

City State of Treysham

A GNAT ADVENTURE BOOK

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For all the hours I spent in **Fabled Lands**, you sold me on cities!

What's this?

The city of Treysham is the launching point for many of the Paldoria GNAT adventures. City State of Treysham gives your character a home between adventures, a place to shop, train, and store equipment (if you are lucky enough to own a house).

It's also a free adventure. You can start your character in City State of Treysham, before venturing out into another Paldoria game, or visit a few sections between adventures — rather like the hub cities to be found in computer RPGs. At any time you can take your character to the front gates and off to another Paldoria book.

While playing, you should track your **Treysham Status** (which will just be called **Status** in the rest of this book) is a measure of how well connected you are with Treysham. If your status rises, more options will be available to you. Other Paldoria adventures can also award **Status**, so playing those may give you more options here.

Let's begin

If you have played a **GNAT** adventure before, you may have an existing character to use. Otherwise, follow the instructions below to create a character. When you have a character, [turn to 1](#).

- Set your *Talent* to 9
- Set your *Vitality* to 3
- Set your *Fortune* to 3
- Gain two *Basic Skills* from the list below
- Pick a *One-handed, Long or Two-handed Weapon* (see equipment list below)
- If you took a *One-handed Weapon* you may take a **Shield**
- Gain 1 **ration** and **10 gold pieces**
- Set your **Treysham Status** to 0

Optionally, you may reduce your Talent by one to gain another Basic Skill. You may do this up to three times.

Skills

Climbing, Diplomacy, Larceny, Linguistics, Naturalist, Occult, Search, Stealth,

Swimming, Tracking.

GNAT Quickstart Rules

(For the full rules reference, visit <https://bit.ly/gnatcore>)

Your character is defined by two numbers: **Talent** and **Vitality**. Talent covers your luck and expertise, while Vitality measures your will to survive and capacity to endure harm.

Talent and Vitality

Testing Talent

While playing you will be asked to *Test your Talent*. Roll two 6-sided dice and compare to your current Talent score; you succeed if the result is less than or equal to your Talent. A natural roll of double 1 (a **critical**) always succeeds, while a double 6 (a **fumble**) always fails.

Some rolls have modifiers, (e.g. *Test your Talent at -3*). Apply this to your Talent before rolling.

Occasionally ill-luck or misfortune can result in a loss of Talent. In this case you will be told to *Lose 1 Talent*, which affects all tests from then on. You may also be told to *Restore 1 Talent*. Restoring Talent will not raise your score above its maximum value. Talent cannot go below zero.

Skills

Skills supply a bonus (+2) to your Talent if you possess them.

If you are asked to (for example) *Test Climbing*, then you *Test your Talent*, adding +2 if you have the Climbing Skill. Sometimes you are still allowed to roll at -2 even if you don't have the skill.

- **Climbing**: Climbing, balancing, and athletics
- **Diplomacy**: Used to negotiate with others
- **Larceny**: Locate and disarm traps
- **Linguistics**: Used to translate dead languages
- **Naturalist**: Knowledge of plants and animals
- **Occult**: The supernatural and spell casting
- **Search**: Used to find hidden things

- **Stealth:** Sneaking and hiding
- **Swimming:** Used to swim and fight in the water
- **Tracking:** Follow trails and find people

Vitality

Your Vitality score measures your ability to push on and endure harm. When it reaches zero, your character is overcome — dead or severely injured. Damage to your Vitality is measured in **Wounds**. If you are told to *Take a Wound*, you reduce your Vitality by one. (Sometimes you may be told to *Take two Wounds*, or more).

You may sometimes be told that damage ignores armour (e.g. from drowning or hunger), in which case the loss cannot be prevented by armour (see below). You may also be told to *Heal one Vitality*, which allows you to heal a point of lost Vitality.

Most adventures will tell you what to do if you reach zero Vitality. If they do not, your character dies and the adventure is over.

Some adventures offer opportunities to *Rest*, which generally involves consuming a **ration** (see Equipment, below). When you rest you will usually be told to restore some Talent and heal some Vitality. Sometimes, if you don't have a ration, you will lose Talent or Vitality instead.

Spells

Spells are magical rituals that must be inscribed on scrolls, tablets, or other items, because unleashing the spell destroys the item that contains it. If you have a spell, you may cast it when instructed to e.g. *Cast Fly by Testing against a 10*. If you succeed, the spell is cast, otherwise the spell is destroyed without effect, unless you choose to *Take 1 Wound, ignoring armour* in which case you keep the spell.

Fortune

All characters have a pool of three Fortune. You can spend a Fortune point after any dice roll to re-roll one of the dice. You can do this after you've used any other re-rolls, and you can continue to spend Fortune and roll again until you like the result. Regain a Fortune each time you gain Experience, or when told to *Gain 1 Fortune*. You may not have more than 3 Fortune.

Combat

When you face combat, you will be told to Fight. To Fight, *Test your Talent*. If you pass, you win the fight. If you fail, you *Take a Wound*.

Many combats involve a penalty, to represent the strength of the opponent, and some last multiple rounds — which means you must *test your Talent* multiple times. For example if you are told to *Fight three rounds at -3*, that means you must *test your Talent* three times, with a -3 penalty on each roll, suffering one wound for each round you fail. If you are still alive at the end of the three rounds, you win the fight.

If you *Fumble* in combat, take an extra Wound.

Weapons, Shields, and Armour

Your character can carry multiple weapons, a shield, and a suit of armour, each of which give bonuses in combat. If you are carrying more than one weapon, you choose which to use at the start of combat. If you have no weapon, fight at -1.

One-Handed Weapons require one hand to use and may give a bonus to your Talent in combat. e.g. a **Sword (+1)**.

Two-Handed Weapons require both hands to use (so you cannot use a shield). A two-handed weapon may re-roll the first 6 rolled each round — you must take the second result.

Long Weapons (such as spears) require both hands to use (so you cannot use a shield). They may sometimes provide an extra bonus where their length is relevant.

Ranged Weapons (such as bows) require both hands to use (so you cannot use a shield), and do not give a bonus in combat. However, you may find certain actions only open if you have a ranged weapon.

Shields require one hand to use. Shields reduce any combat penalty you suffer by 1.

Magical Weapons give you *Advantage* (see below).

Armour comes in Light (1 protection), Medium (2 protection), and Heavy (3 protection). When you *take a wound* while wearing armour, you may choose to ignore the wound — and you may do this a number of times per adventure equal to the protection value. Some adventures may offer the chance to *repair your armour*, which restores its protection value.

When wearing armour, you take a penalty to *Stealth* and *Climbing* skills equal to the undamaged protection value.

Advantage and Disadvantage

When you fight with a distinct advantage — such as when you are flying and your target is not — you have *Advantage*; you may re-roll any one dice, taking the second result. You make this re-roll after any other re-rolls (e.g. from a two-handed weapon).

Sometimes the opposite is true. In this case you have *Disadvantage* and must re-roll the first 1 or 2 you roll each round when fighting, taking the second result.

Equipment

Equipment is marked in bold, such as a **jewelled dagger**, a **ration**, a **flight spell**, or a **pickled serpent's head**. When you take equipment, you add it to your character sheet. You also have a *Coin Pouch* that holds any number of gold pieces (gp).

You can carry as many of these normal items as you wish, but the same is not true of *Heavy Items*. The total number of heavy items you can carry is equal to twice your *maximum Vitality*. (For a new character, this is 6.)

Weapons, shields, and armour are all heavy items. If some other item is heavy it will be listed in the adventure where you find it, e.g. barrel of ale (heavy).

Some items give a bonus to a Skill (e.g. "Tome (+1 occult)"). In this case you count this bonus to your Talent whenever testing that skill. If you carry multiple items that give a bonus to the same skill, only the highest applies.

Keywords and Titles

During your adventures you may gain vital clues, or participate in certain events, which are marked by **Keywords**, which are given in italics, e.g. "Gain the keyword *Arbalest*". Keywords are not equipment, and aren't lost if you lose your items. You can mark keywords on the list at the back of the book.

You may also be awarded **Titles**, which are measures of respect and rank. Titles may give you access to certain restricted parts of adventures.

Keywords can be removed when an adventure is finished, but Titles are retained from adventure to adventure.

Experience

If you are successful in your adventures, you will be awarded one or more *Experience Points (xp)*. You can spend these points to increase your abilities as follows:

Increase Talent: pay experience points equal to your current Talent to raise it by one level. For example, to increase from Talent 6 to Talent 7, pay 6xp.

Increase Vitality: pay experience points equal to twice your current Vitality to raise it by one level. For example, to increase from Vitality 3 to Vitality 4, pay 6xp

Advance a Skill: pay experience points equal to your current Skill bonus to give it a +1. For example, to increase from Climbing +2 to Climbing +3, pay 2xp.

Gain a Skill: pay 2 experience points to buy a new *Skill*.

You may spend experience any time you take a *Rest*, or between adventures.

End of Adventure

If you are not dead at the end of an adventure, you may *Restore your Talent and Vitality*, spend experience, and buy from the standard item list.

I.

Five generations ago, the War of the Wizards devastated Paldoria. Mountains cracked, rivers drowned, cities sank into the sea. The few surviving wizards retreated to their fastnesses and closed their doors against the world outside, leaving the survivors to face the aftermath alone.

One generation ago, when you were still a child, the decrepit sorcerers of Treysham, all but consumed by their decadent excesses, re-opened the doors of their citadel to the outside world. Within a handful of years the other surviving fastnesses — Heldad, Marinth, Krendar, and Jarson — followed suit. It was the dawn of a new age; an age of fresh opportunities, and ancient grudges. For those willing to leave the dubious safety of their village walls, there were fortunes to be made.

You are grown now, and have left your own birthplace in search of one of those fortunes. Your travels brought you to Treysham, where a bright market now fills the ruins that cling to the magi's towers like a widow's spreading skirts.

To learn more about the layout and history of the city [turn to 271](#). If you want to just push on into the market [turn to 95](#).

2.

You make your way to the steering deck at the back of the boat, only to find the first mate deep in conversation with a pair of slavers. They appear to be arguing about how best to trim their cargo for the difficult journey back to Krendar. If the mate has the key on him, it's not obvious.

You decide that there is no option but to simply ask for it, hoping that he's too distracted to think about it. [Test Linguistics](#) (if you don't have Linguistics, [Test your Talent at -2](#)) to pass for a native Krendar. If you succeed, the mate distractedly hands you the **slave ship key**, continuing his argument all the while, and you hurry [back belowdecks \(turn to 270\)](#).

If you fail, the key never makes it to your hand. Instead the first mate stops short and takes a second look at you, clearly realising that you aren't a slaver-man at all.

"A spy!" he gasps, and all three men draw gutting knives and swing for you. [Fight 3 rounds at -2](#) (if you have a shield, ignore the modifier). If you survive, you manage to leap over the side of the ship to the dockside and [make your escape \(turn to 95\)](#). Otherwise, you are subdued (set your Vitality to 1) and [dragged off to the slaver captain \(turn to 12\)](#).

3•

Gain the keyword *Tribe*

You are a long way down Serpent Way, when you hear movement in one of the ruins. Before you can back away, three men leap from the ruins and run towards you, their faces smeared with mud and painted with woad. You just have time to see that their teeth have been filed to cannibal points, before they are on you.

Fight 2 rounds at -2 (shields count double) against these marsh murderers. If you cast a *Fireball*, you win the fight automatically as they flee your display of magic. If you lose, [turn to 211](#).

Otherwise, two of the attackers flee, but one lies dead at your feet. You examine his body, noting his crude armour of woven reeds and fish teeth. These must be the marsh cannibals you have heard about. You can take the **reed armour** (counts as **light armour**), and a **spear (long-weapon)**, if you want. He is also carrying an odd **frog-shaped amulet** around his neck.

[Return to 221](#).

4•

You attempt to open the door with cunning and lockpicks, but there simply is no lock to pick, or mechanism to bypass. You endeavour to get a dagger into the gap at the edge of the door instead, and immediately violet lightning bursts from the lines engraved in the stone and strikes at you. The hostile magic causes you to *Take 1 Wound*.

If this reduces you to zero Vitality, [turn to 30](#) now, otherwise [return to 233](#) and pick another option.

5.

Candle Lane is something of a misnomer, since it's actually a collection of small courtyards and streets that cluster together on the south side of the day market, near to the rookeries of the low town. All of the shops here keep a candle burning in their window to tell you that they are open, and trade in charms and herbs of all sorts.

One of the shops, Threeblossoms, regularly posts lists of herbs that they [wish to buy \(turn to 137\)](#).

Browsing the stalls here, you find a variety of potions and plants on sale.

herbs and potions

	buy	sell
blinkblossom	90gp	-
fire finch egg	-	140gp
fisheye root	10gp	5gp
healing potion (<i>heal 3 vitality</i>)	100gp	30gp
talent potion (<i>restore 3 talent</i>)	80gp	30gp
antidote	50gp	20gp
thyme	10gp	-

When you are done here, you can [return to the market \(turn to 224\)](#).

6.

Those plants are looking at you! Better to strike now than wait for them to get you. Of course, fighting a tree isn't all that easy ...

You draw your weapons, and wade into the attack, and immediately the vines fight back! The blossoms release goutts of poison spores, and the roots animate to crush you. *Test your Talent* or *Lose 1 Talent* as you inhale the spores. If you use an **antidote** you pass this test automatically.

You must *Fight 4 rounds at -3*.

The following rules apply:

- A *Fireball* wins a round automatically, and gives you +2 on each following round.
- **two-handed weapons** and **axes** gain +2
- **ranged weapons** cannot be used

If the plants overwhelm you, [turn to 201](#).

If you win, then, if this is the first time you have fought the trees, they leave behind a **writhing vine (climbing +2, heavy)** which you can take. Now, you can [search for treasure \(turn to 282\)](#), or [climb up to reach the herbs \(turn to 176\)](#) rolling *twice* on the tables provided when you get there.

7.

Gain the keyword *Turncoat*.

You follow the man to a smokey tavern. The sign by the door is so stained with smoke and dirt that it's impossible to see what it's meant to represent. Inside, he chooses a table well away from the door and has ale brought for the both of you. The corner is so dark that you can barely see his face.

"You want a pass to the upper city," he says, "and I want some personal property returned from a so-called business associate. I think we can help each other."

He goes on to tell you that a merchant named Ollivers has certain documents that he wants. You guess that they are probably incriminating, but the man isn't paying you to ask questions. He will give you a letter to enter the upper city if you bring him back Ollivers' Documents.

You agree to consider his proposal. "Don't wait too long," he tells you.

[Turn to 95.](#)

8.

You haven't been long in your shared cell, surrounded by half a dozen other condemned, when Overseer Ekharr spots you.

"Eh now, what's this?" He gives you a long look. "This will never do, we take care of own in the guard, as best we can. I can't let you free, but I'll make sure you are properly armed when you go to fight."

[Turn to 379.](#)

9.

Gain the keyword *Title*

You are making your way through the streets when a grotesque creature — an imp — comes fluttering through the streets on its stubby wings, scattering passersby, who scramble to get out of its way.

It draws to a halt in front of you, hovering in place with frantic wing beats. It resembles nothing so much as a horrific baby, if babies were normally purple and covered in scales, with a lizard's tail tacked on at the end.

The imp hands you a note, which says: "The Voice wishes to speak to you, come."

You decide that you should probably follow. [Turn to 85](#)

10.

You are halfway along Inkdipper's street, when a quill-shaped sign labelled "Vanfer's Books" catches your eye. It's the same name written inside the cover of the occult primer.

You push open the door and let yourself into a cramped shop, where stacks of mouldering books threaten to fall down on every side. A young man with a pointy beard and a dropping moustache, sits behind a small table at the window, scratching away at a piece of parchment with a quill.

"Excuse me, I wonder what you can tell me about this?"

You show him the **occult primer**. "Your name is in the front."

The young man flips through the pages. "Ahh, not my name, but that of my father, I believe. He did once tell me of this book. It passed through his hands, but it was not his work." He turns it over. "I think this was the work of a great Mage from before the war, Anskellion. He was very famous indeed. I believe he opposed the first acts of the war ... I wonder what happened to him?"

"In any case, I think the book has some magical intelligence of its own. You should treasure it."

Restore 2 Talent, and [return to Inkdipper's Street \(turn to 359\)](#).

II.

You get out your **net** and try to catch the metal bird. *Test your Talent*. If you succeed, you manage to [bring the bird down \(turn to 401\)](#). If not, the bird dodges frustratingly out of the way, leading you a merry chase around the gloomy interior of the tower, which seems to have been filled with pointless platforms and destinationless stairs. [Return to 258](#).

I2.

You are dragged, bloody and insensible, to the Krendar captain, a cruel faced man in a blood-red officer's coat. Unfortunately for you, he spots that you are not a crew member, and has you thrown into the hold with the rest of the slaves. A miserable fate awaits you in Krendar!

From what you can overhear, the ship will set sail on the next tide. You have till then to make your escape. If you can cast *Teleport*, then you can easily escape back to the [docks \(turn to 204\)](#). Failing that, you will need to break out the old fashioned way.

You will need to test *Larceny*, to break out of your shackles, *Stealth* to sneak past the slavers, and *Climbing*, to reach the docks. (You may make each of these rolls by *Testing your Talent at -2* if you lack the correct skill). If you succeed on all three rolls, you manage to [sneak off the boat \(turn to 204\)](#), taking the **manacles** with you for good measure.

If any of the rolls fail, you are out of luck. [Turn to 205](#).

I3.

You forage deep into the southern ruins, heading away from the travelled parts of the city until you come to the remains of the south wall, still bulwarked with enormous spell-marked stones.

Here, you find the upstanding remains of a grand house, roofless, but still two-storeys high. The door hangs open.

Inside, a large vestibule opens on to three other rooms, but the doors to these are closed and marked with sorcerous wards, apparently untriggered. On the floor, the emblem of a raven in flight is set into the tiles. A broad flight of stairs [leads upwards \(turn to 284\)](#), while an open arch leads out into some sort of [yard \(turn to 123\)](#).

If you have the *Occult* skill, you may *Test Occult* to find a way past the wards. If you succeed [turn to 321](#). Otherwise, as long as you don't have the keyword *Talk*, you can just [open a door \(turn to 110\)](#), or [leave the house \(turn to 291\)](#).

I4.

You decide to try and sneak through the gate by the simple ruse of mingling with the crowd and passing through when none of the sentinels is looking. It's an obvious enough tactic, but hard to pull off in the jostle and bustle of people.

Test Stealth (if you don't have *Stealth*, *Test your Talent at -2*). If you pass, you slip through the gate to [119](#). If you fail, [turn to 318](#).

I5.

You make careful enquires about getting back the property that was confiscated by the arena, and discover that the guards are eminently bribable in such matters.

To get back any items you have here, you will need to hand over **50 gold** as a bribe. If you do, you may recover any items that you had recorded in the box at 395.

When you are done, you [return to the arena \(turn to 218\)](#).

I6.

You draw your weapons and charge to the attack, easily scattering the escaped slaves huddled around the fire. Few of them even have weapons, but they bravely try to defend themselves, desperate not to be taken back.

Only one is equipped to fight, a one-eyed Krendar with a livid scar down one side of his face. He moves to block you while the others flee. *Fight 2 rounds at -1*. If you lose, [turn to 339](#).

If you win, you cut the man down and drive off the others. If you have the keyword *Truant*, you recognise the man you have killed as Kollish, the Krendar runaway. If you cut off his ear to take back to the Krendar captain, you can easily avail yourself of **kollish's ear**.

There's little else to be gained in this encampment other than the satisfaction of publishing low-born curs who defy the might of imperial Krendar.

[Return to 303](#) and tick the box on line 5.

I7.

You try to read the table, but the masks make it hard, and you bet badly. Before the end of the third round your entire stake is gone!

"Buy in again, or get out," rabbit-mask growls. You can either stake *another 100 gold* and [proceed \(turn to 127\)](#), or [take your leave \(turn to 309\)](#).

I8.

You turn the heavy iron key in the lock, and are rewarded with the *thunk* of unlatching bolts.

You heave the door open and enter a small chamber, lit by a narrow lance of light falling through a little hole in the ceiling. The light illuminates a small iron chest sitting on a plinth. You examine it carefully, and decide to open it with the tip of a weapon, since it doesn't seem to be locked.

Inside, are a small collection of objects. A **lump of amber**, a **rabbit's foot**, a **copper ring (treasure, 30gp)**, a **dagger (one-handed -1)**, and an engraved **bronze seal** about the size of a large coin.

Your work here is done. [Return to 225](#) and tick the box on line 5.

19.

Investigating the north-eastern expanse of the city ruins, where the old merchant district has subsided into the marshes, you have caught sight more than once of a light amongst the ruined buildings, like a campfire or a torch. You suspect that someone is hiding out in the ruins and are determined to track them down.

Tonight, you've got closer than before. The campfire glimmers from amongst a block of semi-ruined buildings, their red tile rooftops still visible against the evening sky.

If you wish to sneak closer and try to spy what's inside, [turn to 273](#). Alternatively you can [go inside and look \(turn to 292\)](#), or [decide to leave it alone \(turn to 303\)](#).

20.

You go down the stairs and find yourself in a flagstoned kitchen. A large empty tub sits in front of a fireplace where clothing has been hung out to dry. Beside the fire an enormous woman, the size of a giant, is sleeping in a cot bed barely large enough to hold her. Her snores are loud enough to shake the room.

The papers won't be here, you clearly need to be on a different floor. *Test Stealth* (if you don't have Stealth, *Test your Talent at -2*). If you pass, you [head back up the stairs \(turn to 323\)](#).

If you fail, the noise wakes the woman, who lumbers out of her bed in her nightclothes, grabbing a poker the size of a broadsword from beside the fire. You decide that discretion is the better part of valour, and rip open the back door before [fleeing into the night \(turn to 309\)](#).

2I.

You enter the temple of Dzume, the blind goddess of death. It's said that Dzume alone profited from the war, and her priestesses travel the desolate roads of the world bringing succour to its people.

Arches soar into the darkness on every side, niches in their sides filled with beeswax candles. The sound of chanting fills the air, though you cannot see its source. The temple smells strongly of lavender and thyme, which are sacred to the goddess. If you have any **lavender** or **thyme**, the priestesses will pay **10 gold** for each.

Services are still held here, but for an adventurer like yourself, their main attraction is that they can lay a blessing on someone to raise them from the dead. If you wish to speak to them about this, [turn to 251](#).

If you wish to attend a service, make a contribution of as much gold as you like, and then roll 2d6. If you roll less than, or equal to, the amount you spent, you may *Gain 1 Fortune*.

When you are done here, you [return to the temple district \(turn to 196\)](#).

22.

You wander the streets of the Outer City, making sure to stay in the reclaimed area — most of the city is still in ruins, and hardly safe. What's been made habitable is a crowded warren of houses and lanes that shades imperceptibly into the [daymarket \(turn to 224\)](#). Two main streets, [Serpent Way \(turn to 221\)](#) and [The Narrows \(turn to 147\)](#), run away towards the outer city, but neither is heavily inhabited.

If you have a **Status** of 2 or more, and do not have the keyword Travail, [turn to 345](#) now.

Although the nobility of Treysham, the Magi and their subjects, mostly make their homes in the Upper City, there are plenty of merchants living in the Outer City too, their new-built townhouses rubbing shoulders with the poorer buildings. If you have the keyword *Turncoat*, and have not been to the house of the merchant Ollivers, [turn to 126](#).

As you pass through the streets you spy a recruiting serjeant of the outer city guards, looking for recruits. If you want to sign up [turn to 29](#).

☐ If there is not a tick in the box, you hear music from down a narrow lane. If you wish to investigate, put a tick in the box and [turn to 189](#).

- » To return to the city centre, [turn to 95](#)
- » To hang around until nightfall, [turn to 309](#)

23.

You open the white door and find yourself in a once-luxurious bedroom, with pale plaster walls and a mouldering curtains by the single window. There is furniture here, but it is time worn and empty.

On the wall opposite the bed is a dusty oil painting of a teenaged girl wearing a tiara and a fine silk dress. Below the painting is a small shelf with two keys on it, a **silver star key** and an **iron triangle key**.

When you are done you [return to the landing \(turn to 284\)](#).

24.

The beaks of the cutlass birds are as brutal to human flesh as they are to fishes. In no time at all you have been sectioned, quartered, diced, and consumed.

You have been slain! If you have a resurrection available, then follow the instructions you have noted (if you purchased a resurrection in the temple district, [turn to X](#) now). If your resurrection leaves you alive in this section then [turn to 95](#) now. Otherwise, your adventure ends here.

YOU ARE DEAD

25.



You decide to settle down and wait for the sun to rise, at which point finding your way ought to be easier, and go to look for a safe place to rest. *Test your Talent*. If you fail, [turn to 275](#), otherwise, you find a dry corner in the ruins of an old house, where you can lay out your cloak to rest.

You *Rest*. Eat a **ration** or *Lose 1 Talent*. If you do each a ration, you may *Heal 1 Vitality*.

Eventually, the sun rises, and you find that you have set camp next to a ruined wall covered in wild roses. If the box above is not ticked, and you have the keyword *Title*, you can search here for the blue rose — risking the many thorns. *Test Search at -4* (if you don't have Search, *Test your Talent* at -6). If you pass, you manage to find a **blue rose** amongst the others. If you fail, you *Lose 2 Talent*. Either way, tick the box above. You can only search here for the rose once.

When you are done here, you [find your way to a major street \(turn to 225\)](#).

26.

A massive snail rumbles out of the darkness towards you, its luminous eyeballs waving like lamps on the ends of fishing rods.

Fight 5 rounds. You gain +2 if you use a **two-handed weapon**, while **ranged** weapons are of no use against the snail's hard shell. A **mace** gains an additional +1 for its armour-cracking qualities.

If you win the fight, you can help yourself to a snail-meat **ration**, before returning to [148](#). If you lose [turn to 399](#).

27.

Remove the keyword *Target*

You take the serjeant to one side and tell him about the group of thieves, or were they smugglers, that you encountered in the ruins., describing the closed eye mark you saw on the dead man's wrist.

The serjeant doesn't mention that the magi have banned people from the ruins, or ask how the man died. Instead he curses floridly. "The Closed Eye! Them again! Smugglers, the lot of them. We are sure they are working for someone in the city, but we don't know who."

He asks you if you could find the place again, but changes his mind before you can answer. "It wouldn't matter, they won't use the place again. Good news, though, there's a reward in this for you!"

He takes you to the main guard post near to the Dragon Gate and takes down your name, before handing over a purse of **30 gold**.

If your **Status** is 2 or less, roll 1d3 (roll one dice and halve the result, rounding up). If the result is greater than your **Status**, *Gain 1 Status* for your service.

Now, [turn to 95](#).

28.

The gold and silversmiths of Goldigger Way specialise in the finest of items, selling mostly to the Magi and their noble hangers-on. Their wide street is a genteel place, lined with leaded-glass windows where precious jewellery — safe behind iron bars — are on show. There's little of use to an adventurer here, but the gem-smiths are often in the market to buy valuable items if you have them to sell.

One shop, tucked into a corner near the end of the street, catches your eye. Its shutters are closed, but the door is open, and a sign with a single staring eye — reminiscent of the emblem worn by the magi's sentinels — hangs over the door. To enter [turn to 274](#).

The traders here will *Buy Treasure*.

Jewellery

	buy	sell
lump of amber	-	20gp
fire finch egg	-	200gp

When you are done here, you can [return to the market \(turn to 224\)](#).

29.

You report to the guard post at the corner of the Daymarket, and are greeted by the same serjeant who recruited you. A few other recruits of dubious quality have turned up as well, and have rusty weapons and padded jacks thrust into their hands.

"I won't lie," the serjeant says, "guard duty can be dangerous business, but we'll give you a roof over your head and a belly full of food for the time your on duty, and a fair five gold a day for your work."

If you have the keyword *Target*, and want to talk to the serjeant about the thieves in the ruins, [turn to 27](#).

If you have not done a stint at guard duty since your last adventure, and you want to try it now, [turn to 151](#), otherwise you can [return to 22](#).

30.

You collapse onto the chamber floor, clawing at the wounds the violet magic has caused, as if you could tear the curse away, but instead your flesh comes apart in your fingers, dissolving into black ash. In moments, you are no more.

You have been slain! If you have a resurrection available, then follow the instructions you have noted (if you purchased a resurrection in the temple district, [turn to X](#) now). If your resurrection leaves you alive in this section then [turn to 95](#) now. Otherwise, your adventure ends here.

YOU ARE DEAD

31.

You and the fisherman, Cyrus, head out into the depths of the marsh. Black eels writhe and splash in the shallows, but they are not for you today.

Eventually, Cyrus points towards a deep channel cut into the mud some distance off. "That's got to be the trail of one-eye!"

Test your Talent, or, if you have the *Naturalist* skill, *Test Naturalist*. If you have some **fisheye root**, you can discard it to add +4. If you pass, you quickly spot the dark shape of One-Eye in the water. If you fail, *Lose 1 Talent*, from the cold and exhaustion, and then repeat the test until you pass.

Eventually, you find yourself face to face with a monstrous eel, fully as long as your boat! You grab your gaff, but its clear that the beast won't be going down without a fight. Before you can even swing your hook, it rushes the boat with its jaws agape!

Fight 4 rounds. If you have a *long weapon*, or a **net**, you may add +2. If you lose, the enormous eel drags you into the water to devour at its leisure, while Cyrus rows frantically away; [turn to 385](#).

If you survive, you manage to overcome the beast, and haul it aboard, before sculling jubilantly back to the docks. [Turn to 384](#).



32.

You realise that the lines are spell wards, a potent form of protective magic designed to prevent anyone from bypassing the door by spell or sorcery. In fact, trying to pass the door with, for example, a Teleport spell, would probably be pretty dangerous!

[Return to 233](#) and pick another option.

33.

"You aren't my problem, kid," you tell her. "You're going to have to look for your father on your own."

Metril snuffles, but lets go of you. *"If you say so. But I'll be scared of the spiders."*

If you want to reconsider, you can [take her with you \(turn to 382\)](#) or [escort her to the magi \(turn to 286\)](#).

Otherwise, [return to 225](#) and tick the box on line 7.

34.

You make your way to the Lion Gate, the main official route into and out of the city, though with the outer walls all but collapsed, it's easy to leave or enter without passing the gate.

If you have the title **Arena Criminal**, [turn to 301](#) now. Otherwise, read on.

Beyond the gate, the high road stretches out into the bleak highlands beyond Treysham. You've heard that this was once rich farmland, amongst the most prosperous on the circle coast, but the same calamity that destroyed the harbour and drew back the sea, has left this country dank and fallow. Now it is mostly used for cattle, and the few cows that you can see from here are thin and worn.

A wise person would head [back into the city \(turn to 95\)](#), but if you prefer you can [take a trip into the fenlands \(turn to 231\)](#).

You can also take the main road out of this book entirely, and proceed to any other GNAT adventure with your current equipment.

35.

Men run screaming and weeping. Others attack the beast with rocks, pieces of wood, or even their bare hands, and are cut down, snapped in half, or pierced through the heart by the poison sting — to the cheering and baying of the crowds.

You try your best to avoid the beast, hoping that the others will wear it down, but you are caught by a mighty swing of its tail and hurled, your ribs broken and your organs crushed, halfway across the arena.

If you have the title **Gladiator**, [turn to 54](#) now.

Otherwise You have been slain! If you have a resurrection available, then follow the instructions you have noted (if you purchased a resurrection in the temple district, [turn to X](#) now). If your resurrection leaves you alive in this section then [turn to 95](#) now. Otherwise, your adventure ends here.

YOU ARE DEAD

36.

"Now, who's this?" Pendar rumbles, advancing hairily towards Metril.

"I'm Metril ... sir"

"Fascinating! So realistic! A Masterpiece!"

Metril looks at you in some distress, backing away from Pendar as she does. "*I'm sure I'm glad to meet you too ... eek!*" She squeaks as Pendar takes hold of one of her arms in his meaty grip. He makes a series of mystical passes with his other hand, conjuring a cascade of luminous runes that rain down on her.

You are about to leap to Metril's defence, when Pendar releases her and sinks back onto the stool he was sitting on.

"Now, *she* would have made a good apprentice! But it's clearly not to be." He turns back to Metril. "Please, could you help an old wizard. In the other room you will find a box of snake skins, could you bring it here?"

He waits till she is gone and then says to you, "You realise that she is a sorcerous construct, don't you? But a most marvellous one. Treysham has always specialised in making automatons, but she is of quite another level of quality! You should take good care of her! And she will have an aptitude for magic, I shouldn't wonder."

You decide to [take your leave \(turn to 235\)](#).

37.

"I think, maybe, you should go back on the ceiling, and wait for your Father."

You are prepared for Metril to resist, but she allows you to help her back up to the grime-thick ceiling without argument, and you hurry away, leaving her trapped in the upside-down tower.

"*Please take this.*" She drops you a rather smeared drawing of a bearded man. "*That's my father, if you see him, tell him I'm here.*" You take **metril's drawing** and hurry up the stairs.

[Return to 225](#) and tick the box on line 7.

38.

The temple of Atros is a bustling place, a stark contrast to the quiet halls of Dzume and Mord. Unlike those places, the priests of Atros cheerfully acknowledge that their God is

dead and gone, a victim of the wizard's war. You've heard the story that Atros tried to stop the magi's demon-fleets striking across the Circle Sea, but was captured by the Hiermochs of Agrak and rendered down into magical oil instead.

Agrak is now as dead as Atros, and the temple priests do a thriving trade in the sort of minor divine magics that they can still supply: holy water, sacred symbols, and minor blessings.

Sacred Things

	buy	sell
Holy Water	10gp	-
Holy Symbol	20gp	-

They can also offer you a **blessing of talent** for **50 gold**. When you are told to *Lose Talent* you can choose to remove the blessing instead.

Finally the priests are happy to lift a curse placed on you (such as a the Curse of Bones, or the Cat Curse), though they charge **100 gold** for the service.

When you are done here you [return to the temple district \(turn to 196\)](#).

