



Author, Author!

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A One-Round Adventure for the *Legends of the Shining Jewel* Campaign

A frustrated author and a stolen manuscript... not what most heroes envision as the beginning of their next adventure. But danger and glory take many forms in the Shining Jewel of the Vast. For heroes of levels 2-7.

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Welcome to LSJ!

This is a Legends of the Shining Jewel campaign adventure. It is written to be played in a standard four-hour convention time slot.

It is a good idea to have the players and judge place some sort of nametag in front of them, so everyone can easily identify each other and the names of the characters they are playing.

Some of the text in this adventure is in ***bold italics***. This text is for the players to hear, although you are certainly free to paraphrase or summarize the text if you feel it is necessary.

LSJGM Empowerment Clause

The coordinators of the campaign empower GMs to make changes to the module as necessary to accommodate any unforeseen actions taken by the PCs. If the players find another way to deal with the module, they should be successful and appropriately rewarded. The GM may also invent new NPCs as needed to populate the city of Amthydor, which is not completely detailed due to practical limitations.

If the party is having trouble dealing with say, undead encounters, the GM can always have a patrol of priests or the like come along to finish the combat and save the PCs. Full XP awards

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should not be given for the encounter if this is necessary.

Do NOT save the PCs if their failure is a result of their own ill-advised actions or lack of forethought. Softening the blow from a bad set of rolls or simple bad luck is one thing, but stupid actions deserve what they get.

Calculating Average Table Level (ATL)

LSJ uses ATL rather than APL in an effort to offer challenging modules without massacring smaller or imbalanced tables. What this means is that, to factor the ATL for a table, the levels of all the player-characters are added together. That number is divided by six regardless of how many player-characters there actually are. This number constitutes the party's ATL (rounded to the closest integer). If that number is not offered in the module, the players may choose if they play up (a higher ATL) or down (a lower ATL). It is against the spirit of the campaign to deny a player an open spot at a table in an effort to maximize the treasure for the other players at the table. Twelve players equals 2 tables of 6, not 3 tables of 4.

A Note About Tiers and the Power of PCs

Not all parties are created equal. Some level 1 parties can handle anything the GM can throw at them, and some level 3 parties are relatively weak for their levels. If the GM finds that the party at the table is really not up to the challenge of the tier, he should adjust the encounters DOWN for that party. This is particularly important if the party has a broad mix of experience levels, is lacking clerics and paladins who can heal, or is a "role-playing" rather than "battle-ready" party. The encounters should be a worthy challenge, not an impossible task or a slaughter fest. Regardless of what the instructions say, the GM should let common sense rule the day (and the module).

Animals in Combat

Animals which are considered ‘class features’ (Paladin bonded mounts, ranger or druid animal companions, and familiars) do not affect the party for the purpose of determining ATL.

Animals that are purchased or adopted from the Bestiary and are available for combat will have their HD included in the calculation of ATL for the scenario. Adopted animals of 2 HD or greater that accompany PCs on an adventure, that are available/intended for combat, add their HD to the total HD of the party for the purpose of determining ATL. The total HD of the party, including animals, is then divided six to determine the APL at which combats should occur. An animal does not need to be trained in order to participate in combat. However, animals which have not been trained for Attack, Defend, Guard or War, which are threatened, must make a Will save DC 15 or flee until combat is resolved.

Adventure Background

Cooper Marlin is a good-tempered but marginally talented author of various adventure stories. About six months ago, Cooper discovered that he was suffering from an awful case of writer’s block. Seeking inspiration, Cooper came across a battered adventurer’s journal in the Amthydor marketplace. He purchased it knowing that such accounts could be springboards for another book. The journal, several hundred years old, described the exploits of an adventurer and his companions. They traveled to a long-forgotten crypt and battled a spectral knight who fought to prevent their entry into the burial chamber of the tomb. Cooper read the journal and was inspired. In a fever pitch of writing, he penned his next novel, “Death in the Sand,” in six days of near-constant scribbling. Cooper’s purchase seemed fortuitous to him, but in truth he placed himself in great danger. The source of his danger is the Ir-Kasi, cousins of the M’Jir nomads of the Zur’Oun desert, also known as the Sea of Fire.

