FABLED LANDS

THE SERPENT KING'S DOMAIN

KICKSTARTER DEMO (PDF ONLY) - 127 sections

by Paul Gresty, Dave Morris & Jamie Thomson
Edited by Richard S. Hetley
FABLED LANDS: THE SERPENT KING'S DOMAIN IS ON KICKSTARTER!

This adventure is only a small part of the gamebook *The Serpent King's Domain*, prepared for the Kickstarter campaign.

If you enjoy this adventure, click on over for the complete book:


Thank you for your support.
We hope you enjoy these fresh new steps into the world of Harkuna!
Adventuring in the Fabled Lands

Fabled Lands is unlike any other solo role-playing game. The reason is that you can play the books in any order, coming back to earlier books whenever you wish. You need only one book to start, but by collecting other books in the series you can explore more of this rich fantasy world. Instead of just one single storyline, there are virtually unlimited adventures to be had in the Fabled Lands. All you need is two dice, an eraser and a pencil.

If you have already adventured using other books in the series, you will know your entry point into this book. Turn to that section now – though note that it would be a good idea to read the 'Special notes for Dunpala' section first, in order to clarify some rules for this particular adventure.

If this is your first Fabled Lands book, read the rest of the rules before starting at section 1. You will keep the same adventuring persona throughout the books – starting out as a 7th Rank count (or countess) in this adventure and gradually gaining in power, wealth and experience throughout the series.

ABILITIES
You have six abilities. Your initial score in each ability ranges from 1 (low ability) to 9 (a high level of ability). Ability scores will change during your adventure but can never be lower than 1 or higher than 12.

CHARISMA the knack of befriending people
COMBAT the skill of fighting
MAGIC the art of casting spells
SANCTITY the gift of divine power and wisdom
SCOUTING the techniques of tracking and wilderness lore
THIEVERY the talent for stealth and lock picking

PROFESSIONS
Not all adventurers are good at everything. Everyone has some strengths and some weaknesses. Your choice of profession determines your initial scores in the six abilities.

Priest:
CHARISMA 7, COMBAT 5, MAGIC 6,
SANCTITY 9, SCOUTING 7, THIEVERY 2

Mage:
CHARISMA 5, COMBAT 5, MAGIC 9,
SANCTITY 1, SCOUTING 8, THIEVERY 6

Rogue:
CHARISMA 8, COMBAT 7, MAGIC 7,
SANCTITY 2, SCOUTING 5, THIEVERY 9

Troubadour:
CHARISMA 9, COMBAT 6, MAGIC 6,
SANCTITY 5, SCOUTING 5, THIEVERY 7

Warrior:
CHARISMA 6, COMBAT 9, MAGIC 3,
SANCTITY 7, SCOUTING 6, THIEVERY 3

Wayfarer:
CHARISMA 5, COMBAT 8, MAGIC 4,
SANCTITY 5, SCOUTING 9, THIEVERY 7

Fill in the Adventure Sheet at the back of the book with your choice of profession and the corresponding ability scores.

STAMINA
Stamina is lost when you get hurt. Keep track of your Stamina score throughout your travels and adventures. You must guard against your Stamina score dropping to zero, because if it does you are dead.

Lost Stamina can be recovered by various means, but your Stamina cannot go above its initial score until you advance in Rank.

You start with 30 Stamina points. Record your Stamina in pencil on the Adventure Sheet.

RANK
You start at 7th Rank, so note this on the Adventure Sheet now. By completing quests and overcoming enemies, you will have the chance to go up in Rank.
You will be told during the course of your adventures when you are entitled to advance in Rank. Characters of higher Rank are tougher, luckier and generally better able to deal with trouble.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st</td>
<td>Outcast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>Commoner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>Guildmember</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th</td>
<td>Master/Mistress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5th</td>
<td>Gentleman/Lady</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6th</td>
<td>Baron/Baroness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7th</td>
<td>Count/Countess</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8th</td>
<td>Earl/Viscountess</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9th</td>
<td>Marquis/Marchioness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10th</td>
<td>Duke/Duchess</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**POSESSIONS**

You can carry up to 12 possessions on your person. You begin this adventure without any equipment or money.

Possessions are always marked in bold text, like this: gold compass. Anything marked in this way is an item which can be picked up and added to your list of possessions.

Remember that you are limited to carrying a total of 12 items, so if you get more than this you'll have to cross something off your Adventure Sheet or find somewhere to store extra items. You can carry unlimited sums of money.

**DEFENCE**

Your Defence score is equal to:

- your COMBAT score
- plus your Rank
- plus the bonus for the armour you're wearing (if any).

Every suit of armour you find will have a Defence bonus listed for it. The higher the bonus, the better the armour. You can carry several suits of armour if you wish – but because you can wear only one at a time, you only get the Defence bonus of the best armour you are carrying.

Write your Defence score on the Adventure Sheet now. To start with it is just your COMBAT score plus 7 (because you are 7th Rank, and you have no armour). Remember to update it if you get some armour or increase in Rank or COMBAT ability.

**FIGHTING**

When fighting an enemy, roll two dice and add your COMBAT score. You need to roll higher than the enemy's Defence. The amount you roll above the enemy's Defence is the number of Stamina he loses.

If the enemy is now down to zero Stamina then he is defeated. Otherwise he will strike back at you, using the same procedure. If you survive, you then get a chance to attack again, and the battle goes on until one of you is victorious.

Example:

You are a 3rd Rank character with a COMBAT score of 4, and you have to fight a goblin (COMBAT 5, Defence 7, Stamina 6). The fight begins with your attack (you always get first blow unless told otherwise). Suppose you roll 8 on two dice. Adding your COMBAT score gives a total of 12. This is 5 more than the goblin's Defence, so it loses 5 Stamina.

The goblin still has 1 Stamina point left, so it gets to strike back. It rolls 6 on the dice which, added to its COMBAT of 5, gives a total attack score of 11. Suppose you have a chain mail tabard (Defence +2). Your Defence is therefore 9 (=4+3+2), so you lose 2 Stamina and can then attack again.

**USING ABILITIES**

Fighting is often not the easiest or safest way to tackle a situation. When you get a chance to use one of your other abilities, you will be told the Difficulty of the task. You roll two dice and add your score in the ability, and to succeed in the task you must get higher than the Difficulty.

Example:

You are at the bottom of a cliff. You can use THIEVERY to climb it, and the climb is Difficulty 9. Suppose your THIEVERY score is 4. This means you must roll at least 6 on the dice to make the climb.

**CODEWORDS**

There is a list of codewords included in this adventure. Sometimes you will be told you have acquired a codeword. When this happens, put a tick in the box next to that codeword. If you later lose the codeword, erase the tick.

The codewords are arranged alphabetically for each book in the series. In this adventure, for example, all codewords begin with G. This makes it easy to check if you picked up a codeword from a book you played previously. For instance, you might be asked if you have picked up a codeword in a book you have already adventured in. The letter of that codeword will tell you which book to check (e.g. if it begins with C, it is from Book 3: Over the Blood-Dark Sea).

**SOME QUESTIONS ANSWERED**

How long will my adventures last?

As long as you like! There are many plot strands to follow in the Fabled Lands. Explore wherever you want. Gain wealth,
power and prestige. Make friends and foes. Just think of it as real life in a fantasy world. When you need to stop playing, make a note of the entry you are at and later you can just resume at that point.

What happens if I'm killed?
If you had the foresight to arrange a resurrection deal (you'll learn about them later), death might not be the end of your career. Otherwise, you can always start adventuring again with a new persona. If you do, you'll first have to erase all codewords, ticks and money recorded in the book.

Are some regions of the world more dangerous than others?
Yes. Generally, the closer you are to civilization the easier your adventures will be.

Where can I travel in the Fabled Lands?
Anywhere. If you journey to the edge of the area detailed in this book, you will be guided to another book in the series. (The War-Torn Kingdom deals with Sokara, Cities of Gold and Glory deals with Golnir, Over the Blood-Dark Sea deals with the southern seas and so on.) For example, if you are enslaved by the Uttakin, you will be guided to The Court of Hidden Faces 321, which refers to entry 321 in Book Five.

What if I don't have the next book?
Just turn back. When you do get that book, you can always return and venture onwards.

What should I do when travelling on from one book to the next?
It's very simple. Make a note of the entry you'll be turning to in the new book. Then copy all the information from your Adventure Sheet and Ship's Manifest into the new book. Lastly, erase the Adventure Sheet and Ship's Manifest data in the old book so they will be blank when you return there.

What about codewords?
Codewords report important events in your adventuring life. They 'remember' the places you've been and the people you've met. Do NOT erase codewords when you are passing from one book to another.

Are there any limits on abilities?
your abilities (COMBAT, etc) can increase up to a maximum of 12. They can never go lower than 1. If you are told to lose a point off an ability which is already at 1, it stays as it is.

Are there any limits on Stamina?
There is no upper limit. Stamina increases each time you go up in Rank. Wounds will reduce your current Stamina, but not your potential (unwounded) score. If Stamina ever goes to zero, you are killed.

Does it matter what type of weapon I have?
When you buy a weapon in a market, you can choose what type of weapon it is (i.e. a sword, spear, etc). The type of weapon is up to you. Price is not affected by the weapon's type, but only by whether it has a COMBAT bonus or not.

Some items give ability bonuses. Are these cumulative?
No. If you already have a set of lockpicks (THIEVERY +1) and then acquire magic lockpicks (THIEVERY +2), you don't get a +3 bonus, only +2. Count only the bonus given by your best item for each ability.

Why do I keep going back to entries I've been to?
Many entries describe locations such as a city or castle, so whenever you go back there, you go to the paragraph that corresponds to that place.

How many blessings can I have?
As many as you can get, but never more than one of the same type. You can't have several COMBAT blessings, for instance, but you could have one COMBAT, one THIEVERY and one CHARISMA blessing.

SPECIAL NOTES FOR DUNPALA
This adventure is a small part of the gamebook The Serpent King's Domain. Some specific notes apply.

Is it possible for an existing character to travel to Dunpala from other parts of Harkuna?
Yes it is. Because of limited space, this adventure does not grant you the complete range of ways that you might normally reach this city – you can't sail your own ship to Dunpala, for example, or simply walk to the city overland. If you possess Over the Blood-Dark Sea, however, you can probably find somebody willing to take you to Dunpala from the city of Smogmaw. If, in your travels, you've found a way to magically transport yourself to Dunpala, that will work too. And, of course, the full range of travel possibilities will become available in The Serpent King's Domain.

Will I be able to continue into The Serpent King's Domain with the character I use in this adventure?
Yes. Most of the paragraphs in this adventure will be renumbered in The Serpent King's Domain. The only real consequence of this is that you will have to make sure that if
you've ticked any boxes in this adventure, you tick the corresponding boxes in *The Serpent King’s Domain*. A reference list detailing which tickbox in this adventure corresponds to which box in *The Serpent King’s Domain* will be made available online. You will also have to transfer any codewords you have gained in this adventure to the more complete codeword list in *The Serpent King’s Domain*.

