, you can investigate the shaft (turn to 15) or leave the caves (turn to 63)

55

You manage to find an unconscious boy under the rubble, but he is on death's door. He is barely breathing and has a large cut on his forehead. If you have some heral leaves or a heral potion, you can help him – *delete the leaves or potion from your adventure sheet and turn to 80.* If not, the boy dies. You bury him and continue to the tower. Turn to 16.

56

By the pile of rubble that used to be a building, you find another, smaller pile of brown stuff. At first, you think it is mud, but then you notice steam rising from it. It's warm. On closer inspection, you realise that it is a big pile of dung. What living thing is prowling the streets? You take a closer look and sniff it. It is bear dung and it is very fresh. There is a bear nearby. You curse as the cobbled streets don't leave tracks, so you instead go over to a nearby building, which is intact and climb onto the flat roof. You are glad that you did, because you see the bear standing just around the corner from where you were. You cannot avoid the bear on the roof, so, taking advantage of the situation, you draw your club and jump on the bear! The bear roars in surprise and fury, but then you smash it's head with your club before jumping off the bear's back. The bear turns around, slightly dazed, but ready to unleash its rage upon you. *When you fight the bear in combat, subtract 6 from the bear's health.* If you have the intimidate skill, you may wish to try to scare it (turn to 39). Otherwise, you will need to fight it (turn to 81)

57

Gorm, the shaman of the Elk Clan is the only member of the clan that does not live in a house. You find him sitting in the city park under a tree. He greets you and tells you that your quest may bring great evil to the world, but he will help you because if you overcome it, you can gain great gifts of experience and knowledge. He offers you charms that will help you against evil. If you look at these, turn to 23. He also offers to sell you some medicinal herbs. If you look at these, turn to 62. Gorm can also translate any strange writings you have come across. If you have anything you want to translate, turn to 96. If you want to visit another shop, turn to 36.

58

You are paralysed with terror as the skeleton approaches you. You watch helplessly as the bone claws are drawn down your face. The pain snaps you out of your paralysis and you fall backwards. *Roll 1 die and divide the result by 2, rounding fractions up. This is how many willpower points you lose. Also, lose 1 health point. You get ready to fight for your life.*

*If you use a club against the skeleton, increase its damage bonus by 1. For this combat. The skeleton is undead. Spores will not work against it.*

SKELETON

ATTACK: 3

DEFENCE: 9

DAMAGE: +0

DAMAGE REDUCTION: 1

HEALTH: 10

If you win, you flee the temple. Turn to 92

59

You leave the city and begin your trek back to civilisation. It is three days hard walk to the Village of Haven. *If you have the hunting skill, you must eat 1 meal or lose 1 health point. Otherwise, you must eat 3 meals or lose 1 health point for each meal you miss. You reach the Village of Haven. If you have the codeword saved on your adventure sheet, turn to 14. If not, turn to 74.*

60

It is getting late and you are tired after a long days travel. You pay the innkeeper 8 copper pieces for a room. *Subtract 8 copper pieces from your adventure sheet.* He leads you to a small room with a pile of smelly straw on the floor. You lock the door and collapse on the pile and go to sleep. Turn to 37.

61

You cannot make out where the codex will be. You decide to scour the tower until you find something. You spend two days of continuous wandering around the tower, looking for this book. *You must eat two meals or lose 1 health point for each meal you do not eat.* Eventually, you find a strange book with thirteen humanoids on it. You recognise the word Zharos, so this must be the book. *Add the book to your adventure sheet and not that it has 13 humanoids on the cover.* If you look inside it, turn to 24. If you just put it in your backpack, you may search the tower further (turn to 49) or just leave (turn to 82).

62

Gorm has some heral which you can buy for 3 silver pieces. He also has some yoven root for 3 silver pieces. *Both of these herbs can be used in any paragraph apart from ones which have a combat in them. The heral will restore 2 health points. The yoven root restores 1 willpower point.* Gorm is not willing to haggle over the herbs as they are expensive to grow. If you wish to look at the charms, turn to 23. If you want Gorm to translate some writings, turn to 96. If you wish to leave, turn to 36.