The Ir-Kasi chasing after Cooper’s journal are agents of the Night Wolf. The Night Wolf was once a paladin who wandered the Zur’Oun Desert, battling evil wherever it might be found. Her final act of heroism came at the Tomb of Al-Achmar, the ancient burial place of a powerful necromancer-lich. She defeated him, but at a terrible cost. To ensure that Al-Achmar would remain trapped in his tomb, she gave her life and remains there, undead, to battle anyone who sought to disturb the necromancer’s tomb.

The Night Wolf has been patiently waiting for the memory of the tomb and its location to pass from the world of mortals so she might be released to move on to her final resting place. Over the years a few persistent adventuring companies – including the most recent one, described in the journal – have assaulted the tomb in hopes of unlocking its secrets and claiming its riches. When the adventurers entered the tomb, the Night Wolf attempted to remove them peacefully. Unfortunately, the adventurers would not listen and a battle ensued.

After the fight the Night Wolf dragged the remains of the adventurers and their equipment out of the tomb and turned them over to the Ir-Kasi. These allies of the Night Wolf are desert wanderers, the descendants of those M’Jir that were victimized by the lich Al-Achmar. They are pledged to protect the tomb from those who would despoil it. The Ir-Kasi headed back to camp with the remains, but they were, in turn, attacked by an ambush party of eryx and were slain. A nomad later stumbled on the ambush site and the journal. Unaware of its importance, he sold it to an Amthydoran adventurer he found at the next oasis. Upon his return to the city, this adventurer sold the book to the seller from which Cooper purchased it.

Meanwhile, the Ir-Kasi discovered that the journal – a written record of the tomb’s location – had been lost, and they began a frantic effort to find and retrieve it. Eighteen months later, they arrived after the long journey to Amthydor. Just the other night they located the journal in a used bookstore. The Ir-Kasi attempted to purchase it,

but it was instead sold to Cooper Marlin. The Ir-Kasi found Cooper's apartment, broke into the place, and took the journal. They also noticed Cooper's manuscript and took it as well, fearing that the tale of adventure might inspire other would-be heroes to attempt to travel to the Tomb of Al-Achmar.

What begins as a recovery of a stolen book will take our heroes to the vast Zur'Oun Desert in a quest to recover Cooper's greatest work. At the conclusion of the adventure, the Night Wolf will tell the PCs that the Tomb will continue to be a magnet for adventurers unless it is destroyed, and asks the heroes to bury the place beneath the desert sands. The Ir-Kasi cannot enter the Tomb, as it is an unholy, unclean place, or they would have long ago destroyed the site themselves.

Introduction – Through a bit of yelling, Cooper contacts the PCs and hires them to recover his manuscript. In this part of the adventure, the PCs get a description of the theft, along with some basic leads to pursue.

Encounter 1 – The PCs begin their investigation of the theft and chase down a variety of leads. With persistence and good fortune, the PCs can track down the Ir-Kasi culprits.

Encounter 2 – The PCs walk in on the Ir-Kasi as they have completed the creation of a magical portal back to the Zur'Oun. A few of their number will escape with the journal and the manuscript. If the PCs chase them through the portal, they find themselves in the middle of a sandstorm in the mightiest desert on Raia.

Encounter 3 – The PCs must contend with the sandstorm and the ambush party of eryx within it. By defeating these creatures, the PCs will gain valuable supplies and a map that will lead them to an oasis, tomb, and the Ir-Kasi encampment that guards it.

Encounter 4 – This encounter deals with the ramifications of PCs attempting to attack,

negotiate or do anything else with the Ir-Kasi besides simply avoiding them. In any event, the journal and the manuscript aren't here; they are hidden with the Night Wolf inside the tomb. Anwar El-Fahid, the subject of their search, meets them. While he no longer has what the PCs seek, he can tell them where it may be found. He will tell them that only the Night Wolf can decide if the manuscript may be returned to the heroes.

Encounter 5 – This encounter deals with the exploration of the Tomb of Al-Achmar. When the PCs reach the lowest seals that close the tomb of the defeated lich, the Night Wolf will reveal herself to the PCs. At this point, the PCs may negotiate with the undead guardian or battle her. If the PCs and she don't come to blows, she will agree to release the manuscript, provided that the PCs help her to destroy the tomb.

Should foolish PCs battle the Night Wolf and open the seals protecting the tomb, Al-Achmar the lich is loosed upon them. D'oh! I hope the players aren't too attached to their characters...