39.

Gain the keyword *Tick*

It is a hard fight, against an overwhelming number of monsters, but you prevail!

When all is done, the clockwork creatures lie broken and dismembered around the base of the pit. Sore and battered, you pick your way through the remains. You can easily amass a small trove of **sorcerous parts (treasure, 100 gold)**. You also manage to uncover a working **electromotive heart**. You can use the heart to cast the *Heal* spell once, without making a casting check. It recovers this ability when you *Rest*.

When you finally emerge from the crater, the people of the Narrows are there to meet you. They ask: "Are the monsters really dead?" You assure them that they are.

"No mage of the High Tower ever cared enough," they tell you. "From now on, our homes are open to you, for what it's worth."

The slum-dwellers share their food and hearths with you. You may *Rest*, *Restore 3 Talent*, and *Gain 1 Experience Point*.

When you are done here, you can [return to the heart of the city \(turn to 95\)](#).

40.

If you have the title **Arena Champion**, you have already completed your quest as a gladiator, and cannot do so again. [Return to 218](#).

You decide to enlist in the arena as a gladiator, a professional warrior, who competes for money.

If you already have the title **Gladiator**, you've fought in the pits before, and can continue directly to your [first match \(turn to 334\)](#). If you don't, you are new around here, and must first take part in a mass melee to catch the eye of the recruiters.

If you want to enter the melee now, [turn to 83](#). If not, you can [go back to the arena gates \(turn to 218\)](#).

41.

☐

If the box above is checked, you have already attempted this, and cannot try again. [Return to 126](#). Otherwise, tick the box and read on.

You try one of the back doors; to your delight it is open. It leads into a flagstoned washroom, where a steaming washtub is filling the air with fog. An enormous woman, her hair gathered up under a lace-edged mob cap, is pounding clothing in the tub with the aid of a wooden club.

"Ahh!" she says, as she spots you, "you've come to help Melba with the washing!"

She reaches for you with a massive soap-sudsed hand ...

If you wish to help Melba with the washing, [turn to 92](#), if you would like to try dodging past her and running up the stairs, [turn to 293](#).

42.

Your efforts eventually pay off, and you manage to persuade a few of the slum-inhabitants to speak to you.

They tell you that the crater demolished more than half of the Narrows, and is the reason no one wants to live here any more. It glows at night, and that's when the

creatures inside, whatever they are, come out from the burrows beneath the rock. In daylight, its safe enough to go to the bottom of the pit, but at night, people don't come back, and when the moon is dark the creatures come out of the pit and take whoever they want.

"But what *are* they?" you ask.

The old man doing most of the talking scratches at his dirty beard. "We don't know, for sure. You can't see 'em right, even if you are stupid enough to look. But they smell like spoilt milk, or maybe rancid oil, and their claws go *tick, tick, tick* as they move."

He shows you the marks their claws have left on his wooden door — they are deep and straight, and look rather like they were made with a knife.

"Don't go down there at night," the old man tells you. "There's nothing there worth the trip."

You thank him and [take your leave \(turn to 147\)](#).

43•

The thieves, if that's what they are, make short work of you, sinking a dagger between your shoulder blades. They strip your body of obvious valuables and hide it under some stones, cursing all the while.

You have been slain! If you have a resurrection available, then follow the instructions you have noted (if you purchased a resurrection in the temple district, [turn to X](#) now). If your resurrection leaves you alive in this section then [turn to 95](#) now. Otherwise, your adventure ends here.

YOU ARE DEAD

44•

You shake your head, refusing to accept the token as a stake. The woman sighs, but slips it back in her pocket before leaving the table.

Now it's just down to you and rabbit-mask. [Test your Talent](#). If you pass, you win the final round, winning back your stake and an additional **100 gold**. If you lose, the other man takes the pot instead, and you get nothing.

Once you are done, [return to 95](#).

45.

You pull some **rations** from your pack and hand them out to the hungry children. They gobble them down, smearing their faces with crumbs. One manages a "Thank you" before they all run off.

Choose how many rations to give (it must be at least one) and then regain that much *Talent*.

Then, [return to 147](#).

46.

You decide to stay at the sign of the Rearing Griffon.

For **5gp** you may stay the night. You may *Rest*, and *Restore 3 Talent*. If you eat a **ration**, or pay another **6gp**, you may also *Heal 1 Vitality*.

The innkeeper can also point you to a nearby armourer. For another **30gp** he can *repair your armour*.

If you decide to stay, and you don't have the keyword *Treasure*, you are approached by an old woman in the inn, [turn to 141](#) now. Otherwise, if you have the keyword, and the **diomedian mirror**, and wish to hand it over, [turn to 361](#).

When you are done here, [turn to 95](#).

47.

You decide to help yourself to some of the items the Krendar have lying around belowdecks. Decide how many items from the following list you want to take and then *Test Stealth* (if you don't have Stealth, *Test your Talent at -2*) with an additional -1 for each item you choose to take after the first.

- a **ration**
- a **cutlass** (a one-handed weapon)
- a **net**
- a **candle**
- a **healing potion** (Heal 3 Vitality)

If you pass the roll, you [get away safely back to the docks with your stolen goods \(turn to 204\)](#). If you fail, however, your larceny is spotted by another crew member, who takes you for a casual thief amongst the crew.

"Give me twenty gold to hold my piece, or I'll drag you to the Captain!" he snarls. If you want to pay the bribe, give the man **20 gold** and then [leave the ship \(turn to 204\)](#), otherwise you will have to *fight him. Fight 2 rounds*. If you win, you get away to [204](#), otherwise, he gets a knife to your throat! Set your Vitality to 1 and [Turn to 12](#).

48.

Empty handed after hours in the sewers, you eventually clamber out of the hole you entered by and give the extinguished **flambeaux** back to the rat-masked man. He pays little attention, the mages got their rat tails from someone else.

Lose 1 Talent, and eat a **ration** or lose another. Then, tail between your legs, [return to 95](#).

49.

You finally track the **glass compass** to its destination, a ruined mansion so overgrown with wild white roses that the old walls are barely visible beneath the masses of thorns. You must *Test your Talent* to make your way through the barrier of thorns without *losing 1 talent*.

Within, the building is no more than a shell of overgrown walls, without a roof or even an upper storey. Strange veins of blue glass show where some apocalyptic spell destroyed the structure, generations before you were born. The stone has been worn down by wind and rain, but the blue glass is untouched.

Test Search (if you don't have Search, *Test your Talent at -2*) and make a note of the result.

You pick your way through the ruins, checking the compass, until you locate — as you suspected you might — the entrance to a cellar. Damp stone steps, their treads stained by moss, lead down into a low chamber where a sorcerous light flickers from a brass lantern. Below the lantern, with his back to you, a robed wizard capers before some sort of magical device held aloft by fizzing skeins of power — Malphas.

If you passed your search test, you have entered quietly enough to [ambush the wizard \(turn to 386\)](#), otherwise your search was noisy enough to be heard and the wizard is [ready for you \(turn to 113\)](#).

50.

You make your escape from the gate guards, but they are annoyingly persistent. Even when you throw yourself into the narrow passages and alleyways, they still aren't far behind. It takes you ages to lose them, and by the time you finally feel safe you are quite lost, and night has fallen.

[Turn to 303.](#)

§1.

You spend the evening with the priests, eating a meal of salt bread and vegetables in their small refectory. They tell you that they have kept watch over every door of the temple, but never caught the thief entering. Then, the priests go to their slumber, leaving you alone in the darkened temple.

- » If you wish to patrol the doors, [turn to 360](#).
- » If you want to descend to the crypts, [turn to 352](#).
- » If you want to stay by the altar, [turn to 250](#).

§2.



You venture into the vast ruins of a broken temple. Fallen pillars lie scattered across the ancient flagstones, the few bases still standing remind you of pointing fingers.

The inside of the temple is heavy with the scent of wild roses, which seem to cover almost every surface. Tangled thorn stems and drooping blossoms knot their way over every illuminated surface. The only exit is [back towards the main street \(turn to 196\)](#).

If the box above is not ticked, and you have the keyword *Title*, you can search here for the blue rose — risking the many thorns. [Test Search at -4](#) (if you don't have Search, [Test your Talent](#) at -6). If you pass, you manage to find a **blue rose** amongst the others. If you fail, you *Lose 2 Talent*. Either way, tick the box above. You can only search here for the rose once.



§3.

☐☐☐

If all three boxes above are checked, the pond is empty, you must [return to 303](#).

Picking your way through the ruins you spot a faint yellow light, and go to investigate, thinking that it might be candle or torchlight. Instead, you find yourself on the edge of a pool filled with glowing frogs, which flicker and flash as they jump from rock to rock.

If you want to hunt the frogs, tick one of the boxes above, and then [Test Naturalist or Tracking](#) (if you don't have Naturalist or Tracking, [Test your Talent at -2](#)). If you succeed, you gain a **ration** in the form of a nice juicy frog, and another for every 3 by which you pass the test. (e.g. if you need a 10 or less and roll a 7, you gain two rations). If you fail, you manage to do nothing but get yourself soaked — *Lose 1 Talent*.

When you are done here you [pick your way out of the ruins \(turn to 303\)](#).

§4.

You blacked out on the sands of the arena expecting death, instead you come around, groggy and sore, in one of the arena's many underground chambers. Your wounds have been bandaged, though you are still badly hurt.

You look up to see a surgeon washing her hands in a copper bowl. "We couldn't have one of our prize gladiators dying like a common criminal she says."

You suspect they just wanted your death to be more profitable, but you are in no position to argue.

To your surprise, you find that, since you technically survived the fight, you are free to go.

Set your *Vitality* to 1 and [turn to 95](#).

55.

The slum-dwellers of the Narrows remember you well as the one who saved them from the monsters of the pit. They don't have much, but they are happy to share what they do have, companionship, a place to sleep, a warm fire.

You may *Rest* and *Restore 2 Talent* by staying here, provided you also consume one **ration**.

When you are done here, you can [return to the heart of the city \(turn to 95\)](#).

56.

You guess that this creature is a Mage's scouting bird from the war, an aerial sentry capable of spying out the land ahead and reporting back. Such creatures were trained to respond to the correct command word and gesture. You decide to take a guess. You raise your forearm and call out "Report!".

To your surprise, it works. The bird stops its endless fluttering and lands on your arm. [Turn to 401](#).

57.



If the box above is not ticked, tick the box and [turn to 206](#) now.

Anaxes welcomes you back to his house, where a room has been set aside for you. "Stay as long as you wish," he tells you.

You may *Rest*, *Heal 2 Vitality*, and *Restore 3 Talent*. Anaxes proves to be adept with fire magic, and can also *Repair your Armour*, all the while entertaining you with discourses on the importance of flame in magical theory. Spending time in his forge, and seeing how gleefully he handles his incendiary magic, you quickly decide that he shouldn't be allowed anywhere *near* a flame — but perhaps this is the madness of magi showing its hand.

When you tire of Anaxes' comforts and conversation, you can [return to the upper town \(turn to 119\)](#).

58.

The booths of Spark Court fizz and fizzle with stray magics, a stark reminder of why only the most insane people are willing to put spells directly into their heads and become magi. Sensible adventurers rely on scrolls and items instead, and the spell-scribes of Spark Court have plenty for sale.

As you are browsing the scroll racks and tablets, you notice an odd shop on the corner of the court, with a [sign shaped like a snail \(turn to 296\)](#) outside it.

spells

	buy	sell
beserker spell	150gp	100gp
Cast before a fight to gain +4 on each round, however the fight lasts one round longer		
flight spell	150gp	100gp
heal spell	50gp	10gp
lightning spell	70gp	30gp
Counts as a Fireball, but uses lightning to attack		
invulnerability spell	50gp	10gp
teleport spell	200gp	100gp
view spell	100gp	50gp

(For spells without descriptions, see the GNAT core rules)

When you are done here, you can [return to the market \(turn to 224\)](#).

59.

You examine the flowers and realise that they are **fisheye root**, a plant said to be irresistible to some fish. You decide to gather a portion before [heading on \(turn to 291\)](#).

60.

"Throw it in," you tell the woman, and she adds the seal to the pot before you play again. Sadly for her, it doesn't change her abysmal luck. The only question is who wins the final round, you or Rabbit-mask.

Test your Talent. If you pass, you claim the whole pot winning back your stake and an additional **50 gold**, as well as the **silver seal** that the domino woman threw into the pot. Even if you lose, you still end up with the seal, though the rabbit mask man takes the gold.

"That's it!" says rabbit-mask, "I'm done."

The man pushes past you as he leaves the chamber, but the woman pauses for a moment. "That seal is meant to be the key to a great treasure," she tells you, "but it never brought me a fortune. I hope it does more for you!"

Restore 1 Talent and Gain 1 Experience Point for your win, then [return to 95](#).

61.

You are searching the upper town for a specific house:

- » If you have the keyword *Tender*, and wish to visit Anoxes, [turn to 57](#)
- » If you have the keyword *Travail*, and wish to visit Velguan, [turn to 398](#)
- » If you have the keyword *Twice*, and the **glass compass** and want to follow it, [turn to 163](#)

If you are looking for none of these, you can [return to 119](#) instead.

62.

"I'm afraid it's not quite like you think," you tell Metril. "I saw the plans upstairs ... downstairs ... whatever. The man you know as Father was a wizard, and I think he *made* you. You aren't a child, you're a magical creation, a homunculus."

"Oh"

She looks very sad, and you have a bad feeling that she might cry, but eventually she says, "*I think he made me to be his child, though.*"

"Not, say, some sort of weapon? An assassin? A spy? You don't get close to someone and then explode?"

Metril stares at you like you are *really* odd. "*No. At least, I don't think so. So ... are you going to help me?*"

It's a good question. Will you:

- » [Leave quickly \(turn to 324\)](#)
- » [Help Metril down \(turn to 288\)](#)

63.

☐

Marc welcomes you back. "Did you manage to help Tulla out, then?"

If you did (you can check the checkbox at 104 if you aren't sure), he thanks you heartily. If the box above is not ticked, tick it, and Marc gives you a free catfish (counts as a **ration**).

When you are done you can return to [Pepper Street \(turn to 138\)](#).

64.

The spiders paralyse you with their venom, wrap you in silk, and then haul you back up to the ceiling to devour.

"*Bad luck,*" says the voice from the trapdoor, "*I'm still stuck!*"

You have been slain! If you have a resurrection available, then follow the instructions you have noted (if you purchased a resurrection in the temple district, [turn to X](#) now). If your resurrection leaves you alive in this section then [turn to 95](#) now. Otherwise, your adventure ends here.

YOU ARE DEAD

65.

As you make your way through the ruins you spot a place where the ground has collapsed, revealing some sort of tunnel below. A rough slope of rubble leads down into the passage. If you have a source of light (such as a **torch** or **lantern**) you can [head down \(turn to 168\)](#).

If you'd rather stay in the daylight, [turn to 291](#).

66.

The shambling figure strikes you with a chilling aura of fear, paralysing you. Before you can recover, you find yourself in a desperate combat!

You must *Fight 3 rounds at -4*, gaining +2 if you have a **holy symbol**. After each round of combat you can choose to take another approach, if you wish.

- » If you want to try and placate it with offerings, [turn to 184](#)
- » If you want to try and force it to return to the grave with magic, [turn to 380](#)
- » If you have the **morvanos family locket** and want to present it, [turn to 213](#)

If you *fight all three rounds* and prevail, you manage to defeat the walking ghost, [turn to 336](#). If you lose, [turn to 375](#).

67.

You decide to climb to one of the higher levels of the collapsed building, where it looks like valuable herbs might be growing. Little do you know that the living roots of the trees, animated by the dark magic that corrupts them, are creeping closer.

Suddenly, a root wraps itself around your ankle, attempting to pull you off the wall so that the trees can feed on your corpse. *Test Climbing at --1* (if you don't have Climbing, *Test your Talent* at -1). If you fail, the roots drag you down! *Take 1 Wound* and *Lose 1 Talent* from the fall. If this kills you, [turn to 201](#). If you survive, you manage to scramble to a higher ledge where you are safe ... for now.

[Turn to 176](#).

68.

Plenty of young men or grizzled bruisers are to be found hanging around Ironmonger's Square, and a good number of them are willing to hire on to fight, so long as you are staying on the right side of the Mage's law (or out of its sight).

You can hire some troops here. They will accompany you to one fight in the Outer City or nearby countryside (they won't enter the inner city, or follow you to another adventure) which is not a one-on-one duel (such as the arena) or required stealth to reach (such as breaking into someone's house).

It costs **40 gold** to hire a band of men.

If you hire the men, mark them on your inventory as **band of bruisers (heavy)**. When you choose to use them in a fight, they will provide a +3 bonus. In addition, they can take 1 Wound for you. After the fight is done, they will leave your service. If you die and are resurrected, the bruisers are not resurrected with you, remove them from your inventory.

When you are done you can [return to Ironmonger's Square \(turn to 219\)](#).

69.

The people of the lower city may have little grasp of the high tongue, but in the upper town such a noble proclamation attracts no end of notice. You spend the rest of the day moving from corner to corner, crying out the overblown deeds of Thusar at the doorsteps of the other nobles.

Apparently this sort of thing goes down well in the upper town. By the time you make your way to Thusar's mansion, the lord — who, it seems, has been magically monitoring your performance — is pleased with you. If your **Status** is below 4, you may raise it by one.

You are also given what Thusar refers to airily as an *honorarium*, which proves to be **30 gold**.

[Return to 119.](#)

70.

One night, as you are trying to get some sleep in the crowded and damp confines of your cell, you are jerked back to consciousness by a sudden wave of heat! A blinding spark flares into life mid-air, rapidly growing into the shape of a fiery figure crowned with horns. A collar of shimmering brass inscribed with magical runes encircles its neck.

The other prisoners scramble away in terror, but the figure comes straight to you and extends a flaming hand. In a voice like crackling tinder it says, "Anaxes bids you to come with me."

Nervously, you take the creature's hand. The sorcerous fire leaps higher, bathing the chamber in heat, and, in a flash, you find yourself dragged through a portal of flame.

When the fire fades you are in the house of Anaxes, where the mage himself awaits. "Having only been rescued for the arena with your help, I could hardly leave you there to suffer the same fate. But don't go making a habit of being sent there, I won't be able to rescue you a second time."

[Turn to 57.](#)

71.

You hurry into the second room, which is indeed Ollivers' office. A heavy, ornate oak desk dominates the chamber, with a small lock-box of inlaid wood sitting atop it. You hurry to the box, but naturally, it is locked. [Test Larceny](#) (if you don't have Larceny, [Test your Talent at -2](#)). If you succeed, you get the box open easily, if not, you nick your own hand while trying to prise it open and *Lose 1 Talent*.

Either way, you get the box open, and find **ollivers' documents**, and an additional **100 gold**. Pleased with your success, you pocket your finds, and make your escape down the other stairs, past a rather confused looking guard.

[Return to 95.](#)

72.

Luck is with you, not to mention the dice, which you handle well, winning back your stake and an additional **100 gold**. Rabbit-mask finally has a bad few rounds, and is forced to haul one of the rings — you see that he has many — off his fingers and add it to the pot. The woman in the domino mask continues to loose badly. But her loss is your gain. [Turn to 116.](#)

73.

You are deep in the southern part of the Treysham ruins, not far from the broken wall, when you spy the flicker of light emerging from the shattered carcass of a looming hall. Frogs? Lightning flies?

If you wish to sneak closer and try to spy what's inside, [turn to 228](#). Alternatively you can [go inside and look \(turn to 330\)](#), or [decide to leave it alone \(turn to 303\)](#).

74.

You visit the arena's arms-master, who slaves away amongst her apprentices, forging weapons of all types for the gladiators to use.

The arms-master can sharpen a blade for you. Pick one of your weapons and pay **30 gold**. The next time you fight a round of combat with that weapon, you gain +2. After that, the weapon loses its edge and returns to normal.

[Return to 334.](#)

75.

"Bring me *all* the food!" you command.

Reluctantly, but at the priest's urging, the marsh murderers produce every scrap of food they have been hoarding, including their pigs, fish, and hunks of meat you decide not to look too closely at. You contribute all the food you are carrying (remove any **rations**, herbs, plants, or other items of food from your inventory).

The food is hauled to Tsuga and cast into its gaping maw, causing the metal demon to roll its eyes and stamp its stubby feet in delight.

It's time. You [attack \(turn to 369\)](#)!

76.

You are sure you can hear the sound of squeaking over the rush and plashing of the water, but you can't tell where it's coming from. Casting about, this way and that, you become quite lost, and before you know it, the freezing water is up to your waist!

Test Swimming (if you don't have Swimming, *Test your Talent at -2*). If you pass, you manage to [haul yourself to drier ground \(turn to 48\)](#). If you fail, you are swept off by the current! *Take 1 Wound*, ignoring armour. If this reduces you to 0 Vitality, [turn to 385](#) now.

Eventually, the rushing water slackens, and you are washed out through one of the many sewer entrances and deposited in the mud and grass of the fenlands outside the city. You pass a freezing night, before stumbling your way back to the city gates at dawn.

[Turn to 95.](#)

77.

You decide to head towards the northeastern part of the ruins, closer to the bay. It's a long trek from the settled parts of town, and it's fully dark by the time you get there, so you can see almost nothing beyond your immediate surroundings.

Something you *can* see, is a singular tower, silhouetted against the night sky. You don't know what it was, but you decide to take a closer look.

As you approach, picking your way through the overgrown streets at its base, you hear an odd fluttering sound from inside the tower, as if the tower was a cage with a songbird trapped inside. Close up, you can see that the tower's door is still intact, and there is no sign of windows on the structure, even when you light your lamp and do your best to shine it upwards.

The noise unnerves you. No one would blame you for [leaving now \(turn to 303\)](#). Alternatively, you can [ease open the door \(turn to 258\)](#).

78.

The creature is a twisting serpent of flame and smoke with gaping incendiary jaws. It strikes repeatedly at the side of the flying carriage, causing it to slew across the street into a wall. Somewhere outside the coachman screams. You are certain that if the creature gets into the carriage you will be blasted to ash!

You must *Fight three rounds at -4* Unless you are fireproof, or are wearing magic armour, you suffer *disadvantage* on the fight.

If you lose, both you and Velguan will die ([turn to 179](#)). If you survive, you finally succeed in hacking the flaming snake into smouldering pieces, and collapse back into the carriage, exhausted and covered in ash.

"Well done, well done," Velguan says, taking a deep draught from his crystal goblet. You notice that his fox-fur attire is annoyingly unscathed by the deadly encounter you have just survived.

"So," you say, "about my fifty gold?"

A cunning look comes over the wizard. "Well, you can have the money, but perhaps you'd rather have my regard, or ..." he looks around, "my sword, since it seems like it might be useful for you.

- To take the money [turn to 404](#)
- To take the sword [turn to 356](#)
- To accept his regard [turn to 216](#)

79.

You run, screaming, through the ruined lanes, but the flaming birds are implacable. Time and time again they dive, scorching you with their fire, until you are reduced first to a corpse, and then to ash. What valuables you have are stolen by the birds.

You have been slain! If you have a resurrection available, then follow the instructions you have noted (if you purchased a resurrection in the temple district, [turn to X](#) now). If your resurrection leaves you alive in this section then [turn to 95](#) now. Otherwise, your adventure ends here.

YOU ARE DEAD

80.

You are passing the opening to a narrow lane when a voice calls out to you from inside. Peering into the darkness you make out a figure in some sort of red coat.

If you have the keyword *Ties*, [turn to 304](#) now.

You can [go to see what the figure wants \(turn to 165\)](#), or [walk on \(turn to 309\)](#).

81.

You erect the enchanted dummy of Velguan amongst the overgrown pillars of the Trey Shrine, but you can't imagine that any wizard, no matter how mad, is going to believe that a stationary dummy is the actual magician. You are going to need to stealthily move it around.

- » If you want to pretend that the dummy is casting a spell [turn to 299](#)
- » If you want to pace the dummy up and down [turn to 159](#)
- » If you prefer to give up, [return to 203](#)

82.



If there is a check in the box above, you have already done this event, and cannot do it again; [return to 309](#). Otherwise, check the box now and read on.

You are ushered into a backroom, where a group of richly-dressed and masked individuals are seated around a table. The piles of glittering golden griffons quickly dispel any doubts you have about the stakes being played for.

To buy in, you must stake **100 gold**. If you don't have it, you must slink away in shame to [95](#).

If you do, you take a seat at the table, with your own pile of coins in front of you, and a borrowed crow mask on your face. You take stock of your opponents. It looks like a man wearing a rabbit mask is doing best, while a woman in a simple domino, is doing the worst. You wonder why everyone is wearing masks in a city where usually only mad wizards do. Are some of these people wizards? You certainly aren't, but who can say.

The game is Nine Men's Bones, played with dice. *Test Diplomacy* (if you don't have Diplomacy, *Test your Talent at -2*). If you pass, [turn to 215](#), otherwise [turn to 17](#).

83.

Melee matches to catch the eyes of the gladiator trainers are held at the arena every few weeks. A crowd of hopeful young fighters gather on the hot arena sands, glancing nervously up at the tiered stands, where the bored-looking trainers are kept company by a small audience hoping to see some terrible injuries.

At the gate, a functionary asks you for an entry fee of **20 gold**. If you don't want to pay the fee, you can [leave the arena \(turn to 218\)](#) now.

If you pay, you take your place on the field. Everyone here is carrying their own weapons, and you are no exception. Someone blows a horn, and a grey-haired brute of a man, dressed in fine furs, stands up.

"My name is Kanthus, I run this arena. These fine ladies and gentlemen have come to see blood and skill, and blood they will have. Survive the melee, and maybe they will pick you. Now, fight!"

To survive the melee, you must *Fight 4 Rounds at +1*. If you have a **shield**, or any **armour** you are better equipped than the others, and gain an additional +1. If you reach 0 Vitality, [turn to 367](#).

There's more to getting selected than surviving, though, it's about putting on a show. Each round, *Test Diplomacy* (if you don't have Diplomacy, *Test your Talent at -2*) in addition to fighting, keeping a note of how many rounds you win, and how many Diplomacy rolls you pass.

Now, add the number of rounds you won, the number of diplomacy rolls you passed, and your status to get your *performance*. Roll 2d6 to try and get less than or equal to your performance. If you pass, you are [selected \(turn to 390\)](#).

If you don't get selected, you will have to come back for the next melee and try again. In the meantime you [return to the city \(turn to 95\)](#).

84.

You are torn apart and devoured — hound food. It's an ignominious end to your life's adventures.

You have been slain! If you have a resurrection available, then follow the instructions you have noted (if you purchased a resurrection in the temple district, [turn to X](#) now). If your resurrection leaves you alive in this section then [turn to 95](#) now. Otherwise, your adventure ends here.

YOU ARE DEAD

85.

The imp leads you through the streets of the city, past the Dragon Gate — where the guards take one look at the imp and stand aside — and then the Wizard's Gate, where the Sentinels speak with the imp for a few moments before letting you by.

You enter the uppermost city, the abode of the wizards. A trio of golden towers soar into the sky, their sides marred here and there by the stains of ancient spellfire. This is the High Tower. The streets around the tower are paved with white marble, though the stones are cracked and fringed with weeds. The Magi travel by spell, or in their floating carriages, when they leave their towers at all, so the roads are left to ruin.

You burn to know what wonders are hidden in those towers, but the imp whisks you past the sealed amethyst doors to a lesser entrance. The door opens, and an enchanted platform whisks you up to a high chamber where the Voice awaits.

The Voice is the wizard elected to speak for all the others. You expect someone grandiose, but he proves to be a slim man, you think — it's hard to be sure what lies behind the ivory Bullfinch mask that covers his face. His voice, at least, sounds male — though young, and oddly accented — as he bids you take a seat on the other side of his polished desk.

"Welcome. That seems an appropriate greeting. Not to Treysham, of course, but to its true and secret heart."

You make no reply. The Voice is probably the most powerful individual in Treysham, and you can't imagine what he wants with you.

"You've made some waves in the city. It's not often a young adventurer attracts so much attention, for good *and* bad. It can cause trouble." The Voice tilts his head. "I have my eye on you."

You stammer something, but the Voice raises one gloved hand to silence you.

"There's an errand I need attended to. Somewhere in the city grows a blue rose. I need it. Bring it to me, and I will reward you."

You don't think this request is optional, so you bow to the Voice and [follow the imp back to the outer city \(turn to 95\)](#).

86.

The mechanical beasts rip you apart, and drag your remains into their tunnels. They do not eat you, since they are not living beings, but your bones and sinews will go to repair their ageing mechanisms.

You have been slain! If you have a resurrection available, then follow the instructions you have noted (if you purchased a resurrection in the temple district, [turn to X](#) now). If your resurrection leaves you alive in this section then [turn to 95](#) now. Otherwise, your adventure ends here.

YOU ARE DEAD

87.

You flee the pit, scrambling up the talus slope and not stopping until the Narrows are well behind you. You need to be better prepared to face those things! *Lose 1 Talent*, and then [turn to 309](#).

88.

When you return to the inn with the burnt sign, the unnamed man is waiting for you, though you can't imagine how he knew you were coming.

If you have the keyword *Twist*, and wish to bring the documents on the agreed upon day, [turn to 272](#) now. Otherwise, read on.

Once again, he takes the darkest corner table, and you wonder exactly how he can make out **ollivers' documents** when you offer them to him (remove them from your inventory). To your mild surprise, he makes good on his bargain, and gives you a **mark of entry** that you can use to enter the Upper City.

Restore 1 Talent, and *Gain 1 Experience Point* for your good fortune, and then [return to 95](#).

89.

Gain the keyword *Target*

You take out your weapon and unleash a rain of arrows at the thieves lurking below, taking them entirely by surprise. One of them goes down with a cry, while the others flee into the night.

Once you are sure they are gone, you pick your way down into the building and examine the dead man. He's dressed like any outer town thug, but there's an odd mark tattooed on his left wrist, a closed eye.

Near to the body is a **sword**, and a large sausage (counts as a **ration**).

Other than the fire, there doesn't seem to be anything else to find here, so you decide to make your escape. [Return to 303](#) and tick the box on line 3.

90.

Test Climbing at -2. If you succeed, you manage to scale your way to the ceiling and hang on to the furniture, though your feet end up dangling in the air. If you fail, you fall down and hurt yourself — *Take 1 Wound*. If you survive, you can try again, or [give up \(turn to 253\)](#). If you are reduced to 0 Vitality, [turn to 193](#).

If you make it to the table, you find that it is covered in odd sorcerous tools — most of which mean nothing to you, and not clearly valuable. Weighted down by these trinkets is some sort of blueprint or construction drawing, which you struggle to understand. If you have the **occult primer**, or successfully *Test Occult* (if you don't have Occult, *Test your Talent at -2*), [turn to 142](#) now.

Otherwise, you come to the conclusion that it's instructions for making some sort of alchemical automaton — like a clockwork bird, or perhaps a sorcerous lion; some sort of weapon of war, no doubt.

You ease yourself carefully [back to the floor \(turn to 253\)](#).

91.

The skeletons are barely animated, unarmed, unarmored, but they keep ... on ... coming! At last, you can hold them off no-longer, and are quickly overcome.

You have been slain! If you have a resurrection available, then follow the instructions you have noted (if you purchased a resurrection in the temple district, [turn to X](#) now). If your resurrection leaves you alive in this section then [turn to 95](#) now. Otherwise, your adventure ends here.

YOU ARE DEAD

92.

Melba drags you into the cloud of steam and thrusts the wash-stick into your hands, commanding you to pound the dirty clothes for all you are worth

Test Diplomacy (if you don't have Diplomacy, *Test your Talent at -2*) to see what she thinks of your work. If you pass, she's pleased with your effort, and sends you upstairs to fetch the master's bedclothes for the next load — *Restore 1 Talent*. If you fail, you end up on the same errand, but with a terrible tongue-lashing from Melba ringing in your ears. In this case, *Lose 1 Talent*.

Now, [turn to 406](#).

93.

If you have the keyword *Turncoat*, [turn to 95](#) now, otherwise, read on.

As you turn away from the gate and start to make your way back to the low town, a man detaches himself from where he was lurking by the wall and comes after you. You put your hand to your purse and weapon, ready for a robbery or a fight, but he raises his hands placatingly.

"No need for that, friend," he says. "I saw the way you hesitated at the gate. Can't get in, eh? Well maybe I can help you with that, if you can help me. What say we take a drink at a tavern I know?"

You can turn the man down by turning to [95](#), or [go with him \(turn to 7\)](#).

Gain the keyword *Truant*. If you have **kollish's ear** and want to hand it over, [turn to 230](#) now.

You are escorted to the cabin of the Krendar captain, a cruel faced man in a blood-red officer's coat, who calls himself Krazek. His cabin is a crowded place, full of trophies and oddities that you suspect were taken from captured slaves. There's a chart table, and even a heavy chair for Krazek to sit in, but he prefers to perch on the edge of the table, looming over you.

"So, you want to work for me, do you?" he says, though you said no such thing.

"Well, there's something you can do, if you don't mind Krendish gold. One of my crew's gone rogue, a man named Kollish. You'll know him by his missing left eye and the scar that runs right down to his jaw here," he makes a gesture.

"Catch him and bring me back his ear, and I'll give you sixty gold."

With that, you are dismissed. [Turn to 204](#).

If you have a **Status** 3 or more with Treysham, and do not have the keyword *Title*, [turn to 9](#) now. If you have a **blue rose**, [turn to 130](#) now.

You are in the central square of Treysham's outer city, where the market of the edge-dwellers once stood. The day market is still held here, in the shadow of the Lion Gate. A second gate, the Dragon, leads to the inner city, but that way is barred to those with insufficient status.

From here you may:

- [Visit the day market \(turn to 224\)](#)
- [Explore the city by day \(turn to 22\)](#)
- [Explore the city by night \(turn to 309\)](#)
- [Find a place to stay \(turn to 354\)](#)
- [Go to the docks \(turn to 204\)](#)
- [Go to the Dragon Gate \(turn to 259\)](#)
- [Go to the Temple Quarter \(turn to 196\)](#)
- [Enter the arena \(turn to 218\)](#)
- [Venture into the ruins \(turn to 225\)](#)
- [Leave the city \(turn to 34\)](#)

If you have **ollivers' documents**, and wish to go to the tavern with the blank sign, [turn to 88](#).