63

You leave the cave and start the trek back to Haven. If you have the word *saved* in your notes box, turn to 94. If not, turn to 35.

64

You read out the words on the scroll as Kendris approaches. As you finish the final syllable, he spasms and a black smoke leaves his mouth. He then looks at you. 'Where am I? Who are you? You explain to him the events of the last few weeks. He looks shocked. The last thing he remembers is completing a ritual for fertility he found in an ancient book. 'It must have been a trap.' He said 'So that someone would summon a demon unintentionally. I thank you for saving my soul.' Kendris orders a feast to be prepared and the village celebrates your victory over evil. If you found the Codex of Zharos, it is burned in a fire. You enjoy many honours in your land, but this adventure is only the first of many...

65

The temple in the city is a large marble building surrounded by pillars. However, over the years, the white of the marble has turned into grey as dust and dirt has accumulated on the temple. As you approach it, you feel very uneasy. After searching the outer rooms and finding nothing, you enter the main hall of the temple. The floor of the hall is covered in what used to be a plush red carpet. It is all rags now. There are still beautiful paintings on the walls depicting gods and wars. The ceiling has a beautiful painting of people with white feathery wings looking over humanity. The windows have stained glass in them. There is a white marble altar. On it lays the skeleton of a human. You search the hall. *This task requires wits and has a difficulty of 11. If you succeed, turn to 19. If not, turn to 73.*

66

The shaman scrutinises the tablet and then smiles. 'You have found a good clue to defeating the evil that toppled this city, my friend. These demons were at war with humanity. We banished them, but they brought much destruction to the world. The diamond which is destroying the demons is a powerful weapon. The tablet tells you how to defeat them. You press two of the top panels and order the demons to leave by the power of the Nine Great Gods. I feel you can find such a diamond nearby.' You thank the shaman for his help. *Delete the codeword relic from your adventure sheet and write down the codeword prophecy. Make a note that the incantation involves 9 Great Gods.* Turn to 96.

67

You grasp your club and swing it at the wolf as it leaps for your throat.

WOLF:

ATTACK 3  
DEFENCE 9  
DAMAGE +1  
DAMAGE REDUCTION 0  
HEALTH 10

If you win, you catch your breath and continue your journey. Turn to 48.

68

You notice two dusty glass bottles on a shelf. One has a cross on it, indicating that it is holy water. This is a powerful weapon against undead and demons. The other bottle contains a liquid which smells of herbal, a healing herb. Gravax does not know the true value of these items. He refers to them as the 'weird water' and the 'stinky potion'. He will sell them to you for 1 silver piece a bottle. You do not haggle with him as you know that this is way below what they would cost normally. *If you buy the herbal, you can drink it on any paragraph except for one with a combat. It will restore 4 health points. The holy water can be used on an undead creature or demon before combat. It will cause 1-6 health points of damage to the creature.* After buying things, you leave the shop. *Make a note that you can return here to buy any of the items Gravax has on offer.* Turn to 36.

69

The Kendris/demon charges at you, ready to smite you with his staff. His demonic qualities have lent him strength and speed. However, he now has the weaknesses of demons. *Kendris is vulnerable to spores and holy water. Any silver weapon you use against Kendris has its damage bonus increased by 5.*

KENDRIS/DEMON

ATTACK: 4  
DEFENCE: 10  
DAMAGE: +2  
DAMAGE REDUCTION: 0  
HEALTH: 15

If you win, turn to 17.

70

You carry on down the cave for a hundred metres before it comes to a dead end. The walls here are covered in moss and black fungus. Looking at the rocks, you notice a small tablet of stone with pictures and runes upon it. If you wish to take it, turn to 8. If not, you may investigate the shaft if you haven't already (turn to 15) or you can leave the caves (turn to 63)



## 71

The demon did not predict that anyone would resist its psychic attacks and so is unarmed. The demon looks small and spindly, but when you hit it, your weapons make a clang as if it is made of metal. *Spores will not work against the demon, but holy water will. If you use a silver weapon against the demon, increase its damage bonus by 5.*

## GREY DEMON

ATTACK: 2

DEFENCE: 10

DAMAGE: +1

DAMAGE REDUCTION: 3

HEALTH: 8

If you win, turn to 95.