Epilogue – Here the method of returning to Amthydor is discussed. Cooper rewards the PC for returning his manuscript. PCs who dealt honorably with the Night Wolf will receive a benefit from her as well.

Introduction (Or, A Novel Idea)

Tonight the weather in Amthydor is cool and clear. Following the loss of so many residents to undead armies nearly a year ago, the nighttime hours find the city unusually quiet. By day, the din of people is replaced with that of hammering, sawing and construction, but nothing replaces the eerie stillness that the night brings. So it's all the more jarring as the frantic shouts of "Thieves! I am ruined!" intrude upon the stillness of the night.

Verify with the PCs as to whether they are checking out the disturbance, and continue:

Your investigation into the man's cries brings you to an outside scaffold of a two-story building. A man of meager dress stands pointing into an open doorway and sputtering with anger. "Robbers! I've been burgled!"

A few other adventurers have responded to the man's shouts, as well as a pair of soldiers in the Diamond Legion. As you mill about outside the door, careful not to interfere with an official investigation of the Legion, you overhear much of the conversation.

The man's name is Cooper Marlin, and he is an author of some kind. He is claiming that he returned home to find his small residence turned upside-down, and he mentions that both a very old journal and his latest manuscript are missing. While he's irritated about the loss of the former, the theft of the manuscript, he claims, will utterly ruin him. The Legion soldiers do a careful search, take a report of the incident, speak to him a bit more, and then take their leave. As Cooper stands at the top of the landing, watching the soldiers leave, he spies you and nods.

"Hey, you there," he says, motioning towards your group. "Something of mine has been stolen, as you no doubt heard. You lingered long enough to listen, so I imagine you found the situation interesting enough to do so. In any event, if you come upstairs, I'd like to make a proposition to you. What do you say?"

Assuming the PCs are willing to hear Cooper's offer, he shows them in. His home is a wreck, but he does manage to drag over a low table solid enough to allow the PCs to sit upon it. He'll offer the PCs refreshments, although he has little except water and cheap ale. Once they are seated, Cooper will introduce himself and make his sales pitch.

Attending to your needs in his shattered apartment as best he can, your host sits down. His ransacked dwelling is a wreck of overturned furniture. "My name is Cooper Marlin. I'm a writer, an author. Perhaps

you've heard of my work...? No, perhaps not. Uh, anyway... I write adventure stories, taking the exploits of heroes such as you, embellishing on them, and churning them out for mass consumption. Over the past few weeks, I've had one hell of a case of writer's block. For writing hobbyists, it's a nuisance. But if it's the way you make a living, it's fatal."

"In search of some inspiration, I came across a book dealer who had an old journal for sale. Well, as it turns out, the journal belonged to an adventurer. This man, a warrior, had belonged to a party of adventurers that uncovered the existence of a tomb of a necromancer-lich. This tomb was in the Great Desert, Zur'Oun. They fought their way into the tomb's interior, and the last entry was written as the warrior and his companions were breaking camp to make one final push into the lowest portion of the vault."

Cooper's excitement is evident. "I couldn't put the journal down. As soon as I finished, I began writing at a fever pitch. My creditors pounded on my door for me to open it up and pay them. I spent a week scribbling until the blisters on my fingers burst. Last night, I finished 'Death in the Sand.' It is my greatest work!"

Cooper's smile vanishes. "I slept in this morning; I was exhausted, as you can imagine. This morning, I headed out to market, came back... to this! I need that manuscript, or I am ruined!"

He leans forward, his arms folded in his lap. "I am nearly broke. I'll strike a bargain with you. I can't pay you, but I promise that I'll include each and every one of you as characters in my next book. And I'll cut you in on the profits that the book may make – say, five percent apiece? It's the best I can do, and I'm in quite a bind..."

Cooper is sincere, and even a quick look around his trashed apartment will back up his claim of being broke. He will field any questions the PCs

might have as best he can. Some canned answers to common questions are below:

Do you know of who might have done this? “I haven’t a clue. I don’t have any enemies, except my creditors – but they rob only themselves by taking away my manuscript and, by extension, my ability to pay back my loans. I don’t know of any authors in Amthydor that write in the same genre as I, so I doubt that’s it.”