There are some codewords I can’t seem to acquire, no matter what I do. Why’s that?
A small number of codewords, and items, that are mentioned in this adventure can only be gained in *The Serpent King’s Domain*. As these codewords are mentioned in this adventure, however, they are included on the codeword list for completeness.

There’s no paragraph 100 in this adventure. Is that intentional?
Yes it is. Another Fabled Lands adventure has specified paragraph 100 as a fixed ‘arrival point’ into *The Serpent King’s Domain* – though not into the city of Dunpala. For clarity, it has been omitted here.

The paragraph numbers for this adventure are a little strange. They range from 1 to 127 – and then leap up to 475. Why?
Paragraph 475 is another ‘arrival point’ from another Fabled Lands adventure. It has been included here so that players may use this route to reach Dunpala from another book.
The white, shining serpent comes in your dreams. It slithers through the dark sky as if on land and then, noticing you, descends. It draws nearer and nearer, and it is immense.

You stand on a clifftop, looking out across a turbulent sea. Far away, thunder cracks, and a bolt of lightning strikes the surface of the water. The serpent reaches the clifftop now, and the light touch of its scales does not disturb a single pebble. It coils into a tight circle, with you at its centre, and its body all around you is taller than a house. And yet, up close, you see a faint translucence to it, as if it is not wholly here. You hold out one hand, to test its tangibility — and then you see that same translucence in your own skin. If the serpent is not truly here, neither are you.

It raises its triangular head to regard you, and its eyes are great, pale blue stones. Then it murmurs one word: 'Namagal.'

The dream ends; a painful near-consciousness returns.

The clear sky above you is too bright. From time to time the sun threads its way across your field of vision, remorselessly beating down on you. Blackness comes intermittently — whether because of night, or because you slip from wakefulness, you can't be sure. It doesn't matter. The dreams, and the serpent that lingers within them, stay far away from you, now.

And then, abruptly, you wake to find that the hellish sky is gone. You are in a house, lying on a bed. A woman is nearby, working. You try to speak to her, but a choking cough is all you can manage. She passes you a glass of water, and says, 'My name is Cellacqtella. You may stay here until you are well again, but no longer.'

A month passes before you can stand unaided. One day you ask Cellacqtella where you are. She tells you, 'I found you alone in an open boat, waiting for death. You are in the Feathered Lands, near the city of Dunpala. This is my home.'

The Feathered Lands! You have no notion of how you have come to this place. You question Cellacqtella further, and realise that you cannot remember the last year of your life. 'You were suffering from the waking rot,' she tells you. 'A loss of memory is common in those few who survive the disease.'

At last, you are well enough to leave. Cellacqtella, your taciturn healer, walks with you along the edge of Lake Firewater for three hours, until you can see the city of Dunpala in the distance. 'We part ways here,' she tells you. 'Take these.' With that, she gives you a small pouch containing 20 Shards, and a well-balanced fishing spear (COMBAT +1). Note them on your Adventure Sheet.

You start to thank her for all that she's done, but she says, 'Thank me by never returning to my home. In this land, it is dangerous to help a foreigner. Goodbye.'

You watch her for a time as she walks back the way you have come. Then you turn away, and enter Dunpala.

Get the codeword Gloom, and turn to 42.

2

You grip the bamboo branch, and hold it out before you. The shining serpent watches you a few seconds, impassive — and then it darts forward, its maw dropping open. It swallows you whole; the twilit world around you becomes white light, pinpricked with tiny black stars.

Make a MAGIC roll and a THIEVERY roll, both at Difficulty 16. Remember that you do not currently possess any of your usual equipment which might help with these rolls.

If you succeed in both rolls, you weather this spiritual assault with little ill effect. If you fail one roll, you must subtract one point from one of your abilities; you decide which. If you fail both rolls, you must also lose a Rank — roll one die and subtract this amount from your maximum Stamina, and remember that this will also reduce your Defence by one point.

Turn to 30.

3

Zlaloc is overjoyed to see you; he takes you by the shoulders and thanks you for your help. He presents you with a bag containing 350 Shards, and a macuahuitl (COMBAT +3), a long wooden sword inlaid with slivers of obsidian which form a razor-sharp edge. On a whim, he also presents you with a prop from one of the theatre's performances, a jaguar mask. Note down the money and the items on your Adventure Sheet if you choose to keep them.

Then he leads you through to the auditorium, where you see that Birdsong at Dawn has already begun directing rehearsals once more. She glances back and, seeing you, forces a thin smile.

Turn to 119.

4

The Call of Eagles tavern is a narrow, four-floor building with fine mosquito netting covering all of its windows. Situated near the harbour, it is a popular spot for sailors working the route between Dunpala and Smogmaw.

You may stay here if you wish, at a cost of 2 Shards per day. Each day that you rest here allows you to recover 1 point of Stamina, up to your maximum.

The smiling woman who runs the establishment tells you that the tavern's nominal owner is in fact named Call of Eagles. In truth, he is more a craftsman than an innkeeper. He welcomes visitors to his workshop behind the building.

Visit the workshop of Call of Eagles
Leave the tavern

Turn to 95

Leave the tavern

Turn to 83
At the start of the performance Dlalan, his face in shadow, is stalking a jungle tiger. But in a moment of inattention, the tiger leaps upon him, clawing his face and disfiguring him horribly. Dlalan returns to his home village, but fears letting his beloved Sitecqa see his appearance. He regrets returning and wanders into the jungle once more, to live forevermore as a hermit.

Sitecqa cares nothing for his appearance; it is his soul she loves. She pursues him, but is captured by a tribe of cannibals. Dlalan cannot hope to overwhelm the cannibals by force, but uses his horrific appearance to convince them that he is a foul monster. They flee, allowing Dlalan to save Sitecqa.

The performance is moody, the darkness on stage eerily capturing Dlalan's state of mind. Particularly haunting is the moment when Dlalan leaves the village, at first planning to kill himself. He is attacked by a Mala Inchi, an evil spirit that whistles the same melody to him, over and over. It is only by forcing himself to whistle a different, more cheerful tune to drive the Mala Inchi away that Dlalan realises how much he values his own life.

Get the codeword Guard, and turn to 42.

You talk with Call of Eagles a while about your adventures so far. When you mention your search for Nyelm Starhand he says, 'A man by that name came to me not long ago. He asked me to craft him a gauntlet of black metal, far too hot and heavy to wear in these parts. He also wanted me to repair a broken key, as long as your forearm, and very intricate. Told me he was preparing for a jungle expedition while he was here, I heard.'

You thank Call of Eagles for his help, and he adds, 'He was preparing for a jungle expedition while he was here, I heard.' Lose the codeword Endless and get the codeword Gully, then turn back to 95.

The ghost of Mellagan withdraws from the theatre. Perhaps it will be for ever. Birdsong at Dawn resumes rehearsals at once. To show her appreciation, she gives you 150 Shards from the door sales of the theatre's next performance, as well as a ball of silver thread. Note these down on your Adventure Sheet.

Turn to 42.

The captain of a battered barque agrees to convey you to Copper Island, swearing that his ship is seaworthy. You must have Over the Blood-Dark Sea to go there. If you do not possess this book, or if you decide to stay in Dunpala, turn to 42.

If you are sure you want to travel, cross off the 45 Shards and roll one die. One a roll of one to five, you ultimately arrive at Copper Island without incident; turn to Over the Blood-Dark Sea paragraph 99.

If you roll a six, however, a great storm rises up shortly after you reach the open sea, sinking the old barque. You tread water for dear life. Lose all the money and items listed on your Adventure Sheet. Finally, you wash ashore. Turn to The Serpent King's Domain paragraph 559.

If you do not possess The Serpent King's Domain, you may assume that you have safely arrived at Copper Island regardless.

As you prepare to leave, Broken Hand shows you a crocodile skin he has recently acquired, which he offers to sell to you for 100 Shards. 'Much cheaper than you'll find at the market in Dunpala,' he says.

As you finish your deal, Birdsong at Dawn enters the room, visibly upset. The two of them speak quietly a few moments, and then she turns to you. 'Excuse me, I've recently learned that one of my cousins has been killed in the city. His body was... incinerated. Such a vile act seems to be the work of Kerep Tlotor, He Who Brings Lunacy. If that creature has come to Dunpala, perhaps it is time for us to leave...'

You leave the two of them to grieve in peace. Cross off 100 Shards if you have bought the crocodile skin, and note it on your Adventure Sheet.

Get the codeword Ghastly, then turn to 42.

Dunpala is hot and humid, and prone to sudden downpours. There is a rumble in the clouds above, and then a rain starts to batter the street with surprising abruptness. You stand in a doorway to watch the flickering lightning overhead.

If you have the title Nahual, turn to 115. Otherwise, the storm finally ceases as suddenly as it began. Turn to 42.

Shimae is still venerated by some of the tribes of the Weeping Jungle. Here in Dunpala, citizens will more commonly make a small offering of coins to the shrine of Shimae in order to protect themselves from liars and confidence tricksters. You may be able to receive a Luck blessing here. If you wish to try, pay the priest here 35 Shards, and roll two dice.

Roll 2-6     receive Shimae's Curse
Roll 7-12     receive Luck blessing

The Luck blessing works by allowing you to reroll any dice
result once. When you use the blessing, cross it off your Adventure Sheet. You can only have one Luck blessing at any one time.

Conversely, if you receive Shimae's Curse, you must subtract 2 from the next combat roll or ability roll you make. This will affect only one roll, and then you may remove this curse from your Adventure Sheet. Also, you may not make an offering at this shrine while you bear Shimae's Curse.

Do you possess Napolti's baton? If so, turn to The Serpent King's Domain 321. If not, then turn to 42 when you are finished here.

12
If you have codeword Glory, turn to The Serpent King's Domain 412. If not, you make a brief account of your lack of progress in curing Dancing Flame, and then you leave. Turn to 42.

13
You enter the tunnel, which begins to slope upwards. You follow it until you emerge into the night on the lip of a cliff. Before you, up in the sky, the full moon hangs too bright, too low, peering at you through a gap in the clouds. You look out across a stormy sea. Wherever you are, you are far from Dunpala.

And then, as you regard your surroundings further, you see a white, shining serpent in the sky above you. It slithers through the dark sky as if on land and then, noticing you, descends. It draws nearer and nearer, and it is immense.

The serpent reaches the cliff top now, and the light touch of its scales does not disturb a single pebble. It coils into a tight circle, with you at its centre, and its body all around you is taller than a house. And yet, up close, you see a faint translucence to it, as if it is not wholly here. You hold out one hand, to test its tangibility – and then you see that same translucence in your own skin. If the serpent is not truly here, neither are you.

Perhaps it reads your thoughts. It murmurs, 'You remain real, tethered to the physical world. But perhaps you find yourself in an unreal place, a point of balance between life and death. Come with me.'

The serpent uncoils itself, and slithers along the edge of the cliff face. It seems benign for now, at least. And so you run to keep up with it.

Turn to 111.