96.

Gain the keyword *Thwart*

With a roar, the mass of escaped slaves storm the deck of the Krendar ship. Slaver men go over the side, or are trampled by the mass of men, many of whom are Treysham citizens taken by krendar raiding parties. There are guards on the gangplank, but not enough to prevent a mass revolt — though it's probably only because the slaves are fresh.

Soon you have reached the dockside, and are carried off into the city itself by the mass of freed-men. The Krendar dare not follow.

Many of the men peel off as you enter the lower city, seeking homes and families, while others flee into the night, but enough remain to see you feasted and feted. You are taken to an inn where some of the escaped slaves are well known, and plied with ale. You may *Rest*, *Restore 3 Talent*, and *Heal 1 Vitality*.

Over the following few days, word of what you did circulates through the low city. The people have no love for the Krendar slaver-men. *Gain 1 Experience Point* and one **Status**, then [turn to 95](#).

97.

You are gnawed to death by rats — what an ignominious end!

You have been slain! If you have a resurrection available, then follow the instructions you have noted (if you purchased a resurrection in the temple district, [turn to X](#) now). If your resurrection leaves you alive in this section then [turn to 95](#) now. Otherwise, your adventure ends here.

YOU ARE DEAD

98.

Gain the keyword *Twist*

"I've got a bit of information that I think you'd be interested in," you say.

Ollivers gestures for you to continue, and you explain about the man at the signless tavern. Your account is met with a snort of laughter from the merchant.

"Pye has grown desperate I see, hiring strangers to rob me. Truth is, he's over his head in bad business and I hold the making or breaking of him. But this is low, even for him. Still, I see opportunities. I'll pay you fifty gold to trick the man into his own ruin. What do you say?"

There seems to be little choice but to accept, or at least pretend to. Ollivers hands over **ollivers' documents**, but arranges the exact time and day when you'll put the incriminating paperwork into Pye's hands.

"Don't let me down," he says. "If you betray me, I'll know."

Business done, you make your exit. [Turn to 95](#).

99.

You decide to try and slip through the gates with the flow of traffic, even though the sentinels stop each party to check their letters of entry. You can see them only a half-dozen yards ahead. The sentries are accompanied by a sorcerous device in the shape of a levitating silver swan, which scans each pass with a flash of its metal eyes as they are held up to it.

You can [try to steal a pass \(turn to 320\)](#), [trust to your powers of stealth \(turn to 14\)](#), or [retreat to the low city \(turn to 93\)](#).

100.

You sit up with a gasp, dragged back from the grasp of death by the power of **derra's pendant**. The pendant, spent, crumbles to dust (remove it from your inventory). You look around and realise that you are on the cold floor of the vestibule of Raven Hall, in the ruins of Treysam.

Confused, and aching, you [make your way into the city \(turn to 95\)](#).

101.

You clamber up the side of one of the crumbling walls, cursing as you are pricked by rose thorns. At last you emerge at the level of one of the petal nests, with your nose pressed up against it. Within the nest you see three jewel-like eggs, and some actual coins, as well as a pair of bright red birds, which regard you cautiously.

You can [grab an egg \(turn to 337\)](#), [snatch some coins \(turn to 195\)](#), or [descend \(turn to 363\)](#).

102.

Your first couple of days of duty are easy enough. You shoo away a few loiterers, help the Upper City sentinels look for pickpockets amongst the crowd outside the Dragon Gate, and settle some disputes in the market.

On the third night, however, a violent brawl breaks out in the dangerous alleys of the ruins, and the guards are sent in. It's just your luck to be on shift at the time. *Lose 1 Talent*, then Fight 1 round at -2 (ignore the penalty if you have a **shield**).

If you lose the fight you are not killed, but are reduced to 1 Vitality, and lose *another* Talent. If you win, you manage to break a few heads without getting yours broken in return.

Either way, you limp back to the guard house and hand back your weapons in return for the paltry **20 gold** reward, then [turn to 95](#).

103.

You recognise these as Flame Finches, yet another form of warped wildlife created during the war. Their red colouring is a warning that they are capable of transforming into flame. It's perfectly possible that the houses here were destroyed in an inferno created by these creatures' ancestors.

You know that these creatures gather shiny things in their nests, but will react with violence if threatened, so you need to get them away from their nests.

[Return to 363](#).

104.

☐

If there is a tick in the box above then you have already completed Tulla's quest. [Turn to 268](#). Otherwise, tick the box now and read on.

You trudge your way to a run-down looking farmhouse overlooking a gurgling drainage channel. A pair of large grass-choked ponds are clearly intended for raising carp, or some other sort of fish, but you don't see anything moving in the murky waters.

The farmhouse door is opened by a thin-faced woman with a thick shawl around her shoulders. She introduces herself as Tulla.

"Your husband hired me to come here," you tell her. "He said there was some sort of problem with your fish?"

"Too right there is!"

She shows you a wooden pail full of catfish, which appear to have been sliced into pieces with some sort of sharp blade.

"All of them are like this!" She waves her hands about in distress. "If we don't put a stop to it we'll be out of house and home."

Test Naturalist (if you don't have Naturalist, *Test your Talent at -2*). If you pass [turn to 181](#), otherwise [turn to 198](#).

105.

The crowds cheer as your opponent falls before you, entirely beaten. You are lauded, and thrown the white roses of victory.

When you make it off the arena floor, you are handed a purse of **150 gold** by Kanthus, along with a hearty congratulation.

[Turn to 334](#) and tick a box.

106.

You slip through the door into the room. This is clearly Ollivers' office, a fine-looking room dominated by a large oak desk that looks like it might have been looted from a mage's house.

Unfortunately the room also contains Ollivers, who leaps up from his desk and grabs a stout cudgel from a rack, all the while calling for his guards!

Fight 2 rounds at -3 to hold off Ollivers, if you have a *long weapon* you gain an additional +2.

If you lose, [turn to 260](#). Otherwise you hold him off long enough to hear the footsteps of the guards on the stairs. There's clearly no way you can take on a whole room full of foes, so you take the braver route and leap out of the front window. *Test Climbing* (if you don't have Climbing, *Test your Talent at -2*), or cast *Flight*, to make it to the ground unscathed. Otherwise *Take 1 Wound*. If this reduces you to 0 Vitality, you are captured as you writhe on the ground in agony, and [carted off to the arena \(turn to 395\)](#). Otherwise, you make your escape to [95](#).

107.

Asking around, you learn that Penalla is from Jarson, a city famed for its archers. Likely as not she's a quick moving ranged fighter. You're going to need a shield to fight someone like her for sure.

"I'd let her close with *me*!" one of the patrons tells you, which is less useful.

Done, you [return to the Thumb \(turn to 136\)](#).

108.

"Now now, lads, no need for violence!" you say, raising your hands. "Sure, I may have put some noses out of joint in the arena, but that's *arena* business surely, and not something you need to dirty your hands with."

It's a pretty desperate sort of plea, but to your surprise it appears to work. The serjeant in charge scratches his balding head and says, "The arena guards don't have much respect for the likes of us, 'tis true. Let them catch their own criminals."

Relieved, you make your escape. [Return to 95](#).

109.

Gain the keyword *Talent*

You are approached between rounds by a shady man wearing a patch across one eye and black-leather all over.

"I saw your skill at the game there, you are wasted in this dive, playing for pennies. I've got a better game in mind, if it interests you."

The man tells you that some high stakes nobles sometimes meet in the back room of the Serpent's Eye tavern. He gives you the password to get yourself in, but warns you: "You better bring a good pouch of money if you want to win, no stakes below one hundred gold."

[Turn to 309.](#)

110.

Gain the keyword *Talk*

You decide to just open a door and see what's beyond ... this is a mistake. Whoever lived here before was prepared to kill to keep out intruders, and the wards kill you without hesitation.

Your spirit is blasted from your body, which collapses to the ground dead. Your spirit remains, however, drifting through the hallways of the ruin. Now the wards are no impediment to you. You pass through the walls, and find a sealed chamber at the back of the ground floor. There, the ghost of a young woman sits sadly before a dead fire.

She looks up as you enter, her pale face full of surprise.

"Oh! Another soul. Are you dead too? My name is Derra Revenda, I used to live here. Is the war done?"

You explain to her that the war is long done, but that you were killed by her traps.

"Oh dear!" Her hands fly to her mouth. "I am very sorry about that. Those were my father's work." She indicates a box lying on a small table. "I have a charm here that can return you to your body. It was intended for me, but my body did not survive. I would like you to have it."

"Are you sure?" you ask her. "Surely that will condemn you to an eternity here?"

"Not now that the war is done, and so I thank you for telling me, and gladly give you this

as a gift."

She gives you **derra's pendant (Treysham 100)**. The first time (after this) that you die while carrying the pendant, it will resurrect you . You may either resurrect in the passage you died in, or at section 100 of this game, assuming that no death instructions in the game you are playing take priority.

You thank her again, and return to your body, coming back to life in the empty vestibule. You avoid the doors, but can still [go upstairs \(turn to 284\)](#), if you wish.

III.

You step out into the village, with your hands raised, making it clear you are no threat, and walk forward.

Marsh murderers, fearsome in woad and mud, emerge from the rude cottages on every side, their hands filled with spears and gutting knives. Looking around, you realise that the object in the centre of the village is an enormous iron cookpot, bubbling over a constant fire.

This was maybe not a great idea.

You try to negotiate. *Test Diplomacy at --2* (if you don't have Diplomacy, *Test your Talent* at -0). If you succeed, the marsh men listen to you, at least enough to escort you to the house of their priest at the back of the village — [turn to 326](#).

If you fail, the villagers apparently decide you'd be a better meal than a friend! You must [defend yourself \(turn to 396\)](#).

II2.

Test your Talent. If you fail you *Take 1 Wound, ignoring armour!* In addition, if you have any armour, its protection is reduced to zero as it is scorched by the birds. If you are reduced to 0 Vitality, [turn to 79](#). If not, you manage to flee from the birds! [Return to 225](#) and tick the box on line 3.

II3.

Even as you enter the cellar, the cat-wizard whirls, bells jingling like the instruments of a demented musician, and launches a fireball at you! *Test your Talent*. If you pass, you manage to dodge out of the way, otherwise you *Take 1 Wound*. If this kills you, [turn to 197](#).

You leap forward, weapon at the ready, while Malphas attempts to counter you with a magical wand he was holding. *Fight 1 Round* at +2. If you win, [turn to 155](#), otherwise [turn to 197](#).

II4.

You turn and scramble away up the steep sides of the crater. Rocks shift and tumble under your feet, and thorns tear at you as the *tick tick* comes closer!

Test Climbing at --2 (if you don't have Climbing, *Test your Talent* at -0) If you pass, you manage to haul yourself out of the pit and flee down the Narrows to [309](#). Otherwise, something clamps itself around your foot, and you are hauled violently back down into the pit! *Take 1 Wound* and [turn to 358](#).

II5.

You are exploring the north-east part of the ruins, when you come across a strange structure. You take it at first to be a low building, but when you investigate it more closely it appears to be a tower ... only a tower that descends into the earth instead of rising into the sky.

In all other respects it appears to be like a tower. The walls appear to taper as it goes deeper; there are narrow tower windows — albeit ones that open onto damp soil rather than open air; there is a spiral stair, like a tower would have. You could certainly describe it simply as a series of cellars, but something about it screams "tower" to your mind.

If you wish to descend the tower [turn to 305](#). If you'd rather stay in the daylight, [turn to 291](#).

116.

Hours pass, and many of the other players drop out, leaving just you, rabbit-mask and domino-mask, who is hanging on by a thread. Her next roll is disastrous, and she loses the last of her coins.

"Hah!" the rabbit-mask man snorts. "That's you out at last. We both know you don't have anything left."

The woman fumbles in her pockets in the hope of finding another hundred gold, instead she produces an ornate-looking silver seal, a circular medallion with a knot-like symbol embossed on one side.

"This is worth my stake," she says. "let me play on."

Rabbit-mask brays with laughter. "Not a chance!"

Its up to you whether to [accept her stake \(turn to 60\)](#), or [kick her out \(turn to 44\)](#).

117.

Within the old chest are, unsurprisingly, more bones, but these are strung together with wire chains so that they form a set of armour. This **bone armour** counts as medium armour (2 protection), though it can only be resold for half the normal value.

You decide to get out of here before more undead rise. [Return to 225](#) and tick the box on line 2.

118.

You succeed in driving away the flock of cutlass birds, killing more than one of them in the process. You have a fair hope that it means they won't be coming back.

Tulla is certainly grateful. She gives you the **30 gold** that her husband promised you, as well as some **rations** in the form of a smoked catfish. She also is happy for you to take a dead **cutlass bird** if you want it.

Since the hour is now late, she invites you to *Rest* in their cottage for the night. (If you eat a **ration** you may *Heal 1 Vitality* and *Restore 1 Talent*.)

In the morning you head [back to the city \(turn to 95\)](#).

119.

You are on the Avenue of Dragons, which runs from the [Dragon gate \(turn to 259\)](#) to the [Wizard's Gate \(turn to 346\)](#), at the heart of the city.

The houses here are far grander than in the outer city, but suffered just as badly in the war. Although this part of Treysham was sealed off from the outer world for generations, the mages made little use of it, and the grand houses were left blasted and broken. Only since the gates were opened have some of the buildings been repaired, and many are still uninhabited.

If you have a **Status** of 3 or more, you can buy yourself one of these empty houses. To do so you should [visit the Merchant's Hall \(turn to 265\)](#).

- » If you own a house in the Upper Town and wish to visit it, [turn to 281](#)
- » If you wish to search for a specific house, [turn to 61](#)
- » If you wish to visit the Shrine of Trey, [turn to 203](#)
- » If you want to hunt for roses in the Upper Town, [turn to 134](#)

120.

You open the black door, and enter what appears to be a wizard's workshop. Shattered glassware glitters beneath a blanket of ash, as if a fire rushed through here sometime in the past. Arcane marks cover the walls, and a carved image of a flying raven looms from the shadows at the end of the chamber.

You've not taken more than one step, before the ash swirls into the air, forming a rough humanoid shape that sweeps down to attack you, a sorcerous wraith. *Fight 3 Rounds at -2*. You have *Disadvantage* if you don't have a magical weapon, but you instantly win the fight if you can cast *Dispel*.

If the raven-wraith defeats you, [turn to 157](#).

When you are done you [return to the landing \(turn to 284\)](#).

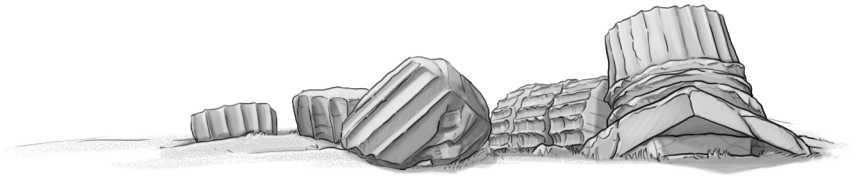
121.

Eeling is harder than it looks, you think, as you tumble overboard on your first attempt to haul one of the creatures into the boat.

You land in the water with a mighty splash, and the wounded eel, your gaff still stuck in its side, rounds on you immediately. *Fight 2 rounds at -1*. It is hard to fight in the water. *Test Swimming* (if you don't have Swimming, *Test your Talent at -2*), if you fail you suffer an additional -2 (-1 if you are fighting with a spear or trident). If you survive, you gasp your way back to the boat, where you sulk, morose, [all the way back to the docks \(turn to 204\)](#).

If you fail, you have been slain! If you have a resurrection available, then follow the instructions you have noted. If your resurrection leaves you alive in this section then [turn to 95](#) now. Otherwise, your adventure ends here.

YOU ARE DEAD



122.

"A wise choice," the projected mage tells you. "I will have it known that my eye looks benevolently on you."

If your **Treysham Status** is 7 or less, raise your **Status** by 1.

[Turn to 95](#).

123.



You emerge into an overgrown garden at the back of the ruined hall. The high walls are crumbling beneath the weight of countless wild roses, whose tangled thorny stems prick at you from every side.

If the box above is not ticked, and you have the keyword *Title*, you can search here for the blue rose — risking the many thorns. *Test Search at -4* (if you don't have Search, *Test your Talent* at -6). If you pass, you manage to find a **blue rose** amongst the others. If you fail, you *Lose 2 Talent*. Either way, tick the box above. You can only search here for the rose once.

The only way out is [back into the hall \(turn to 13\)](#).

124.

You use your weapon to knock some of the nests from the wall tops. Eggs smash on the ground, and shrieking birds burst into the air in a shower of sparks. Sparks? Yes — the birds catch fire as they take to the air, and rain down on you like fire bolts.

Test your Talent. If you fail you *Take 1 Wound, ignoring armour*! In addition, if you have any armour, its protection is reduced to zero as it is scorched by the birds. If you are reduced to 0 Vitality, [turn to 79](#). If not, you manage to flee from the birds! [Return to 225](#) and tick the box on line 3.

125.

With the aid of your magical vision, the house becomes translucent, allowing you to make out the shapes of rooms and furnishings within. It looks like a chamber on the first floor, overlooking the market, contains a heavy desk and other furnishings suggestive of an office. A corridor behind it seems to have a stair at either end, one leading to the front door, and one to the back. The office, if that's what it is, is the second door along from the back stair, but there appears to be someone within.

[Return to 126](#).

126.

Griffon Hall, the house of Merchant Ollivers, is a tottering edifice overlooking the Daymarket. Three floors of leaded windows, half-shuttered, suggest opulence, though the building is as close to ruin as much of the Old Town.

The main door opens onto the market, and is guarded by a footman in a velvet doublet and slashed hose. Circling the building, you spot a narrow lane, and what might be a back door into a scullery or kitchen.

If you cast a *View* to scout the house, [turn to 125](#).

If you wish to approach the guard and ask to see Ollivers, [turn to 174](#). If you'd prefer to try and sneak through the back door, [turn to 41](#). Alternatively, you can [wait till nightfall \(turn to 283\)](#).

127.

"This is too rich for me!" declares a man with a mask of black feathers, which were probably a raven only a few days ago. He gathers what coin he has left and bows out.

It looks to you like the woman in the domino mask ought to do the same, but she seems desperate to win, and fishes some more coins out of the pockets of her coat, not Treysharan griffons this time, but a mess of Krendar marks and crescents from Marinth.

"Pass the dice," she says.

Test Larceny (if you don't have Larceny, *Test your Talent at -2*). If you pass, [turn to 72](#), otherwise [turn to 220](#).

128.

You set out to explore the ruins of Treysham in the depths of the night, with only the faint glow of the moon through the scudding clouds to guide your way. Walls of broken stone loom out of the darkness, empty window frames catching the light like the blank orbits of skulls. The ruins are a maze of streets, with nothing but the distant luminous towers of the magi to orient you.

Which is probably why you rapidly get lost.

It takes you a while to realise that you can no longer see the lights of the occupied part of the city, or even tell for sure how to get back to the larger roads. You are trapped in a maze of rubble and ruins.

You can [wait for the day \(turn to 25\)](#), or [try to find a way back \(turn to 239\)](#).

129.

You open the door and slip inside what appears to be a guardroom, with a pair of cot beds, and a weapons rack on the wall. Luckily the guards are elsewhere.

Test Search (if you don't have Search, *Test your Talent at -2*). If you pass, you locate a **crossbow** (a *Ranged Weapon*) under one of the cots, which you can help yourself to.

After a few minutes you hear a creak in the hallway. Slipping to the door, you peer through the keyhole, and see a richly dressed man come out of the other room, and then pass by on his way to the stairs. Surely this must be Ollivers. Realising that his office must now be empty, you hurry into it.

[Turn to 71.](#)

130.

You are just wondering how to get the **blue rose** to the Voice, given that he is somewhere within the forbidden part of the city, when his imp seeks you out, fluttering down out of the grey afternoon sky with a brass lantern dangling from his foot-claws.

The imp takes the rose off you (remove it from your inventory), and then opens the fretwork doors of its lantern with one foot, while still holding it with the other.

An eldritch radiance pours from the lamp, solidifying into the shape of the Voice of the Magi — though you can see the stalls of the day market through its translucent form.

"Ahh, you have found what I asked for. Good. Now I offer you a choice of reward, my [regard \(turn to 122\)](#) or my [gold \(turn to 371\)](#).

131.

You decide to help yourself to whatever treasure is to be found in the huts and pig pens of the village. Predictably, it isn't much.

You can take any of the following: some dubious meat (counts as two **rations**), a **spear** (a long weapon), a **bundle of darts** (a ranged weapon), a **pig** (heavy, treasure 40gp), and **5 gold**.

It's a meagre reward for slaughter, but you decide it's what the marsh men deserve for their cannibal killing.

Satisfied with yourself you [leave the village to its ruin \(turn to 231\)](#).

132.

You don the uniform of an arena guard, and take up a new life in the dark chambers beneath the colosseum. Here the worst of the city's criminals are held in crowded stone pens before fighting for their freedom — or dying to please the crowds. The professional gladiators have their own quarters elsewhere, but you are a mere grunt, and not fit to wait on them.

Your first week passes easily enough. You eat and sleep with the other guards, keeping the prisoners in line while ignoring their cries and pleas for help. Every few days there's some sort of event in the arena, though it isn't always a fight. There are javelin throwing contests, chariot races, and melees where new gladiators are chosen.

The day before the next big event, one of the prisoners calls out to you as you when you are alone: "Help me escape, and I'll make it worth your while!"

To hear him out, [turn to 240](#). If you turn a deaf ear, then *Test your Talent at -1*. If you pass [turn to 393](#), otherwise [turn to 314](#)/

133.

If you have the keyword *Tomb*, [turn to 278](#) now.

The temple of Mord, God of gravediggers, is a sombre place, lit only by shallow oil lamps. Few visit here, unless they have bodies to bury. You know that the grey-robed priests of Mord never abandoned their duty, even during the horrors of the war, even though their God is often held to be dead.

You make your way to the altar, where a basalt statue of Mord sits cross-legged, his three eyes closed, and both pairs of arms raised — one pair of hands covering his mouth, the other his ears. Mord does not see, hear, nor speak, of the secrets that the dead take to their graves. Before the statue are three shallow alabaster bowls for offerings, but the bowls are empty.

A priest in a dark-grey robe emerges from the shadows beside the statue. He has a request to make of you. He tells you that someone has been breaking into the temple and stealing the offerings placed in the bowls before the altar. The priests have kept watch at the doors and windows, but have not caught the culprit. They need an adventurer such as you to catch the thieves.

"We are not rich," the priest says, "but if you help, we will reward you with Mord's blessing." If you agree to help [turn to 51](#).

When you are done here, you [return to 196](#).

134.



Many varieties of wild roses grow amongst the quiet streets and abandoned houses of the upper town. Some, you think, were planted by the past inhabitants of the city, others seem to have sprouted after the war.

You spend some time wandering the streets, admiring the roses, and hoping to find some exceptional specimens.

If the box above is not ticked, and you have the keyword *Title*, you can search here for the blue rose — risking the many thorns. *Test Search at -4* (if you don't have Search, *Test your Talent* at -6). If you pass, you manage to find a **blue rose** amongst the others. If you fail, you *Lose 2 Talent*. Either way, tick the box above. You can only search here for the rose once.

When you are done here, you [return to the Avenue of Dragons \(turn to 119\)](#).

135.

As you pass down one of the passages you come across an empty niche. There are, of course, many places in the crypts where bodies are yet to be placed, but this one has one of the recent parchment labels affixed to the stone. It reads *Callien Morvanos*.

Raising the skull lamp for a better look you realise that the dust in the niche is scuffed and disturbed. Something glitters in the dirt, and you realise that the stone is dusted with salt, just like the priests leave in their offering bowls.

Looking at the adjacent niches, you find other Morvanos names, a woman, a child — Callien's family perhaps? On top of the woman's shroud-wrapped body is a lead locket, and inside that a tiny oil painting of a family of three. You aren't sure why, but you take the **morvanos family locket**.

Now you must to choose whether to go [watch the doors \(turn to 360\)](#), or [stand by the altar \(turn to 250\)](#).

136.

The gladiators have their own tavern — or something much like it — near to the arena, the Sign of the Raised Thumb, where they gather to commemorate fallen comrades, or boast about their victories.

Chief attraction here is Galabalus, the current champion, a sallow and wiry man who you are sure has a vicious turn of speed, and a talent for murder. If you want to be champion yourself, you'll have to beat him one day.

The Thumb is a good place to pick up tidbits of information about other gladiator's fighting styles, but no one willingly wants to condemn a fellow to death by giving away too much, so you have to play it carefully.

If you want to find out more about a fellow gladiator, pay **20 gold** for drinks and favour, and then *Test Diplomacy* (if you don't have Diplomacy, *Test your Talent at -2*). If you succeed, you can ask about:

- [Estus \(turn to 285\)](#)
- [Galabalus \(turn to 300\)](#)
- [Gormok \(turn to 175\)](#)
- [Penalla \(turn to 107\)](#)
- [Sofek \(turn to 214\)](#)

When you are done here, you can [return to the arena \(turn to 334\)](#).

137.

Gain the keyword *Till*

You are in Threeblossoms, a herbalists' shop on Candle Lane. Bunches of dried flowers and roots dangle from the rafters of the low ceiling, brushing against your head as you move. Clay jars of seeds and dried fruits line the shelves along the walls.

The owner, Tara Tiss, tells you that she is in the marked for some **nirnroot**. If you bring her a bunch, she will pay you **30 gold** for it.

"Look for it along the edge of the marshes," she tells you, "that's the place where it grows."

[Return to 5.](#)

138.

You make your way down the long curve of Pepper Street, where much of the day market's food is sold. The air here is heady with the scent of frying food, roasting meat, and honey sweets.

Halfway down the street a bearded man in a grubby apron stands on a box shouting about the quality of his catfish. You can see that he has a couple of barrels with fish in them. He catches your eye as you pass and waves you over. If you want to speak to him, [turn to 252](#).

Browsing the various food stalls you find the following to buy and sell:

Food and Drink

	buy	sell
rations	6gp	-
fine wine	20gp	-
You can drink the wine (remove it) for a +2 <i>Diplomacy</i> bonus whenever such a bonus would make sense.		
liquid courage	25gp	-
Drink before rolling for a <i>Fight</i> round, to gain +2. However, if you lose the round, take an additional <i>Wound</i> .		
pepper gin (3 uses)	25gp	-
Drink (use one dose) before casting <i>Fireball</i> for an automatic success. Then roll 2d6, on a 6 or less you retain the <i>Fireball</i> spell.		

When you are done here you can [return to the day market \(turn to 224\)](#).

139.

With the aid of your magical vision, the house becomes translucent, allowing you to make out the shapes of rooms and furnishings within. It looks like a chamber on the first floor, overlooking the market, contains a heavy desk and other furnishings suggestive of an office. A corridor behind it seems to have a stair at either end, one leading to the front door, and one to the back. The left room appears to have at least one person in it, while the other — what might be an office — does not.

[Return to 283](#).

140.

Your group waits until a particularly lax guard is on food duty, and then tries to storm the cell entrance. The guard goes down easily enough, but not before crying out and raising the alarm. Your only chance is to take the guards at the end of the prison block in a fight and then make a break for the door.

Fight 3 Rounds, remembering that you are unarmed, and must fight at -1. If you lose, [turn to 177](#).

If you succeed, you grab your equipment from the strongroom near the prison block (recover any equipment from the box at 395). If you can cast a *Teleport*, then you can escape directly to [95](#). Otherwise, you arm yourself and make for one of the many arena gates. Other guards rush to intercept you, but you manage to avoid them until you reach the gates themselves.

Here, though, some quick-thinking sentries have set up a barricade, and you must fight them too. *Fight 2 Rounds* with disadvantage. If you lose, [turn to 177](#).

Otherwise, you manage to break out, and [flee into the city \(turn to 95\)](#).

141.

Gain the keyword *Treasure*

The woman who takes you aside has long grey hair tied into numerous braids under her woollen hood, and a face lined with enough wrinkles to serve a dozen people. It looks like she probably shouldn't even be upright. You suspect she's one of the old edge-dwellers from before the gates reopened.

"You look like the type that might be up for delving into the ruins."

You don't deny it, but gesture for her to go on. She introduces herself as Anya, and tells you that her ruin-diving days are over — as if you couldn't tell — but that she's got a lead on something valuable, which she calls the Diomedian Mirror.

"A wizard thing, most like, of polished stone, spell-scribed. I know someone who wants it dearly. If you see the sign of a fox's head, out there in the ruins, go and look below it, then bring the mirror back me here. I'll make it worth your while."

[Turn to 95](#).

I42.

Gain the keyword *Tiny*

You realise that the key to these plans is the inclusion of what appears to be a sketch of a human skeleton. These are designs for making a sorcerous automaton in the shape of a person, perhaps intended as a sophisticated spy, or maybe an assassin. One other thing strikes you, if the scale on the plans are to be believed, the automaton must have been small ...

[Return to 253.](#)

I43.

You try to lift the letter from the servant's pocket, but you aren't the first scum to try stealing their way into the Upper City, and he's alert to your tricks. The man cries out, and within moments the sentinels are pushing their way forward to catch you!

Test Climbing (if you don't have Climbing, *Test your Talent at -2*). If you succeed, you manage to flee to [95](#). Otherwise, you are captured by the sentinels, their eye-marked masks nullifying any petty magic you might try to use to save yourself.

If your **Status** is 2 or more, you lose one Status, but the sentinels don't levy any truly punitive punishment on a reasonably well-respected citizen. If your **Status** is less than 2, however, they treat you like the criminal you are. Your Status is reduced to 0, and you are [dragged to the arena \(turn to 395\)](#).

I44.

This must be the sign that Anya told you to look out for. Remembering her instructions, you examine the wall below the sign until you find a loose stone, behind which is a hessian-wrapped package.

Inside, to your surprise, are *two* mirrors, both identical in appearance — black, polished, and inscribed with eldritch runes. Only a difference in weight, subtle, but perceptible when you are holding both, let you distinguish the **fake mirror** from the **diomedian mirror (heavy, search +1)** that Anya asked you to find.

You consider that if you only show her one, how would she even know the difference between the fake and the real?

When you are done here [return to 225](#) and tick the box on line 1.

145.

You listen to the music for a while. It's nice, but something seems to be missing, as if the harmonies were off, and the band seems dispirited despite their bright costumes.

Soon they reach the end of their set, and the audience drifts away.

If you'd like to throw a few coins into the hat, strike off up to three coins and [turn to 377](#). Otherwise, [return to 22](#) to head back to the main part of town.

146.

"Oh it's you!" the eel boat skipper says as you approach. "You were a dab hand with the eels last time, so what say we go after a *real* prize."

"You've seen the size of the eels we haul in, but out there is a true monster. They call it old one eye, on account of its single staring eye. There's been a standing reward out for the beast from the wizard Kroyzen up at the high towers. Three hundred golden griffons, and not a penny less! You help me bring the creature in, and I'll split the money with you."

If you want to go after old one eye, [turn to 31](#). If you'd prefer to just turn him down, [return to 182](#).

147.

If you have the keyword *Tick*, [turn to 55](#) now.

You venture into the narrows, a narrow winding street that once led to the [docks \(turn to 204\)](#) on the east of the city. Now, a massive crater, the product of some off-target spell, cuts the street off halfway along. Shattered houses and loose piles of masonry ring its edge, though the best stonework has been robbed to rebuild other houses.

Nervous faces peer at you from the crooked windows of the shacks that line the street; the people here are poor and desperate. Hungry children trail along behind you, hoping for a scrap of food. If you wish to share a **ration** with them, [turn to 45](#).

When you reach the edge of the crater and peer in, you see a vertiginous scree of rubble, tangled roots, and grey water.

"You should stay away from the crater," an old woman tells you. "There's monsters down there. We hear them at night, sniffing around our doors. People go missing. You'd best go back."

You can heed her advice and [head back to the city centre \(turn to 22\)](#), [climb down into the crater \(turn to 149\)](#), or knock on some doors to [learn more \(turn to 257\)](#).

148.

You venture into the concealed hollow inside the ruins, and discover that the glow is neither ghosts or conspirators, but is issuing from many faintly luminous snails that are gathered on the old rocks and twisted trees. They glimmer in a rainbow of muted colours.

If you have the *Naturalist* skill, you can [turn to 247](#) to learn more.

You reckon that some of the snails are likely poisonous to the touch, but some might not be. If you want to try and grab some snails, *Test your Talent*. If you succeed you manage to grab a snail — roll 2d6 on the table below:

2-3. ultraviolet snail

4-5. green snail

6-8. brown snail

9-10. blue snail

11-12. red snail

If you fail the check, however, you find yourself surprised by an *enormous* snail! [Turn to 26](#).

Once you've hunted for snails, you can't try again until you have taken a *Rest*. In the meantime, you can [continue to explore \(turn to 303\)](#).

149.

You approach the crater in the late afternoon. The westering sun reflects from a limpid pool of water way down in the crater's depths, flashing like the glint of a mirror. Slopes of old rubble, half visible under a blanket of scrub, run down towards the water. It looks like there might be deep holes in the rocks down there, perhaps old sewer tunnels, but you can't tell for sure.

To head down now [turn to 327](#). If you'd prefer to go down at night, and have some source of illumination (such as a **lantern**), [turn to 156](#). Or, you can simply [head back up the street \(turn to 147\)](#).

150.

Nothing remains of the marsh village but the blackened remains of houses. If any of the marsh murderers survived your massacre, they no longer live here.

A quick scout of the ruins confirms that suspicion. The giant iron cookpot from the heart of the village is missing too.

There is nothing more to find here but death. [Return to 231](#).

151.

You move into the guard barracks and spend three days on duty, patrolling the streets of the Outer City and bashing a few heads while you are at it.