## 72

You walk around a corner to start your exploration of the ancient city and bump into a huge furry mass. You have just walked into a bear! It roars in anger at being disturbed and prepares to lash out at you with its claws. If you have the intimidate skill you may wish to try to scare it (turn to 39). Otherwise, you prepare for combat (turn to 81)

## 73

Behind the altar, you find a scroll made of papyrus lying on the floor. It is covered with twenty lines of runes. You cannot make out these ancient runes, even with the literacy skill. If you take it, turn to 2. If you leave the temple without it, turn to 92.

## 74

You get to the village at dusk. You can pay 1 silver piece to stay at the inn. If you cannot or will not, you spend the night huddled under the stars. It is cold and you need to keep warm. *This task requires endurance and has a difficulty of 13. If you succeed, you lose no health points. If you fail, you lose 1 health point.* In the morning, you may buy 1 meal for 1 silver piece. This will be enough food for your journey home. You can also buy some herbal leaves for 4 silver pieces. *You may use them on any paragraph apart from a paragraph with a combat. They will restore 2 health points.* Turn to 41.

## 75

The Sun is sinking in the pink sky as you arrive at the village of Haven. You find the village inn and enter. It is full of farmers and labourers, drinking, talking and laughing loudly. Until they notice you. Everyone in the room stares at you as you walk towards the bar. 'A mug of ale.' You say to the burly barkeep, trying to sound confident. 'Two coppers.' Replies the man. You pay him and he slams the ale mug on the counter. The clientele go back to their own conversations. *Deduct 2 copper pieces from your adventure sheet.* As you sup your ale, you survey the room. The peasants seem like peasants from any other village. They are dressed in their grubby work clothes and look tired from a hard days work. A concerned looking old man interrupts your reverie. 'Scuse me.' He says 'But you look like

someone who can handle a dangerous situation. See my boy, Ravan, went missing a couple a days ago in the mountains. 'E were looking for ancient treasure see.' I told 'im not to but 'e did. Can ye find 'im?' If you agree to find the man's son, turn to 30. If you refuse, the man spits on you and walks off, disgusted. Turn to 60.

76

Gorm reads the papyrus scroll and smiles. 'This scroll holds powerful magic. It will banish otherworldly beings such as demons from this world. Just pronounce the words as I say.' Gorm teaches you how to speak the 32 words on the scroll. *Delete the fact that the scroll has 20 lines of runes and now record that the scroll has 32 words.* Turn to 96.

77

'Well met to ye!' Says the old barbarian. 'I am Hunnet, warrior of the Elk Clan of the mountains.' You introduce yourself. 'I can see ye are a warrior after my own heart. Ye fight with a fury that canna be quelled. Let me take you to see my clan. And from one berserker to another, let me teach ye a thing or two.'

The old barbarian takes you to the part of the city where his tribe live and tell them about the bear. Two people rush off to skin it and prepare it for dinner. The buildings the Elk Clan live in are mostly intact. There are about two hundred people living and working in the buildings in the city as it provides protection and shelter from the dangers of the mountains. Hunnet takes you to his house, made of rectangular red stones. You wonder where such things are mined. There, he feeds you bear meat and then takes you out to a square where he teaches you a more powerful berserk skill. *Whenever you use your berserk skill, you may now increase your attack and damage bonus by 2. Your defence is reduced by 2. After each combat where you use it, roll a die. On the roll of 1-3, lose 1 willpower point. On the roll of 4-6, lose 2 willpower points.*

Hunnet then shows you around the part of the city where his clan lives. Each family has a stone house and lives in warm and dry conditions. The tribe all seem happy and well fed. Hunnet shows you the well where they get their water and strange houses made of glass where the tribe grow crops.

However, you are surprised that corn can be grown this far north. When you go inside the glass, you feel that the air is warm, almost like down south. Hunnet does not know how the glass houses work, but he is glad that they do.