14
Merenta is a young girl with a tendency to tell lies. As she grows older, she increasingly begins to see spirits all around her. Such a gift is much prized, and yet the people of her village are familiar with her lies; nobody believes Merenta except her aunt, who warns her that she must maintain a balance between the time she spends in Elaz Carnaquen, the spirit realm, and Elaz Velara, the land of the living.

When Merenta's aunt dies, however, Merenta becomes addled by grief, and seeks only to project her soul into the spirit realm, to be reunited with her aunt once more. And yet, in so neglecting Elaz Velara, she goes dangerously insane. It is only the intervention of her aunt in the spirit realm that saves her. Her aunt manages to sever Merenta's connection with the spirit realm once and for all. Her gift is lost, and she is known as a liar forevermore.

Turn to 42.

15
Your fight has drawn a great deal of attention. Half a dozen men stand around the pool now, jeering at you. Though you have slain two crocodiles, several more are approaching to detain you.

Just then, a broad-shouldered, one-eyed man pushes his way through the group, and thrusts a long pole towards you. You grab it and manage to climb out. Exhausted, you drop at the man's feet. This, you realise, is Broken Hand.

His men jab similar poles at the approaching crocodiles, until they back away. As they do this, you cough up a mouthful of pool water and then, as boldly as you can, demand that Broken Hand turn over Birdsong at Dawn.

He stares at you a few seconds, then gives a deep belly laugh. 'Perhaps you should ask the good lady if she wishes to be rescued,' he says.

With that, Birdsong at Dawn herself pushes through the group of men. A tall, graceful woman, she affectionately places her fingers on Broken Hand's shoulder.

Turn to 41.

16
Lose the codeword Afraid. Get the codeword Gazelle.

Without warning, you launch yourself at Kaimren. He had expected this, however; he draws a wand from his robes and parries your weapon, causing a shower of blue sparks. Then he stamps on the floor; the ground gives a violent convulsion, throwing you off balance. You lose grip of your weapon as you struggle to keep your footing.

Kaimren has learned a few new tricks, it seems. You fight to the death while, nearby, Birdsong at Dawn screams at you to stop. Note that you must fight this combat unarmed, using only your base COMBAT value.

Kaimren COMBAT 11, Defence 15, Stamina 17

If he kills you, this is the end of your adventure unless you have a resurrection deal. If you beat him, turn to 75.
You scale the farm's tall fence, and drop down on the other side. Keeping low, you dart towards the buildings at the centre of the farm. You are just congratulating yourself on your dexterity, however, when you slip on a half-eaten fish, and fall into one of the crocodile pools. Turn to 46.

With one hand you grip the bowl; with the other, the bamboo. The shining serpent watches you a few seconds, impassive – and then it darts forward, its maw dropping open. It swallows you whole; the twilit world around you becomes white light, pinpricked with tiny black stars.

Make a COMBAT roll and a THIEVERY roll, both at Difficulty 16. Remember that you do not currently possess any of your usual equipment which might help with these rolls.

If you succeed in both rolls, you weather this spiritual assault with little ill effect. If you fail one roll, you must subtract one point from one of your abilities; you decide which. If you fail both rolls, you must also lose a Rank – roll one die and subtract this amount from your maximum Stamina, and remember that this will also reduce your Defence by one point.

Turn to 86.

You are allowed into a little tent containing some of the more interesting artefacts these rogues have acquired of late.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Shards</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amber wand (MAGIC +1)</td>
<td>350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crocodile skin</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tsavorite prism</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green gem</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water flask</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ink sac</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potion of nature (SCOUTING +1)</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potion of stealth (THIEVERY +1)</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potion of strength (COMBAT +1)</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scarlet macaw</td>
<td>320</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The potions may be used just before an ability roll or fight to add 1 to the relevant ability for that one roll or fight only. Several scarlet macaws are available for purchase; their wings have been clipped, and they are quite docile.

When you are finished here you leave, keeping a watchful eye open for the city's constables. Turn to 42.

If you have the codeword Gazelle, turn to 69 immediately. If not, but you have the codeword Grief, turn to 98. Otherwise, read on.

The Theatre of the Obscure is a modern, decagonal building in the centre of Dunpala. Stories say that it was designed by the dark sorcerer Mellagan, and built after his death using the vast fortune he'd amassed. Its distinctive architecture is of arcane significance, those stories say; Mellagan's spirit swirls about the building's rafters, awaiting the precise astronomical confluence that will allow him to be reborn.

In the meantime, the Theatre of the Obscure has become the cultural fulcrum of Dunpala. The building's walls are a deep cherrywood red. Its interior is darker still. The few lanterns within are dim, suspended high up; shadows are long, potential hiding places frequent. The troupe of actors that works out of the theatre specialises in tales of horror, stories of the fear of the unseen and unknowable. The style inside the theatre reflects that theme.

If you possess a bamboo invitation, and you wish to go backstage, turn to 62. Otherwise, it costs 15 Shards to see a performance.

See a performance (cross off 15 Shards) turn to 91
Leave the theatre turn to 42

Listening to the priest's talk of redemption reminds you of
Zlaloc's words at the Theatre of the Obscure. On a hunch, you ask if he knows of Birdsong at Dawn.

'I know her well,' he says. 'She was a priestess here, long ago. Lately though, she's been spotted with a man called Broken Hand. He was a pirate, once; now, he deals in crocodile skins. Who knows what such a villain wants with Birdsong at Dawn? If you intend to pay him a visit, take a stout weapon.'

He can direct you to the farm where Broken Hand lives. You may go there any time you are in the centre of Dunpala (that is, whenever you are at paragraph 42). Whenever you wish to do so, turn to 74.

You can go there now, if you wish. If not, you leave the shrine. Turn to 42.

24

Call of Eagles can try to increase the COMBAT bonus of any weapon you provide him with. You will need to give him 150 Shards for his work, as well as the weapon you wish to try to enhance.

If you ask Call of Eagles to carry out this work, remove the money from your Adventure Sheet, and then roll two dice, adding any COMBAT bonus the weapon already possesses.

Roll 2-9  The work is successful; increase the weapon's COMBAT bonus by +1
Roll 10-11  The work is unsuccessful; reduce the weapon's COMBAT bonus by 1 (to a minimum of 0)
Roll 12 up  The weapon breaks under the artificer's efforts. Remove it from your Adventure Sheet

Note that Call of Eagles can only provide weapons with a maximum bonus of COMBAT +4. 'That's as much as I can do,' he explains. 'If you want really high-quality work, seek out Bellentacq in Shamsar.'

When you are finished here, return to 95.

If you have the title Nahual followed by a number greater than zero, turn to 93. If not, turn to 47.

25

Nopalti is a lame young boy, a member of the Leaping Fish tribe. While his strong brothers become great hunters and fishermen, Nopalti must spend his days with the women of his tribe, cooking and repairing clothing. He is ridiculed by all, save his oldest brother, Tenlta.

One day, a monkey steals Nopalti's father's cloak, and runs away into the jungle. Nopalti hobbles after it, at last finding that the monkey has become entangled in the heavy cloak, and allowed itself to be snared by a boa constrictor. The monkey reveals itself as a divine being, and begs Nopalti to free him, offering him a magic baton that will make him as great a warrior as any man in his tribe. Nopalti accepts, and the monkey honours its word. Armed with this great weapon, Nopalti at last gains respect in his tribe.

But the sly monkey places an enchantment on Nopalti's brother Tenlta, so that he becomes crazed with ambition. Tenlta schemes to slay their father, and several village elders besides. And the monkey visits Nopalti to tell him the only way to break the curse is to snap his beloved baton in half. Nopalti faces Tenlta in battle, and overcomes him. But he will not strike the killing blow. At last, he breaks the baton, and the enchantment is lifted.

It is a surprisingly upbeat conclusion for the Theatre of the Obscure. Turn to 42.

27

The scarred man sags against you, and you help him into an alleyway. From there, you kick open a door into a clothing shop. You close the broken door behind you, then look for a back exit. At last, the two of you take shelter beneath a wagon a couple of streets away, and wait for the sound of the red-cloaked constables to recede.

Make a THIEVERY roll at Difficulty 13. If you succeed, turn to 73. If you fail, turn to 108.

28

'You! You've got a lot of nerve coming here!'

The yell comes from behind as you are leaving the tavern. You turn. The man screaming at you is a short, wiry figure in quilted cotton armour. Most notably, his right hand has been severed at the elbow.

You protest that you've never met this man before, but he screams your name along with a string of invectives. He certainly knows you. And then you realise the truth – you met him during the months of your life you can't remember.

Eager to learn more, you ask when you previously crossed his path. But your question only angers him. 'You mean you don't even remember doing this to me?' He shakes his stump of an arm at you, and then draws a dagger and lunges at you, berserk. You count yourself lucky that he is already quite drunk – and, you guess, originally right-handed.

One-armed man  COMBAT 5, Defence 8, Stamina 14

If you are killed, turn to 99. If you beat the man, turn to 44.
29

Birdsong at Dawn stops you as you are leaving. She says, 'Oh, let me introduce you to the newest member of our troupe. This is —'

But you stop her. You already know the little man beside her. He is Kaimren the Portly, a minor sorcerer you caught trying to raise an army of scorpion men, in far-off Sokara. It feels like an age ago, now. The intervening time has not been kind to Kaimren. He is no longer so portly, and carries a watchful air about him, like a beaten dog.

You tell Birdsong at Dawn and the other actors about the circumstances in which you first met Kaimren. For his part, he explains that he managed to escape from the prison that the Venefax authorities sent him to, but that he has subsequently been captured and enslaved twice since. 'I have been a fool in my life, many times over,' he says. 'I sought out this theatre in this strange land because it offers the erasure of past crimes, past lives. I wish only to let the man I was disappear, forgotten.'

'We have to let him stay,' says Birdsong at Dawn. 'Whatever he's done in the past.'

Attack Kaimren       turn to 16
Convince the troupe to expel him   turn to 126
Allow him to stay       turn to 61

30

You wake. You are cold, sore. It takes a moment to realise you are still in the little cave where you have spent the last few days. The priest of Quetzil is with you; a rope back up to the surface hangs above his head.

He smiles when he sees you are conscious. You begin to question him, but he says, 'The girl above, she told me she had seen you leave this place. I came to tend to you at once.' You glance over his shoulder; behind him, the cave wall is whole once more. There is no tunnel.

Gain the title Nahual, and note the number '1' beside it. This is your Nahual value, and you may be instructed to raise or lower it throughout your adventure. You should not remove the title Nahual however, unless specifically instructed, even if your Nahual value falls to zero. Your trials over the last few days have sorely tested your strength, however; reduce your Stamina to half its current value, rounding up.

Turn to 121.

31

Make a CHARISMA roll at Difficulty 12.

Successful CHARISMA roll turn to 106
Failed CHARISMA roll       turn to 116

32

Qlelec is a well-known figure in Dunpala. He is a crazed old man who will raucously sing any song you can name for a Shard or two. He can usually be found near the harbour, or in one of the taprooms thereabouts. People say he was once a wanderer or adventurer, but the heat of the jungle, or perhaps its spirits, drove him mad.