Test your Talent at -2 to see how your tour of duty goes. If you pass [turn to 210](#), if you fail [turn to 102](#).

152.

You check the **occult primer** for the symbol over the arch. It tells you that: *The slashed star is a warning of traps or wards*. Good to know! [Return to 168](#).

153.

Test Stealth (if you don't have Stealth, *Test your Talent at -2*). If you fail, you are spotted by the villagers, and quickly surrounded! [Turn to 396](#) now. Otherwise, read on.

You pick your way around the outskirts of the village, taking your time to peek between the sodden houses, catching glimpses of filthy villagers scurrying here and there. A few muddy pigs root around in the sedge grasses. The entire place stinks of rot, mud, smoke, and shit, as well as an omnipresent odour of burnt meat that turns your stomach.

At the heart of the village is what appears to be a massive cookpot, at least ten foot across. Steam rises from it, making it difficult to see it clearly, but you have a bad feeling about it, an oppressive air of occult malice. Some of the villagers are feeding the fire with wood, you think.

On the other side of the cookpot, a circular hut appears to be home to a priest or sorcerer. It is hung about with twists of marsh grass woven into crosses, triangles, and hands. You catch a glimpse of the priest, a man with a mass of shaggy braided hair, who comes outside for a moment, and then goes back inside.

You can [sneak to the priest's cottage \(turn to 326\)](#), or [choose another course \(turn to 287\)](#).

154.

You are in the old sewers beneath Treysham's low town. Once these passages were part of a complex sanitation system, but the tunnels were flooded during the war, and have never been reclaimed. Thankfully, most of the knee-deep water you are wading through has flowed in from the fens, rather than down from the streets — or so you hope.

If you have the keyword *Tunnel* and wish to look for a specific opening, [turn to 233](#) now.

You peer into the many dark openings, wondering where you might find the rat kings. *Test Naturalist at +1* or, if you don't have Naturalist, *Test Tracking* (if you don't have Tracking, *Test your Talent at -2*). If you are suffering the **cat curse** you can add another +1. If you pass one of these rolls, [turn to 277](#). Otherwise, *Test your Talent at -2*. If you pass this roll, [turn to 48](#). If you fail all these rolls [turn to 76](#) instead.

155.

Gain the keyword *Trick*

You have struck a fatal blow, but Malphas hasn't died.

As the mad wizard's tinkling robes fall away, you see why — this is nothing but a simulacrum! A doll wizard, though unlike Velguan's attempt, this one is animated and malicious.

The doll jerkily flicks its magical wand, unleashing a spell that resembles a lazy serpent curling through the air. *Test your Talent*. If you pass, you avoid the spell, and hastily chop off the doll's straw-stuffed head before it can cast anything else.

If you fail, the curse strikes you, but luckily, it is not fatal. Instead, it inflicts a transformation, turning you into an upright, talking, human-sized, cat. Incensed, you claw the doll to death before it can cast more spells.

Add the **cat curse (heavy)** to your inventory. If you do not have enough capacity for it, you must discard some other heavy item. While you have the curse, you suffer a -4 penalty to *Diplomacy*, although you also gain a +1 to *Stealth*. You may not remove the curse until it is lifted by a cursebreaker — try the temple district.

Test Search (if you don't have Search, *Test your Talent at -2*). If you pass, [turn to 238](#), otherwise, you decide to [get out of here \(turn to 119\)](#).

156.

At night, the limpid pool of water at the base of the crater glows with a disturbing green radiance, as if it is still contaminated with ancient magic. Picking your way nervously around the luminous water, you see that the glow is concentrated at the mouths of dark holes yawning in the rubble.

As you stop to look at one, you become aware of a quiet *tick, tick* noise coming closer, like the wild clicking of a clock. The air becomes heavy with a curious smell, like rancid oil. Fear grips you. You shouldn't be here.

You can [run for the surface \(turn to 114\)](#), or [stand your ground \(turn to 358\)](#).

157.

You run, strike impotently at the wraith, but its black feathery claws strike right through your body, and rip the soul from your heart!

You have been slain! If you have a resurrection available, then follow the instructions you have noted (if you purchased a resurrection in the temple district, [turn to X](#) now). If your resurrection leaves you alive in this section then [turn to 95](#) now. Otherwise, your adventure ends here.

YOU ARE DEAD

158.

You decide to climb up to the nests while the birds are distracted, and find them full of eggs and loose coins, which it appears that the birds have collected. You can take a **flame finch egg** and **20 gold** before making good on your escape. [Return to 225](#) and tick the box on line 3.

159.

You get down on your hands and knees, cursing the insanity of wizards, and haul the dummy back and forth along the middle of the shrine, as if it is pacing up and down while waiting for someone. You think it looks convincing, but an hour passes and nothing happens.

Lose 1 Talent and [return to 81](#).

160.

You are visiting the escaped slaves' camp in the ruins.

While you are here you may *Rest*, *Restore 3 Talent*, and *Heal 1 Vitality*. If you eat a **ration** you may *Heal an additional 1 Vitality*.

The slaves are from many lands, kidnapped from around the Circle Sea. Spending time with them, you learn much about places and peoples you had never even heard of before — the boat people of Nantak, the tower divers of Talak, the hereditary seneschals of Jaroom.

☐

If there is no tick in this box, tick the box. Then, roll 1d3 (roll a six-sided dice and divide by 2, rounding up). If the result is greater than your *Linguistics* skill, you may *Advance Linguistics*.

When you are done here, you bid farewell to the former slaves and [return to the city \(turn to 95\)](#).

161.

You decide to stay at the sign of the Brass Plate, though it has no official name.

It's a rowdy place, full of former edge-dwellers fallen on bad times. It's not the sort of place where strangers are welcome. *Test Diplomacy* (if you don't have Diplomacy, *Test your Talent at -2*) to try and fit in, or *Test Linguistics* (if you don't have Linguistics, *Test your Talent at -2*) to at least put on a convincing local accent.

If you can't pass either of these rolls, you are jostled and hassled, getting only the barest of rests in your little patch of floor. *Lose 1 Talent*.

For **1gp** you may stay the night. You may *Rest*, and *Restore 1 Talent*. If you eat a **ration**, or pay another **5gp**, you may also *Heal 1 Vitality*.

When you are done here, [turn to 95](#).

162.

You keep out of the way of the fighting, lurking in the dormitory while guards and criminals clash in the tunnels. After a few hours the fighting is over, though there are dead guards and escaped prisoners to show for it. Ekhar is incensed at your cowardice. He pays you your **40 gold** and sends you packing.

Lose 1 Talent, and then [turn to 95](#).

163.

You set about the streets of the Upper Town, following the twitching needle of the **glass compass**. It leads you away from the bustling parts between the Dragon and Wizard's gates, into ruined sections of the city, overgrown with rambling stems of wild roses and scarred by ancient spellfire.

Test Tracking or Search (if you don't have Tracking or Search, *Test your Talent at -2*). If you pass, [turn to 49](#), otherwise you wander the streets for ages, but just can't pinpoint the location the compass is indicating. Lose 1 Talent for your wasted time and [return to 119](#).

164.

Gain the keyword Triumph

Clang! Bong! Whack!

With enormous effort, you manage to crack Tsuga's iron body. A foul stew of bones and ichor pours out, emptying the demon cookpot. Tsuga's enormous eyes roll madly, and finally the beast falls dead!

The marsh men surround you in a cheering mass, throwing their spears into the air and lifting you up. You are the hero of their village.

The villagers have little to give you, save some paltry treasures they have managed to scrounge from the people they killed: **40 gold**, a **sword**, and a curiously marked **bronze seal**.

However, you are able to recover something much more significant from Tsuga's metal corpse, one of its enormous eyeballs, which you string on a thong and hang around your neck. While you wear **tsuga's eye (heavy)** you have *1 additional armour*, which stacks with any other armour you wear, and is automatically repaired each time you Rest.

What's more, once word spreads around Treysham that you have ended the marsh-murderer menace once and for all, you gain 1 **Status**.

[Turn to 313](#).

165.

You enter the alley, only to find yourself surrounded by four Krendish slaver-men in red coats! They assault you with cudgels, and try to throw a net over you, so that they can bundle you away!

Fight 1 round at -2 (shields count double). If you win, the slavers break, and you quickly get [back to the main streets \(turn to 309\)](#).

If you lose the combat, even if you are not reduced to 0 Vitality, they capture you. You are roped, netted, hooded, subdued (set your Vitality to 1) and dragged away through the back lanes and ruins towards the docks.

It's a fair distance, so you have a chance to plan your escape. *Test your Talent*. If you succeed, you pick the perfect moment to trip the man behind you and barrel off into the ruins. [Turn to 303](#). If you fail, you've started another scuffle, but this time you must Fight 1 round at -4 without the benefit of any of your weapons! If you survive, you still manage to [escape \(turn to 303\)](#).

If not, you are eventually dragged on board a rocking slave ship somewhere in the bay, and dumped, manacled, in its hold.

From what you can overhear, the ship will set sail on the next tide. You have till then to make your escape. If you can cast *Teleport*, then you can easily escape back to the [docks \(turn to 204\)](#). Failing that, you will need to break out the old fashioned way.

You will need to test *Larceny*, to break out of your shackles, *Stealth* to sneak past the slavers, and *Climbing*, to reach the docks. (You may make each of these rolls by *Testing your Talent* at -2 if you lack the correct skill). If you succeed on all three rolls, you manage to [sneak off the boat \(turn to 204\)](#), taking the **manacles** with you for good measure.

If any of the rolls fail, you are out of luck. [Turn to 205](#).

166.

Gain the keyword *Ties*

You turn around and untie the ceremonial binding looped around the man's neck.

"You're free," you tell him, to his clear amazement.

"Thank you! Thank you!" He clutches at your hand in delight, tears running down his face. "The Krendar took me as I was hunting clams in the marshes. I thought I would never see home again!"

"But, they have sent raiders into the town at night. There is a hold full of people in that ship. There must be a way to help them!"

You may *Gain 1 Fortune and 1 Talent* for this good deed, before wishing the man good luck. [Turn to 95](#).

167.

You follow the directions to the Serpent's Eye tavern, an ill-favoured looking drinking hole in the cellar of an old ruined house. It's hard to imagine any sort of high-value anything happening here, but when you make your way into the basement, you find the same one-eyed man waiting by the entrance to the back room.

"Oh, it's you," he says. "Now, I hope you've got a good few hundred gold on you, or this will be a waste of time."

If you want to go ahead, [turn to 82](#), or [turn to 309](#) to come back another time.

168.

You are in a tunnel running beneath the ruins of Treysham's outer city. The arched roof drips with water, and dangling roots have wormed their way between the stones. Some way behind you, a slope of rubble leads [out of the tunnel \(turn to 65\)](#), while the tunnel itself [continues into the blackness \(turn to 381\)](#).

Just where you are standing, an opening leads into a side chamber. Above the entrance, a crude symbol has been scratched into the rock, resembling a star with a slash through it. If you have an **occult primer** [turn to 152](#).

If you want to go through the opening, [turn to 262](#).

169.

You can only just read the high tongue, let alone pronounce it, so you are forced to paraphrase the proclamation as best you can. This doesn't go down as well as you'd like around the nobles, but it probably sells a lot better in the low town than the original would.

By the end of a hot day's proclaiming, your throat is sore from shouting about Thusar's glory. but the lord's men give you a good flagon of ale and decent meal before handing you a purse of **30 gold**. You may also keep the cap, if you wish.

When you are done eating, you [hurry out onto the Avenue of Dragons \(turn to 119\)](#) once more.

170.

You venture through a broken arch and find yourself at the edge of a field of bones, caught in the open bowl of a ruined building. Sightless skulls stare upwards at the open sky beneath a damp layer of moss and detritus. As you venture forwards, loose bones roll beneath your feet.

It's no surprise when some of the bones rise and come together, grasping crude weapons as they advance on you. Your first blows demolish the undead with ease ... but they keep on coming!

Fight 1 Round at +1 (if you have a shield, you may add another +1). Then, if you won by less than 5, repeat the combat, and keep on repeating it until you win by 5 or more, or [perish \(turn to 91\)](#).

If you overcome the creatures, you find that the tireless corpses were protecting a chest, buried in the middle of the bones. If you want to open the chest, *Test Occult* (if you don't have Occult, *Test your Talent at -2*). If you pass, [turn to 117](#), if you fail, [turn to 236](#).

When you are done here, [return to 225](#) and tick the box on line 2.

171.

You are deep in the tunnel below the ruins, at least half an hour from the entrance. The tunnel ends here, not in a chamber, but in an immense iron door, marked with a triangular symbol. A huge lock, equally triangular, is surrounded by three lines of wards.

You could teleport through the door, if you had the spell, but you run the risk of being trapped on the other side. Better would be to simply open the lock. It's too heavy to pick. If you have an **iron triangle key**, and wish to use it to open the door, [turn to 18](#).

If you don't have the key, there's nothing for it but to head all the way back down the tunnel and [out \(turn to 291\)](#).

172.

Ollivers might prefer to take you alive and hand you over to the mages, but his guards fill you full of crossbow bolts instead.

You have been slain! If you have a resurrection available, then follow the instructions you have noted (if you purchased a resurrection in the temple district, [turn to X](#) now). If your resurrection leaves you alive in this section then [turn to 95](#) now. Otherwise, your adventure ends here.

YOU ARE DEAD

173.

You enter the arena, which is packed with cheering crowds, eager for blood. It is time to face **Galabalus**, the current champion. If you can beat him, the coveted title will be yours!

You are ready for anything — until Galabalus rides into the arena on the back of a mandragore! He salutes you laconically, and then charges!

Fight 1 Round at -3. If you lose, you take two wounds, as the mandragore smashes you with its serrated tail!

If you survive, the opening charge, Galabalus wheels around to open his range. You realise that you have a chance to unseat him. *Test your Talent.* If you have a **whip** you can use it to scare the mandragore, and gain +4 to the test. If you succeed, you manage to unseat Galabalus, and can face him on foot. [Turn to 298.](#)

If not, you must keep fighting him mounted.

The fight follows the rules below:

- If you fight with a **one-handed weapon** you are at a severe *disadvantage*
- If you fight with a **ranged** or **long** weapon, you can reach Galabalus as he charges you, and gain +2
- If you fight with a **shield**, you can deflect the mandragore's tail blows — you take 1 Wound per round, not two.

Now, *Fight 3 Rounds at -1* (plus any modifications from above), taking 2 wounds for each loss. If you win, [turn to 237](#). If you lose, [turn to 366](#) instead.

174.

Gain the keyword *Transit*

You approach the footman at the door, and ask if Ollivers is in. It appears that he is, for you are soon escorted to the second floor, and ushered into a well-appointed study dominated by an ornate oak desk which was likely salvaged from some abandoned mage's house.

Ollivers stands beside the desk, one hand resting on an inlaid lock-box that rests on the desk. He is a floridly-overdressed mountain of a man with pudgy fingers.

"I don't know you," Ollivers says, "and I'm a busy man, but always with an ear open to new opportunities. What can I do for you?"

- If you'd like to attack Ollivers to steal his documents, [turn to 405](#)
- If you want to double-cross the man from the bar, [turn to 98](#)
- If you'd rather make some vague excuses and leave, [return to 126](#)

175.

You find the man himself, Gormok, boasting about his deeds in one corner of the tavern. Even in his time off he wears parts of his armour, greaves and bracers adorning his muscular limbs.

"So, then I found myself face to face with an *enormous* crab!" Gormok says, waving his hands around like pincers. "It grabbed me in its claw and tried to crush me dead, but it couldn't get through my armour — nothing can! So I took up my mace and smashed it too pieces! Bang! Bang! Bang!"

"There's nothing as hard, and hard hitting as me!"

Sounds like Gormok plans to fight slow and heavy. You make a mental note, and [return to the Thumb \(turn to 136\)](#).

176.

You manage to clamber your way to a jutting piece of floor where the animated roots can't reach you. Herbs and flowers of all sorts bloom here in the rich loam the magical trees leave behind, though you can only risk grabbing a few.

Roll once on the following table (or twice, if the previous paragraph instructed you to) to see what you get:

1. **blinkblossom**
2. **fish-eye root**
3. **lavender**
4. **nirnroot**
5. **thyme**
6. Nothing

You decide to get out of here while you still can — [return to 221](#).

177.

You come around, groggy and battered. The arena won't let you go so easily, but you suffer for your escape attempt in reduced food, beatings, and miserable treatment. *Set your Vitality to 1 and Lose 2 Talent*, then [turn to 328](#).

178.

You realise that this unquiet spirit must have risen from the crypts beneath the temple. By stealing the offerings it can strengthen its grip on the mortal world, becoming more and more solid as it does. For now, it is still at least partly spectral, and if you can just find the right method to placate it, you can send it back.

- » If you want to try and placate it with altar offerings, [turn to 184](#)
- » If you want to try and force it to return to the grave with magic, [turn to 380](#)
- » If you have the **morvanos family locket** and want to present it, [turn to 213](#)
- » If you want to attack it, [turn to 66](#)

179.

Try as you might, you cannot defeat the flaming serpent. It bursts inside the carriage, and despite Velguan's desperate spellcasting, the two of you are reduced to ash along with the carriage.

You have been slain! If you have a resurrection available, then follow the instructions you have noted (if you purchased a resurrection in the temple district, [turn to X](#) now). If your resurrection leaves you alive in this section then [turn to 95](#) now. Otherwise, your adventure ends here.

YOU ARE DEAD

180.

You cast your spell and try to see through the door, but you are immediately assaulted by a wave of violet light that bursts from the lines engraved in the stone. The hostile magic causes you to *Take 1 Wound*.

If this reduces you to zero Vitality, [turn to 30](#) now, otherwise [return to 233](#) and pick another option.

181.

You realise that you have seen cut marks like this before, not the work of a blade, but of a beak — the metal beak of a Cutlass Bird, a magically created terror weapon from the war. Whichever city created them is likely long gone, but the birds remain.

Forewarned, you set up an ambush, expecting the birds to come back to wreck more destruction. Tulla provides you with a **net** which they use to haul fish from the ponds, and you make sure to cover your head.

You have hours to wait, but eventually your patience is rewarded. The cutlass birds emerge from the shadows of the canal, their scissor-like metal beaks clicking and snicking as they advance.

You burst from your hide and attack the birds, swinging your net over them. *Fight two rounds*, adding +1 if you have a shield. If you survive, you drive off the birds for good. [Turn to 118](#), otherwise [turn to 24](#).

182.

☐☐

If there are no checkboxes ticked, or both boxes are ticked, then read on. If one box is ticked, then tick a second box and [turn to 146](#) now.

You approach one of the eel boats and hire on as a temporary labourer for the day.

"You better pull your weight is all I'm saying," the captain says. "I'll give you two gold for each eel you can haul in, but if you go in the water I won't save you from them!"

Together, you row the eel-skiff out along the winding channels into the marsh. The eels here are leftovers from the war, fang-toothed monsters as thick and as long as your leg. Getting them out of the water requires a gaff hook and a keen appreciation of animal behaviour.

Test Naturalist (if you don't have *Naturalist*, *Test your Talent at -2*) and make a note of the result. If you fail the roll, [turn to 121](#) now.

If you pass, you manage a good job fetching in eels, though you are soaked and slime-covered by the end of it. Compare the result of your roll to the target number, you catch one eel for each number you succeeded by (e.g. if you rolled a 7 and needed a 9 or less, you catch 2 eels).

When you finally return to the docks, the captain gives you the agreed upon fee of **2 gold** for each eel. Instead of accepting the full price, you can choose to keep one of the eels back for your dinner; it counts as a **ration**.

Either way, you cannot return here for a fishing expedition until you have taken a *Rest* somewhere.

Now, tick one of the boxes above, and [return to 204](#).

183.

It is foolish in the extreme to have come back here. The slaver-men may be lazy, but they aren't so indolent as not to spot the traitor that freed their slaves!

In moments you are surrounded, and dragged to their captain's cabin. [Turn to 12](#).

184.

You grab the offerings from in front of the altar, and toss them at the shambling cadaver. It stops to consume them, gobbling the meat and salt, but it only makes it stronger!

[Turn to 66](#) and suffer *an additional -1!*

185.

You cast your Teleport spell, intending to pass completely *through* the door, but instead you are brought up short, as if you had run into a wall. Before you can recover, violet lightning bursts from the lines engraved in the stone and strikes at you. The hostile magic causes you to *Take 1 Wound*.

If this reduces you to zero Vitality, [turn to 30](#) now, otherwise [return to 233](#) and pick another option.

186.

Ekhar is pleased with your report, and has Anaxes beaten. You gain the title **Arena Trusty**, and will be welcome around here when the job is done.

The rest of your time passes without event. When your time is done, you collect the agreed **40 gold** before gladly handing over your post to the your replacement and returning to a life above ground. [Turn to 95](#).

187.

You are creeping your way through the southern part of the ruins, close to the docks, where the old city walls are half-submerged in peat-stained water, when your eye is caught by a soft glow emerging from a low ruin.

You are cautious. You've heard stories of ghosts and spectres — luminous with supernatural fire, and your own experience tells you that these ruins are full of clandestine meetings that you have no wish to stumble into.

You can [slip away \(turn to 303\)](#), or [sneak in for a closer look \(turn to 148\)](#).

188.

You enter the partitioned chamber where Merchant Ollivers has his fur-covered bed. A charcoal brazier in the corner of the room provides a dull heat and a faint light. You tiptoe around the bed, picking through the discarded items, but it appears Ollivers is too organised to keep his documents here.

You do find a **chisel**, and a **copper seal**, which might be worth something, and quickly pocket them, before slinking away. *Restore 1 Talent*, and then head down the stairs to [323](#).

189.

You follow the sound of music through a narrow lane, and under an arch, emerging into a sheltered square dominated by an overgrown and unruly orange tree. At the foot of the tree a small group of musicians in colourful outfits and gauze masks are playing for a paltry audience of idling locals. An upturned hat in front of them contains a few coins.

If you'd like to throw a few coins into the hat, strike off up to three coins and [turn to 377](#).

If you'd prefer to just sit and listen to the music, [turn to 145](#), or [return to 22](#) to head back to the main part of town.

190.

There's plenty of ideas for escape, so more plausible than others.

One group wants to attack the guards who bring your meals and try to stage a break-out that way. If you want to join them, [turn to 140](#).

A second group has heard rumours of a secret tunnel out of the arena, and plans to volunteer for work details in the hope of finding it. If you want to take part, [turn to 290](#).

A final man claims to have a contact on the outside who's going to slip a bribe to the guards to let him go. If you've got something valuable enough amongst your belongings, he might take you along. If you want to try that, [turn to 207](#).

If you don't want to get involved in any of this, then you can [await your fate \(turn to 328\)](#).

191.

You are struck by the potent bolt of energy, which rips through you like the wrath of some god.

You have been slain! If you have a resurrection available, then follow the instructions you have noted (if you purchased a resurrection in the temple district, [turn to X](#) now). If your resurrection leaves you alive in this section then [turn to 95](#) now. Otherwise, your adventure ends here.

YOU ARE DEAD

192.

You insert the seals you have into the matching depressions on the door. There's no doubt that the seals match the spaces, but they won't stay in place, and nothing happens even when all the seals you have are in place. It's pretty clear that you need all five to open the door.

[Return to 233](#) and pick another option.

193.

Your body hits the ground with lethal force.

You have been slain! If you have a resurrection available, then follow the instructions you have noted (if you purchased a resurrection in the temple district, [turn to X](#) now). If your resurrection leaves you alive in this section then [turn to 95](#) now. Otherwise, your adventure ends here.

YOU ARE DEAD

"Well, look who's here."

You are somehow unsurprised to see the man with the eyepatch that you met in the low town gambling den, lounging against one of the arena's many arches.

"After some better gambling action than this common stuff? If so, follow me."

He leads you to an airy chamber in the upper part of the arena, close to the sloping red roof. Here, the masked gamblers lounge on couches, tossing coins into urns marked with the names of competing gladiators.

"Ahh, another fool ready to part with their gold," someone comments.

If you want to make a bet, stake fifty times you status in gold (e.g. if you are Status 4, bet 200 gold), and then roll two dice on the following table:

- 2. Disaster! Your fighters died. You lose everything you bet.
- 3-5. You bet badly. You get back half your stake.
- 6-8. You make a small loss. You get back your stake minus 20 gold
- 9-11. You get a small win, and get back your stake and a half.
- 12. Big win! You get back three times you stake!

You can only bet three times before you must leave. You can bet again after the next time you take a Rest.

When you are done here you make your excuses and [head back to the arena \(turn to 218\)](#).

You reach into the nest and extract **20 gold**. The birds chitter uneasily. *Test your Talent*. If you pass, the birds quiet down again. You can [try to take an egg \(turn to 337\)](#), or climb down and head off — [return to 225](#) and tick the box on line 3.

If you fail, the birds burst into flame, and swoop out of the nest to attack your face! If you passed the climbing test before coming up here, you manage to drop down quickly enough to avoid the attack, and scarper — [return to 225](#) and tick the box on line 3.

Test your Talent. If you fail you *Take 1 Wound, ignoring armour!* In addition, if you have any armour, its protection is reduced to zero as it is scorched by the birds. If you are reduced to 0 Vitality, [turn to 79](#). If not, you manage to flee from the birds! [Return to 225](#) and tick the box on line 3.

196.

It is a truth acknowledged the world over, that most of the gods turned their faces from Paldoria when the wizards went to war with one another, because they could not watch, or because they did not have the power to stop it. In your own village, the shrine stood empty, the statues of the gods torn down and used as firewood by your ancestors.

Most of the fine temples of Treysham lie equally empty, but some are still in use, either because their priesthoods still live in hope that their gods will return, or because some elements of the divine still remain. The wizards in their towers care nothing for either.

To visit:

- » The temple of the Goddess of death, Dzume, [turn to 21](#)
- » The temple of the God of tombs, Mord, [turn to 133](#)
- » The temple of the God of storms, Atros, [turn to 38](#)
- » The ruined temple at the furthest end of the district, [turn to 52](#)

When you are done here, you can [return to the centre of town \(turn to 95\)](#).

197.

Malphas strikes you down with his sorcerous bolts. Whatever your past with the traitor wizard, he appears to have had the last laugh now.

You have been slain! If you have a resurrection available, then follow the instructions you have noted (if you purchased a resurrection in the temple district, [turn to X](#) now). If your resurrection leaves you alive in this section then [turn to 95](#) now. Otherwise, your adventure ends here.

YOU ARE DEAD

198.

You examine the dead fish closely and determine that they must have been killed by some sort of underwater predator, perhaps a species of pike. You make sure that your legs are well covered and then venture into the muddy pools to hunt for the killer fish.

Angry catfish, disturbed by your feet, brush past your legs, pricking you with their barbels, but the real danger comes from above! You are halfway across the first pool, when a raucous, shrieking, flock of cutlass birds descend on you, their foot-long metal beaks snapping at you like razor blades!

Fight three rounds with disadvantage. If you have a **net** you can swing it through the air to ignore the disadvantage. If you have a *long weapon* you may add +1, otherwise you must fight at -2.

If you survive the encounter [turn to 118](#), otherwise [turn to 24](#).

199.

If you have the keyword *Track*, you have already done your stint of guard duty, and there is no more work available. [Return to 218](#).

"It so happens I *do* have a shortage of guards at the moment," Overseer Ekharrr tells you. "Forty gold, room and board in the arena, take it or leave it."

If you want to take the job, gain the keyword *Track* and [turn to 132](#) now. Otherwise you [return to the arena \(turn to 218\)](#).

200.

GHUAHH!

You gasp yourself upright, heaving for breath.

This isn't where you were before. You look around — taking in the grey flagstones, the sombre arches, and the flickering beeswax candles — and realise that you are in the temple of Dzume in Treysham.

You catch your breath, letting your lungs fill with the scent of lavender and thyme. After a little while a door creaks open and one of the priestesses enters.

"Oh! You poor thing. Be at peace, you are safe."

You have been resurrected. If you were playing another game, you are now playing City State of Treysham. Set your *Talent* and *Vitality* to their starting values, and set your *Fortune* to 1. Due to the power of Dzume's magic, you retain whatever was in your inventory when you died.

To continue playing in this game, [turn to 95](#).

201.

Woozy from blood loss and narcotic spores, you slump to the ground, unconscious. Slowly the tree roots encase you, suckling on your flesh, until you are no more than fertiliser.

You have been slain! If you have a resurrection available, then follow the instructions you have noted (if you purchased a resurrection in the temple district, [turn to X](#) now). If your resurrection leaves you alive in this section then [turn to 95](#) now. Otherwise, your adventure ends here.

YOU ARE DEAD

202.

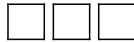
You rush to the front lines and join in the fighting beside your fellow guards. The escaping prisoners are angry and desperate, throwing themselves on your blades in their desperation to break free, or take you down.

Fight 3 Rounds at -3 (shields count double). The other guards give you advantage, and you gain an additional +2 if you have a long weapon. Due to the close quarters, a two-handed weapon suffers an additional -2.

If you hold them back for three rounds, the prisoners are routed, and forced to surrender — [turn to 331](#). Otherwise the prisoners crush you underfoot as they break the lines and flee for the gates. You have been slain! If you have a resurrection available, then follow the instructions you have noted (if you purchased a resurrection in the temple district, [turn to X](#) now). If your resurrection leaves you alive in this section then [turn to 95](#) now. Otherwise, your adventure ends here.

YOU ARE DEAD

203.



You make your way to the ruined shrine to Trey, the legendary founder of the city. It seems that the wizards of the tower care little for their predecessor — the shrine's marble dome has been shattered, and wild roses overgrow the stone. Judging from the dirt and rubble, it doesn't seem like anyone ever comes here.

In the centre of the temple there is a statue, but the face has worn away, and you can't tell if it was meant to represent a man, woman, or something else entirely.

If there is an unchecked box above, you can tick a box to *Restore 2 Talent*.

If you have **velguan's dummy** and wish to place it here, [turn to 81](#).

When you are done here you turn, somewhat wistfully, away. [Turn to 119](#).

204.

The docks were once a prosperous area of the city, a deep water port that accepted trade from cities around the Circle Sea.

By the time the War of the Wizards was done, the deep water bay had vanished, replaced by a vast expanse of mudflats and channels. The sea is now ten miles to the east, and the ancient piers and docks of the city are left dry and stranded.

Now only shallow-draft vessels can make their way up the grey river. Eel boats and one-masted wherries are the usual visitors to the old docks, but today a red-sailed slave boat out of Krendar is moored at one of the piers. Cruel-eyed Krendar-men, distinctive in their red uniforms, lounge about on deck.

- » If you have a **red guard uniform**, and wish to use it to mix with the crew, [turn to 389](#).
- » If you want to approach the ship and enquire about their business, [turn to 223](#).
- » If you want to hire on with an eel boat, [turn to 182](#).

When you are done here, you can [return to the centre of town \(turn to 95\)](#).

205.

Gain the title **Enslaved**

The Krendar chain you to the oars, and you are given the dubious honour of rowing yourself to captivity. You cross the circle sea, and are sold into slavery.

Months pass as you labour in the fields for your new master, a Krendish wizard named Kromus. If you own the adventure "Escape from Kromus", you may play out your escape using that.

Otherwise, you eventually manage to get away. All you have to your name is a **knife** (one-handed -1), **10 gold pieces**, and a **slave's chiton**. All else is lost.

You *Gain 1 Experience Point* and set out once more for the lands of Treysham, ending up eventually at [95](#).

206.

You approach the mansion that you believe belongs to Anaxes, a tower-like edifice surrounded by its own walls. Uniformed guards, with the seasoned look of veteran Malishi mercenaries, patrol the grounds, making you hesitate to approach, but it seems they have been told to look out for you.

You are quickly gestured over, and escorted through the tower's spell-warded door. A pair of enchanted sentries — soot-blackened suits of armour animated by some sort of internal fire — turn their heads to watch you as pass by.

Within, Anaxes is overjoyed to see you, his face now hidden behind a blank brass mask from which flames flicker.

"Forgive my security precautions. Although my standing was restored when I escaped the arena, nevertheless I cannot be too careful. The High Tower is riven with rivalries. It's easy to see how the war came about.

"For you, though, I have have nothing but gratitude! I owe you my life. My door is always open to you."

Gain 2 Experience Points, and take the **100 gold** that Anaxes presses into your hands. [Turn to 57](#) to visit his house.

207.

Soon, you find yourself speaking to a seedy guard named Porfos.

"You don't need to die in the arena, sure enough, but you've got to make it worth my while. Your friend here's paying good money to get out of here, what about you?"

Test Diplomacy (if you don't have Diplomacy, *Test your Talent at -2*). If you succeed you persuade Porfos that you've got something worth his while. If you have **200 gold**, or a treasure item worth at least that much, in the items stashed at 395, then you can give it to him to secure your escape. If you can't, you must [return to the cells \(turn to 328\)](#).

If you persuade Porfos, recover the items that you have at 395, and then hand over your bribe.

You expect some sort of cunning fake escape, but instead Porfos just gets his keys and releases the both of you. Corruption runs deep.

[Turn to 95](#).

208.

You tell Kroyzen that you'd rather take the ring, and he slips it — rather damply — from his finger, and hands it to you.

Add the **ring of the marshes (+1 swimming, heavy)** to your inventory. While you wear the ring, you may use it to add +3 to a *Naturalist* roll, once. This ability resets when you *Take a Rest*.

[Turn to 204.](#)

209.

Metril seems drawn to the door, running one hand cautiously over the runes marked into the surface.

*"There are some **really** scary wards carved into this thing," she says, "someone didn't want anyone to get in here without the right things. You need to put runes into these holes, then it will open. I wonder what's inside?"*

"Yes, I wonder," you say.

[Return to 233.](#)

210.

Guard work is tough, but fair, you are surprised to discover. You shoo away a few loiterers, help the Upper City sentinels look for pickpockets amongst the crowd outside the Dragon Gate, and settle some disputes in the market. You get what the serjeant promised, bed, meals, and **20 gold** at the end of your four days of work.