You tell Hunnet that you have come to the city to find the Codex of Zharos. Hunnet has never heard of it, but suggests places for you to look. 'There's a temple in the north part of the city. There's also the Tower. According to legend it was going to house all the knowledge of mankind, but some gods destroyed it or something. It's an eerie place though. We donna go near there. One of our tribe went there but never came back. Now we just stick to this part of the city.' You thank Hunnet for his advice. Hunnet also tells you that there are many merchants in his clan where you can buy or sell goods. You have a good rest with the tribe. *Restore 6 health points.* If you would like to buy some useful equipment, turn to 36. If you want to go to the temple, turn to 65. If you want to explore the tower, turn to 20.

78

'Fellow villagers!' You begin 'We do not need the codex for it will bring great evil upon us!' You start a speech, telling the village about what you saw. You need to convince them or they will lynch you. *This task requires aura and has a difficulty of 15. However, the difficulty will change depending on certain factors.*

If you have the intimidate skill, reduce the difficulty by 2.

If you have the word *nightmares* on your adventure sheet, reduce the difficulty by 2.

If you have the word *Prophecy* on your adventure sheet, reduce the difficulty by 1.

If you have the word *Scraps* on your adventure sheet, reduce the difficulty by 1.

If you have the word *codex* on your adventure sheet, reduce the difficulty by 1.

If you succeed, turn to 46. If you fail, turn to 12.

79

As you try to dislodge the tablet, your hand touches the fungus which bursts and releases its spores. You can't avoid breathing them in. As you do, you start to feel tired. You collapse to ground and experience weird nightmares with horrible deformed monsters. *Roll 1 die. If you roll a 1-3, lose 1 willpower point. If you roll a 4-6, lose 2 willpower points.* You wake up a few minutes later. However, it seems like you were hallucinating for years. You realise that this fungus is catatonic fungus and make sure that you do not disturb it again. You carefully remove the tablet without touching the fungus again. *Add the stone tablet to your equipment list.* If you have the literacy skill, turn to 3. If not, turn to 54.

80

Using the heral, you stop the bleeding to the boy's wound. Eventually, he comes to, looking pale, but he is still alive. After a rest and some water, he looks better. 'Charlie's the name.' he says. 'Come with me!'

The boy takes you to a nearby house where his father lives. Upon hearing the story, his father cannot thank you enough. He gives you seven sheets of paper with runes on them. He also gives you 6 silver pieces and some bear meat. *Add 7 sheets of paper, 6 silver pieces and 1 meal to your adventure sheet.* You continue to the tower. Turn to 16.

81

The huge brown bear growls and bears its teeth. It charges you, ready to knock you down with its huge clawed paws. *If you have already wounded the bear, reduce the bear's health accordingly. You may use spores against this opponent. Fight the bear for one combat round.*

BEAR:

ATTACK: 5

DEFENCE: 8

DAMAGE: +3

DAMAGE REDUCTION: 0

HEALTH: 24

After one round, turn to 29.

82

You find yourself in front of large double doors. This must be the tower's main entrance. As you approach it, a dagger flies out of nowhere and cuts your arm. *Lose 1 health point.* You draw your weapon, scouring the darkness for your assailant. Then it appears. One of the metallic dolls has come

to life. It looks at you, eyes glowing red, holding a dagger like a sword. Then it charges! You freeze, trying to comprehend this murderous doll. *The doll has a psychic attack of 3. If you defend yourself from this attack (the doll's attack strength is less than your psychic defence), turn to 4. If you cannot defend yourself, turn to 28.*

83

Gorm takes one look at the cover of the book and then stops 'This is the Codex of Zharos!' he shouts in fear. 'It is great evil. Do not even look inside it, for its pages will drive you mad!' You explain that a druid in your village wants it to restore your people to its former glory. 'He is very misguided. This book summons demons. Although they promise power in the short term, eventually they will take the soul of the summoner with them. Be careful.' Gorm carefully leafs through the book, taking care not to study pages for longer than necessary. 'There are some pages missing here.' He notices. 'The book is no use without them.' *Add the codeword codex to your adventure sheet. Turn to 96.*

84

You start to dig through the pile of rubble. *This task requires strength and has a difficulty of 12. If you succeed, turn to 6. If you fail, turn to 55.*

85

You awake at dawn. Sunlight is streaming in through the window. You wash in a bucket of water, get dressed and prepare to head north through the unmapped mountains. As you walk through the village square, you see a butcher's shop and a baker's shop is open. They are selling dried meat and bread for travellers. You may buy a days worth of food for 10 copper pieces (or 1 silver piece). You may buy any number of day's worth of food. When you have finished shopping, you leave Haven. Turn to 97.