Qlelec surprises you by running up to you and exclaiming, 'I look for spotted stones. Give me one, and I'll tell you a story.'

If you have a violet-flecked stone and you wish to give it to him, turn to 88. If not, turn to 51.

33

You grip the bowl, holding it high above your head. The shining serpent watches you a few seconds, impassive – and then it darts forward, its maw dropping open. It swallows you whole; the twilit world around you becomes white light, pinpricked with tiny black stars.

Make a COMBAT roll and a SCOUTING roll, both at Difficulty 16. Remember that you do not currently possess any of your usual equipment which might help with these rolls.

If you succeed in both rolls, you weather this spiritual assault with little ill effect. If you fail one roll, you must subtract one point from one of your abilities; you decide which. If you fail both rolls, you must also lose a Rank – roll one die and subtract this amount from your maximum Stamina, and remember that this will also reduce your Defence by one point.

Turn to 86.

34

The priest says that to renounce worship of Tyrnai you must pay him 75 Shards, and allow him to strike you with his fist three times — while he is wearing a mail gauntlet.

If you accept these conditions, pay the 75 Shards and delete Tyrnai from the God box on your Adventure Sheet. The priest strikes his first blow on the side of your head, causing lights to flash in front of your eyes. By the time he strikes his third blow, he has a feral grimace on his face, and seems reluctant to stop.

Roll two dice, and lose this many Stamina points. Also, if you have arranged a resurrection here, it is cancelled with no refund. Finally, if you are still alive, turn back to 68.

35

As well as worshipping a pantheon of major deities, the people of the Feathered Lands worship several hundred minor gods, animal spirits and ancestral figures. You see a number of such shrines dotted around the city. You also find a small building dedicated to Tyrnai, the god of war worshipped on the northern continent.
Visit the shrine to Tyrmai turn to 68
Visit the shrine to Galami, the sin-eater turn to 56
Visit the shrine to Shimae, the monkey spirit turn to 11
Return to the city centre turn to 42

You sit on the stage and wait a while. Soon, the pervasive darkness in the room becomes deeper still. You cannot see him, but you know that Mellagan is present.

You speak to him, telling him that his place is no longer in this theatre. Does he even enjoy the plays now performed here? There are other places to go, other realms for ghosts such as he.

He does not answer you. But you feel sure that the ominous presence around you is considering your words. Make a CHARISMA roll at Difficulty 15.

Successful roll turn to 7
Failed roll turn to 104

You force the constable to work hard to defend himself, but you cannot keep him quiet for long. He succeeds in putting a little distance between the two of you, and draws a deep breath to bellow for help.

But the scarred man has approached the constable, unseen. He coshes your opponent across the back of the head with a stout piece of wood, knocking the constable senseless.

You can hear other constables nearby. Together, you run for a new hiding place, and wait there until the sounds of pursuit peter out.

Turn to 73.

You scale the farm's tall fence, and drop down on the other side. You very nearly slip and fall into a crocodile pool right away, but you just manage to regain your footing. Still, you don't linger – the crocodiles have a surprising degree of freedom to move.

Keeping low, you dart towards a prominent-looking house at the centre of the farm.

Turn to 114.

If there is a tick in the box, turn to 102 immediately. Otherwise, put a tick in it, and read on.

As you walk the city's streets you happen upon a fight between one of the city's constables, and a middle-aged man with a long, livid scar across his cheek and neck. The constable hits the man in the gut with a spiked mace, but then the man strikes the constable with his elbow, hard, knocking him unconscious.

The scarred man staggers your way, clutching his wounded belly. Just then, another constable appears further up the street, and shouts, 'Stop that murderer! There is a large bounty for his capture!'

The man notices you for the first time, and says, 'It's true, I am a murderer – though I've killed nobody this night, nor for some years. Please, I'm hurt. Help me escape.'

Capture the murderer turn to 84
Help him escape turn to 27
Neither help nor hinder him turn to 60

To make a magically hardened crystal knife, Call of Eagles will require a dagger, a blue crystal shard and an amber wand (MAGIC +1). You will also need to pay him 300 Shards.

Wielding such a knife adds 2 to your COMBAT score. In addition, it is one of the few weapons you may wield in spiritual battle. In any fight in which you must use your Nahual value in place of your COMBAT score, the crystal knife will still apply its +2 bonus. This bonus applies to your Defence rating as well, in both spiritual and mundane battle.

If you possess these three items and wish Call of Eagles to carry out his work, cross the items and money off your Adventure Sheet, and note down the crystal knife (COMBAT +2) instead. Also note that, given the unique nature of this weapon, this COMBAT bonus cannot be increased unless specifically stated.

Turn to 95.

Birdsong at Dawn gives you a weak smile. 'I have been seriously ill, of late. It was Broken Hand who found me, and tended to me. I would be dead if not for him. Perhaps I am strong enough to return to the theatre, now. But, in truth... I love him. And I remain here of my own choice. Broken Hand has promised he will renounce his life of wickedness if I will stay here with him. I believe him. Yes, the poor souls of the Theatre of the Obscure have depended on me for a long time. My absence surely concerns them. But this is my home, now. Can I not be allowed some small happiness of my own? At the theatre I might redeem fifty misguided souls. But here, I can redeem the man I love. Is that so wrong?'

An unfortunate turn of events. Without the guidance of Birdsong at Dawn, the Theatre of the Obscure will likely fall into ruin – the men and women there may resume their villainous ways, even. Also, if you fail to return with Birdsong at Dawn, you won't receive your promised reward.
If you wish to try to convince Birdsong at Dawn to return with you to the theatre, make a CHARISMA roll at Difficulty 15.

Successful CHARISMA roll turn to 97
Failed CHARISMA roll turn to 120
Don't try to convince her to leave turn to 107

In the old language of south-east Ankon-Konu, 'Dunpala Ztsele Qatl' means 'The Place Where Stingrays Swim'. It was here that the Falling Water tribe first settled, living off the fish that Lake Firewater provided, and here too that traders from the northern continent were first welcomed with open arms. Those early merchants made Dunpala their base in the Feathered Lands, and it rapidly became the largest and richest city east of the Weeping Jungle. And yet such prominence has not come without bloodshed. Foreign boats first landed in Dunpala more than two centuries ago. Since then, warriors have swept from the jungle to attack the city four times, slaughtering every foreigner present, and much of the city's native populace besides. In each case, it has taken decades for commercial links to mend, and grow strong once more. These days, those who choose to live within Dunpala keep a wary eye on the jungle to the west.

The people of Dunpala tend to be resilient or desperate opportunists, the brand of pirate or merchant willing to brave the dangers of the Nozama River in pursuit of fortune. This is especially true of those who migrate across from the jungle. For abandoning their families and obligations in the west, they are considered criminals. To succeed in reaching Dunpala, they must be hardy indeed.

Dunpala has spilled out into Lake Firewater, its tall, immigrant buildings built on stilts wherever the ground becomes soft. And yet Dunpala is not as lawless as it might seem. Foreigners face stringent limits on buying property within the city or exporting goods. In practice, this forces many traders to work through native intermediaries.

The king of eastern Ankon-Konu, Whispering Wind, makes his home in Dunpala. In truth, he is responsible for little more than the international imports and exports passing through this region. And yet this duty alone makes him an influential figure.

You are restored to life at the shrine to Tyrnai in Dunpala. Your Stamina is back to its normal score. The possessions and cash you were carrying at the time of your death are lost. Cross them off your Adventure Sheet. Also remember to delete the entry in the Resurrection box now that it has been used.

The one-eared priest is grimacing with the effort of raising you. At last he says, 'There's no shame in falling in battle. The only shame is if you don't slaughter a horde of heathen scum first.'

Turn to 68.

You search the drunken fighter's body, and are pleasantly surprised to find he was carrying 400 Shards. Note this amount on your Adventure Sheet. You may also take his dagger (ordinary weapon), a compass (SCOUTING +1) and his quilted armour (Defence +2).

You are still keen to know where you might have met this man before. You question the tavern keeper, but she has never seen him before today.

The mystery remains. Turn to 42.

The mood in the theatre is tense, today. You learn that, last night, one of the stage hands was found murdered just two streets away. 'He was a good man,' Birdsong at Dawn tells you. 'Whatever his past crimes, he didn't deserve this.'

'The body was burned so badly it was hard to identify him,' Zlaloc tells you, quietly. 'I've heard legends of a killer called Kerep Tlotor who does just that. He'll kill a few people, then disappear for a few years. That's a pattern he's kept for over a century, now.'

You leave the theatre. As the door shuts behind you, you hear its bolt being slid into place.

Get the codeword Ghastly, then turn to 42.

The cold water in the pool comes up to your chest. You try to climb out, but the pool's sides are treacherous. With nothing to grab hold of, your muddy footholds give way beneath you and you plunge back into the water once more.

Seeing your struggles, two fat crocodiles swim towards you,
eager to gulp you down as a light snack. Fight them as a single opponent, but subtract 2 from your COMBAT ability for the duration of this battle, as the water restricts your movement.

Pair of crocodiles  COMBAT 10, Defence 15, Stamina 31

If you are killed, turn to 99. If you survive this brutal battle, turn to 15.

47  
If the box above has already been ticked, turn to 124. If not, read on.

The priest takes your chin, and stares into your eyes a few moments. Then he says, 'You have been touched by one of Micantuithl's devourers. Did he tear away a part of your soul? There is a way for you to confront this spectre once more, if that is what you wish. You will need two things. First, a spirit light, a Xibalban lantern, in order to lure the creature to this place. The artificer Call of Eagles is known to create such things. Secondly, and most importantly, you will need to prepare yourself to face the spectre in Elaz Carnaquen, the spirit realm. You seem strong; perhaps I can help you with this. But consider whether this is truly a wise course. You will have to sacrifice much, and such enlightenment is not necessarily a blessing.'

If you wish to accept the priest's help, place a tick in the box above and turn to 67. If you do not wish his help at this time, you leave the temple. Turn to 42.

48  
If you have the codeword Hymn, turn to The Serpent King's Domain 229. If not, read on.

The temple to Eleuia is a square, white-walled building near the city centre. You are greeted by a young priestess in a pale blue robe. 'Eleuia is the goddess of dreams. Generations ago, she would visit us all as we slept. Sadly, this is no longer true. She is missing, or perhaps she is dead, if it is possible for a goddess to die. In any case, today, our dreams are only dreams.'

You ask what could kill a goddess, and the priestess says, 'There are several legends, all mutually contradictory. Some say that the jackal Gengril consumed Eleuia, so that he would become divine himself. Others say that Eleuia trespassed into Xibalba, the realm of the cursed dead, searching for her lost daughter — and that she became lost herself, and roams there still. A third story recounts how human sorcerers trapped Eleuia in a wine barrel. They let her divine power trickle out little by little, so that they might wield it themselves. Whatever the truth, we maintain this temple to remember her, and we quietly hope she will one day return.'