If your **Status** is 2 or less, roll 1d3 (roll one dice and halve the result, rounding up). If the result is greater than your **Status**, *Gain 1 Status* for your service.

You hand back your padded jack and borrowed sword, then [return to 95.](#)

211.

The marsh men overwhelm you, and quickly bind you with reed ropes, before dragging you into one of the ruins. You realise that these cannibals plan to butcher you on the spot and eat you later.

If you can cast *Teleport*, you can use it to escape back to [Serpent Way \(turn to 221\)](#). If not, you muse *Test your Talent* to slip your bonds and run to the same place. You get +2 on this test if you are carrying a **knife**.

If you manage to do neither of these things, the marsh murderers make quick work of you. You have been slain! If you have a resurrection available, then follow the instructions you have noted (if you purchased a resurrection in the temple district, [turn to X](#) now). If your resurrection leaves you alive in this section then [turn to 95](#) now. Otherwise, your adventure ends here.

YOU ARE DEAD

212.

You hand the **fake mirror** to the old woman (remove it from your inventory), and she takes it with trembling hands. She holds it up to her face, staring into it as if expecting to see something marvellous inside, but you know for yourself how dull the thing is, and indeed she clearly sees nothing.

With a despairing cry she lets the mirror fall to the table, cracking it in half.

"Betrayed! I have been played false! I don't know who has done this, but I lay a curse on whoever has done this. Let them wither as I have withered."

You feel the weight of the **curse** fall on you. Mark it on your character sheet as **curse (heavy)**. You cannot remove it yourself, and while you have it, your maximum talent is reduced by 1. You will have to find someone to remove the curse for you.

You let out a cry and stumble away from the table. The old woman watches you go with narrowed eyes, but says nothing.

[Turn to 95.](#)

213.

"Wait!" you cry out, pulling the **morvanos family locket** from your pocket and holding it up, so that the ghastly cadaver can see the painting inside.

"I know you wish to make yourself corporeal once again, but it will not reunite you with your family. They are already gone, and you must return to the grave to join them."

You hope you've guessed right about the creature's motivation, as it moves closer. It raises one half-spectral hand and takes the locket from you (remove it from your inventory), then raises it to look at the picture inside.

You feel a bead of sweat trickle slowly down the back of your neck, but you dare not move. The ghost's unearthly radiance bathes you like the light of a diseased candle. Abruptly it turns, still holding the locket, and recedes through the hall of pillars faster than you can follow.

Steeling yourself, you take the skull lamp from its hook and go back to the crypts. By the time you find the Morvanos vault, the missing corpse is back in its place, with the locket grasped firmly in its dead fingers. You decide to leave it be.

You go to rouse the priests and explain what happened. They are very grateful that you dealt with the spirit by returning it to its rest rather than destroying it. They reward you with the **blessing of mord** that they promised. You may discard the blessing to use it like a *Fortune* point.

In the morning you gain the keyword *Tomb* and [return to the city centre \(turn to 95\)](#).

214.

"Sofek the Thorn?" the woman you approach asks, raising an eyebrow quizzically.

"He's from the far side of the Circle Sea, I hear, a place where the wizards enslaved the wildlife to their magics. He fights with the most curious weapon, a hive of stinging flies. What a nightmare! You want the heaviest armour, that's for sure, but they are still going to get inside. Make sure you carry some sort of insect-repelling tar."

You thank the woman and [return to the Thumb \(turn to 136\)](#).

215.

You do well in your opening rounds, winning back your stake and an additional **100 gold**. Domino-mask loses as much as you win, while rabbit-mask continues to do well. [Turn to 127](#).

216.

"The regard of a mighty wizard such as yourself is more than enough payment for me!" you say.

"Well said."

Velguan has his coachman drop you in the centre of town. Over the next few days, you discover yourself more highly spoken of.

If your **Treysham Status** is 3 or less, raise your **Status** by 1.

[Turn to 95.](#)

217.

"Hey, I know you," the thief with the brand says. "You're the cutter what gave ol' Pye the right what for." He turns to the others. "Seems 'ee's one of us!"

The thieves [invite you to their camp \(turn to 312\)](#).

218.

You stand at the busy gates of Treysham's arena, a vast circular amphitheatre surrounding an open field of sand. The thick sloping walls are dotted with narrow windows, and the red-tile roof glows in the afternoon sunlight. The arena is one of the few structures destroyed in the war that the magi used their magic to rebuild, and gladiatorial contests, horse races, and monstrous duels, are held here all the week round.

The truly unfortunate are condemned to fight here as punishment, but the real stars are professional gladiators. They can make huge fortunes, and attract fans from across the city. Vendors outside the arena gates are busy selling small effigies of the most popular gladiators. If you want to buy a **gladiator effigy (heavy)** for yourself, they cost **30 gold**. (You can discard an effigy for a +1 on a roll).

- » To bet on the outcome of a gladiator match, [turn to 306](#)
- » To join up as a gladiator, [turn to 40](#)
- » To sign on as an arena guard, [turn to 199](#)
- » To try and recover items confiscated here, [turn to 15](#)

When you are done here you can [return to the heart of the city \(turn to 95\)](#)/

219.

Ironmonger's Square rings with the sound of hammers and the wheezing of bellows, and the air is full of sparks and the stink of hot metal. The buildings around the sides of the square are mostly smithies, where weapons and armour can be crafted to order. The open part of the square is often put to use in testing those weapons, shooting arrows at breastplates, hitting helmets with arrows, and hacking at cattle bones with swords.

If you are looking for armed men to help you, this is the place to [hire them \(turn to 68\)](#).

There are many weapons or sets of armour available around the square. (Remember, all weapons and armour are **heavy** for encumbrance purposes).

Weapons

	buy	sell
Stiletto one-handed weapon	25gp	10gp
Sword, axe, or other one-handed weapon	20gp	10gp
Spear, pike, or other long weapon	20gp	10gp
Greatsword or other two-handed weapon	25gp	12gp
Shortbow or other ranged weapon	20gp	10gp
Glaive — one-handed and long weapon	40gp	15gp

Armour

	buy	sell
Padded jerkin, or other light armour (protection 1)	40gp	15gp
Chainmail, or other medium armour (protection 2)	100gp	45gp
Heavy scale, half-plate, or other heavy armour (protection 3)	250gp	110gp
Thief's chain — light armour (protection 1, no Stealth penalty)	120gp	60gp
Shield	20gp	10gp
Dragonscale Shield (reduce combat penalty by 2 or 4)	140gp	70gp

When you are done here, you can [return to the market \(turn to 224\)](#).

220.

There's a knack to throwing and keeping the dice, but you don't seem to have it. You lose, and lose bad, and before you know it, your stake is gone. The only comfort is that the rabbit-masked man, whose hands, you notice, bear a dozen rings, finally has a run of bad luck, and is forced to throw in some rings.

"You, eh ... need to match the pot," the domino woman tells you nervously. You can either stake *another* **100 gold** and [proceed \(turn to 116\)](#), or [take your leave \(turn to 309\)](#).

221.

Serpent Way was once a grand promenade running alongside the southwest part of the city wall, a wide avenue lined with trees and tall houses whose jutting clerestories looked out over the street below.

Now the buildings are collapsed and broken, and the trees have overgrown them. What were once ornamental cherries and ash trees, have mutated into twisted trees with arching branches and trailing aerial roots. They are like nothing you have seen elsewhere, and you have the disturbing feeling that the heavy hanging blossoms are turning to face you as you make your way down the deserted street.

If you do not have the keyword *Tribe*, [turn to 3](#) now.

If you are feeling brave, you can [venture into some of the tree-covered ruins \(turn to 347\)](#). If not, it might be safer to [head back \(turn to 22\)](#).

222.

If you succeed, you enter a spiritual contest with the ghost, as follows:

- Roll 2d6 for yourself, and do the same for the ghost.
- The highest roll wins the round.
- If you win twice before the ghost does, it is exorcised
- If the ghost wins twice before you do, *Take 1 Wound, ignoring armour*, then start over

If you successfully exorcise the spirit, it collapses in on itself, as if it were shrinking, or receding down a long and diminishing passage. After a few moments it is gone. Laid to rest, you hope.

You go to rouse the priests and explain what happened. They are very grateful that you dealt with the spirit by returning it to its rest rather than destroying it. They reward you with the **blessing of mord** that they promised. You may discard the blessing to use it like a *Fortune* point.

In the morning you gain the keyword *Tomb* and [return to the city centre \(turn to 95\)](#).

223.

You make your way to the gangplank of the Krendar ship, and are met by a guard party of slaver-men in bright red uniforms. They are uniformly black-haired, pale-skinned, and hostile, though those up on deck seem to be lying around indolently.

"What do you want?" the first guard asks. "This isn't a place for sightseeing, unless you've come to buy a slave."

- » If you want to buy a slave, and do not have the keyword *Ties*, [turn to 343](#)
- » If you want to ask to see the captain, [turn to 94](#)
- » If you want to leave, you can [return to 204](#)

The day market of Treysham fills the many alleys and side-streets that border the square in front of the [Dragon Gate \(turn to 259\)](#). The more prosperous shops occupy the ground floors of the taller buildings, while the poorer traders must make do with booths in the street, or temporary stalls that are cleared away when night falls.

Although the traders find spots where they can, certain streets are well known for particular sorts of products.

- For food and drink, visit [Pepper Street \(turn to 138\)](#)
- For arms and armour, you need to go to [Ironmonger's Square \(turn to 219\)](#)
- For herbs and curios, you are best visiting [Candle Lane \(turn to 5\)](#)
- For magical spells and items, go to [Spark Court \(turn to 58\)](#)
- For jewellery and gems, visit [Goldigger Way \(turn to 28\)](#)
- For books and documents, visit [Inkdipper's Street \(turn to 359\)](#)

When you are done here, you can [return to the centre of town \(turn to 95\)](#).

225.

The ruined portion of Treysham vastly exceeds the inhabited part. Whole tracts of buildings ruined by the war have been reclaimed by nature, hidden beneath trees and wild roses. Before the city was reopened, these ruins were plundered by the brave and foolish willing to risk their lives for some scrap of treasure.

The Magi now discourage such delving, but they don't bother to enforce the decree, so you are free to venture here.

If you wish to explore the empty ruins, *Test Search* (if you don't have Search, *Test your Talent at -2*). On a success, you may pick an entry from the list below, otherwise you must roll 1d6 to see which result you get. If the entry has a checkbox beside it, and that box is checked, you have already done this encounter, and have wasted your time — *Lose 1 Talent*. Otherwise, turn to the indicated section.

When you are done here you can [return to the inhabited city \(turn to 95\)](#).

1. ☐ [Fox Ruins \(turn to 310\)](#)
2. ☐ [Field of Bones \(turn to 170\)](#)
3. ☐ [Birds' nests \(turn to 363\)](#)
4. ☐ [Raven Hall \(turn to 13\)](#)
5. ☐ [Broken tunnel \(turn to 65\)](#)
6. [Nightfall \(turn to 392\)](#)
- ☐ [Strange Tower \(turn to 115\)](#)

226.

You are still jiggling the dummy about, when you feel an oppressive sensation. The hair all over your body stands on end, and the air fills with the stink of witchfire.

A bolt of lightning splits the sky, striking the dummy. . If you succeed, you manage to drop the dummy just in time! If you fail, you are still holding the dummy and must Take 1 Wound, ignoring armour. If this electrifying bolt reduces you to 0 Vitality, [turn to 191](#), otherwise you roll to safety.

After the smoke clears you find that **velguan's dummy** has been destroyed (remove it from your inventory), but you extract the **charged rune** from its chest to take back to Velguan.

You decide that it would be best not to be caught in the blasted shrine by the mage's sentinels, so you [hurry away \(turn to 119\)](#).

227.

The swamp men strike you down, but leave you alive (set your Vitality to 1, but lose 1 Talent). Unfortunately, that's because they plan to eat you!

They drag you off the darkened street and into a stinking ruin where it appears they have a camp. They hiss at each other in some guttural marsh tongue, probably arguing over who gets your best bits.

Test Linguistics (if you don't have Linguistics, *Test your Talent at -2*). If you pass, you can manage enough of the marsh tongue to tell them that you have been cursed by magic, and would be poison to eat. *Test Diplomacy* (if you don't have Diplomacy, *Test your Talent at -2*) (if you have the **cat curse** you pass automatically). If you pass the Diplomacy test, they let you go, but demand a tribute — any one item from your inventory. [Turn to 303](#) and tick the box on line 2.

If you fail, they decide to take a chance on eating you anyway.

You have been slain! If you have a resurrection available, then follow the instructions you have noted (if you purchased a resurrection in the temple district, [turn to X](#) now). If your resurrection leaves you alive in this section then [turn to 95](#) now. Otherwise, your adventure ends here.

YOU ARE DEAD

228.

You decide to clamber up the grassy rubble that surrounds the building and peek in through one of the windows. *Test Stealth* (if you don't have Stealth, *Test your Talent at -2*). If you fail, you make a noise that alerts the people inside. You can [reveal yourself now \(turn to 330\)](#), or [retreat \(turn to 303\)](#) before they spot you.

Otherwise, you manage to lodge yourself in a stone embrasure, from which you can look down on the open inside of the ruin. Here, a fire has been lit, and a small group of figures is visible sitting around it. Their voices drift up towards you on the faint breeze. You can't hear much, but it's enough to tell that they are criminals of some sort, waiting for a delivery that doesn't seem to have arrived. One of them complains that they've been waiting for multiple nights.

Do you want to:

- » [Go down and speak with them \(turn to 330\)](#)
- » [Sneak off into the night \(turn to 303\)](#)
- » [Launch an attack from here \(turn to 89\)](#) (requires a ranged weapon)

229.

You enter the arena, and find yourself fighting **Gormok the Brute**.

Gormok is a monster, in heavy bronze plates and wielding a massive metal mace whose points can crush skulls. If you can't match him, you

The fight follows the rules below:

- Gormok's might blows will crush any shields, **shields** do nothing in this fight
- If you wear **light armour**, you can evade the big blows, and gain +1
- If you wear **medium armour**, you are too slow to get out the way, and too lightly armoured to withstand the mace, you suffer *Disadvantage*
- If you fight with a **ranged** or **long** weapon, you keep Gormok at bay, and gain +2
- If you fight with a **one-handed weapon**, Gormok overwhelms you, and you suffer -2
- If you have a **net**, you gain *Advantage*

Now, *Fight 3 Rounds at -1* (plus any modifications from above), taking 2 wounds for each loss. If you win, [turn to 105](#). If you lose, [turn to 366](#) instead.

230.

You hand over **kollish's ear** to Krazek, who takes it without comment (remove it from your inventory). He goes over to his desk and counts out the **60 gold** in red krendish coins that he promised you — proper blood money.

"Take it and go," he tells you, and you do.

[Turn to 204](#).

231.

You make your way out into the grey fenlands that lie on the landward side of Treysham. Scattered clouds bring equally scattered showers, interspersed with flashes of sunlight that glint off distant meres. The trickle and glug of water seems to be a constant sound out here.

There are a few ramshackle farmhouses scattered here and there, their walls made of stone scavenged from Treysham's ruins, and a greater number of morose cows which look up from their chewing to watch you pass. You don't see any people.

If you have the keyword *Toil*, then you have accepted a quest to aid Tulla. If you want to find her farm, [turn to 104](#).

If you have the keyword *Till*, and want to go to search the marshes for nirnroot, [turn to 388](#).

If you have the keyword *Tribe*, and you want to try and find the place the marsh murderers came from, [turn to 269](#).

Otherwise, you spend a damp and miserable day in the fenlands, before hurrying back to the city gates before they close in your face. *Lose 1 Talent* and [turn to 309](#).

232.

Gain the keyword *Tender*

The plan goes perfectly. Using your knowledge of the guard's habits, you spirit Anaxes and his companions to the rear gate and are able to spirit them out without being noticed.

"Come to my house in the upper town, and I will reward you," Anaxes says.

You hurry back to the cells and take the last of the drug, joining the others in unconsciousness. When the escape is discovered Ekhar is naturally suspicious, but has no idea who might have helped with the escape. Things are certainly uncomfortable for a while, but you keep your head down.

When your time is done, you collect the agreed **40 gold** before gladly handing over your post to the your replacement and returning to a life above ground. [Turn to 95](#).

233.

You make your way through the sewers, turn after turn, opening after opening, following the rat king's directions, until you leave the flooded portions behind. You must now be most of the way to the Enusian hill, maybe under the Upper Town! If the wizards are aware that an open passage leads past the inner wall, there is no sign of it.

Eventually, you emerge from the passage into a chamber of dressed stone, which appears to be the ancient basement of a fine house. A sorcerous lamp lights itself as you enter, bathing the room in a steady blue glow.

There appears to be nothing in the chamber but a door-like slab of solid stone set flush into the far wall. A complex network of lines are inscribed into the wall surrounding the door, if that's what it is, and extend onto its surface where you see five circular depressions, each about the size of a large coin.

Each of these depressions is lined and edged in a different metal: copper, bronze, silver, gold, and orichalcum. If you have a **copper seal**, **bronze seal**, **silver seal**, **gold seal**, and **orichalcum seal**, and wish to try placing them in the depressions, [turn to 362](#).

- If you have only one, or some, of these seals, but want to try anyway, [turn to 192](#).
- If you have the *Occult* skill, and successfully *Test Occult*, then [turn to 32](#).
- If you have the *Larceny* skill, and successfully *Test Larceny*, you can try to [break open the door \(turn to 4\)](#).
- If you want to try to use a *View* spell on the door, and successfully cast the spell, [turn to 180](#).
- If you want to try to *Teleport* through the door, and successfully cast the spell, [turn to 185](#).
- If Metril is with you, [turn to 209](#)

When you are done here, you make your way back to the low town sewers, empty handed. [Turn to 76](#).

234.

You call upon the mage Pendar, who it appears is visiting Treysham at the same time as you. As before, most of the mage is obscured behind an enormous bushy beard, in which all manner of small animals make their homes. Mice and shrews scamper constantly up and down, while the cold eyes of snakes regard you silently from their hairy burrows. Pendar's face is invisible in the mass.

"Is that you, Famulus?" Pendar asks, shaking his staff in your direction.

"It is I," you reply.

"Ahh, well, brilliant. Well done for finding me here, I'm sure that was some sort of test I was setting." Pendar scratches his beard, pondering.

"Well, since you *are* here, I have a gift for you!"

Pendar roots around in his beard and, if you have not already taken it, produces a scroll. It is a copy of the spell **strike**, of uncertain use. If you have already taken it, then he just fumbles around for a while and finds nothing.

"This should definitely be of use," Pendar tells you — whether he gave you anything or not.

"Now, let's get to work. I need some things for my experiments. Let's see ... bring me some **blinkblossom**, a **rabbit's foot**, and a **mummified finger**, that should do."

- » If you have all three of these items, [turn to 338](#).
- » If Metril is with you, Pendar is definitely interested in her, [turn to 36](#) to see why.
- » To take your leave [turn to 235](#).

235.

You have been allowed to enter the precincts of the High Tower.

Close up, behind its protective walls, the golden towers have an air of abandonment. The marble pavements that surround them are cracked and overgrown, and the magical golden walls are marred and stained by ancient spellfire. Most of the amethyst doors leading into the towers do not look like they have been opened in decades. You can't help but wonder — looking up at the soaring towers — how many wizards still live in their halls.

In the enclosed plaza formed by the bases of the three main towers, is a disturbing reminder of the war. What looks at first glance to be a fantastical sculpture, resolves into a series of twisted cages, attached with armatures to the framework of an immense sorcerous weapon, pointed skyward like a drawn bow. The whole thing has been blasted and *melted* by magical energies, so much so that the poor wretches who once inhabited the cages were clearly melted too — there are bones fused with the enchanted metal.

At what stage of the war was this weapon created? Why has it not been removed? Do the mad wizards in their towers plan to use it again? You have no answers.

From here you may:

- » [Visit the Voice \(turn to 333\)](#)

If you have the title **Famulus** you may also

- » [Forge a spell \(turn to 316\)](#)
- » [Seek out Pendar \(turn to 234\)](#)

236.

You heave open the moss-encrusted lid of the old chest, entirely missing the magical ward carved into its surface. The ward lays a **curse of bones (heavy)** on you (this uses an inventory slot). While you suffer the curse, you have an additional -3 when fighting any undead creature. You may not remove the curse until it is lifted by a cursebreaker — try the temple district.

Just as well you didn't get cursed first ... [Turn to 117](#).

237.

Galabalus, the champion, lies defeated at your feet. The sands of the arena are stained with your blood and his, but he still breathes.

You drag him before the magi on their balcony and raise your sword. The magi, cackling for blood, or perhaps for fresh bones to use in their magic, demand Galabalus's death, but the crowd surge to their feet, and shout for him to be spared.

You can choose to spare him, in which case you gain you gain **the crowd's approval** (while you have the approval, you can use it to gain *advantage* on any roll — you can do this up to 3 times).

Or you can do as the magi ask, and kill him, in which case you gain 1 **status**.

Either way, you are now the Champion. Gain the title **Arena Champion**, a grand prize purse of **300 gold**, and 1 **Treysham Status**.

You leave the arena, stepping back into the shadows of the under-tunnels, where Kanthus is waiting for you.

"Well done, you are the Champion now ... it's a heavy weight to bear. Watch your back for challengers."

Your time in the arena is done, for now. [Turn to 95](#).

238.

You are about to leave, but it occurs to you that some of the stuff here might be of value. A quick ransack of the place turns up the following: a twist of **fish-eye root**, a **mummified finger**, a **lump of amber**, some **sorcerous glassware (treasure, 120gp)**, and an **invulnerability spell**.

You take what you want, and [head out \(turn to 119\)](#).

239.

You don't fancy the thought of lingering in the ruins all night, while all manner of danger might be stalking you. Instead, you decide to press on, hoping to find one of the circular roads that ring the city, and use it to get back to the outer town.

Test Tracking (if you don't have Tracking, *Test your Talent at -2*). If you pass, you do indeed locate one of the broad avenues that once connected Treysam's districts. *Restore 1 Talent*, and [turn to 303](#). If you fail, [turn to 275](#) instead.

240.

"My name is Anaxes," the prisoner tells you, when you come close to the barred door of his cell. "I was a mage, until my enemies falsely accused me of working with enemies of the city, and now here I am."

A *mage*. You are amazed to see one of the mighty unmasked and brought so low, but the lighting-mark scars that mar his flesh prove that he's telling the truth.

"I have a way out," Anaxes says, "a drug I've made that will knock out the guards long enough for me and my companions to escape, but it must be put in the guard's food. Help me, and I'll reward you as soon as I regain my position. Once I'm out of here my enemies won't dare to challenge me. Don't worry, you can take the drug too, so that no one knows you helped me."

Do you want to [help him \(turn to 322\)](#), [report him \(turn to 186\)](#), or [ignore him \(turn to 314\)](#)?

241.

"Kollish! Captain Krazek wants your ear! Give it to me and you don't have to die!"

Kollish turns chalky pale, but draws his cutlass. "I'd rather die."

Most of the others back away from your fight, or grab their meagre belongings and flee, but a few rally to help Kollish fight you.

Fight 2 rounds at -1. If you lose, [turn to 339](#).

If you win, you cut the man down and drive off the others. If you have the keyword *Truant*, you recognise the man you have killed as Kollish, the Krendar runaway. If you cut off his ear to take back to the Krendar captain, you can easily avail yourself of **kollish's ear**.

There's little else to be gained in this encampment other than the satisfaction of publishing low-born curs who defy the might of imperial Krendar.

[Return to 303](#) and tick the box on line 5.

242.

You set off around the town, with your proclamation and cap, and try your best to cry the praises of Thusar, but you can barely read the high tongue on the scroll, let alone pronounce it. Soon, you find yourself being shadowed by a rival herald, who ridicules your speech at every turn. You end up making Thusar sound like an idiot. Enraged, he refuses to pay you for your work, and curses your name around town.

Roll 1d6. If the result is less than your **Status** you lose 1 Status!

Now you can slink away in shame to [119](#).

243.

"Oh! A high and mighty gladiator, locked in here with all of us. Bet it's not so funny on the other side of the bars, eh?"

The other prisoners don't take well to having a gladiator amongst them. *Test Diplomacy* (if you don't have Diplomacy, *Test your Talent at -2*) to try and persuade them to go easy on you. If you fail, *Lose 1 Talent* as you get pushed to the back of the line for food and jostled constantly when you are trying to sleep.

Then, [turn to 379](#).

244.

You quickly unlock the doors to the slave pens, three on each side of the hold (remove the **slave ship key** from your inventory). Most of the slaves inside are chained as well, but the same key that opens the doors opens the manacles. The only question is whether you can get it done in time.

Test your Talent. If you succeed, you get the chains unlocked before any of the slavers notice, [turn to 96](#) now.

Otherwise, some of the crew pour down the stairs before the job is done. You toss the keys to one of the slaves and rush to intercept the guards. *Fight 4 rounds.* Freed slaves rush to your aid, giving you *advantage*. Once, you may choose to prevent a wound by allowing a slave to die in your stead.

If the guards overcome you, you are subdued (set your Vitality to 1) and then [dragged to the captain \(turn to 12\)](#), otherwise you storm the deck at the head of the slaves — [turn to 96](#).

245.

You leave the boat with your new slave in tow, following along behind you with head bowed until you are out of sight of the ship.

Now, would you like to [continue with your slave \(turn to 267\)](#), or [free them \(turn to 166\)](#)?

246.

You start to search the ground floor for anything the previous inhabitants might have left behind, not noticing that the blossom-heavy vines are slowly curling up behind you. You turn, and receive a face full of narcotic pollen, sprayed from the heavy flowers.

Test your Talent at -2 — if you use an **antidote** you have +4 on this test. If you fail, you *Take 1 Wound, ignoring armour*. If this kills you, [turn to 201](#). If you survive, you manage to scramble away from the approaching plants.

[Turn to 282.](#)

247.

You recall that these *noctiluculent snails* are not themselves magical, but absorb magical runoff and effluent left behind from the war, concentrating it into their shells. Alchemists and potion makers will pay a fair price for these.

You also remember that sometimes the magical leftovers can cause them to grow to a vast size ...

[Return to 148.](#)

248.

You consider the doors. White is often seen as a mark of good luck, and black of bad, but in the occult traditions before the war — you think — those colours are reversed. Could it be that black is lucky, and white is bad? You aren't sure.

[Return to 284.](#)

249.

You are warily going through the marsh murderer's paltry belongings, when a faint sound on the night breeze makes your ears perk up. A wail, ghostly, high-pitched, unearthly.

You quail, ready to run, but a gust of wind carries the sound more clearly — amazingly, it appears to be the whistle of a distant flute.

If you want to follow the sound, *Test Tracking* (if you don't have Tracking, *Test your Talent at -2*). If you succeed, [turn to 397](#). If you fail, *Lose 1 Talent*, then decide whether to keep looking (test again), or give up. If you give up, [turn to 303](#) and tick the box on line 2.

250.

The air in the temple tastes of smoke and the bitter herbs that the priests burnt before the altar before they retired. They also placed silver and meat in the three bowls as offerings to the god. You consider stealing them yourself, but the blind gaze of the god's statue makes you reconsider.

Instead, you pace, patrolling the area between the dark supporting pillars, and the empty halls beyond as the temple sinks further and further into silence. Clearly the thief is not coming.

You've just persuaded yourself of that, when you catch sight of a pale light moving between the pillars. You draw your weapon, ready to catch the burglar, but what you see approaching is quite something else, a phosphorescent figure draped in the pale wrappings of the grave!

Test Occult (if you don't have Occult, *Test your Talent at -2*). If you pass [turn to 178](#), otherwise [turn to 66](#).

251.

You are conveyed to the High Priestess, a dark-skinned and venerable woman named Motakka. Her heavy robes are blood red, and embroidered with panels representing the myths of Dzume. Her tapestry-draped chamber smells even more strongly of thyme and lavender.

Motakka bids you take a seat. "So, you wish to have Dzume's forbearance laid upon you? By our prayers we can ask the Goddess to turn her gaze away from you, once only. Should you die, this prayer will bring you back to life here in the temple, but then it will be spent.

"This is no small thing, it will require a costly and difficult blessing. I am afraid we must charge a price of **200 gold** for this."

If you wish to pay the price, gain **dzume's forbearance (resurrect, City State of Treysham 200)**. Should you die, while playing any game, and not be resurrected by some other effect in that game, you can choose to be resurrected at section 200 of this game.

When you are done here you [return to the temple \(turn to 21\)](#).

252.

If you have the keyword *Toil*, [turn to 63](#) no. Otherwise, gain the keyword *Toil* and read on.

"Welcome, welcome, what can I get you?" the fishmonger asks.

"I saw the way you looked at me, and it wasn't just in the hope that I'd buy fish," you suggest.

"Oh! It's true." The fishmonger introduces himself as Marc, and tells you that his fish farm is being attacked by something that's killing all his fish. He's brought a few to sell, but if it keeps on like this he'll be out of business. He begs you to go to his farm and help his wife Tulla solve the problem.

"It's just outside the Lion gate, in the marshes near to town."

He promises that his wife will reward you if you can solve the problem.

You [return to 138](#).

253.

This level is lit only by the light you have brought with you. Although there are tall arched windows (the arched part being at the bottom of each) they open onto hard-packed dirt.

Above you, the light reflects from the glass of a large upright mirror, and from glassware spread out on a table. As in the floor above (below?) the furniture is all upside down and attached uncannily to the ceiling. It looks like some of the things on the table might be valuable, but it's hard to tell from down here.

If you have the *Climbing* skill, and want to try to climb up to the floor to look at the table, [turn to 90](#).

"Hello?" comes the voice from below. "*I can hear you moving around. Are you coming?*"

The stairway runs up (down?) [towards the surface \(turn to 305\)](#), and further down (up?) [into the earth \(turn to 324\)](#).

254.

You head to the upper floor, and find yourself at one end of a steep-roofed hall, lit by the embers of a banked fire. Dark mounds of blankets show where the merchant's body servants are sleeping, while the divided section at the back is no doubt Ollivers' chamber.

It's possible that Ollivers might keep the incriminating documents close at hand, though you'd have to sneak down the length of the hall to check. If you'd prefer to head back down the stairs, [return to 323](#). If you want to try to sneak to the master's chamber, *Test Stealth* (if you don't have Stealth, *Test your Talent at -2*). If you pass, [turn to 188](#).

If you fail, you step on a creaky board, and wake one of the maids. She shrieks as she sees your shadow creeping up the hall, waking everyone else. Now would be a great time to cast *Teleport*. If you do, [turn to 309](#). Otherwise, you bolt for the stairs, only to run straight into a pair of crossbow-wielding guards.

Fight 2 rounds at -3. If you survive, you break past them, and stumble out into the street. [Turn to 309](#). Otherwise, [turn to 172](#).

255.

You tell the priest: "We must put out the fire."

It's easier than it sounds. In the damp mud of the swamp, the fire must be fed constantly to keep it roaring. Instead, a pair of soot-faced villagers brave the sparks to drag the few large logs away, making a show of cleaning out the ash with rakes and reed brooms, as they no doubt need to do often enough.

Tsuga eyes them hungrily, but is content to wait for the new fire to be lit. Instead, the villagers let it cool.

You wait as long as you can, until you are sure Tsuga is about to work out that something is wrong, and then run in to [attack \(turn to 369\)](#)!

256.

Calamity! Tsuga's iron body crushes you into the filthy earth like the blow of a hammer. The demon frog rolls back and forth across your body a couple of times to make sure you are tender, and then swallows you whole.

You have been slain! If you have a resurrection available, then follow the instructions you have noted (if you purchased a resurrection in the temple district, [turn to X](#) now). If your resurrection leaves you alive in this section then [turn to 95](#) now. Otherwise, your adventure ends here.

YOU ARE DEAD

257.

The people who make their homes in the Narrows are amongst the most downtrodden in the city. Most of the doors you knock on remain closed.

If you have the keyword *Twist*, you have a certain criminal reputation that opens doors. Otherwise it's a matter of trying to talk your way in. *Test Diplomacy* (if you don't have Diplomacy, *Test your Talent at -2*). You can add +1 for every five gold you are willing to hand out. If you have the keyword, or pass the test, [turn to 42](#). If not, you end up [staring at closed doors in defeat \(turn to 147\)](#).

258.

You ease open the door and step inside. It's pitch black, and the sound of fluttering wings is much louder, overlaid with a metallic note. You raise your light, and are instantly assaulted by a metal shape that comes plummeting out of the darkness!

Fearing that this is some sort of guardian construct left behind from the war, you snatch out a weapon, but the creature careens away from you, squawking, and you are surprised to see that it is some sort of metal bird.



The bird flies back up the tower and starts battering at the walls with its metal wings.

If you:

- » Have a **net** and want to try and catch the bird, [turn to 11](#)
- » Can cast *Flight* and want to fly up to the bird, [turn to 350](#)
- » Have the *Occult* skill, and want to use it, [turn to 56](#)

Alternatively, you can [let yourself out of the tower \(turn to 303\)](#).

259.

The Dragon Gate is the only portal providing passage through the enchanted inner wall of Treysham, and it lives up to its name — the enormous skull of a dragon is perched over an arch wide enough for two carts to pass abreast, though you cannot be sure if it is real, or some artful reproduction.

A throng of servants and noble-blooded stream through the gate, but each is checked by a member of the magi's sentinels, their blank masks marked on the forehead with the purple-eye emblem of Treysham.

To [enter \(turn to 119\)](#), you must have a **Status of 2+**, or carry a **mark of entry**. Otherwise, you will be turned away.

The only other means of entry is try and slip past the guards in the crowd. If you wish to try this [turn to 99](#).

You may also [return to the low-town \(turn to 95\)](#).

260.

Ollivers' pudgy fingers hide strength enough to throttle a man, and he gladly does so, squeezing the life out of you.

"Pathetic dog!" he spits in your face. "Dying for another man's dirty work, I almost pity you."

Not pity enough to spare your life, though. Once he's done with you, Ollivers has his men throw your body into the river.