86

At the top of the slope, you come to the dark entrance of the cave. Your first torch is burning down, so you use the dying flame to light another one. *Subtract one torch from your equipment list.* As you do, you hear a series of squeaks and the flapping of a dozen tiny wings. A flock of bats fly out of the cave entrance, jostling you. The bats fly away, leaving you in peace. You enter the dark cave. The walls and floor are damp and slippery. You lose your footing and slip on the floor. You fall forwards, your torch flying from your hands. You land hard on the floor, face first. It hurts, but you have had worse, so you pick yourself up. As you do, you see that your torch is lying on the edge of a dark shaft only a few centimetres from where you landed. You count yourself lucky that you didn't fall in. You collect your torch and survey the cave. The tunnel leads deeper into the mountain. Or you could try to climb down the shaft. If you decide climb down the shaft, turn to 15. If you carry on down the tunnel, turn to 70.

87

You eventually come to a part of the wall that is covered in what appears to be a map of the tower. There are symbols on the map, probably for the illiterate servants of the tower. You try to decipher the symbols. *This task requires wits and has a difficulty of 14. If you have the codewords relic or prophecy on your adventure sheet, it has a difficulty of 12. If you succeed, turn to 34. If not, turn to 61.*

## 88

'Well met to ye!' Says the old barbarian. 'I am Hunnet, warrior of the Elk Clan of the mountains.' You introduce yourself.

The old barbarian takes you to the part of the city where his tribe live and tell them about the bear. Two people rush off to skin it and prepare it for dinner. The buildings the Elk Clan live in are mostly intact. There are about two hundred people living and working in the buildings in the city as it provides protection and shelter from the dangers of the mountains. Hunnet takes you to his house, made of rectangular red stones. You wonder where such things are mined. There, he feeds you bear meat. You stay with the clan for a week.

During your stay, Hunnet shows you around the part of the city where his clan lives. Each family has a stone house and lives in warm and dry conditions. The tribe all seem happy and well fed. Hunnet shows you the well where they get their water and strange houses made of glass where the tribe grow crops. However, you are surprised that corn can be grown this far north. When you go inside the glass, you feel that the air is warm, almost like down south. Hunnet does not know how the glass houses work, but he is glad that they do.

You tell Hunnet that you have come to the city to find the Codex of Zharos. Hunnet has never heard of it, but suggests places for you to look. 'There's a temple in the north part of the city. There's also the Tower. According to legend it was going to house all the knowledge of mankind, but some gods destroyed it or something. It's an eerie place though. We donna go near there. One of our tribe went there but never came back. Now we just stick to this part of the city.' You thank Hunnet for his advice. Hunnet also tells you that there are many merchants in his clan where you can buy or sell goods. You have a good rest with the tribe. *Restore 6 health points.* If you would like to buy some useful equipment, turn to 36. If you want to go to the temple, turn to 65. If you want to explore the tower, turn to 20.

## 89

Gorm looks through the sheets of paper and shivers. 'These sheets are from the Codex of Zharos. They are the last stages in summoning a demon from other worlds. *Add the codeword scraps to your adventure sheet.* Just these sheets alone are not enough to do anything, though. You'll need the rest of the codex for that. Turn to 96.

## 90

You press the faces of the diamond and shout 'By the power of the Nine Great Gods, I order you to leave!' A blue ray flies out from the diamond and strikes Kendris in the chest, sending him flying backwards. He spasms as a black smoke leaves his mouth. He then looks at you. 'Where am I? Who are you? You explain to him the events of the last few weeks. He looks shocked. The last thing he remembers is completing a ritual for fertility he found in an ancient book. 'It must have been a trap.' He said 'So that someone would summon a demon unintentionally. I thank you for saving my soul.' Kendris orders a feast to be prepared and the village celebrates your victory over evil. If you found the Codex of Zharos, it is burned in a fire. You enjoy many honours in your land, but this adventure is only the first of many...