While the goddess is absent, the faith passes predominately through family lines, and the priestess cannot make you an initiate of Eleuia. Nor can she offer you a blessing. Turn to 42.

49  
You encounter a group of the city's red-cloaked constables who, grinning, tell you there is a special tax for walking in this part of Dunpala during the night.

Make a CHARISMA roll, Difficulty 16. If you succeed, you are able to talk your way out of this spurious fine. If you fail, you have to give them either 75 Shards or one of your possessions (you choose which). If you are unable to provide either, they will beat you; roll three dice and subtract this amount from your Stamina.

If you are killed, turn to 99. Otherwise, turn to 42.

50  
Lose the codeword Ghastly.

As you wander Dunpala, you spot two figures clenched together in an alleyway, one of them uttering a shrill titter. Two lovers sharing a joke, perhaps. And yet that laugh has a maddening, hateful edge to it. Curious, you step closer. The two figures are both men. One is gripping the other by the throat, silencing any cry for help. As you watch, he raises a long knife, and places the flat of his blade against his captive's cheek.

A too-loud footstep betrays your presence. The man with the knife turns, and sees you. He is a man, yes, and yet... not quite. In the hunch of his back, the hair on his face and arms, in his loping movements and insane titter, there is something of the hyena in him, as well. This, you realise, is Kerep Tlotor, the killer you have been warned about.

Tlotor bashes his victim in the side of the head, knocking the man unconscious. Then he lopes towards you with astonishing speed, and lunges at you, giggling the whole time.

Kerep Tlotor  COMBAT 12, Defence 17, Stamina 26

If you win this combat, turn to 101. If you lose, turn to 76.

51  
Qlelec is disappointed by your lack of such a stone, but not wholly surprised. Roll one die to see what mood he's in today.

Roll 1-2  Belligerent turn to 92
Roll 3-5  Jovial turn to 112
Roll 6   A moment of lucidity turn to 20

52  
Twice, the small point of light above you darkens to night, and then brightens to day again. You sit and wait, not knowing quite
what you are waiting for, while your belly growls with hunger. You have water, at least – rain is frequent in Dunpala; it isn't hard to catch a little rainwater seeping down the shaft above you, before it sinks into the earthy ground at your feet.

You sleep. Sometimes when you wake, you meditate on what sort of enlightenment you are supposed to receive in this little hole in the ground. And you begin to wonder whether the priest of Quetzil, who has cleverly deprived you of all your belongings, is trustworthy.

On your fifth day in your little cave, you stand beneath the shaft and yell for help. When none comes, you sleep some more. At some point during this confinement, you wake to find a long tunnel in the wall before you. Somewhere within, a feeble light glimmers. You are certain this passage was not present when you fell asleep.

If you have the codeword **Gargoyle**, turn to *The Serpent King's Domain* 498. If not, but you have the codeword **Gloom**, turn to 118. If you have neither codeword, turn to 13.

---

53

You may leave Dunpala by boat, sailing out into Lake Firewater, or you may journey overland. To set sail, you must either possess a ship which is docked in the harbour here (check the Ship's Manifest on your Adventure Sheet), or find a captain willing to take you as a passenger.

- Go to the harbour turn to 122
- Take the great road west, into the Weeping Jungle *The Serpent King's Domain* 197
- Travel north-west, into the jungle *The Serpent King's Domain* 449
- Travel south *The Serpent King's Domain* 377
- Travel east *The Serpent King's Domain* 410
- Skirt Lake Firewater, heading for Begatombo *The Serpent King's Domain* 542
- Stay in Dunpala turn to 42

---

54

If you are an initiate of Tyrnai, it costs 20 Shards to purchase a blessing here. A non-initiate must pay 35 Shards. Cross off the money and mark **COMBAT** in the Blessings box of your Adventure Sheet.

The blessing works by allowing you to try again when you fail a **COMBAT** roll. It is good for only one reroll. When you use the blessing, cross it off your Adventure Sheet. You can only have one **COMBAT** blessing at any one time.

Turn to 68.

---

55

At last, the fireflies withdraw, dispersing into the dark streets around you, while Kerep's human form burns to ash. You lie on your back, drained and panting.

Kerep Tlotor has stolen a sliver of your soul. You must temporarily subtract one point from all of your abilities. Note 'Kerep's Touch (−1 all abilities)' on your Adventure Sheet. This curse cannot be removed in the normal way – if you wish to regain this part of your soul, you will have to find some way of confronting Kerep Tlotor once more.

Still, you have the feeling that your fate might have been worse, had you not already weakened Kerep during your fight. You rise, searching for the man that Kerep knocked unconscious. There is no sign of him now. Somewhat unsteady, you return to the city centre. Turn to 42.

---

56

Galami is a minor goddess with the power to absolve sin; families in the Feathered Lands may make a small offering of food to her at mealtimes. The shrine to Galami is a small, square building, its inner walls covered in heavy black drapes. The priest of Galami is able to give you a **SANCTITY** blessing. You will need to pay 30 Shards, and participate in a ritual that involves you eating a small amount of dirt. Cross the money off your Adventure Sheet if you wish to receive this blessing.

The blessing works by allowing you to try again when you fail a **SANCTITY** roll. It is good for only one reroll. When you use this blessing, cross it off your Adventure Sheet. You can only have one **SANCTITY** blessing at any one time.

If you have the codeword **Grief**, turn to 23. If not, you return to the city centre. Turn to 42.

---

57

You venture out into the night to explore Dunpala, alert for any danger posed by the more disreputable types who have made this city their home. Roll two dice.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Turn to</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2-6</td>
<td>Witness to an affray</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Men in red cloaks</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8-12</td>
<td>A tittering in the darkness</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

58

You swirl in and out of consciousness. At last, when you fully wake, the fireflies are gone, and you are still alive. For whatever reason, Kerep Tlotor has spared you.

He has stripped away a sliver of your soul, however. You must temporarily subtract two points from all of your abilities. Note 'Kerep's Touch (−2 all abilities)' on your Adventure Sheet. This curse cannot be removed in the normal way – if you
wish to regain this part of your soul, you will have to find some way of confronting Kerep Tloror once more.

You rise, wobbly. There is no sign of Kerep Tloror now, nor of the man he knocked unconscious. You return to the city centre. Turn to 42.

59

Zlaloc is saddened by the news that Birdsong at Dawn has chosen to leave the theatre. You remind him that she is, at least, alive and apparently happy.

Make a CHARISMA roll at Difficulty 13. If you succeed, Zlaloc gives you 100 Shards for your investigative work. Then, whether your succeed or fail, he asks you to leave.

Get the codeword Gazelle, then turn to 42.

60

You back away from the man. He frowns, and then staggers into an alleyway. The red-cloaked constable is soon joined by two others; the three of them charge past you, following the scarred man. You lose sight of the four of them — but then you hear an agonised cry, from somewhere nearby.

You spot a curious violet-flecked stone that the scarred man dropped as he fled the constables. Note it on your Adventure Sheet if you choose to keep it. Then, as you have a feeling that you may have angered the constables for failing to help them, you leave the area before they can return.

Turn to 42.

61

Kaimren can stay. He gives you a nod of thanks, and is led away.

'Forgiveness is difficult, but rewarding,' Birdsong at Dawn tells you. 'You’ve made the right choice. Don’t worry, I’ll watch over him.' Whether to safeguard or scrutinise him, she doesn’t say.

Roll two dice. If the result is higher than your SANCTITY score, increase that ability by 1.

Lose the codeword Afraid, and turn to 42.

62

The staff and performers of the Theatre of the Obscure prove to be a motley group — they are grizzled and coarse; some are missing ears, or fingers. You find Zlaloc, who takes you into a dressing room, and offers you a strong spirit to drink.

'The Theatre of the Obscure has become a place of redemption,' he says. 'Every man and woman here is a criminal — we count debt welshers, thieves and counterfeitters amongst our number. We have murderers here, and worse. Some of us have been punished. Others — such as myself — are still sought by those who enforce laws, here or elsewhere. This is why we perform in the dark. It is wise for us not to show our faces. So long as we are truly repentant, this theatre houses us and provides us with a modest income. Our lives here are quite different to what they were before.'

You ask how such a unique situation came to be. Zlaloc says, 'Our spiritual leader is also our theatrical director, Birdsong at Dawn. This arrangement is her creation. Sadly, she is missing just now. Privately, I fear she has been abducted, or killed — I was searching for her the night we met, in fact. I hope this theatre will not fall apart without her. Can you help us find her? I can reward you.'

Zlaloc takes your bamboo invitation; delete it from your Adventure Sheet. If you wish to help search for Birdsong at Dawn, get the codeword Grief. Then it is time to leave. Turn to 42.

63

To make an aeonian flute, Call of Eagles will need either a flute (CHARISMA +1) or a bamboo flute (CHARISMA +1), as well as a compass (SCOUTING +1) and a ball of silver thread. You will also need to pay Call of Eagles 600 Shards for his work.

This will create an aeonian flute (CHARISMA +4). In addition to its CHARISMA bonus, this flute is difficult to lose. If you ever lose this flute — that is, if you are ever instructed to remove it from your Adventure Sheet — roll one die. On a roll of 1–5, you will soon find the flute amongst your belongings once more, and need not remove it as instructed. Only on a roll of 6 do you lose it for good. This is true even if you die, and are resurrected. You are still free to discard or sell the flute as you wish, of course. If you do so willingly, it will not return to you.

If you possess the necessary items and money, and wish Call of Eagles to create an aeonian flute, adjust your Adventure Sheet accordingly. Then turn to 95.

64

Make a THIEVERY roll at Difficulty 12, and a SCOUTING roll at Difficulty 13.

Both rolls successful

Fail one or both rolls

65

If you have the codeword Afraid, turn to 29. If not, you leave the theatre. Turn to 42.

66

If you have the codeword Ghastly, turn to 50 immediately. Otherwise, read on.

As you pace the city's streets, you hear an odd, tittering
ululation. Searching for its source, you spot a grulo, a nocturnal grey bird with a bright yellow plume, perched on a building nearby. The grulo is an omen of fortune – both good and ill. Roll two dice.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Effect</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2-6</td>
<td>Lose a blessing, if you have any (you choose which)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7-9</td>
<td>No effect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-12</td>
<td>Gain a Luck blessing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A Luck blessing allows you to reroll any dice result once. When you use the blessing, cross it off your Adventure Sheet. You can have only one Luck blessing at any one time.

Turn to 42.

67

'Leave your belongings here,' The priest says. 'You will not need them.' You do so; note that you cannot use any of your possessions until told otherwise.

This done, the priest leads you out of the temple, and walks with you towards the edge of the city. As the buildings disappear, and the first traces of jungle life become visible, you pass a woman playing with a young girl. The priest greets them as you pass. 'Friends of the temple,' he explains. 'The girl has been blessed and cursed with the sight.'