You have been slain! If you have a resurrection available, then follow the instructions you have noted (if you purchased a resurrection in the temple district, [turn to X](#) now). If your resurrection leaves you alive in this section then [turn to 95](#) now. Otherwise, your adventure ends here.

YOU ARE DEAD

261.

"Malphas is dead ... but it wasn't Malphas," you announce, as Velguan ushers you in to yet another darkened and shuttered chamber — you suspect he is moving around the house to make himself a harder target.

"Explain!"

You do, and Velguan breathes a sigh of relief. "If Malphas has left an effigy behind, it means he is not in the city, and so I am safe at last."

Velguan expresses his thanks by handing you a carved **orichalcum seal** that he assures you has great value, though you aren't convinced. Nevertheless, you *Gain 1 Experience Point*, and may *Restore 2 Talent*. Gratefully, you return the **glass compass** (remove it from your inventory).

Your visit done you [return to the upper city \(turn to 119\)](#).

262.



If the box above is ticked, you are confronted by a wall of rubble, it seems this path is blocked. [Return to 168](#). Otherwise, tick the box, and read on.

You venture forward into a side chamber, where supporting arches rise to a central a point above your head. More water trickles from the ceiling, pooling around your feet. At the far side of the chamber you spot a glint of gold, and advance on it, hopeful for treasure. Instead, it seems you trigger some ancient trap. The chamber trembles, and rocks fall from the ceiling all around you!

The ceiling collapses with a deafening rumble, threatening to bury you under a tonne of rubble, but you somehow manage to dodge the falling rocks. A supporting pillar crumbles to the ground, and you scramble up it, then leap onto a sliding slope of scree that's sliding down into the hole. The image of a salmon trying to swim upstream flashes into your mind.

Astoundingly, you manage to scape the collapse by going upwards. You crawl out into the weak sunlight of late afternoon, somewhere in the midst of the ruins.

Looking around, you find yourself on a narrow path, lined with **lavender** bushes (you can take some of the fragrant herb if you want). You don't recognise the path, and you don't know where the tunnel entrance lies from here, so you have no choice but to make your way [back into the city \(turn to 95\)](#).

263.

One of the thieves goes in for the killing blow, but stops short. "Hey, get a light," he says.

They bring over a brand from the fire and hold it up to your face.

"I know you," the first thief says. "You're the cutter what gave ol' Pye the right what for." He turns to the others. "Seems 'ee's one of us!"

They let you go, though you are pretty battered. Set your Vitality to 1 and [turn to 312](#).

264.

You enter the locked room in the bowels of Raven Hall.

To your surprise, it appears to be some sort of bedroom, though windowless and long abandoned. The fireplace is choked with ash and dirt, the furniture is shrouded in cobwebs. You check the narrow bed and find a skeleton laid out amongst the mouldering fabrics. It's hard to tell for sure, but you think they were young.

You move to the table, chair, and chests, finding the signs of a young person's life: mildewed books, folded clothes, the remains of food. Were they locked in here as a prisoner, or to save them from the war? Either way, they didn't make it.

Amongst the bones you find a **silver tiara (treasure, 120gp)**, and a **carnelian ring (treasure, 50gp)** which you can take, if you don't mind robbing the dead.

On the dresser is a small box containing **30 gold** in old coins, and a **potion of talent (restore 3 talent)**.

When you are done, you decide to leave the hall — and the bones — to their rest. [Return to 225](#) and tick the box on line 4.

265.

You make your way to the Merchant's Hall, which was once the headquarters of Treysham's guilds. Now the merchants, such as they are, prefer the hustle of the lower city to the empty avenues of the upper town.

The Merchant's Hall is almost as empty. A long, high hall, lit by a single flickering fire and a few high windows. Here, a single lesser mage, his hangdog mask framed by a ragged wig of black string, presides over an enormous folio bound in lizard skin. This scribe is watched over by a hovering golden skull adorned with four copper wings. You don't know what it's for.

☐

If this box is not checked, check the box and [turn to 394](#)

The mage tells you that a house costs **400 gold**. If you can afford it, and wish to buy, pay the money, and the mage will write your name in the book.

You can also buy a **mark of entry** here for **50 gold**, the mage simply assumes that if you are standing in Merchant's Hall, you are already entitled to one.

When you are done, [return to 119](#).

266.

"Wait!"

You are taken aback when the rat king speaks, its voice made up of a multitude of squeaking.

"I've got some valuable information for you," the creature says. "Spare me, and I'll tell you how to get from the sewers into a mage's house!"

If you wish to spare the creature, gain the keyword Tunnel, and then [leave empty handed \(turn to 48\)](#). Alternatively you can continue on with your [bloody tail-cutting work \(turn to 373\)](#).

267.

You head back to the city with your slave in tow. The man is useful, but no one can miss the cord of servitude tied around his neck, and it doesn't sit well in Treysam, a city that prefers to send its criminals to the arena to die fighting magical monsters.

Roll 1d3 (roll a dice and halve the result, rounding up). If the result is less than your **Status**, *Lose 1 Status* as your slave is noticed.

[Turn to 95.](#)

268.

Tulla and her husband Marc are very pleased to see you. They tell you that the cutlass birds have not returned, and that the fish are plentiful.

They invite you eat with them before you head back to the city. You may *Rest*, and *Restore 1 Talent*.

When you are done, you [return to the city \(turn to 95\)](#).

269.



If the box above is ticked, you have already tracked the marsh murderers to their village. [Turn to 287](#).

You previously encountered the marsh murderers in the ruins of the outer city, where they tried to kill and eat you. That encounter gave you few clues about where they came from, but you know the direction from which they appeared.

Test Tracking at --1 (if you don't have Tracking, *Test your Talent* at -1). If you succeed, you manage to pick up on the trail of the marsh men, and track it southwards into the depths of the fenlands. Tick the box above and [turn to 287](#).

If you fail, you spend the entire day trudging your way aimlessly through the marshes, growing cold and tired, before you are forced to turn back by the fading light. You hurry back to the Lion Gates before they close in your face. *Lose 1 Talent* and [turn to 309](#).

270.

The slaves turn their faces from you as you approach the bars of their cages, taking you for another slaver, at least until you come up to the gate and whisper to them: "I'm here to get you out."

One of the slaves, a little better fed than his fellows, shuffles over to the bars. "I don't know if you're telling the truth, I hope to the old gods that you are. If you do mean to help us, you'll need the key, and only the officers carry those."

If you have a **slave ship key**, and want to let the slaves out, [turn to 244](#). Otherwise you can [abandon them to their fate \(turn to 204\)](#), or [go in search of a key \(turn to 279\)](#).

Treysham was once a prosperous trading port on the circle sea. Its magi built their walled complex of golden towers on the Enusian hill, overlooking the broad harbour, while the rest of the city expanded to the east, forming a wide semi-circular settlement enclosed by a second wall.

The broad harbour is long gone, smashed by some cataclysm during the war. Now an expanse of mudflats — grey, brown, and stinking — flanks the shallow river that connects what was left of the port to the distant sea. The outer wall has crumbled too, and the broad streets and high narrow houses of the city itself are now little more than acres of ruins, sporadically inhabited and overgrown. Wild roses clamber where guards once stood sentry; trees cultivated by the magi as exotic specimens choke the streets with their roots.

Only at the gate to the inner compound did the city still cling to life. A shanty town grew up in the ruins of the grand squares, drawing the scant protection of the magi sealed within the citadel. These *edge-dwellers* sometimes traded with your village, exchanging trinkets and treasure unearthed from the ruins for food and cloth.

Now that the inner gates have re-opened, and the mages are once more to be found, occasionally, on the streets of Treysham, much of that shanty town has been cleared away from the gates, but the **outer city** is still half in ruins, with as many secrets still hidden within as in the countryside beyond. Between the inner walls and the magi's tower, the **inner city** is in a little better shape, but only an handful of the grand houses that once belonged to the city's nobles have been reoccupied.

One thing that the magi *have* deigned to rebuild is their arena, where warriors come to fight to please the crowds. Here, monsters left over from the war are pitted against criminals and professional gladiators alike.

Three gates pierce the outer wall, the Lion, the Gryphon, and the Kraken. Of these, only the Lion Gate is still in use, the others lead to ruins and abandoned roads.

[Return to the city centre \(turn to 95\).](#)

272.

Once again, the man you now know to be Pye takes you to the darkest corner of the inn and takes a table. You produce **ollivers' documents** and hand them over (remove them from your inventory). He leafs through them quickly, holding them up to the dim firelight to read them better.

"Oh yes," he says, "at last!"

"I wouldn't be so pleased to see those if I were you," a voice says, startling you both. From the next booth a trio of men appears, two thugs and a foppish man who is probably the criminal Pye crossed in the first place. Before Pye can move, the thugs grab him by the arms and fling him back in his seat.

The foppish man tosses you a purse containing **50 gold**, and tells you: "You'd best get out of here now."

"You bastard!" Pye shouts. "I know who you are! You'll pay for this!"

You decide to get gone. Gain the title **Pyemaker**, *Restore 1 Talent*, and *Gain 1 Experience Point*, then [turn to 95](#).

273.

The buildings form a rough square, enclosing a courtyard that was probably once a garden, and this is where the fire has been set. There are a number of ways to approach through the ruins, but you are immediately aware that whoever is there, they have set sentries — they don't want to be found.

Test Stealth at --2 (if you don't have Stealth, *Test your Talent* at -0). If you fail, you alert one of the sentries. At once a cry goes up, and you realise that whoever it is will probably flee the area now. You can just [reveal yourself now \(turn to 292\)](#), or [make your escape \(turn to 303\)](#).

If you succeed, you manage to find a spot from which you can overlook the square. There is indeed a fire there, and what looks like a makeshift camp. A handful of people, indistinct in the gloom, are sleeping, cooking, and talking. There's men and women, most of them unarmed, as far as you can see. Whoever they are, they don't strike you as a threat.

You can [go down to see who they are \(turn to 292\)](#), [leave \(turn to 303\)](#), or [rush down and attack them \(turn to 16\)](#).

You enter a dark shop. The air is thick with the smell of incense, and the frisson of magic. A velvet curtain blocks your way forward.

When you pass through the curtains you find yourself confronted by a enormous man wearing a toad mask, seated behind a wide table and surrounded by candles. This back chamber is stiflingly hot, and the man — surely a mage — looms ominously.

"Greetings, welcome to the shop of Tinzagus!" booms the man behind the table. "I have for sale things that no one else will sell ... or buy."

Tinzagus spreads out some very odd items on his table, without explanations to justify their inflated prices.

You may only buy any given item from Tinzagus once.

odds

	buy	sell
brass winding key	200gp	-
captive flame finch	-	200gp
crystal skull	300gp	-
fire finch egg	-	150gp
ornate gold seal	400gp	-
metril	-	-
rabbit's foot	-	30gp
sentry bird	-	400gp
strike spell (you don't know what this does)	70gp	-

If **Metril** is with you, and you are interested in selling her, [turn to 355](#). If, instead, you have the title **Clockworker** and wish to speak to Metril, [turn to 319](#).

When you are done you can [return to the market \(turn to 28\)](#).

275.

You are picking your way through the night-shrouded ruins when you become aware that something is following you. A low growl makes you think of a wolf, or a wild dog, though you'll be lucky if it is something so mundane.

If you can cast *View*, and want to use it to scout the danger, [turn to 349](#). Alternatively you could burn a *Flight* or *Teleport* spell to [dodge the danger \(turn to 303\)](#), or *Test Tracking* (if you don't have Tracking, *Test your Talent at -2*) to do the same.

If you can't get away, you have no choice but to turn and face what's stalking you. As it emerges from the inky shadows, you see that it is some sort of enormous red hound with glowing eyes.

If you have a **soup bone**, and wish to toss it to the creature, [turn to 403](#), otherwise, you need to defend yourself against it! *Fight 2 Rounds at -1*. If you don't have a lantern, or some other way of seeing in the dark, you suffer *Disadvantage*.

If you defeat the creature, you can take a **hound's tooth** from it, before [moving on \(turn to 303\)](#). If it defeats you, [turn to 84](#).

276.

You enter the ground floor rooms of the Raven Hall. The grand windows are boarded over, and drifts of dust cover the once-fine furniture. Now that you are past the wards, room after room lies open to you, all clearly abandoned, and none of great interest.

Eventually, however, you come to a locked and reinforced door, inlaid with magical wards. The lock, which is massive and cast from iron, has a star inscribed on it.

If you have a **silver star key**, you can use it to [open the door \(turn to 264\)](#). If not, you could try picking it, but it looks risky. *Test Larceny* (if you don't have Larceny, *Test your Talent at -2*). If you succeed, you can open the door as above. If you fail, magical energy leaps from the door and strikes you — *Take 1 Wound*. If this reduces you to 0 Vitality, [turn to 191](#). If you survive, you can try again.

Once you are done with these rooms, you can [return to the vestibule \(turn to 13\)](#).

277.

You remember that rat kings prefer dry ground near flowing water, and choose the shallower but swifter-flowing tunnels until the sound of squeaking fills the air. Raising your torch you see that the ground ahead is alive with rats, bringing food, obeisance, and information to a knot of rats tied together by their tails.

You draw a knife, and wade into the mass. *Test your Talent*. If you fail, you don't manage to catch the King. You can either [give up \(turn to 48\)](#), or [return to 154](#) and try again.

If you pass the roll, make a note of how much less than the target number you needed, and [turn to 373](#).

278.

The priests of Mord are glad to see you return to their temple. Since you aided them, they have suffered from no more unquiet spirits, though you see that they have now placed a sturdy metal gate across the entrance to the crypts.

The priests are glad to offer you their hospitality, though it means another meal of salt bread and thin ale, although this time they add a simple stew to the mix. You may *Rest* and *Heal 1 Vitality*.

When you are done here, you [return to the temple district \(turn to 196\)](#).

279.

You quickly determine that there are three possible people who carry the keys to the slave pens, the captain, the first mate, and the hortator — the slave driver. The captain is in his cabin, and breaking in there seems like a bad idea, but the hortator is oiling his drums and the first mate is on the steering deck.

- » To head to the steering deck, [turn to 2](#)
- » To creep up on the hortator, [turn to 383](#)

280.

The man tells you that from time to time the wizards send men into the old flooded sewers in search of the tails of rat kings for their magic. By approaching him, you have the good fortune to be allowed to take part!

The rat-man thrusts his **flambeaux (heavy)** (treat this as a lantern) into your hands, and stands aside to let you clamber down into the sewers. [Turn to 154.](#)

281.

You return to your house in the Upper City.

You can stay here for as many days as you like, though you must pay **2 gold** for each day. On each day you may *Rest*, and *Restore 3 Talent*. If you eat a **ration** you may also *Heal 1 Vitality*. If you stay for at least three days you can *Heal 1 Vitality* without the need of a ration.

If Metril is with you, you restore one additional talent each day.

You can leave any items or money here, safe from the ill-chance of your adventures. Write whatever you wish to leave in the box below (or on a separate sheet), and then remove it from your inventory.

When you are done, you can [return to the Upper City \(turn to 119\)](#).

282.

You manage to avoid the animated trees for long enough to grab a few trifles from beneath the carpet of moss and fallen stones.

Roll once on the following table (or twice, if the previous paragraph instructed you to)

1. **1 gold**
2. A rusty **dagger** (one-handed weapon, -1)
3. A **lump of amber**
4. A mummified, severed, **rabbit's foot**
5. A **book (treasure, 30gp)**
6. Nothing

You decide to get out of here while you still can — [return to 221](#).

283.

Griffon Hall, the house of Merchant Ollivers, is a tottering edifice overlooking the Daymarket. Three floors of leaded windows, half-shuttered and dimly lit, suggest opulence, though the building is as close to ruin as much of the Old Town.

The main door opens onto the market, and is guarded by a footman in a velvet doublet and slashed hose. Circling the building, you spot a narrow lane, with windows on the floor above.

If you cast a *View* to scout the house, [turn to 139](#).

If you wish to approach the guard and ask to see Ollivers, [turn to 174](#). If you'd prefer to try and climb up to the back windows, [turn to 365](#). Alternatively, you can [come back in the day \(turn to 126\)](#).

284.

The second floor of the hall is in far worse shape than the first. Many of the rooms have collapsed entirely, just empty shells of walls without ceilings, and the balcony that runs around the vestibule is broken in many places. Here, again, the symbol of the raven in flight is repeated on the old stained wallpaper.

The south part of the building, closest to the city wall, is still intact, and here you find two closed doors, one [black \(turn to 120\)](#), one [white \(turn to 23\)](#). Stairs lead [down to the vestibule \(turn to 13\)](#).

If you have the *Occult* skill, [turn to 248](#).

285.

"Estus ... you know why they call him *the long eh*?" The drunken gladiator you are talking to gives you a laugh and a suggestive gesture.

"No no, it's because he fights with a spear and a net, you see. Holds you off, moves fast. Seen him take a heavy fighter *apart*! Best you fight him at his own range."

You thank the gladiator and [return to the Thumb \(turn to 136\)](#).

286.

You decide to hand Metril over to the Magi. A child locked in a wizard's tower for a hundred years is clearly their problem.

The girl clutches your hand fearfully as you make your way through the ruined city, saying nothing, but staring wide-eyed at the fallen buildings and shattered streets. After a little while you approach the gates to the upper city, where a masked Sentinel watches the crowd with a blank gaze.

Metril hides behind you as you approach the Sentinel, dragging at your hand. *I'm scared* she whispers.

If you want to change your mind, and look after metril yourself [turn to 382](#).

Otherwise, you approach the Sentinel and present it with the girl, explaining how you found her (and if you have the keyword *Tiny*, what she is). You hope for some reward, but the Sentinel merely takes her away without a word.

Restore 1 Talent, then [return to 225](#) and tick the box on line 7.

287.

If you have the keyword Triumph, [turn to 313](#) now.

If you have the keyword Terror, [turn to 150](#) now.

You track the marsh people to a damp and ill-aspected village deep in the fens. A vague drift of woodsmoke rises from house half-sunk into the earth, their rooves as green as the marsh is brown, and their walls cobbled together from old masonry and the planks of sunken ships.

In the middle of the village there appears to be some sort of large shrine, or structure, but you can't get a good look at it without coming closer.

You can:

- » [Sneak closer to the village \(turn to 153\)](#)
- » Charge in to [attack \(turn to 396\)](#)
- » [Announce your presence \(turn to 111\)](#)
- » If you can cast *View*, [turn to 340](#)
- » [Leave \(turn to 231\)](#)

288.

You decide that you can't leave Metril on the ceiling. You get her to climb onto the bed and reach down, while you reach up, which is just enough for you to get a hold of her hands. One yank, and she's on the floor (ceiling?) with you.

No sooner is she down than she runs up the stairs, calling out for her father. You hear her running up and down. After a little while she comes creeping back to you. She wraps her arms around you and whispers, *"I can't find Father anywhere, and everything's all broken. I'm scared. Maybe I should go back on the ceiling? What do you think?"*

- » If you want to put her back on the ceiling, [turn to 37](#)
- » If you want to leave her here and make your own way, [turn to 33](#)
- » If you want to take her to the magi, [turn to 286](#)
- » If you want to take her with you, [turn to 382](#)

289.

Gain the keyword Twice

"Malphas!" you gasp, recognising the cat-wizard who betrayed you over the Pellucar Orb.

"Malphas?" Velguan replies, "But he was exiled from the city! It's not possible."

Could he have returned? If so, you have your own scores to settle with him.

Velguan uses the rune to enchant a **glass compass**, which he hopes will lead you to the location of Malphas. You only have to pace the length of Velguan's house to realise that he must be somewhere within the city, perhaps even in the upper town!

"Find him," Velguan asks, "I dare not face him while he has the secret of magic deflection."

[Return to 119.](#)

290.

Rumours abound of ancient tunnels under the arena — abandoned parts of the sewers, perhaps, or bolt-holes from the war — but none of your fellow conspirators seem to know exactly where to look. You will need to surreptitiously scout the area to find them.

Test Stealth and Search (if you don't have Stealth and Search, *Test your Talent at -2*). If you have been in the arena before, as a guard, prisoner, or gladiator, you have +3 to these tests for your familiarity.

If you fail either test, you don't manage to locate anything. *Lose 1 Talent* and [turn to 328](#). Otherwise, read on.

The prisoners are let out of their cells during the day, mostly to help the guards with the most menial tasks — clearing the latrine pits, washing blood from the arena floor, or catering to the needs of the gladiators. On one of these trips out of the cells, you spot a small doorway in a store-room near to the prisoner's refectory, nearly invisible behind a pile of old barrels.

You let the others know, and quickly split off from your work detail. It's the work of mere moments to move the barrels, a little more to head down the passage beyond. The door leads to steps, and the steps to a water-filled tunnel that cuts beneath the nearby streets and emerges into the ruined south of the city.

Once you reach the surface, the party scatters, leaving you alone. You have only the

things you were carrying when you made your escape: **10 gold**, a **cudgel** (one-handed weapon with disadvantage), and a hunk of bread (counts as a **ration**). You may be able to get your stuff back from the arena later, but for now you are [lost in the ruins \(turn to 275\)](#).

291.

You are making your way back to the more settled parts of town, when you realise that you are not alone, another group is making its way through the ruins.

If you want to hide from them, *Test Stealth* (if you don't have Stealth, *Test your Talent at -2*). If you succeed, you can slip on to [225](#).

If you don't want to hide, or don't manage to do so, roll 1 dice to see who you encounter:

1-3. A guard patrol, [turn to 311](#)

4-6. Rival adventurers, [turn to 341](#)

292.



If there is a check in the box above, [turn to 160](#) now.

As you enter the courtyard, the people gathered around the small fire leap up in alarm. Close up, you can see that they are scared, and ill-equipped. Some are wearing the simple chitons of Krendish slaves. Only one, a heavily scarred man with one eye, seems to be armed. He wears the red of a Krendar slaver, but has torn off his badges of rank and allegiance.

Escaped slaves, and a rebel leader?

If you have the keyword *Truant*, you recognise Kollish, the Krendar runaway. If you wish to attack him, [turn to 241](#). If you have one of the keywords *Ties* or *Thwart*, then the slaves recognise you. Put a tick in the box above, and then [turn to 325](#).

Otherwise, you will need to persuade them you are not a danger. *Test Diplomacy* (if you don't have Diplomacy, *Test your Talent at -2*). If you have a **slave's chiton**, you may add +2. If you succeed, they will [cautiously welcome you \(turn to 402\)](#). Alternatively, if you have a hatred of escaped slaves, this would be the perfect opportunity to [attack them \(turn to 16\)](#).

293.

Test your Talent. If you succeed, you duck under Melba's meaty grasp, and [sprint up the stairs \(turn to 406\)](#).

If you fail, you find yourself in Melba's grasp, and she has the strength of a giant! Holding you in one hand she starts to beat you using her washing stick. *Fight 2 rounds at -2.* Space is too tight for the use of a shield, long weapon, or ranged weapon. If this leaves you without a weapon, fight at an additional -1.

If you survive the fight, you can [stagger out the door \(turn to 126\)](#), or [dash upstairs \(turn to 406\)](#).

294.

Gain the keyword *Target*

You draw your own weapons and rush into the fight, but it's dark and you are outnumbered. *Fight 3 rounds at -3* (shields count double). You have *Disadvantage* unless you can see in the dark or have some form of light (such as a **lantern**) that you can hold in one hand. If you have a long or ranged weapon, you gain a +2 bonus in the first round before they can properly close the distance with you.

If you lose the fight, [turn to 43](#), or — if you have the title **Pyemaker** — [turn to 263](#).

Otherwise, you prevail, killing one of the men and putting the others to flight. In their haste they drop their packs and weapons, and you can help yourself to a **dagger**, a **helmet** (counts as light armour), a long sausage (counts as a **ration**) and a half-filled wineskin — which you drink down on the spot.

You examine the dead man and the hole in the wall they seemed to be guarding. Beyond it, part of the city wall has collapsed, forming a route into the city. It seems they were waiting for someone, but there's no sign of anyone in the marshes beyond the wall. The dead man himself is hardly remarkable, except for a curious tattoo, a little like a closed eye, on the inside of his left wrist.

Unwilling to hang around, lest the others return, you hurry away. [Turn to 303](#) and tick the box on line 3.

295.

"Hello? Can you hear me?" You get down on your knees next to the trapdoor.

"Yes, *I can! Have you come to save me? I'm sort of stuck!*"

"Who are you?"

"*My name is Metril. My father lived in this tower. Then something happened. It got all shook up. It got very dark. I shouted for Father to let me out, but no one answered. It's been a long time.*"

You struggle to make sense of this. Can Metril have been stuck here since the war? That's more than a hundred years ago!

"*Can you let me out?*"

You decide that your only choices are to [open the trapdoor \(turn to 374\)](#), or [leave \(turn to 253\)](#).

296.

You enter the narrow shop only to find yourself surrounded by glass-fronted tanks of faintly luminous snails, in a variety of different colours. The shopkeeper, who is perched on a tall stool examining a snail under a powerful set of lenses, tells you that these creatures are of great value to potion makers, though the precise value varies with the colours.

odds

	buy	sell
ultraviolet snail	-	150gp
Of especial value to weather workers.		
green snail	-	70gp
A vital ingredient for talent potions.		
brown snail	-	20gp
Not of any great value, barely magical at all!		
blue snail	-	70gp
Greatly desired by spell-scribes.		
red snail	-	150gp
Where else do fireballs come from?		

When you are done here, you can [return to Spark Court \(turn to 58\)](#).

297.

You take the proclamation and a **herald's cap**, and find yourself on the street. The proclamation has a list of places to visit, and then a lengthy message proclaiming the many accomplishments of Thusar the magnificent. Unfortunately the message is composed entirely in the high tongue!

If you have the *Linguistics* skill, you can read the message fluently — [turn to 69](#).

If not, *Test your Talent at -2*. If you pass, [turn to 169](#), otherwise [turn to 242](#).

298.

With a mighty shoulder-charge, you manage to catapult Galabalus from the saddle, sending him sprawling in the sand. The mandragore screeches in rage and charges for the stalls, but you don't have time to try and catch it, because Galabalus is back on his feet in an instant, throwing aside his spear and drawing a sword and shield.

The fight follows the rules below:

- If you fight with a **two-handed weapon**, you can easily smash Galabalus' shield aside, and gain +1
- If you fight with a **net**, Galabalus can easily slash it apart, and you suffer -2

Now, *Fight 4 Rounds at -3* (plus any modifications from above). If you win, [turn to 237](#). If you lose, [turn to 366](#) instead.

299.

You get down on your hands and knees and do your best to get the dummy to imitate the casting of some sort of spell, crying out random magic words as you do so, while at the same time trying to stay out of sight.

Test Occult (if you don't have Occult, *Test your Talent at -2*). If you cast a spell while doing so (any spell will do), you can add +4. If you pass, [turn to 226](#), otherwise, *Lose 1 Talent*, and [return to 81](#) to try again.

300.

Gain the keyword Tell

"You want to know how the champion fights? Go buy a seat in the arena and watch, you'll learn fast enough!"

You gather that Galabalus is a master of all forms of combat — not terribly useful for planning your strategy.

"Psst. You want to know something that will help you?" A small, ratlike man, sidles up to you. "Take a walk down to the beast pens, why don't you."

"Why do you care?" you ask.

"Me? I just hate Galabalus, leave it at that." The man scurries away.

You thoughtfully [return to the Thumb \(turn to 136\)](#).

301.

Straying so close to the well-guarded gate when you are wanted by the mage's soldiers, is a bad idea. Your face is recognised, and the soldiers close in.

If you can cast *Teleport*, and use it to escape the noose, [turn to 50](#). Alternatively, if you can cast *Fly*, and do so, [turn to 400](#).

If you can't do either you can *Test Diplomacy at -4* (if you don't have Diplomacy, *Test your Talent* at -6). You can sweeten your persuasion with the addition of cash — add +1 to your check for every **50 gold** you hand out. If you pass the test [turn to 108](#).

Your final chance is simply to turn and run. *Test Climbing at -4* (if you don't have Climbing, *Test your Talent* at -6).

If all these things fail, you are quickly overpowered and sent once more [to the arena \(turn to 395\)](#).

"So, do you have it?" Velguan asks at once, when you return.

If you don't have the **charged rune** for him, he [sends you away at once \(turn to 119\)](#).

If you do have it, Velguan takes it with a cry of elation (remove it from your inventory).

"At last! I will know my foe and have my revenge upon him."

He throws open a door and vanishes into a sorcerous workroom, apparently not caring if you follow. Here, he places the rune into a deep copper dish placed on a plinth, and incinerates it, releasing a cloud of luminous purple smoke which forms the shape of a face, glowering down at the wizard.

The face is wearing a mask, of course, in this case a cat's face, fringed with bells. If you have any of the titles: **Catnapped**, **Krakenouched**, **Treysham Envoy**, **Orbfinder**, or **Cat-catcher**, [turn to 289](#).

Otherwise, Velguan doesn't comment on the face — other than to glower at it murderously — but he does express his thanks by handing you a carved **orichalcum seal** that he assures you has great value, though you aren't convinced. Nevertheless, you *Gain 1 Experience Point*, and may *Restore 2 Talent*.

You decide to [leave him to his brooding \(turn to 119\)](#).

303.

You have ventured into the ruins of Treysham at night. An uneasy hush lies over the tangles of ruined buildings, broken only by the croaking of frogs, and the rustle of unseen animals moving through the bushes.

The ruins are dangerous at night, home to wild beasts and cut-throats sneaking in from the marshes, not to mention the dangers of Treysham's own people.

If you wish to explore the empty ruins, you will need a **lantern** or some other way to see in the dark. *Test Search* (if you don't have Search, *Test your Talent at -2*). On a success, you may pick an entry from the list below, otherwise you must roll 1d6 to see which result you get. If the entry has a checkbox beside it, and that box is checked, you have already done this encounter, and have wasted your time — *Lose 1 Talent*. Otherwise, turn to the indicated section.

When you are done here you can [return to the inhabited city \(turn to 95\)](#).

1. [Frog Pond \(turn to 53\)](#)
2. ☐ [Ruined street \(turn to 307\)](#)
3. ☐ [Clandestine meetings \(turn to 73\)](#)
4. ☐ [A lone tower \(turn to 77\)](#)
5. ☐ [Flickering fires \(turn to 19\)](#)
6. ☐ [Lost \(turn to 128\)](#)
- ☐ [Mysterious Glow \(turn to 187\)](#)

304.

This must be one of the Krendar slave-taking gangs that the slave you freed told you about! You have no desire to be taken as a slave yourself. *Restore 1 Talent* and hurry away to [309](#).

305.

You descend the tower, leaving the daylight behind. This is as far as you can go without some source of light — the little sliver of light shining down the stairwell runs out here.

In the gloom, you make out what appears to be a bedroom, only the four-poster bed and clothing chest are on the ceiling. There's nothing there to hold them up, but they also aren't falling. Even the bedclothes — rumpled and thick with dust — are neatly tucked in as if ignoring gravity entirely.

As you stand on the floor (or should that be the ceiling?), considering this, a rather plaintive voice seems to come from somewhere lower (higher?) in the tower.

"Hello? Is someone down there? Can you hear me? I need ... um ... a little help?"

You can hurry up (down?) the steps and [out of the tower \(turn to 291\)](#) or [go deeper \(turn to 253\)](#) (if you have a **lantern** or other source of light).

306.

Not for you the dangers of combat, or the boredom of guard duty. There are fortunes to be made betting on the results of the arena battles, and you would like a bit of this action.

If you have the keyword *Talent*, [turn to 194](#).

You walk a circle around the arena's outer precinct, and quickly come across people laying bets on the next matches. It seems pretty low-rate to you, no doubt the more prestigious gamblers meet somewhere else, but this is all you have access too.

If you want to make a bet, stake **10, 20 or 30 gold**, and then roll two dice on the following table:

- 2.** Disaster! Your fighters died. You lose everything you bet.
- 3-5.** You bet badly. You get back half your stake (5/10/15 gold).
- 6-8.** You make a small loss. You get back your stake minus 2 gold
- 9-11.** You get a small win, and get back your stake and a half (15/30/45 gold).
- 12.** Big win! You get back twice times you stake!

You can only bet three times before you must leave. You can bet again after the next time you take a *Rest*.

When you are done here, you [return to the arena \(turn to 218\)](#).

307.

Gain the keyword *Tribe*

You are creeping along a narrow street, choked with rubble and plants, when you hear the sudden noise of running footsteps behind you, too late to do anything but hastily draw a weapon and leap to your own defence.

Three men come sprinting towards you, their faces smeared with mud and painted with woad. You just have time to see that their teeth have been filed to cannibal points, before they are on you.

Fight 2 rounds at -2 (shields count double) against these marsh murderers. If you cast a *Fireball*, you win the fight automatically as they flee your display of magic. If you lose, [turn to 227](#).

If you win, the attackers flee, leaving one of their number dead. Quickly examining the body of this marsh man you uncover **5 gold**, a smoked eel (counts as a **ration**), and a crude **handaxe** (one-handed weapon).

If you have the keyword *Tune* [turn to 249](#) now. Otherwise, [turn to 303](#) and tick the box on line 2.

308.

Gain the keyword *Traitor*

Disaster! You run into a patrol of your fellow guards led by Ekhar himself! There's no way out. You are exposed as the traitor you are — lose **1 Status**.

If you can cast *Teleport* or *Invisibility*, you can escape to [218](#), otherwise you are captured and beaten — *Set your Vitality to 1* and *Lose 1 Talent*.

If you are captured, Ekhar takes great satisfaction in throwing you into the cell next to Anaxes'. "Now you get to die to please the magi," he snarls, "and me."

[Turn to 395](#).

309.

At night, the daymarket booths close their doors, but the streets of the low town are still crowded with canny-cutters and edge-dwellers making merry in the inns and taverns. Members of the night-watch, guard recruits in padded jacks, stand around in small groups, watching the crowd, but they only get involved when things get unusually violent.



If this box is not checked, roll 1 dice. On a 6, check the box and [turn to 80](#).