## 91

The world goes black. Eventually, you realise that you are on a desolate plain which stretches out as far as the eye can see. Then you see it. Your nightmare, crawling out of the darkness. It is terrifying. If you need to snap out of your nightmare, you need to defeat it in psychic combat. If you lose, you will spend the rest of your life in a catatonic state. *If you have the shaman's charm, you can use its bonus for this combat.*

NIGHTMARE

PSYCHIC ATTACK: 4

PSYCHIC DEFENCE: 9

DAMAGE: +0

DAMAGE REDUCTION: 0

WILLPOWER: 12

If you win, turn to 51.

92

If you would like to buy some useful equipment, turn to 36. If you want to go to the temple, turn to 65. If you want to explore the tower, turn to 20. If you leave the city and head back to Waterbridge, turn to 59.

93

'How dare you return just to tell me that I can't have the codex! You want to destroy this village! Burn the heretic!' If you run, turn to 53. If you try to convince the crowd that the Codex is evil, turn to 78.

94

The journey back is longer and harder as you are supporting Ravan across the mountains. Eventually, you get back to the old man's house. The old man opens the door and is overjoyed to see his son. He throws his arms around him and beckons you both to sit at his table. He then prepares a vegetable stew for you to eat. He serves it with bread. You all devour it within minutes. The man is overjoyed. 'Thank you my friend. I have little to reward you, but please take what I offer. I used to be in the militia and I kept my shield. Please take it. It may help you on your journey.' *Add the buckler to your adventure sheet. It will increase your defence by 1.* He also gives you a loaf of bread and some apples. *Add 1 meal to your adventure sheet.* You spend the night at the old man's hovel. Turn to 85.

95

Your last blow smashes the demon into a thousand metallic pieces. Eventually, the villagers return to the square and you tell them what happened. You bury Kendris by the great oak in the village square. After the ritual of passing, the villagers go back to their lives. But you cannot. Wanderlust has gripped you, so you pack your bags and start another adventure...

96

Gorm will interpret texts for 1 silver piece per text. The numbers you need to turn to for the translation depend on numbers in the texts you have.

If you have a stone tablet and the codeword *relic* on your adventure sheet, subtract the number of runes on the tablet from the number of this paragraph and turn to that paragraph. (If you have the codeword *prophecy* on your adventure sheet, you do not need the tablet translating.)

If you have a papyrus scroll, subtract the number of lines on the scroll from the number of this paragraph and turn to this paragraph.

If you have some sheets of paper, subtract the number of sheets you have from this paragraph and turn to that paragraph.

If you have a book with creatures on the front cover, subtract the number of creatures on the front cover from this paragraph and turn to that paragraph.

When you have finished, if you wish to look at Gorm's charms, turn to 23. If you want to look at Gorm's herbs, turn to 62. If you want to leave, turn to 36.

97

You begin the long trek to the fabled lost city in the mountains. The more you think about it, the more unlikely it sounds. As you travel through the rocky, wild land, you wonder at what the inhabitants of this city ate and how they travelled south. During the first day of travel, the weather gets colder. It is overcast the whole time. You see few animals apart from some mountain goats chewing on the tough grass and bracken. You also notice a few rabbits. That night, you sleep under the stars with your cloak wrapped tightly around you. On the second day, the land becomes more desolate. A chill wind blows all day. That evening, you find a small cave to spend the night, which shelters you from the steady rain. On the third day as you traipse through the rocky landscape, you have to endure sleet and hail. You have to be tough to come through the journey unscathed. *This task requires endurance and has a difficulty of 12. If you succeed, you take no damage. If you fail, lose 1 health point through being cold and wet.*

You also get hungry through your journey. *If you have the hunting skill, you must eat 1 meal or lose 1 health point. If you do not have the hunting skill, you must eat 3 meals or lose 1 health point for each meal you do not eat.* Kendris told you that the city was three days travel from Haven, but by midday on the third day, you are starting to become sceptical. Then, you climb to the top of a hill where a sight makes you stop. Turn to 26.