You reach a hole in the ground, as wide as a man is tall. 'The spirit realm of Elaz Carnaquen hangs closely over this continent, more so than elsewhere in this world. To align yourself with that realm, you must in part sever yourself from this one. Descend, and learn how.' With that, he hammers a stake into the ground, and ties a rope to it. He drops the rope into the hole.

You climb down. The sides of the shaft are smooth. In near-total darkness, your feet touch the floor of a small cave. Groping your way around, you find no exits.

'What now?' you yell up the shaft.

In response, the priest suddenly pulls up the rope. In the gloom, it takes you a couple of seconds to notice this, and it is out of your reach before you can grab it. You yell up to the priest again, demanding an explanation.

But he is gone. You are alone in the dark. Turn to 52.

68

The shrine to Tynrni, the northern god of war and chaos, is housed in a squat limestone building that was once a forge, and that has been fortified since. The priest within is a battle-scarred, one-eared fellow with a perpetual scowl. 'Heathens!' he spits, glancing from the shrine's barred window out at the people of Dunpala. 'Heathens one and all. There isn't a man amongst them worthy of the war god's blessing!'
You can leave possessions and money in your house to save having to carry them around with you. You can also rest here safely for as long as you like, and recover any Stamina points you have lost. Record in the box below anything you wish to leave here.

Each time you return to your house, however, you must roll two dice before resting.

- Score 2-10: your house and possessions are safe
- Score 11-12: your house has been confiscated by the city's constables. Lose all items previously stored here, and erase the tick at section 42 that indicates you possess a house.

Please, this place is not safe. I am an actor at the Theatre of the Obscure. If you wish to talk more, come find me there.

He gives you a **bamboo invitation**, and then leaves you, staggering away. Note down the invitation on your Adventure Sheet, and then turn to 42.

---

If you have the codeword *Genius*, turn to 87. If you have the codeword *Glacier*, turn to 117. If you have neither, read on.

Broken Hand's crocodile farm is a short walk out of town, up along the eastern coast of Lake Firewater. You discover his home is one of several buildings at the heart of a large, fenced-off area. Within, you see several guards armed with swords and long poles, and enough crocodiles to discourage casual trespassing. A sign at the farm's main entrance says, 'Unexpected visitors most unwelcome!'

If you wish to enter to search for Birdsong at Dawn, neither a frank nor an aggressive approach seems appropriate. While you observe the farm, however, you see two separate deliveries of fish and meat arrive, which the guards feed to the crocodiles. You might be able to bluff your way in as a delivery person – though you'd have to return to Dunpala first and spend 100 Shards or so on crocodile food. Alternatively, you could wait until nightfall and simply climb the farm's fence. Though once inside, you'd have to evade both guards and beasts.

- Bluff your way in (lose 100 Shards)  
- Sneak inside  
- Go back to Dunpala (you can return here later, if you wish)

Your last blow crushes his throat. It is enough to overwhelm him. He collapses, bloody and unable to breathe. Within a minute, he is dead.

Kaimren is carrying a **cobalt wand** (MAGIC +3) and a **short sword** (COMBAT +2). Note them on your Adventure Sheet if you take them. Also, for closing the curtains on this old foe, roll two dice. If the result is greater than your COMBAT score, increase that ability by 1.

'Get out!' yells Birdsong at Dawn. 'And never come back!' The actors around you are looking uneasy. You decide it would be prudent to obey her.

Turn to 42.

---

You fall, unable to defend yourself. But Kerep does not strike a killing blow. Instead, he stands with one foot on your chest, and tips his head back. A great cloud of fireflies rises from his gorge, buzzing in the air above you both. Then it descends towards you.

The fireflies cover you, biting at you, crawling inside your nose and mouth. And, battered and beaten, you can do nothing to stop them.

Restore your Stamina to 1 (that is, you have 1 point of Stamina left). Then, if you have the codewords *Goblet* or *Indigo*, turn to 110. If you have neither of these codewords, turn to 58.
The next few hours are tense. Your persuasive condemnation of Kaimren forms a schism between those who want him out and those who follow Birdsong at Dawn. At last, Kaimren is expelled from the theatre – but so are you, and half a dozen other actors. 'Never come back,' Birdsong at Dawn tells you. 'You will not be welcome here.'

When you leave the theatre, Kaimren has already disappeared into the city. Then one of your fellow evictees tells you that she robbed the theatre's ticket office on her way out. Your share of the haul comes to 250 Shards, and a shell amulet (SANCTITY +2). This particular actor's return to crime has already begun, it seems. Note down the money and the amulet on your Adventure Sheet if you decide to keep them.

Lose the codeword Afraid, get the codeword Gazelle, and turn to 42.

Dunpala's marketplace is essentially a single row of stalls that stretches in one long, twisting line throughout the centre of the city. It is only within living memory that the people of this region began using Shards as currency.

'Don't try to trade with the jungle tribes,' one of the city's merchants advises you. 'You could walk along the Great Road from Dunpala straight to Inkatek – but without some sort of special permission, the Nyar will slaughter you on sight.'

Items with no purchase price are not available locally.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Armour</th>
<th>to buy</th>
<th>to sell</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Animal helm (Defence +1)</td>
<td>75 Shards</td>
<td>60 Shards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quilted armour (Defence +2)</td>
<td>150 Shards</td>
<td>125 Shards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weapons (spear, dagger, etc.)</td>
<td>to buy</td>
<td>to sell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Without COMBAT bonus</td>
<td>60 Shards</td>
<td>50 Shards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMBAT bonus +1</td>
<td>300 Shards</td>
<td>225 Shards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMBAT bonus +2</td>
<td>600 Shards</td>
<td>475 Shards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMBAT bonus +3</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>650 Shards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magical equipment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amber wand (MAGIC +1)</td>
<td>600 Shards</td>
<td>400 Shards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ebony wand (MAGIC +2)</td>
<td>1200 Shards</td>
<td>800 Shards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cobalt wand (MAGIC +3)</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>1200 Shards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other items</td>
<td>to buy</td>
<td>to sell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bamboo flute</td>
<td>(CHARISMA +1)</td>
<td>350 Shards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lockpicks (THIEVERY +1)</td>
<td>350 Shards</td>
<td>275 Shards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patron amulet</td>
<td>(SANCTITY +1)</td>
<td>280 Shards</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When you are finished here, turn to 42.

One afternoon you are surprised to find the performers refusing to go on stage for rehearsals. Birdsong at Dawn says, 'Three of the troupe have said they've seen the ghost of Mellagan, the sorcerer who constructed this theatre. They're afraid to perform in case he's watching. If this continues, I think it won't be long before the troupe disintegrates altogether. Is there anything you can do to help?'

Try to banish the ghost      turn to 19
Talk to it         turn to 36

Alternatively, if you think the whole endeavour is too risky, you may leave the actors to deal with their own troubles. In this case, get the codeword Gazelle, and turn to 42.

The priest will only make you an initiate of Tyrnai if you are a Priest, a Warrior or a Wayfarer. If so, you may become an initiate for free. This gives you the benefit of paying less for blessings and other services offered here. You cannot become an initiate of Tyrnai if you are already an initiate of another faith. If you are able to become an initiate, and you choose to do so, write Tyrnai in the God box on your Adventure sheet.

Turn to 68.

For a monarch, Whispering Wind is remarkably accessible. He lives in a house in the oldest part of the city. His home is larger than most, but unassuming; you walk past it once while
searching for it.

Whispering Wind is eager to see visitors, his schedule permitting. A soldier stands on his doorstep, though you soon gain the sense that he is an aide rather than a bodyguard.

If you have the codeword Gain, turn to 12. If not, turn to 113.

83

If you have the codeword Clutch or Gloom, and the box above is not ticked, place a tick in it and turn to 28. If you have neither codeword, or if the box has already been ticked, turn to 42.

84

The murderer takes a step back as he sees your aggressive stance. Though wounded, he remains a skilful foe.

Scarred murderer  COMBAT 9, Defence 15, Stamina 15

If you are killed, turn to 99. If you are both still alive after four rounds, a team of the city's constables arrives on the scene, and quickly pummels the man unconscious.

If you win this fight, whether alone or with the constables' assistance, you learn that a bounty of 400 Shards had been offered for this man. You also spot a curious violet-flecked stone that the man dropped during your fight. Note down the money and the item on your Adventure Sheet if you wish to keep them, and then turn to 42.

85

There is a disconcerting sense of absolute oblivion. When it passes, the sun is beating down on you with remarkable intensity. Nearby, a city stands on the edge of a lake, its buildings spilling into the water itself.

You have reached Dunpala. Turn to 42.

86

You wake. You are cold, sore. It takes a moment to realise you are still in the little cave where you have spent the last few days. The priest of Quetzil is with you; a rope back up to the surface hangs above his head.

He smiles when he sees you are conscious. You begin to question him, but he says, 'The girl above, she told me she had seen you leave this place. I came to tend to you at once.' You glance over his shoulder; behind him, the cave wall is whole once more. There is no tunnel.

Gain the title Nahual, and note the number '1' beside it. This is your Nahual value, and you may be instructed to raise or lower it throughout your adventure. You should not remove the title Nahual however, unless specifically instructed, even if your Nahual value falls to zero. Your trials over the last few days have sorely tested your strength, however; reduce your Stamina to half its current value, rounding up.

And then, as you stand, you see you have brought back a souvenir from the realm of spirits. You are still gripping part of a clay bowl, that has a curious bluish colour. Note this broken clay bowl on your Adventure Sheet if you decide to keep it.

Turn to 121.

87

You are no longer welcome at Broken Hand's crocodile farm. You arrive to find that a half-dozen crocodiles have been released onto the land around the farm. They prove surprisingly mobile over short distances, even on land, and you lose 3 Stamina points as you stumble in your haste to escape them.

Presuming you are still alive, return to 42.

88

Qlelec takes the stone with glee. Remove it from your Adventure Sheet. Then he says, 'I'll tell you a horror story. There is a creature called Kerep Tlotor who wanders this continent as the mood takes him. He kills a few, here and there, when he's hungry for a soul. You can tell Kerep's victims – his touch burns their bodies to cinders. It's been that way for two hundred years now, I hear. Oh, I also hear that Kerep Tlotor recently arrived in Dunpala. Maybe you'll meet him soon.'

With that, Qlelec breaks into a loud chorus of 'The Drunk Priest of Smogmaw,' and skips away.

Get the codeword Ghastly, and turn to 42.

89

With a slight shake of your head, you take a step backwards. The shining serpent watches you a few seconds, impassive – and then it darts forward, its maw dropping open. It swallows you whole; the twilit world around you becomes white light, pinpricked with tiny black stars.

Make a MAGIC roll and a SCOUTING roll, both at Difficulty 16. Remember that you do not currently possess any of your usual equipment which might help with these rolls.

If you succeed in both rolls, you weather this spiritual assault with little ill effect. If you fail one roll, you must subtract one point from one of your abilities; you decide which. If you fail both rolls, you must also lose a Rank – roll one die and subtract this amount from your maximum Stamina, and remember that this will also reduce your Defence by one point.

Turn to 30.