There are plenty of merchants living in the Outer City too, their new-built townhouses rubbing shoulders with the poorer buildings, but these are locked up and guarded. If you have the keyword *Turncoat*, and have not been to the house of the merchant Ollivers, [turn to 283](#).

On the corner of Shade and Wand streets, a man in a leather rat-mask holds a guttering flambeaux over a hole in the ground. If you want to ask him about rat catching duty, [turn to 280](#).

If you have the keyword *Talent*, and want to find the Serpent's Eye tavern, [turn to 167](#).

- » To look for a gambling den, [turn to 344](#)
- » To return to the city centre, [turn to 95](#)
- » To hang around until morning, [turn to 22](#)

310.

You come across a wall where the face of a fox has been scribed into the stone. If you have the keyword *Treasure* you recognise this — [turn to 144](#).

Otherwise, the ruined building behind seems to have little to offer but a patch of odd-looking flowers. If you have *Naturalist*, [turn to 59](#), now.

When you are done here, [return to 225](#).

3II.

You find yourself face to face with a patrol of city guardsmen. Luckily for you, they are low city sentries, not the masked Sentinels of the upper city, who might be more keen to uphold the mage's law forbidding entry to the ruins.

If you have a **Status** of 3 or more, the guards respectfully let you pass without comment — they know not to menace their superiors.

If you don't, they shake you down, demanding a **10 gold** "fee" to let you pass without trouble. If you can't pay, or won't pay, *Test Diplomacy* (if you don't have Diplomacy, *Test your Talent at -2*) to get them to let you pass. If you fail, they decide to arrest you after all, and cart you off [to the arena \(turn to 395\)](#).

Assuming you find your way past them, you can [return to the city centre \(turn to 95\)](#).

3I2.

Gain the keyword *Traffic*

"I'm Tam," says the thief with the brand, as he leads you over to the fire. "And those are Gyra, Thom, and Fingers. Boss has got us waiting here for a shipment that's supposed to be coming over the wall, but we've not seen head nor hair of them."

Tam takes a place by the fire and passes you a flagon of wine. You gather that they are here to smuggle dreamweed into the city, but their contact hasn't showed.

It's not been long, when Thom leaps to his feet. "Someone's coming." Once again the smugglers draw their weapons, only this time you join them, as a figure comes into view from *outside* the walls.

Luckily, the newcomer is known to your friends. Dirty and damp, he joins you at the fire and explains that the channel they were using to bring their cargo up to the walls has dried up or changed. Their boat got stuck, and there's no way they can get the cargo here. Everyone has been wasting their time.

"Well that's a bugger," Tam says. "We're going to have to bring it in by the docks after all."

"You want to help out?" Thom asks you. "Be at the old docks at dusk, out where the abandoned watchtower is. We'll need help getting the stuff into town."

Restore 1 Talent for the wine, and [return to 303](#), ticking the box on line 3.

313.

The dirty inhabitants of the villager are very glad to see you. The killer of Tsuga is welcome here any time.

The priest offers you the hospitality of his fire. You may *Rest*, and *Restore 2 Talent*. If you eat a **ration** you may also *Heal 1 Vitality*.

When you are done here you [return to the fens \(turn to 231\)](#).

314.

A few days into your second week, a riot breaks out inside the prison under the arena. A gang of prisoners manage to overpower the guards bringing their food and liberate weapons from the gladiators' armoury. At least thirty of them storm the passages leading to the arena's main corridor.

You can:

- » [Retreat to the outer gates \(turn to 348\)](#)
- » [Wade into combat on the front line \(turn to 202\)](#)
- » [Try to stay out of the way \(turn to 162\)](#)

315.

You have been slain! If you have a resurrection available, then follow the instructions you have noted (if you purchased a resurrection in the temple district, [turn to X](#) now). If your resurrection leaves you alive in this section then [turn to 95](#) now. Otherwise, your adventure ends here.

316.

You gain access to a spellforge in the third of the three towers, the Tower of Calculations. It sits at the base of a shaft of air and fire, lit by hovering violet spheres.

Here you may commit a spell to memory by forging its mystic pathways into your brain with fire and pain.

Spell Forging

To forge a spell, you must first have a copy on a scroll. Then, reduce your *Talent* permanently by one, and destroy the scroll. Roll 2d6. If the result is 11 or 12, you fail to forge the spell.

If the result is 10 or less, you succeed in forging the spell. You may now cast it at any time, without an item, by rolling a 6 or less on 2d6. *Gain 1 Insanity* — if your Insanity ever exceeds your Talent, you go irrevocably mad and must stop playing.

You can also improve a previously forged spell here. Roll 2d6. If the result is greater than the casting roll for that spell, you may *Gain 1 Insanity* and raise the casting roll by 1.

When casting a forged spell you have the following options if the casting roll fails:

- Cast the spell anyway, and *Gain 1 Insanity*
- Allow the spell to fail

When you are done with your unwise tampering, you [leave \(turn to 235\)](#).

317.

Is your net made of metal? If so, you have a **captive flame finch**, a magical bird that can turn into flame! Luckily, it cannot melt your metal net. You can keep the finch until you find a buyer for it, treat it as a lamp, or use it like a *Fireball* spell that does not require a casting roll.

If your net is *not* made of metal, it goes up in flames (remove it from your inventory), and nearly takes you with it! *Test your Talent* or *Take 1 Wound. If this reduces you to 0 Vitality, [turn to 79](#) now.

Otherwise you decide to get out while the going is good. [Return to 225](#) and tick the box on line 3.

318.

You try to sneak your way through the gate without being seen, but the magical swan has supernatural eyes. As you slip through the crowd it turns its silver head in your direction and lets out a honk of alarm. Within seconds, the sentinels are after you.

Test Climbing (if you don't have Climbing, *Test your Talent at -2*). If you succeed, you manage to flee to [95](#). Otherwise, you are captured by the sentinels, their eye-marked masks nullifying any petty magic you might try to use to save yourself.

If your **Status** is 2 or more, you lose one Status, but the sentinels don't levy any truly punitive punishment on a reasonably well-respected citizen. If your **Status** is less than 2, however, they treat you like the criminal you are. Your Status is reduced to 0, and you are [dragged to the arena \(turn to 395\)](#).

319.

You call on Tinzagus to see how Metril is doing.

The rotund mage doesn't move from his seat, though his bulbous eyes do pulse before he replies. "She's been doing very well. Your little discovery has been a great help around here."

He's hardly finished speaking when Metril appears from the back room, carrying a box of magical items. When she sees you, she drops the box, runs over, and hugs you.

"I'm so glad to see you," she gushes. "There's no spiders here, and everything stays on the floor, it's great! Thanks for finding me a job, I'm learning a lot! Did you find my father?"

You have to tell her that you did not, but she doesn't seem too upset.

You decide to take Metril out to the daymarket, and buy her some new clothes, and something to eat, while she tells you all about the various things she has been learning at Tinzagus' side.

Roll 1d3. If the result is greater than your *Occult* skill, *Gain +1 Occult Skill*. You may make this check only once, regardless of how often you visit Metril.

When you are done, you escort her back to the shop and [take your leave \(turn to 95\)](#).

320.

You slip close to a group of well-dressed servants, likely the household of a ranking wizard preparing for their master's arrival. One has a **mark of entry** casually tucked into a side pocket.

Test Larceny (if you don't have Larceny, *Test your Talent at -2*). If you pass, you deftly lift the letter from his pocket. and use it to pass through the gate to [119](#). If you fail, [turn to 143](#).

321.



If the box above is ticked, you have already bypassed these wards, [turn to 276](#) now.

You examine the wards, and realise that they are a particularly deadly form of magic. Triggering them would surely kill you instantly!

Luckily, they are also old, and so, degraded. By carefully chipping away at the tarry paint with which they were applied, you can disarm them. If you have a **dagger** or a **chisel** you can do this automatically. Otherwise *Test your Talent*, and if you fail *Take 1 Wound*. If this reduces you to 0 Vitality, [energy leaps from the wards to strike you \(turn to 191\)](#) .

If you succeed, tick the box above and [turn to 276](#). Alternatively, you can [leave the hall \(turn to 291\)](#).

322.

You agree to help Anaxes with his escape, and he slips you the vial of potion that he has managed to produce while in his cell — you don't ask how.

The first part of the plan goes well. You slip the drug into the wine of the guards on sentry duty, and they quickly pass out. You check that they aren't actually dead and pocket the last of the drug to use on yourself later, before opening the door to Anaxes' cell to let him and his companions out.

Now you just have to get them all the way through the tunnels to the rear gate. *Test Stealth* (if you don't have Stealth, *Test your Talent at -2*). If you pass [turn to 232](#), otherwise [turn to 308](#).

323.

You find yourself in a dimly lit passageway that runs the length of the house along the back wall. Three windows line one wall, while the other has two closed doors, both identical. Two staircases vanish into the darkness at the ends of the passage, one up and one down.

Stealth is of the utmost importance now. *Test Stealth at +1* (if you don't have Stealth, *Test your Talent* at +3). If you fail, you raise the alarm. Voices cry out, and there is nothing for it but to escape the way you came. *Lose 1 Talent* and [turn to 95](#).

If you pass:

- To enter the left-hand room, [turn to 71](#)
- To enter the right-hand room, [turn to 372](#)
- To go upstairs, [turn to 254](#)
- To go downstairs, [turn to 20](#)

324.

When you enter this level of the tower you are confused by a strange structure rising from the floor (your floor, that is), like a wheel supported by rigid chains, and adorned with white teeth. It takes you a few moments to realise that it is a chandelier full of **candles**.

Looking up, you see what appears to be a study, with dusty books stacked on the floor. A lectern hangs down over your head, with the tip of a quill reaching low enough to tickle the top of your head. Heavy hanks of cobwebs hang off the ceiling, apparently bound by your gravity, rather than whatever holds the furniture up.

When you take a look at the next flight of steps, you are surprised to see that a trapdoor covers them, though the locking bar is easily accessible on your side. Someone apparently wanted to seal something up on the other side.

"Hey!" The voice is louder, like it's on the other side of the trapdoor. "*Look out for the spiders!*"

You spin around to see a number of giant white spiders descending towards you on the end of trailing silk-lines. They whip towards you, casting sticky lassoes. *Fight 2 rounds at -3*. If you lose, [turn to 64](#).

If you win, you can [head for the surface \(turn to 253\)](#), [open the trapdoor \(turn to 374\)](#), or try to [talk through the door \(turn to 295\)](#).

325.

"Wait, I know you!" one of the slaves says, stepping forward and raising a little lamp to get a better view of your face. She turns to the others and says, "This one is a friend to all of us, and an enemy of the Krendar!"

To your surprise, they come forward one by one to embrace you, leaving you blushing and stammering.

"You are always welcome here," says the woman who spoke first, "though I hope we will find some way back to our own homes eventually. In the meantime, you have our hospitality, for whatever that is worth."

[Turn to 160.](#)

326.

You enter the hut of the marsh-murderer priest, a gloomy roundhouse, whose peaked roof is hung so thickly with occult signs woven from reeds and grass that it resembles the root system of a levitated forest.

The priest regards you nervously, but doesn't immediately try to kill or eat you, which is a good start.

"Your people come into the city to kill and eat us!" you say. "It has to stop."

The priest shakes his bone-studded head sadly. "We have no choice, Tusga the Frog God demands sacrifices. If we do not bring fresh bodies, he will devour us."

"Tsuga ?"

The priest takes you to the door and points at the massive iron cauldron in the middle of the village, only now you see that it isn't actually a cauldron, but a bloated metal frog, whose gaping mouth you mistook for a cookpot. Baleful metal eyes glare at the villagers, urging them to bring yet more sacrifices to fill its belly. You realise that the villagers are starving, the frog eats all.

You can [leave the villagers to their fate \(turn to 231\)](#), or [face Tsuga to save them \(turn to 387\)](#).

327.

You decide to scramble down to the bottom of the crater. It's a long way, with poor footing, and a variety of thorny bushes to make it even worse.

Test Climbing (if you don't have Climbing, *Test your Talent at -2*). If you fail, you *Lose 1 Talent* as you twist an ankle, and are scratched with thorns.

At the bottom, the grey water turns out to be a shallow pool, no more than a foot deep, populated only by tadpoles and slime. Down here, the noises of the city are muted, and the air is hot and still, even though the sun is low. The towers of the magi, just visible high above, look impossibly distant.

As you thought, there appear to be low, rough, entrances into tunnels, or underground chambers here. You can [enter them \(turn to 342\)](#), [wait for night \(turn to 156\)](#), or [clamber back out again \(turn to 149\)](#).

328.

The time to fight in the arena has come. You are ushered out of your cell amongst a mass of other prisoners, and thrust into the bright sun and roaring noise of the arena. The steep ranks of seats on every side are filled with cheering, and jeering, spectators. At the far end of the arena's circle, the pavilion of the magi flickers under a wash of spells.

The doors close behind you with a terrible *slam*. Moments later, a platform rumbles up from below, revealing a terrible beast resembling an enormous crocodile with centipede legs and an upraised sting! The prisoners panic as the beast charges forwards ...

To survive the battle you must *Fight 6 Rounds*

If you have the title **Arena Trusty**, Ekhar has ensured that you are armed with **light armour**, and a **one-handed weapon**. If not, you have been thrust into the arena with nothing but your bare hands, and must fight at -1.

Before any round, you may do one of the following:

- Attempt to scavenge for a weapon. *Test Search* (if you don't have Search, *Test your Talent at -2*). If you have the title **Gladiator** you get +4 on this test — you know where to look. If you pass, you arm yourself with a **one-handed weapon**. If you fail, *Lose 1 Talent*.
- Cry out to the crowd for support. *Test Diplomacy* (if you don't have Diplomacy, *Test your Talent at -2*). If you have the title **Gladiator** you get +4 on this test — you have fans in the crowd. If you pass, you gain *advantage* for the fight. If you fail, *Lose 1 Talent*.
- Look for a weak point in the beast. *Test Naturalist* (if you don't have Naturalist, *Test your Talent at -2*). If you pass, you gain +2 for the rest of the fight. If you fail, *Lose 1 Talent*.

If you make it through the battle, [turn to 329](#), otherwise [turn to 35](#).

329.

Men run screaming and weeping. Others attack the beast with rocks, pieces of wood, or even their bare hands, and are cut down, snapped in half, or pierced through the heart by the poison sting — to the cheering and baying of the crowds.

You don't want to join them, so you play it careful, avoiding the danger where you can, only dashing in to strike when there is no danger to yourself. Soon the numbers of prisoners have been whittled down, but the beast has taken countless wounds. You see that it is limping now with a number of its legs, and looks to be half-blind in one eye.

When the remaining prisoners rush the beast, you dart around to its blind side and stab your makeshift weapon into the creature's blind eye. It gives a roar of agony, snapping desperately at you with its massive jaws, but you hold on to its whipping head before it finally collapses onto the sand.

You have won!

You and the other survivors limp out of the arena to deafening cheers, though whether they are for your victory or just the amount of blood spilt, you aren't sure.

Gain 1 Experience Point for your victory, and then walk free to [95](#).

330.

You make your way through the old main doors of the ruin, which are still upstanding. Inside, the ceiling and internal walls are long gone, leaving behind a large open courtyard ringed with rubble. At the far side, a small fire flickers, illuminating a gap in the building's back wall, and the faces of three or four men.

They spot you at once, and draw a brace of daggers and shortswords. It's not the most friendly of welcomes.

If you:

- » Rush in to attack, [turn to 294](#)
- » Raise your hands and negotiate, [turn to 353](#)

Alternatively, if you have second thoughts, you can cast *Flight* or *Teleport* to escape the situation, in which case [turn to 303](#) and tick the box on line 3.

331.

The revolt is brutally put down, and its ringleaders are sent out to face a pack of gigantic crabs, armed only with blunt daggers. Overseer Ekhar is impressed with your fighting spirit. You gain the title **Arena Trusty**, and Ekhar tells you that you'd be welcome to apply as a gladiator after this.

You join your fellows in a feast to celebrate your victory. You may *Rest*, *Restore 3 Talent*, *Heal 1 Vitality*, and *Repair your Armour* at the arena's forges.

When your time is done, you collect the agreed **40 gold** before gladly handing over your post to the your replacement and returning to a life above ground. [Turn to 95](#).

332.

Gain the keyword *Transform*.

You unwrap the **diomedian mirror** and hand it over (remove it from your inventory), feeling lighter at once. Any takes it with trembling hands and gazes into it, letting out a quivering breath. *At last ...*

As you watch, a light seems to pass from the mirror to the woman. At once, her grey hair turns brown, and the wrinkles race away from her face. In moments she becomes young again. You catch a flash of a commanding face, before she produces a fox mask from beneath her robes and places it over her face.

"I thank you," she says, her voice now strong and young behind the mask. "You have restored that which I lost, and you have my gratitude. Come to the Upper Town and seek me out, and I will reward you."

She leaves you there, quite confused. [Return to 95](#).

333•

You enter the tower of the Voice, and ride the magical platform to the high chamber where the Voice looks out over the city. As you enter his chamber, a pair of diminutive magi, wearing identical frog-head masks, scurry past you, neither much taller than your waist.

"Is it not a fine day?" the Voice asks as you enter, not turning away from the window where he stands. "The city scurries and pulses, so much life since the screens were lowered. It reminds me of the days before the war."

"Now, why have you come to trouble me?"

You have to admit that there was no specific reason, realising that it is only your status that prevents the Voice from blasting you with his magic.

"I'll withdraw," you tell him, and [hurry away \(turn to 235\)](#).

334•



Gain the title **Gladiator**

The gladiators of Treysham make their home in the labyrinth of chambers beneath the [arena \(turn to 218\)](#), on the opposite side from the stinking pens of condemned prisoners and the cages where monsters are kept. Here there are facilities to train, and rest from injuries, though they are not free.

If you wish to *Rest* here, pay **20 gold**, then *Restore 3 Talent*, *Heal 3 Vitality*, and *Repair your Armour*.

If you don't want to fight right now, you can:

- [Get your weapons sharpened \(turn to 74\)](#)
- [Look for gossip from other gladiators \(turn to 136\)](#)
- If you have the keyword *Tell*, you can [visit the beast pens \(turn to 407\)](#)

When you are ready to fight, choose which weapons you will use. You can enter the arena with only three main items, which must be from the following list: **armour**, **weapons**, a **net**, a **whip**, or a **shield**. You may also carry any potions, but no spells, or other items.

Once you have chosen your fighting load, look at the checkboxes at the top of the page:

- If no boxes are ticked, you must fight [Estus the Long \(turn to 378\)](#)
- If one box is ticked, you must fight [Penalla \(turn to 370\)](#)
- If two boxes are ticked, you must fight [Gormok the Brute \(turn to 229\)](#)
- If all three boxes are ticked, you face [Galabalus the Champion \(turn to 173\)](#)

335.

You recognise these trees as some kind of *Spellwood*, plants twisted and mutated by exposure to magic. Such plants are often animate carnivores, feeding on the rotting corpses of animals that they kill with their throttling tendrils and poisonous pollen. Going any deeper into these ruins is going to be risky.

[Return to 347.](#)

336.

The priests of Mord are drawn to the sound of your fight. When you explain that the spirit was stealing the offerings they are grateful that you dealt with it, but sorrowful that the crated was destroyed rather than laid to rest back in the crypt.

Nevertheless they honour their bargain. They give you a **blessing of immunity**. The next time you would suffer the effects of poison or disease, you may discard the blessing to ignore that effect.

Gain the keyword *Tomb* and [return to the heart of the city \(turn to 95\)](#).

337.

Test your Talent. If you pass, you manage to grab a **flame finch egg** before the enraged parents burst into flame — yes, burst into flame — and attack you! If you passed the climbing test before coming up here, you manage to drop down quickly enough to avoid the attack, and [scarper \(turn to 291\)](#).

Test your Talent. If you fail you *Take 1 Wound, ignoring armour!* In addition, if you have any armour, its protection is reduced to zero as it is scorched by the birds. If you are reduced to 0 Vitality, [turn to 79](#). If not, you manage to flee from the birds! [Return to 225](#) and tick the box on line 3.

338.

"Oh that's perfect!"

Pendar takes the items from you (remove them from your inventory) and does something incomprehensible with them, which you can't really see because of his beard. You hear him mutter something like *Now I'll show Thusar who he's dealing with!* But you aren't sure you heard him right.

After a while, Pendar says, "Are you still here? Oh, you probably want a reward, don't you. Well I have just the thing."

One meaty hand appears from out of the shaggy mass of hair, and hands you a small bottle. If you drink this **stabilising elixir** you can reduce your *Insanity* by 1.

You decide to [leave pendar to his work \(turn to 235\)](#).

339.

The escaped slaves treat you as you deserve to be treated — they kill you, loot your belongings, and stash your corpse in the ruins where no one will find it.

You have been slain! If you have a resurrection available, then follow the instructions you have noted (if you purchased a resurrection in the temple district, [turn to X](#) now). If your resurrection leaves you alive in this section then [turn to 95](#) now. Otherwise, your adventure ends here.

YOU ARE DEAD

34⁰.

You concentrate on the mystical view of the village, zooming over the moss-thick rooftops. You can see a few filthy people scurrying around; looking at their muddy bodies and matted hair, you are glad you can't also *smell* them.

At the heart of the village is what appears to be a massive cookpot, at least ten foot across. Steam rises from it, making it difficult to see it clearly, but you have a bad feeling about it, an oppressive air of occult malice. Some of the villagers are feeding the fire with wood, you think.

On the other side of the cookpot, a circular hut appears to be home to a priest or sorcerer. It is hung about with twists of marsh grass woven into crosses, triangles, and hands. You catch a glimpse of the priest, a man with a mass of shaggy braided hair.

You can [sneak to the priest's cottage \(turn to 326\)](#), or [choose another course \(turn to 287\)](#).

34^I.

It seems you aren't alone out here, others have ventured into the ruins in search of treasure, illegal or not.

Luckily for you, there's enough ruins to search, and enough dangers to find, that you aren't in direct competition. Rather than fight, they just want to exchange news of the things they've found. You are guarded about your own secrets, but let slip a few hints of dangers to be avoided. *Restore 1 Talent*.

You bid them farewell and [return to the city proper \(turn to 95\)](#).

342.

You stoop to enter the low tunnels. They are pitch black, and the stench of burnt oil is ever stronger here. Unless you have a **lantern** or other source of light, you must [back out \(turn to 327\)](#) and choose another option.

You enter the tunnels cautiously. They are slick with standing water, faintly luminous in the darkness. You thought that they were no more than shallow passages, but they wind and knot beneath the rubble, forming a labyrinth that you slowly traverse. Suddenly, from out of the shadows, a monster stalks — a beast of clockwork sorcery somewhat resembling a lizard, but with a long snout bristling with metal teeth.

Fight 2 rounds at -2 In the narrow confines of the tunnel, you have *Disadvantage*, and cannot use a **long**, **ranged** or **two-handed** weapon. On the other hand, a **shield** counts *triple*.

If you lose the fight, [turn to 86](#). Otherwise, you realise that you have to get out of here before more of the creatures discover you! *Test Tracking* (if you don't have Tracking, *Test your Talent at -2*) to find your way out in time. If you pass, [turn to 87](#).

Otherwise, the creatures harry you through the tunnels. You manage to stay just ahead of them, but they are on your trail! Finally, you stumble out of a filthy tunnel, only to realise that night has fallen and you are still in the pit!

[Turn to 358](#).

343.

Officially, the Krendar wouldn't bring slaves to Treysham, where the rulers prefer to send their criminals to the arena. Unofficially, they quickly assemble a choice of slaves for you to buy, for **50 gold** each.

If you buy a slave, he or she will accompany you on your adventures, and provide a +1 in combat. Optionally, when you suffer a Wound, you can have the slave die instead.

When you are done, [turn to 245](#).

There are plenty of gambling dens doing late night business in the lanes and ruins of Treysam, though the stakes are as low as the fortunes of the patrons.

You get yourself a spot in a game of Topple the Tower with a bunch of greasy fishermen, up from the delta to spend their coin in the low city's taverns. They are playing mostly for silver pennies, but have some money to spare.

The fisherman with the largest beard deals from a deck of dogeared cards, it's time to place your bet.

Choose a stake of **2, 4, or 6 gold**, then decide if you want to cheat.

Now, *Test Diplomacy* (if you don't have Diplomacy, *Test your Talent at -2*) to read your opponents, and *Test Larceny* (if you don't have Larceny, *Test your Talent at -2*) to stack your cards. If you decided to cheat, also *Test Stealth* (if you don't have Stealth, *Test your Talent at -2*).

If you succeeded on at least two rolls, you get back your stake and a half (i.e. 3, 6, or 9 gold). If you succeed on all three rolls, you get triple your stake. If you succeed on one or fewer rolls, you lose your stake, and, if you cheated, you also *Lose 1 Talent* to your opponent's suspicion.

After each round, you may choose to play again, or stop. Once you've won a total of 50 gold here, you've cleaned out the gamblers, and you can't gamble here again until you take a *Rest* somewhere.

If you win five rounds in a row, and don't have the keyword *Talent*, [turn to 109](#) now.

When you are done, [return to 309](#).

345.

Gain the keyword *Travail*

A sudden commotion announces the arrival of a floating golden carriage that passes through the crowds without wheels or horses to pull it. The prow of the carriage curves up into a flamboyant stallion's head, behind which a hooded coachman is just visible.

To your surprise, and some alarm, the carriage draws to a stop in front of you and the door opens, revealing a wizard dressed in red. He has a fox's face for a mask, with gold-chased rims to its vulpine eyes.

"You!" the wizard says. "You look like you could handle yourself in a fight. I am the wizard Velguan, and I need a bodyguard for the night. Fifty gold pieces will be yours if you agree. What do you say?"

It sounds like good money for what will likely be very little work, which probably means that there is some sort of catch. If you want to accept the job, [turn to 368](#), otherwise you can stammer out a refusal and [return to 22](#).

346.

You follow the Avenue of Dragons through the [upper town \(turn to 119\)](#) to the Wizard's Gate, at the heart of the city. This gate is the grandest of all, twenty feet high, and crowned with the flaming violet sigil of an open eye.

The same violet eye symbol is repeated on the blank-faced masks worn by the sentinels, the elite guard of the high city. It is said that the sentinels can *smell* magic, and inhibit it by their very presence. Even wilder rumours whisper that the sentinels are nothing but cadavers, the corpses of failed wizards reanimated by magic.

Beyond the gate is the High Tower, actually three towers of gold that rise so close to one another that they merge together. This is the fastness of the magi of Treysham, the place where they waited out the war and its long years of aftermath in the splendid isolation of their magical shields. No one knows how they survived five generations in this sealed innermost city — when the shields were finally released, they did not speak of it.

Entry to the High Tower is almost impossible. Even those who have business with the mages usually meet only the Voice, a singular magi elected to speak for the others.

If you have the title **Famulus**, or a **Status** of 9 or more, the sentinels will let you [enter \(turn to 235\)](#).

347.

You pick your way through the hanging roots and twining boughs of the twisted trees, creeping your way into one of the shattered houses. The walls soar up many stories above your head, but the floors have been caved in by the spiralling trunks of trees.

Long trailing stems, heavy with blossoms, dangle down the centre of the empty shaft. They rustle and shift as you move past them, turning their flowers towards you. Further up, you see ledges covered with all sorts of herbs and plants, thriving in the damp shade of the ruins.

If you have the *Naturalist* skill, you may *Test Naturalist*. If you pass, [turn to 335](#).

You can:

- » [Retreat now \(turn to 221\)](#)
- » [Attack the trees \(turn to 6\)](#)
- » [Look for treasure on the ground floor \(turn to 246\)](#)
- » [Climb up to try and reach the herbs \(turn to 67\)](#)

348.

You rush to the usually well-defended gates, only to discover that the escaping prisoners have outflanked your fellow guards and are in the process of breaking out! You must *Fight 3 Rounds at -3*. Shields count double, but the space is too cramped to use a two-handed, long, or ranged weapon.

If you hold them off for three rounds, reinforcements arrive and contain the revolt — [turn to 331](#). Otherwise the prisoners crush you underfoot. You have been slain! If you have a resurrection available, then follow the instructions you have noted (if you purchased a resurrection in the temple district, [turn to X](#) now). If your resurrection leaves you alive in this section then [turn to 95](#) now. Otherwise, your adventure ends here.

YOU ARE DEAD

349.

Your spell gifts you a spectral view of the ruins where each moving thing is rendered in shades of green and red. You are being stalked by a gigantic hound that slips through the broken doorways and rubble around you.

Using your magical vision, you can easily [avoid the creature \(turn to 303\)](#), or stage an ambush. If you wish to attack it, *Fight 2 Rounds* with *Advantage*. If you win, you can take a **hound's tooth** from the corpse. If you lose, [turn to 84](#).

350.

You intone the words of the flight spell and soar up the empty shaft of the tower, to where the metal bird is looping and turning, as it searches for a way out. When you reach the same level, the bird starts circling you, letting out what sounds like a joyful metallic song. You are even able to reach out and brush one of its wings, the metal feathers are surprisingly soft.

When the magic fades and you descend, the bird [comes with you \(turn to 401\)](#).

351.

The marsh murderers beat you down, and drag you to their cookpot.

Now that you can see it more clearly, you realise that the *pot* is some sort of unholy metal creature, resembling an enormously fat iron frog. The cauldron is actually the creature's open mouth. You realise — far too late — that the wretched marsh men are slaves to the frog demon.

It's not much of a comfort, when they throw you in.

You have been slain! If you have a resurrection available, then follow the instructions you have noted (if you purchased a resurrection in the temple district, [turn to X](#) now). If your resurrection leaves you alive in this section then [turn to 95](#) now. Otherwise, your adventure ends here.

YOU ARE DEAD

352.

The cryptkeeper silently hands you a lantern made from a human skull, and leaves you alone to descend into the crypts, which wind beneath the temple and its neighbours.

Endless passages twist away into the darkness, curled upon themselves like the shells of snails. Their walls are lined with niches, some containing coffins, some bones, some jars of ashes, reflecting the burial fashions of lost ages. The priests of Mord have labelled each niche with painstakingly hand-written notes, though the style of the notes also change with the years, from stone inscriptions, to burn-marked bones, and finally to scraps of parchment.

You could spend days down here, and never see every chamber. *Test Search* (if you don't have Search, *Test your Talent at -2*) to find something more relevant.

If you pass, [turn to 135](#). Otherwise you need to choose whether to go [watch the doors \(turn to 360\)](#), or [stand by the altar \(turn to 250\)](#).

353.

"No need for violence, lads," you say, raising your hands so that they can see you have no weapons.

One of them takes a flaming brand from the fire and approaches cautiously, while the others spread out to surround you.

If you have the keyword *Twist*, [turn to 217](#) now. If not, you will need to *Test Diplomacy at -2* (if you don't have Diplomacy, *Test your Talent at -4*) to persuade them that you aren't a threat. If you succeed, they take you for one of their own — which appears to be some sort of smuggling crew from low town.

If you fail, you [have to fight \(turn to 294\)](#).

354.

If you have the keyword **Tenant** then you own a house in the city, and can rest there for free. If you'd like to do so you can [turn to 281](#) now.

You look for an inn to spend the night. There's plenty to choose from, poor and rich, but they all offer you a place to rest your head and something to eat. In the end you have to choose between a cheery looking place with the sign of a rearing griffon over the door, or a scummy dive with a brass plate nailed to the door in place of a sign.

- To stay at the Rearing Griffon, [turn to 46](#)
- To stay at the Brass Place, [turn to 161](#)

355.

Of course you can't *sell* Metril ... the girl may be strange — for example she doesn't actually eat, you've discovered, nor sleep — but she's been a loyal companion since you rescued her from the inverted tower. However, the life of an adventurer is not suitable for a child, no matter how unusual, and it occurs to you that Tinzagus, as a connoisseur of the unusual, might have a suggestion.

It turns out that he does. After you tell him Metril's story, he offers to take her on as an apprentice in his magic shop. You ask Metril what she thinks of this idea — noting the way she is staring with interest at the Mage's goods — and she hesitantly says that the place reminds her of home.

"I could be happy here, maybe, if that's what you think is best?"

If you want to apprentice Metril to Tinzagus, remove her from your inventory, and gain the title **Clockworker**.

Regardless, when you are done, you can [return to Goldigger Way \(turn to 28\)](#).

356.

Velguan produces a golden sword in a golden scabbard.

"It's name is *Aguara*, take good care of it."

Aguara is a one-handed +1 weapon, which grants *Advantage*, so long as nothing else is giving you *Disadvantage*. It is a powerful blade!

You thank Velguan for the gift, and he has his coachman deposit you in the [centre of town \(turn to 95\)](#).

357.

You lead Murtlan back into the heart of the city. The sun is rising over the broken towers as you reach the isolated plaza where you met the musicians before. The group is still there, though cooking breakfast over a small stove instead of playing.

"Murtlan!"

An excited cry goes up as they see you, and you are quickly welcomed into the group, who listen amazed as Murtlan describes your heroism in expansive tones.

"This calls for a song," says the band leader, and before you can stop them, they grab up their instruments and begin to play.

The group's music rolls over you. At first is merely stirring, but when Murtlan's flute joins in, it becomes enchanting, weaving a spell around you. You feel a rush of warm emotion.

Restore 2 Talent and Gain 1 Fortune.

You hardly notice that the music is done, until Murtlan's voice jerks you from your reverie.

"We've talked," he says "and we plan to go back on the road, to the villages ... where things are safer. You have my thanks, and also this ..."

He produces a small amulet from a pocket.

"I always thought this was lucky, but maybe it wasn't particularly lucky for me! Hopefully it will do you better."

You take the **lucky amulet**. Once per adventure, you can use it to *Gain 1 Fortune*.

Now, [turn to 22](#).

358.

You prepare as best you can, swinging your light this way and that, as the *tick tick* sounds surround you, and the oil smell becomes almost unbearable.

Out of the darkness emerge long, low-slung beasts, with narrow tooth-filled jaws like the heads of pikes. Their clawed legs tap lightly on the ground, but that's not what creates the ticking noise — you realise that the creatures are clockwork constructs, made of brass and coiled springs.