90

By day, the city of Dunpala is a veritable hive of activity. Everywhere, the men and women of the city are seeking a way
to make a little money – or a way to forget the difficulty of just such a task. Roll two dice.

| Score 2-6 | Unscrupulous vendors | turn to 123 |
| Score 7-8 | Qlelec the Loon       | turn to 32  |
| Score 9-12 | A storm             | turn to 10  |

91

Decide which play you wish to see during your visit to the theatre.

- Dlalan the Hunter turn to 5
- The Song of Merenta turn to 14
- Nopalti of the Leaping Fish turn to 26

92

Abruptly, Qlelec swings his fist and bops you on the cheek, knocking you down. While you're on the ground he seizes one of your possessions and runs away.

You start to run after him, but a small crowd of chuckling citizens stops you. The people of Dunpala see Qlelec as ridiculous, but he is well-liked all the same.

Lose 3 Stamina points for the punch, and one of your items (you choose which). Then turn to 42.

93

'Kerep Tlotor, a spectral devourer, has left his mark upon you,' says the priest. 'An unwise choice on his part, perhaps, as you have learned a little of the ways of the Nahual. This grants you power in the spirit realm. If you possess a spirit light, a Xibalban lantern, you may summon Kerep Tlotor to this place to confront him once more. He will not be killed easily, however.'

If you have a Xibalban lantern, and you wish to face Kerep Tlotor, turn to 127. If not, you leave. Turn to 42.

94

Foreigners are rarely trusted at the best of times in Dunpala. These fences decide you might be allied with the city's constables. While you do your best to tell them you have no such allegiance, they swiftly pack up their goods and move on.

Worse, you also find that somebody has taken the opportunity to steal 100 Shards from you. Remove that amount from your Adventure Sheet, if you possess that much, and turn to 42.

95

Call of Eagles is a tall Dunpalan with forearms marked with the scars of years of smithing. He fidgets as he talks about his work as an artificer, a creator of magical items.

After some discussion, you have an idea of what sort of items he can create. Consider the list below for more information.

- High-quality weapons turn to 24
- Crystal knife turn to 40
- Aeonian flute turn to 63
- Xibalban lantern turn to 70

When you are finished here, do you have the codeword Endless? If so, turn to 6. If you do not have this codeword, you leave, retracing your steps through the tavern. Turn to 83.

96

Foreigners are forbidden to own property in Dunpala. In practice, this means that if you wish to buy a house, you'll have to work through local agents who can help arrange the transaction. The process is costly, and potentially frustrating.

The cost of buying a house in Dunpala is broken into two parts, the administrative fee and the property fee. If you wish to enter into the administrative process, you must first pay 200 Shards, and then make a CHARISMA roll at Difficulty 18 to see if your efforts to buy a house have been successful. You may, however, add the following modifiers to the roll:

- Possess a merchant's cloak +3 to roll
- You are a Warrior, Priest or Wayfarer +2 to roll
- You are a Rogue -2 to roll
- You are Rank 9 or higher +2 to roll
- You are Rank 4 or lower -2 to roll

If the roll fails, your efforts to buy a house have been unsuccessful. You may begin the process again, but you will have to pay another 200 Shards.

If you succeed in your CHARISMA roll, you may then buy a house. The cost of the property itself is 300 Shards. If you buy the house, you may tick the box at section 42 to indicate that you possess a house. Note that if you abandon your efforts to buy a house at this point, you'll have to start from scratch again if you wish to buy a house in Dunpala in the future.

When you are finished here, turn to 42.

97

You speak movingly of the criminals she has helped so far, and how that help could come to nought if she abandons them now. She need not leave Broken Hand for good, you argue, but it is clear that she sees her two callings as incompatible. At last, with no little sadness, she says, 'Return to the theatre when you wish. I will be there with my followers.'

You bid Broken Hand farewell, but he merely glowers at you in response. It is time for you to leave.

Get the codeword Genius, and then turn to 42.
98
If you have the codeword *Genius*, turn to 72. If you have the codeword *Glacier*, turn to 59. If you have neither codeword, read on.

Zlaloc spots you near the theatre's entrance. You report that you have made no progress in your search for Birdsong at Dawn. He frowns, but nods his head in understanding.

Zlaloc invites you to stay and watch a performance for free – though the usher who shows you to your seat demands 10 Shards for the service. Perhaps the usher was once a thief, you reflect; if so, old habits die hard.

If you wish to stay and see a play, cross off 10 Shards and decide which you will watch.

- Dlalan the Hunter turn to 5
- The Song of Merenta turn to 14
- Nopalti of the Leaping Fish turn to 26

If you do not wish to see a performance, you may return to the city centre. In this case, turn to 42.

99
You are dead. If you have a resurrection deal, turn to the section noted on your Adventure Sheet after first erasing your current possessions, money, and any details noted on your Ship's Manifest.

If you don't have a resurrection arranged, this is the end and you can only start afresh with a new character. First make sure to erase all ticks, codewords and Adventure Sheet details in all your Fabled Lands books. You can begin again at 1 in any of the books in the series.

101
Finally, you manage a powerful swing at Kerep Tlotor's chest, breaking his sternum and cutting into his heart. He drops to his knees, a great grin still plastered across his face. His skin starts to smoulder, and then ignites into flame. Then he tips back his throat, and a thousand fireflies rise from his gorge, filling the air around you.

Kerep Tlotor is a supernatural being. Though you have killed his human form, he is not defeated. The fireflies land on your skin, biting at you. They crawl into your mouth and up your nose. And though you beat at them and roll on the ground, you can do little to stop them.

If you have the codeword *Goblet* or *Indigo*, turn to 110. Otherwise, turn to 55.

102
You spot a handful of muggers preying on a couple of merchants near the docks. The merchants' shouting soon attracts a group of Dunpala's red-cloaked constables, forcing the muggers to take flight. The merchants are almost sobbing with gratitude as they thank their rescuers. And yet then the constables, laughing wickedly, demand every Shard that the merchants are carrying, as a fee for their assistance. Facing possible imprisonment, the merchants pay up.

These, then, are the men responsible for enforcing Dunpala's laws. Once the group disperses, you wander that way and find 5 Shards on the ground, dropped in the initial scuffle. Note this money on your Adventure Sheet, then turn to 42.

103
The temple to Quetzil is a large, though neglected, pyramid in the older, more inland section of town. Inside, its walls are covered with murals of winged serpents, both feathered and scaly. A couple of rattlesnakes circle one another in a shallow pit in the floor. Up above you, a spider monkey swings from creepers clinging to the temple's ceiling.

You find a lone priest sweeping the floor. He is dressed like the other inhabitants of Dunpala, with the addition of a large fragment of broken shell hanging around his neck. 'Quetzil is duality,' he says, in answer to your questions about the god. 'He is man and beast. He is the bird in the sky, and the snake on its belly. He resides in both Elaz Velara, the land of men, and Elaz Carnaquen, the land of spirits.'

He is unable to make you an initiate of the god, but he can offer you a blessing of Immunity to Disease and Poison, for a fee of 40 Shards. If you wish to receive it, you may ignore any one occasion when you would normally suffer from disease or poison – for instance, if bitten by a venomous snake. When you use the blessing, cross it off your Adventure Sheet. You can only have one such blessing at any one time.

If you are suffering from Kerep's Touch, turn to 25. If not, you leave. Turn to 42.

104
You have angered the ghost of Mellagan. You hear a rumbling roar in the darkness around you, and then a bolt of mystical energy slams into your chest, blighting you. Subtract 1 point from one of your abilities.

And then the dark presence lifts. This act of malevolence has expended much of the ghost's energy. Birdsong at Dawn feels sure the ghost will return, months or years from now. But for the moment, the theatre is free of its influence.

You leave the troupe to its rehearsals. Turn to 42.
Several actors agree with you, but in the end it is Birdsong at Dawn who wins the day. 'Kaimren can stay,' she says at last. 'His crimes have been severe, but they are forgotten here. You'll find that there is little in this world that cannot be forgiven, in time – even a lack of forgiveness in others.'

Perhaps it would be wise for you and Kaimren to stay out of one another's way for a while. You leave the theatre, for now.

Lose the codeword Afraid, and turn to 42.

Several guards glare at you through the gate as you recount your story. Yet when you show them the meat you have brought, they truculently escort you along the winding path, and through several more locked gates, to the buildings at the centre of the farm. 'Can you go put the gators' food in the usual place?' one of them asks.

You have no idea where that is, but you nod enthusiastically.

As soon as you are out of the guards' sight, you dump the heavy sack of food and head for a prominent-looking house.

Turn to 114.

You reassure Birdsong at Dawn that, in following her heart, she is doing the right thing. She is grateful for your understanding, and presents you with a blue crystal shard as a gesture of thanks.

'Please, tell my followers at the troupe that they may visit me, as a friend, any time they wish,' she says. 'And know that you will be also be welcome here whenever you return.'

It is time to leave. Get the codeword Glacier, and turn to 42.

Peeping out from your hiding place, you see the feet of one of the city's constables lingering nearby. Then the man bends down. Despite the darkness, he sees the two of you at once. The constable backpedals away as you scramble out of your hiding place. In your haste, you bang your head on the edge of the cart.

Lose 3 Stamina points. But then you leap at the constable, trying to stop him yelling for help.

Constable    COMBAT 10, Defence 16, Stamina 19

If you are killed, turn to 99. If you manage to reduce the constable to 5 Stamina points, turn at once to 37.

Resurrection costs 300 Shards if you are an initiate of Tyrnai, and 900 Shards if not. Once you have arranged for resurrection you need not fear death, as you will be magically restored to life here at the shrine to Tyrnai. To arrange resurrection, pay the fee and write 'Shrine to Tyrnai, The Serpent King's Domain, paragraph 43' in the Resurrection box on your Adventure Sheet. If you are later killed, turn to 43 in The Serpent King's Domain.

You can only have one resurrection arranged at any one time. If you later arrange another resurrection elsewhere, the original one is cancelled. In this case, cross it off your Adventure Sheet. You do not get a refund.

When you are finished here, turn to 68.
Qlelec is in fine fettle today, singing an off-key song about the mythical land of Dangor.

'The Park of Distractions was filled with great games, but the noise of its guests drove its maker insane! He murdered those fools with astonishing violence, then renamed his work 'The Park of Deep Silence!'

You're starting to understand how the park's maker must have felt. Give Qlelec a few Shards for his performance if you wish, and then turn to 42.

Whispering Wind is a rather overweight Dunpalan. His wife serves you a cup of tomato juice flavoured with maguey, while he shows you mosaics and carvings depicting several ancestors. He tells you with some pride that he can trace his family line back over six centuries.

At last, Whispering Wind tells you a little of his duties in Dunpala. Essentially, he oversees any substantial dealings with foreigners, in order to avoid repeating the bloody conflicts which have at times occurred in the past. This role includes granting foreigners the right to conduct commerce with the people of the Weeping Jungle, an act otherwise punishable by death. 'A wonderful opportunity, that is,' he says. 'There are many treasures hidden amongst those trees and vines.'

Sadly, Whispering Wind has strict quotas regarding this right, and cannot extend it to you for some time. You ask who can impose such restrictions on a king, and he smiles and says, 'There is a great power in this land, and it does not reside in me.' He thinks a few moments, then adds, 'But I might be persuaded to make an exception to this rule.'

He leads you into another room in the house, and introduces you to his youngest son, Dancing Flame, a boy of fifteen years. The boy is strong, and friendly – and yet, as you speak to him, he tells you he is a crocodile called Imziz, and that his favourite drink is sea water. He says he can fly up to the clouds, and that yesterday he ate a cake made of starlight.

'For several weeks, he has not been able to utter a word of truth,' says Whispering Wind. 'In all other ways he is normal – he eats well, plays well, dances with his friends. But whenever he opens his mouth, he speaks only this... nonsense. He cannot tell me what has caused this change, of course, and I have never heard of anything like it before. But if you could find a way to remedy him, I would be inclined to grant you a great favour.'

Get the codeword Gain, and turn to 42.
those I trust to change their ways may stay. As I result, I find myself quite understaffed."

Birdsong at Dawn merely smiles at this affirmation of Broken Hand's change of heart.

If you wish, you may leave possessions and money here to save having to carry them around with you. You may also rest here safely, and recover any Stamina points you have lost. Record in the box below anything you wish to leave. Each time you return, roll two dice.

| Score 2-10 | Your possessions are safe |
| Score 11-12 | A worker has pilfered one of your possessions. Roll one die, and lose the first to the sixth item on your Adventure Sheet as corresponds to this roll (if you have fewer items stored here than the roll indicates, lose the last one). |

 ITEMS LEFT AT FARM

If the box above is empty, place a tick in it and turn to 9. If it is already ticked, you finally return to Dunpala. Turn to 42.

118
You enter the tunnel, which begins to slope upwards. You follow it until you emerge into the night on the lip of a cliff. Before you, up in the sky, the full moon hangs too bright, too low, peering at you through a gap in the clouds. You look out across a stormy sea. Wherever you are, you are far from Dunpala.

'I've been here before,' you say. 'I've visited this place in my dreams.'

'This is no dream. This is the point of balance between life and death.'

You whirl about. And there is the immense, translucent serpent, gliding soundlessly across the ground towards you.

'The Serpent King is aware of you, and he is powerful. His thoughts were often with you as you lay dying. Come with me.'

The serpent slithers along the edge of the cliff and, despite the unreal air of this place, you have to run to keep up.

Turn to 111.

119
As a friend of the theatre, you are welcome to stay in the building's upstairs dormitory for as long as you wish. You may rest here safely, and recover any Stamina points you have lost.

You can leave possessions and money here to save having to carry them around with you. Note anything you choose to leave here in the box below. Each time you return, roll two dice.

| Score 2-8 | Your possessions are safe |
| Score 9-12 | One of the residents of the theatre has succumbed to the temptation to steal. Lose everything that you had left here. |

 ITEMS LEFT AT THEATRE

When you wish to leave, consider the two boxes above. If the first box is empty, place a tick in it and turn to 45. If it has already been ticked, place a tick in the second box, and turn to 80. If both boxes have already been ticked, turn to 65.

120
You speak of the criminals Birdsong at Dawn has helped so far, and how that help could come to nought if she remains with Broken Hand. She could return to them for just a short time, you argue. But she shakes her head. 'No. Some amongst them might prove volatile if I return, even briefly. They must stand on their own feet, now. They are strong enough, I feel. Tell my troupe that they may visit me here, as a friend, whenever they wish – and know that you, too, will also be welcome here whenever you return.'

You must leave, alone. Get the codeword Glacier, and turn to 42.

121
You follow the priest back to the temple of Quetzil, and he returns the equipment you had previously left here; you may once again use this equipment whenever you wish.

'You may call the devourer Kerep Tlotor here at once, if you possess a Xibalban lantern,' the priest tells you. 'But remember you are still weak. I urge you to seek rest at once.'
If you possess a Xibalban lantern and wish to face Kerep Tlotor at once, turn to 127. If not, you leave the temple. Turn to 42.

122
You approach Dunpala's harbour, at the southernmost tip of Lake Firewater. A handful of King Whispering Wind's administrators patrol the docks, wearing blue cloaks that indicate their role and rank. From time to time one of them will board a ship to check cargo and manifests, searching for any excuse to levy extra trading charges.

Here you can buy passage to far-off lands, or even a ship of your own to fill with cargo and crew. You can buy one-way passage on a ship to the following destinations:

- **Begatombo**, cost 15 Shards  
  *The Serpent King's Domain* 181
- **Smogmaw**, cost 30 Shards  
  turn to 79
- **Copper Island**, cost 45 Shards  
  turn to 8

If you buy a ship, you become its captain and you may take it wherever you wish. Three types of ship are available.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ship type</th>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>Capacity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Barque</td>
<td>350 Shards</td>
<td>1 Cargo Unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brigantine</td>
<td>550 Shards</td>
<td>2 Cargo Units</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Galleon</td>
<td>1000 Shards</td>
<td>3 Cargo Units</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If you buy a ship, add it to the Ship's Manifest, and name it as you wish. The quality of the ship's crew is poor, unless you upgrade it. If you already own a ship, you can sell it back to the harbourmaster for half of the above prices.

It costs 65 Shards to upgrade a poor crew to average, and 120 Shards to upgrade an average crew to good. Crews of excellent quality are not available in Dunpala.

If you own a ship, you may buy as many Cargo Units as it has room for. You may also sell cargo, if you have any. However, all buying and selling must be carried out through local agents, which incurs a cost of 60 Shards. That is, by paying 60 Shards you may buy and sell as much cargo as you wish during this visit to Dunpala, but you will have to pay this fee again the next time you wish to trade here.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cargo</th>
<th>To buy</th>
<th>To sell</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Furs</td>
<td>260 Shards</td>
<td>210 Shards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grain</td>
<td>240 Shards</td>
<td>200 Shards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metal</td>
<td>860 Shards</td>
<td>800 Shards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minerals</td>
<td>700 Shards</td>
<td>640 Shards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spices</td>
<td>380 Shards</td>
<td>300 Shards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Textiles</td>
<td>270 Shards</td>
<td>220 Shards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timber</td>
<td>140 Shards</td>
<td>110 Shards</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If you own a ship and wish to set sail, turn to *The Serpent King's Domain* 244. Otherwise, when you are finished here you go to the city centre. Turn to 42.

123
You come across a hastily-assembled marketplace where some of the thieves and pirates who frequent Dunpala are fencing their ill-gotten wares. Much of it is quite mundane; if you wish to see the more interesting items you'll have to convince these crooks that you can be trusted. Make a THIEVERY roll at Difficulty 12.

- **Successful roll**  
  turn to 21
- **Failed roll**  
  turn to 94
- **Don't want to see items**  
  turn to 42

124
He looks at you with some sadness. 'You have previously proven yourself quite able in the study of the Nahual's way. I wonder what has caused you to lose that knowledge. In any case, I lack the means to help you gain such power a second time. Return to me if you regain your connection to Elaz CarnaQuen, and perhaps we can rid you of Kerep Tlotor's influence.'

For now, you leave the temple. Turn to 42.

125
Kerep Tlotor falls. The fireflies around him burst into flame, a fire that spreads to his own body. He screams, and reaches out a hand to grab at your ankle.

And then you snap to alertness, as if from dozing. You are still sitting before your Xibalban lantern. The room is calm. You wonder for a moment if you imagined the whole confrontation.

Remove 'Kerep's Touch' from your Adventure Sheet, as well as any ill effects it caused you. Then roll two dice; if you roll higher than your Rank, you gain a Rank. Going up in Rank gives you an additional 1 – 6 maximum Stamina points (roll one die), and will also increase your Defence by 1.

Finally, restore your Stamina score to its maximum. Feeling better than you have in a long time, you bang on the door of the room and yell to the priest to let you out.

Turn to 42.

126
Birdsong at Dawn is a leader of sorts to this troupe of former criminals, but she has no real power over them. If you can malign Kaimren badly enough, the troupe will reject him despite Birdsong at Dawn's wishes.
And so you detail how Kaimren has proven himself a power-hungry sorcerer, an untrustworthy manipulator of minds – that is, you tell them the precise truth. Make a CHARISMA roll at Difficulty 14.

- Successful roll: turn to 77
- Failed roll: turn to 105

The priest reads you to a bare, windowless room at the back of the temple. He makes a ring of sigil-painted stones, and places the Xibalban lantern at their centre. 'Wait here. Be calm. Kerep Tlotor will come.' With that, he leaves you. As he closes the door behind him, you hear a bolt slide into place.

You sit, patient, in the eerie green light of your lantern. Two hours pass before you feel a malevolent presence behind you. You turn – but Kerep Tlotor thumps you in the side of the head, causing stars to flash before your eyes, and hurling you against one wall.

He is as much animal as man, now. He bounds towards you, fireflies buzzing around his body – and behind him, bizarrely, you see yourself, not quite conscious, still sitting before your lantern. Your spirit and body have become dissociated; you fight Kerep Tlotor on an ethereal plane, to save your physical form.

This spiritual combat is not fought in the normal way. When attacking, your Nahual value – that is, the number listed after your Nahual title – replaces your COMBAT ability. Your Defence score is calculated by adding your Nahual value to your MAGIC or SANCTITY ability (whichever is higher). Your Rank has no bearing on this Defence score. If you are injured, you lose Stamina points in the normal way. Finally, unless specifically stated, you may not use any of your weapons, items or armour to help you in this fight.

Kerep Tlotor  
Nahual 7, Defence 8, Stamina 20

If you lose, your adventure is over unless you have a resurrection deal. If you win, turn to 125.

If you enjoyed this demo of The Serpent King’s Domain then please consider backing us on Kickstarter.
# Adventure Sheet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ability</th>
<th>Score</th>
<th>STAMINA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CHARISMA</td>
<td></td>
<td>When unwounded:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMBAT</td>
<td></td>
<td>CURRENT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MAGIC</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SANCTITY</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCOUTING</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THIEVERY</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Defence:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resurrection Arrangements</th>
<th>Titles &amp; Honours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Blessings**

---

[Image of a cityscape]
Possessions (maximum of 12)

1. 
2. 
3. 
4. 
5. 
6. 
7. 
8. 
9. 
10. 
11. 
12. 

MONEY (Shards)
Fabled Lands

The most ambitious gamebook series of all time

Set out on a journey of unlimited adventure!

FABLED LANDS is an epic interactive gamebook series with the scope of a massively multiplayer game world. You can choose to be an explorer, merchant, priest, scholar or soldier of fortune. You can buy a ship or a townhouse, join a temple, undertake desperate adventures in the wilderness or embroil yourself in court intrigues and the sudden violence of city backstreets. You can undertake missions that will earn you allies and enemies, or you can remain a free agent. With thousands of numbered sections to explore, the choices are all yours.

Read more about the Fabled Lands here.