Four of them dart forward to attack you, this will be a hard fight.

Fight 3 Rounds at -3 (shields count double). If you survive this opening attack, you have the chance to escape before more of the creatures reach you [turn to 87](#) if you want to do this.

If you stand your ground, yet more of the beasts emerge from their rock burrows. You must survive *another* 3 Rounds to defeat them.

During this fight:

- You suffer *Disadvantage* unless you can see in the dark
- Shields count double
- **ranged weapons** are -2, because of the darkness
- A **lightning spell**, will automatically win two rounds, as it fuses the creature's mechanisms
- The **berserk** spell, if you cast it, increases both phases to 4 Rounds

If you don't survive the fight, [turn to 86](#), otherwise [turn to 39](#).

359.

The scribes and copyists of Inkdipper's Street work out of old warehouses that once held goods brought in via the now-empty [docks \(turn to 204\)](#). When the weather is good, they bring their manuscripts out into the street and work from trestle tables, the rest of the time they must copy by candlelight, a process that can introduce no end of errors into their work. This is one of the reasons that the inscription of spells is left to the inhabitants of the nearby [Spark Court \(turn to 58\)](#).

☐ If this box is not ticked, you have the **occult primer**, and wish to investigate it further, [turn to 10](#).

Books

	buy	sell
bestiary (+1 naturalist, heavy)	200gp	100gp
dictionary (+1 linguistics, heavy)	200gp	100gp
occult primer	-	200gp
tome (+1 occult, heavy)	200gp	100gp

When you are done here, you can [return to the market \(turn to 224\)](#).

360.

You decide to follow the same regimen as the priests, walking a circuit of the temple's entrances, and checking each window to make sure that no one is trying to break in. You find nothing, even though you patrol all night through, but in the morning the offering bowls are empty as before. *Lose 1 Talent* for this setback.

The priests are downcast, but you insist on trying again. [Return to 51](#) and pick another option.

361.

Anya is waiting for you at a table by the fire. "Do you have it?"

- If you'd like to give Anya the **diomedian mirror**, [turn to 332](#)
- If you'd like to give Anya the **fake mirror**, [turn to 212](#)

You cautiously place all five seals into the door. Some force holds them in place, so that once they are placed, they can no-longer be removed (remove them from your inventory).

With an ominous hum, the door swings open, and you find yourself in some sort of hidden wizard's laboratory — a sanctum for some mage escaping the war, perhaps, who perished in the fighting and never made it back.

Here are enchanted items bizarre and dangerous, most of which you would hesitate even to touch. Engraved skulls, darkly radiant orbs, spell scrolls, no doubt trapped. It would take days to take stock of it all, but you are determined to do just that.

By the time you have finished, you have amassed the following:

- A **fireball spell**
- A **flight spell**
- A **heal spell**
- A **teleport spell**
- A **view spell**
- A **talent potion** (drink to *Restore 3 Talent*)

But the most important thing of all is a ring in the shape of a snake devouring its own tail. While you wear the **orobouros ring** your maximum Fortune is raised by 1.

You *Gain 1 Experience Point* for this miraculous find, and eventually make your way [back to the city \(turn to 95\)](#).

363.

You are wandering along the overgrown paths of the northern ruins, following what were once streets along the edge of the city. The city wall has long collapsed along this section, allowing you to wander directly [into the marshes \(turn to 231\)](#) if you wish.

Looking up, you spot large bird nests crowning the tops of the broken walls. They appear to be made from rose petals, and bright red birds, perhaps the size of sparrows, are darting back and forth around them. They look almost gemlike.

If you have *Naturalist*, you may *Test Naturalist*. If you pass, [turn to 103](#).

It looks like you could clamber up to the nests. If you want to do so, *Test Climbing* (if you don't have Climbing, *Test your Talent at -2*) and note the result before [climbing up \(turn to 101\)](#).

Alternatively, you could probably knock down one of the nests, if you happen to have a *long weapon*. If you want to do that, [turn to 124](#).

Finally, if you can spare a **ration**, you could try to lure the birds down with food. That would leave their nests empty, you guess. Maybe you could even [catch one \(turn to 376\)](#).

If you'd rather push on, [turn to 291](#).

364.

You cast your spell, but it has no effect at all! The creature must be immune to magic, a perfect assassin to kill a Mage. Grimly you draw your blade to defend yourself. *Lose 1 Talent*, and [turn to 78](#).

365.

You go around to the back of the house, and find yourself in a narrow unlit lane, barely wide enough to spread your arms out. Three narrow windows, dimly lit, look out from the first floor. Two are shuttered, but the third appears to have been left open.

You quickly scale the back wall up to the window, only to come face to face with a pair of angry yellow eyes! There's a black cat perched on the window sill that swipes at your face as you arrive. *Test Climbing at -1* (if you don't have Climbing, *Test your Talent at -3*). If you fail, you tumble from the window and *Take 1 Wound*. If that's enough to reduce you to 0 Health, [turn to 193](#), otherwise you shoo the cat away, and [climb inside \(turn to 323\)](#).

366.

You fight bravely, but this day, you do not overcome!

Test your Talent + Status. If you succeed, you are spared — set your Vitality to 1 — though your climb up the gladiator's ranks is over, for now. [Turn to 334](#) and erase all the ticked boxes.

If you fail, the magi overseeing the match demand your death! Your life blood is spilt on the sands, your dreams are over.

You have been slain! If you have a resurrection available, then follow the instructions you have noted (if you purchased a resurrection in the temple district, [turn to X](#) now). If your resurrection leaves you alive in this section then [turn to 95](#) now. Otherwise, your adventure ends here.

YOU ARE DEAD

367.

You fight bravely, but this day, you do not overcome!

Test your Talent + Status. If you succeed, you are pulled from the arena floor and patched up. Set your Vitality to 1, and [return to the city \(turn to 95\)](#).

If you fail, you are left to die on the gore covered sands.

You have been slain! If you have a resurrection available, then follow the instructions you have noted (if you purchased a resurrection in the temple district, [turn to X](#) now). If your resurrection leaves you alive in this section then [turn to 95](#) now. Otherwise, your adventure ends here.

YOU ARE DEAD

Velguan gestures for you to join him in the back of the enchanted carriage, which is as golden and jewelled as the outside. You nervously take a place on the red velvet bench opposite the wizard, who conjures up a bottle of wine and a glass from an unseen compartment with a wave of his hand. You can't help but wonder what sort of toll all this magic has taken on the man behind the fox mask.

You also can't help but wonder what need so powerful a magician should have for a bodyguard such as you!

The carriage accelerates away from the low town, whisking back and forth through the streets of Treysham, apparently at random. Through the tinted ruby carriage windows you can see the soaring golden towers of the Mage's fortress drawing close and then receding again.

Suddenly the carriage slams to a halt as if it has collided with something very solid.

"Defend me!" cries Velguan, as the carriage door is torn open.

If you cast *Dispel*, *Fireball*, or *Strike* at the flaming creature beyond the door, [turn to 364](#). Otherwise you will have to fight the thing by hand: [turn to 78](#).

369.

You draw your weapons and rush to attack Tsuga the Frog Demon.

The creature sees you coming, and spews a massive gout of water from its cavernous cooking-pot mouth. If you *extinguished the fire*, then you are doused in cold water, but none the worse. If you didn't, then you are scalded by the boiling stew, and *Lose 1 Talent*.

Before you can close with Tsuga and stab it in the eyes, the beast uproots itself from its fire and rolls at you like a giant iron bowling ball, demolishing houses and sending villagers flying! If you *stuffed it with food*, you must *Fight at -3* until you have won three rounds (however long that takes). If you didn't, then you must win four rounds at -4 instead.

The following rules apply to this fight:

- Due to Tsuga's iron body, small weapons (like daggers) and **ranged** weapons are ineffective
- If you fight with a **two-handed** weapon, you gain +3
- If you cast *Strike*, you automatically win a round
- If you cast *Fireball*, you automatically win a round, but suffer an additional -2 in every subsequent round as Tsuga glows red-hot

If Tsuga wins the fight, [turn to 256](#), otherwise [turn to 164](#).

370.

You enter the arena, and find yourself fighting **Penalla**.

Penalla is an archer from Jarson, armed with a wicked recurved bow, and light armour. She is quick, but weak at close up fighting.

The fight follows the rules below:

- If you fight with a **shield**, you are well protected from Penalla's arrows, and gain +2
- If you fight with a **ranged weapon**, you must duel it out at range, but suffer -1 due to Penalla's superior skill
- If you fight with a **one-handed weapon** and a **shield**, you can close with Penalla and overwhelm her, and gain another +1 (in addition to the shield bonus)
- If you don't have a shield, or have a shield but a **long** or **two-handed weapon**, it's hard to close with Penalla, and you suffer *disadvantage*.

Now, *Fight 4 Rounds at -1* (plus any modifications from above). If you win, [turn to 105](#). If you lose, [turn to 366](#) instead.

371.

"I suppose that choice is to be expected of an adventurer," the projection says. "Very well, my imp will see to it."

The imp gives you an unfriendly smirk and closes the lantern, then fishes out a small purse of coins and drops it on the ground in front of you, before flapping away with the rose. When you check the purse it contains **100 gold**.

[Return to 95](#).

372.

You open the door and slip inside, only to realise that you have entered a guardroom! Two men in padded jacks, with crossbows and daggers to hand. You realise that, even if you were to win a fight with the pair, you'll put the whole house on alert.

Fight 2 rounds at -4, if you have a *ranged weapon* you gain an additional +2 as you duke it out with the guards from the cover of the doorway. If you lose [turn to 172](#). If you survive the fight you are still cornered, but you find a chance to hurl yourself out of the window.

Test Climbing (if you don't have Climbing, *Test your Talent at -2*), or cast *Flight*, to make it to the ground unscathed. Otherwise *Take 1 Wound*. If this reduces you to 0 Health, [turn to 193](#), otherwise you make your escape. [Turn to 95](#).

373.



If there is not a check in the box above, put a check there, and [turn to 266](#) now.

You quickly snatch up the rat king and slice off its tails, at which point it falls apart into a chaos of tailless normal rats. You take your prize back to the rat-masked man at the entrance for your reward. You have as many tails as the success number you noted down before, and the man pays you **5gp** for each tail (you always get at least 1 tail).

If you have the *Naturalist* skill, roll 1d3. If the result is greater than your current skill, raise it by one level. For example if you have the basic Naturalist skill (+2) and roll a 3, you may raise it to +3

Job done, you [return to 95](#).

374

You open the trapdoor and descend (ascend?) into the top floor of the inverted tower.

On the ceiling is what looks like a child's room. A small cot bed with a rag doll lying on it, a small chest. Chalk drawings cover the "floor" and much of the walls, in a thick profusion.

In the middle of the ceiling a young girl is sitting, cross-legged, looking down at you.

"Hello!" she says, jumping to her feet. *"I'm Metril! My Father should be downstairs, but he doesn't answer when I call. And"* she looks confused, *"I seem to be stuck up here, somehow. It's very confusing."*

"Could you help me down?"

Do you wish to:

- » [Leave quickly \(turn to 324\)](#)
- » [Help Metril down \(turn to 288\)](#)
- » If you have the keyword *Tiny*, [tell Metril the unfortunate truth \(turn to 62\)](#)

375

Your blows barely seem to affect the shambling creature. Half of them pass straight through its spectral body, though its blows seem to have no trouble hurting you. You can't prevail. It brings you down with its filthy claws and then feasts on your body, finally achieving the corporeality it requires, before it flees the temple.

You have been slain! If you have a resurrection available, then follow the instructions you have noted (if you purchased a resurrection in the temple district, [turn to X](#) now). If your resurrection leaves you alive in this section then [turn to 95](#) now. Otherwise, your adventure ends here.

YOU ARE DEAD

376.

You crumble one of your **rations** into crumbs (remove it from your inventory) and scatter it on the ground. Soon the path before you is covered in twittering crimson birds, snatching up the food.

If you have a **net** you can try to [catch one \(turn to 317\)](#). Alternatively, you can [raid their nests \(turn to 158\)](#).

Finally, you can do neither, in which case [return to 225](#) and tick the box on line 3.

377.

Gain the keyword *Tune*

The lead musician perks up when you throw your coins into the hat.

"Thank you for that, friend! Business has been slow. It's not been the same since our star musician vanished. Murtlan the flautist, oh, how I remember his soaring notes."

The other musicians nod in agreement.

"How did he go missing?" you ask.

The band leader scratches his thinning hair. "It was probably when we were staying in that old house by the ruins. I think he said he was going for a walk, but in the morning there was no sign of him."

He looks at you entreatingly: "If you could only find Murtlan for us, why then we'd be restored to fortune, and we'd be very grateful!"

You make a vague promise and [bid them goodbye \(turn to 22\)](#).

378.

You enter the arena, and find yourself fighting **Estus the Long**.

Estus fights with a net and spear, and is quick and light on his feet.

The fight follows the rules below:

- If you fight with a **two-handed weapon**, it gets tangled in the net, and you cannot use it (if that was your only weapon, you fight unarmed)
- If you fight with a **ranged weapon**, Estus can easily close the range with his spear, so you suffer -1
- If you fight with **heavy armour**, you suffer disadvantage, because you are too slow
- If you fight with a **one-handed weapon**, or a **long weapon**, you can match Estus blow-for-blow, and get +2

Now, *Fight 4 Rounds at -1* (plus any modifications from above). If you win, [turn to 105](#). If you lose, [turn to 366](#) instead.

379.

You are stripped of your equipment and thrown amongst the other prisoners. Rumours say that the magi have a big event planned, where dozens of you will be sent out to fight together. Those in the know tell you that means something very dangerous, but also the chance that any survivors will be released. It's a better bet than facing the gladiators in a show match, that's for sure!

☐ If the box to the left is not ticked, but you have the keyword *Tender*, tick the box and [turn to 70](#) now.

As the big event approaches, some of the prisoners discuss an escape attempt. If you want to learn more [turn to 190](#).

If neither of these options apply, you have no choice but to keep your head down and try to prepare for the big event. *Test your Talent*. If you succeed you manage to make some friends and keep out of trouble — *Restore 1 Talent* and *Heal 1 Vitality*.

[Turn to 328](#).

380.

Either *Cast Dispel at -2* or *Test Occult at -2* (if you don't have Occult at -2, *Test your Talent at -2*) (gain +2 if you have a **holy symbol**). If you fail, the spirit lets out a wail and rushes to attack you. [Turn to 66](#).

If you succeed, you enter a spiritual contest with the ghost, as follows:

- Roll 2d6 for yourself, and do the same for the ghost.
- The highest roll wins the round.
- If you win twice before the ghost does, it is exorcised
- If the ghost wins twice before you do, *Take 1 Wound, ignoring armour*, then start over

If you successfully exorcise the spirit, it collapses in on itself, as if it were shrinking, or receding down a long and diminishing passage. After a few moments it is gone. Laid to rest, you hope.

You go to rouse the priests and explain what happened. They are very grateful that you dealt with the spirit by returning it to its rest rather than destroying it. They reward you with the **blessing of mard** that they promised. You may discard the blessing to use it like a *Fortune* point.

In the morning you gain the keyword *Tomb* and [return to the city centre \(turn to 95\)](#).

381.



If the box above is ticked, you continue down the passage to [171](#), otherwise, tick the box, and read on.

As you continue down the tunnel, picking your way through the gloom, a rustling sound grows from somewhere ahead of you. It rapidly swells, growing into a scurrying rush, before a wave of rats come pouring down the tunnel at you!

If you have the keyword *Tunnel*, or are suffering the **cat curse** the rats avoid you as they rush past, otherwise you must *Test your Talent at -2* or *Take 1 Wound*. If you have a **shield** you gain +2.

If the rats reduce you to 0 Vitality, [turn to 97](#) now, otherwise, you wait till the tide has passed and [move on \(turn to 171\)](#).

382.

"I'm afraid your father isn't around," you tell Metril. "You've been here a *long* time. I think it would be better if you stuck with me."

Add **Metril** to your inventory. While Metril accompanies you, you must pay double any time you pay to rest (e.g. in an inn or tavern), and use two **rations** each time you consume a ration to regain Vitality.

Whenever you test *Stealth*, *Climbing*, or *Diplomacy* with Metril's help, add +1 to your *Talent*. While Metril is with you, you can carry one more *Heavy* item (Metril carries it for you).

Metril will seek you out again if you die and are resurrected.

Gain 1 Experience Point and [turn to 95](#)

383.

You make your way to the deck and slip up behind the hortator — a bald mountain of a man —who is busy oiling the heads of the drums he uses to drive the slaves at the oars. A whip is coiled at his belt, alongside an iron key — the key to the slave pens.

You decide that the best way to get the key is to wait for the hortator to lean over the drums and then simply lift it from his belt. *Test Larceny* (if you don't have Larceny, *Test your Talent at -2*). If you succeed, you lift the **slave ship key** and quickly [slip belowdecks again \(turn to 270\)](#).

If you fail, the hortator catches you in the act, clamping one massive hand around your wrist.

"I'll teach you to steal from me!" he roars, before picking you up bodily with both hands, hoisting you into the air, and tossing you overboard!

Test Swimming (if you don't have Swimming, *Test your Talent at -2*) or *Take 1 Wound*. If this reduces you to 0 Vitality, [turn to 385](#), otherwise you manage to swim to the docks and [make your escape \(turn to 95\)](#).

384.

You make your way back to the docks with Old One Eye taking up the majority of your boat. By the time you've got the creature up onto the stone dockside, a crowd of fishermen have gathered, eager to see this legendary creature.

It seems that Kroyzen gets word of your success just as quickly. The wizard comes running down to the dock, the grey fish-head mask he wears, bobbing up and down like the bladder on the end of a jester's stick.

"Oh! How wonderful!" the mage gushes, falling to his knees and caressing the corpse like the body of a lover.

Cyrus gives an uncomfortable cough. "Ahh, about that reward."

"Of course, of course." Kroyzen produces a purse of money from under his robes and counts out an amount for Cyrus, handing over fifteen solid gold crowns, minted before the war. He has the same for you, worth **150 gold**, but hesitates before handing it over.

"You strike me as a type with an eye for more than simple gold," he says, and shows you a ring on his finger, set with a silver gem like a sightless eel's eye. "If you prefer, you can have my ring of the marshes instead, what do you say?"

If you want to take the gold, add it to your inventory and then [turn to 204](#). If you'd rather take the ring, [turn to 208](#).

385.

Sadly, the ability to breathe under water is not something you mastered. The cold flood steals your breath away.

You have been slain! If you have a resurrection available, then follow the instructions you have noted (if you purchased a resurrection in the temple district, [turn to X](#) now). If your resurrection leaves you alive in this section then [turn to 95](#) now. Otherwise, your adventure ends here.

YOU ARE DEAD

386.

You leap forward, holding back your cry of revenge, and plunge your blade into Malphas' back. It passes right through him, and you pull it out with satisfaction — but to your surprise the wizard stays upright! [Turn to 155](#)

387.

You decide to confront Tsuga, the demon frog, to rescue to the village. Its baleful eyes follow you as you skirt the village centre, but it doesn't move, simply waiting for more food.

You can [wade into the fight \(turn to 369\)](#), or try to find an advantage.

- » If you want to put out the fire under Tsuga, [turn to 255](#)
- » If you want to stuff Tsuga with food, [turn to 75](#)

388.

☐☐☐

You head off the path into the rills and sloughs of the fen itself. Here and there, chunks of rock rise up from the muck, the last ruined traces of the buildings that once covered the fertile plains around Treysham. It's wet, cold, and trackless.

If at least one of the boxes above is not yet ticked, *Test Naturalist or Tracking* (if you don't have Naturalist or Tracking, *Test your Talent at -2*). If you pass, you manage to gather some **nirnroot** — tick one of the boxes above. You cannot return here for more searching until you have taken a Rest.

If you fail, *Lose 1 Talent* as you get soaked to the skin.

When you are done, [return to 231](#).

389.

If you have the keyword *Thwart*, [turn to 183](#) now.

You head up the gangplank in your stolen Krendar uniform, expecting to be unmasked at any moment, but the crewmen let you pass with supreme disinterest.

Once aboard, your suspicions are quickly confirmed — Treysham may prefer to send its criminals to the arena, but this is a slaver ship. Their only concession to their host city is to keep their slaves below decks, where they cannot easily be seen, but you can see the miserable men and women languishing in the ship's holds.

Because they take you for one of your own, you can easily take the opportunity to [rob the slavers \(turn to 47\)](#), but equally, you might be able to [free the slaves \(turn to 270\)](#). Alternatively, you can still [hurry off the ship \(turn to 204\)](#) before you are uncovered.

390.

You are brought before Kanthus, the fur-robed man you saw before on the stands.

"You've done well," he tells you. "You caught the eyes of some of the trainers, and that means sponsorship, prize money, the favour of the magi. If you've got what it takes, you can make a name for yourself, even try for a shot at the champion's title, if you live that long."

Kanthus produces a contract, a scroll where you can make your mark in wax.

"What do you say?"

If you want to sign the scroll and become a gladiator, [turn to 334](#) to take up your new life. If you prefer to back out, then you [return to the city centre \(turn to 95\)](#).

391.

Gain the keyword *Terror*

It's time to end the threat of the marsh murders once and for all. No more will they creep by night into Treysham and turn its people into barbecue meat.

You set fire, as best you can, to the damp moss huts. The old wood is difficult to light, but with no one here to oppose you, the fire spreads. Soon the decrepit buildings are collapsing in on themselves in showers of flame, filling the air with dense smoke. The village pigs scatter, squealing, into the marsh, never to return.

When the village is fully ablaze, you make your way back to the city. Soon, word of your murder spree spreads through the low town. It's not something that's going to impress many nobles, but the commoners who fell victim to the marsh men are certainly pleased. If your **Status** is 3 or less, *Gain 1 Status*.

Now [turn to 95](#).

392.

You set out to explore the ruins, planning to luck upon some trove of treasure undiscovered by anyone before. Instead, you wander the empty streets for hours, picking your way through crumbling ruins and tangles of thorns, without anything to show for it but exhaustion.

Soon, night falls, and you are still far from the settled parts of the city. Only the flickering glow of the mages' high towers stands as a beacon to guide you.

Eat a **ration** or *Lose 1 Talent*. If you do eat a ration, you may *Heal 1 Vitality*.

Now, *Test your Talent*. If you succeed [turn to 303](#), otherwise you [wander into danger \(turn to 275\)](#).

393.

You spend another peaceful week at work in the arena. There are a few scuffles but no serious injuries; the magi don't like it when their prisoners die *before* they get in front of the crowd. Ekhar teaches you a few tricks of the trade when it comes to making sure prisoners toe the line. Roll 1d6. If the result is greater than your current level of *Diplomacy* you *Gain 1 Diplomacy*.

When your time is done, you collect the agreed **40 gold** before gladly handing over your post to the your replacement and returning to a life above ground. [Turn to 95](#).

394.

Before you can complete your business in the hall, a noble wizard sweeps in and accosts you.

"You there! I have need of a herald. Take this proclamation and cry my fame around the city."

The man is wearing a half-mask in the shape of an eagle's face, which marks him as a lesser sorcerer, but does nothing to hide this disdain he clearly holds for everyone here. You can [take the proclamation \(turn to 297\)](#), or just [ignore the man \(turn to 265\)](#).

395.

You have been condemned to the arena as a prisoner. Your fate is to provide fodder for the professional gladiators and monstrous beasts that fight for the magi's entertainment.

Record any equipment you have in the box below, it has been removed from you.

--

- » If you have the title **Gladiator**, [turn to 243](#)
- » If you have the title **Arena Trusty**, [turn to 8](#)
- » If you have neither, [turn to 379](#)

396.

In moments you are surrounded by a mass of marsh murderers. They are dressed in reed armour, and armed with spears and serrated bone gutting knives. Mud and woad streak their faces and arms, and their teeth have been filed to cannibal points.

They rush to attack, closing from every side, and taking advantage of the muddy ground to pin you down. *Fight 5 rounds at -3*, with disadvantage. Shields count double, and you gain +2 if you are using a **long weapon**. If you lose, [turn to 351](#).

If you cast *any* spell, the villagers draw back in terrified awe, and call for their priest, a robbed and grubby man whose long and braided hair is caked with mud and pierced through with dozens of rabbit bones. The priest makes mystic gestures and urges you to [speak with him in his hut \(turn to 326\)](#).

If you win the fight, either through skill at arms, or by casting a spell, you rout the fighters, scattering them into the marsh. You can choose to [loot the village \(turn to 131\)](#), [go to the priest's hut \(turn to 326\)](#), [leave \(turn to 231\)](#), or [slaughter the survivors once and for all \(turn to 391\)](#).

You follow the drifting music across the tangled ruins. Eventually you track the sound to a ruined house, its collapsed walls almost overwhelmed by dark creepers. The faintest glimmer of light guides you to the marsh murderer's camp — little more than a few damp embers in a muck-choked fireplace.

Beside the fire, a man is tied up hands and feet. He has somehow managed to manoeuvre a flute to his lips and is blowing on it as best he can.

When he sees you, the flute falls from his lips in surprise. "Please, help me!" he says.

You untie his bonds, as he tells you that he was ambushed just like you, and tied up to be the marsh murderer's next meal.

"They've been dragging me around these ruins for days, I thought I would never survive. Luckily I still had my flute, and I thought maybe I could call for help with it."

A thought strikes you: "You aren't Murtlan, by any chance, are you?"

"I am!"

"Your band is looking for you!"

"Oh ... of course." Murtlan gets unsteadily to his feet, still clutching the flute. "I don't suppose you could help me get back ... I'm not sure I'm safe out here alone."

You agree to help him navigate the ruins — truth be told, you are grateful to have a companion after your recent experiences.

By the time you navigate out of the ruins, the sun is rising.

[Turn to 303](#), keeping a note of this passage, and tick the box on line 2. Then, [turn to 357](#).

- If you have the keyword *Trick* [turn to 261](#) now.
- If you have the keyword *Twice*, Velguan is waiting for you to use the compass, [return to 119](#).
- If you have the keyword *Trail* [turn to 302](#) now, otherwise gain the keyword *Trail* and read on.

You find your way to Velguan's mansion and ring the bell suspended by the entrance. To your surprise the fox-masked wizard answers his own door. He looks around furtively, and then ushers you inside.

Within, the house is as grand as his flying carriage, bedecked in heavy tapestries and rich brocade, but there is a curious absence of furniture, and no sign of the many servants you might expect to see. Belatedly, you realise that the shutters are closed and the curtains drawn, the only light comes from flickering witch-balls floating in the dusty air.

It occurs to you that all wizards are axiomatically mad, their minds scarred by the profligate use of spells.

"I am glad you are here," Velguan says. "My would-be assassin has not ceased their attempts on me, and my magic will not reveal them. I have need of the more mundane skills that you seem to possess."

He shows you a magic rune. "This rune can tag my rival, but only if he attempts a killing spell on me, so I need you to take this ..." With a flourish he pulls down a tapestry to reveal a disturbingly realistic dummy of himself! "I will place the rune on the dummy, and then you must take it to the Shrine of Trey and fool my rival into attempting to kill it."

Velguan gives you **velguan's dummy (heavy)** and urges you to [hurry \(turn to 119\)](#).

399.

The giant snail simply crushes you flat as it rolls over you. Ouch!

You have been slain! If you have a resurrection available, then follow the instructions you have noted (if you purchased a resurrection in the temple district, [turn to X](#) now). If your resurrection leaves you alive in this section then [turn to 95](#) now. Otherwise, your adventure ends here.

YOU ARE DEAD

400.

You take to the air using your flight spell. Unfortunately for you, the soldiers of Treysham are well used to the tricks of wizards. No sooner have you cleared the gate, than you are peppered with arrows, and come tumbling to the ground.

You are *Reduced to 1 Vitality*, then [dragged to the arena \(turn to 395\)](#).

401.

You examine the **sentry bird (tracking +1, heavy)** that you have caught.

As you suspected, it is a magical artefact left over from the war, a Sentry Bird, capable of scouting a battlefield for its controller and reporting back. Now that the bird has landed it delivers its report about the tower in a piping singsong voice — "Tower. Empty. No Exits."

While you have the bird in your inventory, you gain +1 *Tracking*. In addition, you can use the bird to automatically cast a *View* spell, but doing so disables the bird until the next time you can *Rest*. Finally, the bird can help you in combat. Once only, you can have it take a *Wound* for you, but that destroys the bird.

Very satisfied with your find, you [return to 303](#) and tick the box on line 4.

402.

The group welcomes you, cautiously, to their camp. You gather that they are former slaves escaped from the Krendar — whose city lies across the Circle Sea from Treysham. Treysham outlaws slavery, but these people are scared and far from home, preferring to hide in the ruins rather than risk themselves on the streets of a foreign city.

They offer to share what little food and shelter they have. You can *Rest* with them, and *Restore 1 Talent*, but you quickly realise that when you are done here they will flee somewhere else in the city, or perhaps even out of it.

You manage to speak with their leader, a heavily scarred Krendar named Kollish. It appears that Kollish is a defector from the Krendar ranks, and probably responsible for the other's escape. You try to persuade him that it might be safe for the slaves to find a proper place to stay in the outer city, but he just replies: "Not with a slave ship still in the harbour." and that's that.

When you are done, you bid the former-slaves farewell. [Turn to 303](#) and tick the box on line 5.

403.

You toss the **soup bone** to the creature, and to your relief, it stops to devour it rather than attacking you. *Restore 1 Talent and 1 Fortune* for this stroke of good luck, and [get out of here \(turn to 303\)](#).

404.

"I'll have the money you promised," you say, and the wizard hands over **50 gold** with only a small grumble, before depositing you on the poorer side of the Dragon Gate.

[Turn to 309](#).

405.

Instead of replying, you snatch out your weapon and launch an attack, shouting "Give me your papers!"

To your surprise, Ollivers is no pushover — his fat hides some serious muscle. But you have the advantage. *Fight 3 rounds at -2*. If you lose, [turn to 260](#). If you win, you overcome the man, and demand what you came for.

Shakily, Ollivers opens the lockbox, and gives you **ollivers' documents**, along with **100 gold** that he also keeps there.

"I know who you are," Ollivers grunts, as you make your escape, "You'll pay for this!"

It seems that the man is as good as his word, for in the days that follow, your depiction is nailed up on the Daymarket gates along with a reward. You manage to avoid immediate capture, but your **Status** is reduced by 1.

406.

You hurry to the second floor of Ollivers' house. You find yourself in a corridor that runs the length of the building, with a stair at either end, and windows on your left. On the right are two closed doors. Time is short, so you need to choose which to enter.

To choose the first door, [turn to 129](#), to choose the second [turn to 106](#).

You make your way to the beast pens, which are filled with creatures you hope never to have to fight — enormous crabs, venomous serpents, three-headed birds, shambling mounds of mutated vegetation.

In a separate area you spot a mandragore — a twenty-foot lizard, half whipping tail, half toothy jaws. A beast trainer cracks a whip, cowing the mandragore so that two scurrying men can fit a saddle to the creature.

"Someone's going to ride that?" you ask.

"Would you believe it!" The man cracks the whip again, driving back the mandragore, which had crept forward, belly low, the moment he glanced away. "Vicious beast. The whip is the only thing it understands."

"So, who'd be mad enough to get on the saddle?"

The man is only too eager to tell. "Galabalus, of course! I pity whoever has to face him next! He's been down here training to use a spear from mandragore-back, is there anything the man can't turn his hand too?"

You admire the beast for a moment, then [hurry away \(turn to 334\)](#).

A word from the Author

A long time ago, when I was still a child, I had an ambition to write my own gamebooks, which I would lay out on paper and staple together to form a book. **Grave of the Kraken** was born from one of those adventures, the more prosaically named **Seven Horses Inn**.

Seven Horses appears to have been rather heavily influenced by Dave Morris' **The Eye of the Dragon**, book 4 of the Golden Dragon series. Eye also has a flooded city, a magical treasure, and even a Pantechnicon, though the rest of the adventure is quite different.

I believe I had a grand idea to make a series like the Fabled Lands books (which I encountered a few years after Seven Horses was written). For that I needed a system. I'd previously created my own tabletop RPG system called Termite, and then a more concise version called Grasshopper, so my quest for even shorter rules led to the creation of GNAT, the system that this adventure uses.

If I wrote GNAT down as a set of rules, I no longer have them, but the adventure itself survived, tucked away in one of my boxes. Recently, having written a couple of Dragon Warriors Gamebooks for Red Ruin Press, I came back to that little stapled book and thought: "I can re-create this".

So Grave was born, and with it the re-created version of GNAT that you can find in the introduction, or on the GNAT Core website. Hopefully I will do more with GNAT in the future, but in the meantime, GNAT is open to anyone to build their own games with. If you like the system, take it and use it, the license details are on the website (https://bit.ly/gnat_gamebooks).

David M. Donachie
Friday, 10th June 2022

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About the Author

David M. Donachie lives in a chilly garret in Edinburgh with his wife and numerous animals — the current count includes one snake, two cats, three lizards, four mice, and a big yellow frog[†].

David is both a fiction author and a games designer. You can find his short story anthology "The Night Alphabet" on Amazon, and his mesolithic fantasy novel "The Drowning Land" in the same place. He has also written tabletop RPGs for Mindjammer Press, Cubicle 7, and his own imprint Solipsist Press, and Gamebooks through Red Ruin Press.

He is also an artist, which explains the chilly garret (as does the cheap double-glazing), bad eyesight, and generally hunched posture he tends to assume. Rumours that he is a time-travelling refugee from the 19th Century are surely contradicted by his day job as a web developer.

Want to know more? Visit wheretofind.me/@davidmdonachie

[†] *Numbers may vary, consult your dealer before buying*

Use the following list to track keywords you have encountered.

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Title | <input type="checkbox"/> Tunnel |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Toil | <input type="checkbox"/> Turncoat |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tomb | <input type="checkbox"/> Twice |
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You can download a copy of this checklist at https://bit.ly/gnat_gamebooks