Who is your creditor? “Telly Serasa. He’s three hundred pounds, with hands big enough to fit around a man’s neck. Needless to say, I’m not eager to miss his payments.” (GM Note: This is a dead end.)

Do you have any fans that might be interested in stealing one of your manuscripts? “I doubt it, but even if that was the case, how would they know I was writing one? I told no one that I was working on the manuscript, and I completed it quickly. I simply don’t see how it could have happened.”

Do you know of anyone who might have been interested in stealing the journal? (Thoughtful pause) “Hmmm... well, when I purchased the journal, there was another person who was arguing with the shopkeeper that he had put a deposit on the book. The proprietor told him that the foreign coins he had paid with were no good here in Amthydor. I don’t recollect exactly what the other buyer looked like. I do remember that he was a human, deeply tanned, with dark eyes and a short moustache, and... oh, how could I forget. He had the top of his head wrapped up in white strips, like bandages. A... turban? I think that’s what they call them. Keeps your head protected from the sun, or so I recollect.”

Where is the book dealer? Do you think he might be able to point us in the right direction? “It’s possible. The place is known as the ‘Cup and Tome.’ It’s right down the street, about six blocks down and on the left side. He’s got a pair of wheelbarrows filled with old books on either side of his door; you can’t miss it. I never got the proprietor’s name, I’m afraid.”

Did the author of the journal ever give his name? “I wish he had, but unfortunately not.”

Do you mind if we search the apartment for clues? “The Legion already did, but sure. Do you want a shovel?” (The PCs can search the area but won’t find anything of interest.)

What did the journal and the manuscript look like? “The journal is a small, thick book, bound in leather with a symbol embossed on the front, in gold leaf. It looks like a trio of interlocking rings, arranged in a triangular pattern, point down. My manuscript is a collection of parchment, about the thickness of two fingers, tied off with twine to hold the papers together. My initials are on the lower left corner of each page.” (The symbol can’t be identified by the PCs and is unimportant to the adventure.)

What did the journal say about the interior of the tomb? “It was fairly general. It mentioned four chambers leading to an outer vault room, and that each one was filled with traps and fantastic monsters.”

If the GM feels that the PCs haven’t asked enough questions to nudge them in the direction of the Cup and Tome book shop, have Cooper mention the bookstore and the man in the turban (read the appropriate previous boxed text descriptions).

Important Note: If PCs use *Detect Object*, the manuscript will be ¼ to ½ mile from the site of casting. Casting this spell, if the manuscript is in range, will bring the PCs directly to the Coast and Fish Inn – and Encounter Two.

Encounter One – The Hunt

The trip to the Cup and Tome is uneventful, a few short blocks through the city’s Port District.

The trip from Cooper Marlin’s home to Cup and Tome Book Sales is a short one. The small, single story building is so choked with books

and papers of all kinds that you half-expect it to explode. Excess books are piled into a pair of wheelbarrows that sit on either side of the doorway and are labeled “BARGAIN BINS.” Inside the shop, shelf space is at such a premium that books are simply stacked on the floor, sometimes to a height of four feet. The proprietor of the shop is a wizened old human, seventy winters old by the looks of him, who can barely be spotted behind a veritable mountain of papers, books, manuscripts and letters.

The owner’s name is Erno Kippley, and he’s been in business (literally) for as long as he can remember. This shop is a treasure trove for those who collect old writings of all sorts, although digging past all the junk can be intimidating. However, any PC who wishes may look around the shop – and possibly find something worthwhile!

Searching the Shop

If and only if a PC expresses interest in searching the shop, have that PC make a Search check. Consult the chart below; the item type and sale price is listed. Only one search is allowed per PC. Items marked with an asterisk are certified items and available for purchase at the price listed on the cert.

Except for a 0-10 result, once a PC has found an item, other PCs cannot find it. If a check returns a result that has already been rolled (and the item purchased), treat the result as if it was the next lower category on the list. If no other options are left, treat it as if a 0-10 has been rolled.

PCs cannot “take 20” – the store is simply too large (relatively speaking) and too packed with books to do anything but browse and hope to stumble across something!

Detect Magic will return a massive reading of the Illusion school. All of these items radiate magic thanks to a *Magic Mouth* spell that says “Thanks for shopping at the Cup and Tome!”

after having been purchased and brought outside by the buyer.

Items that are discovered in the shop must be purchased by adventure’s end! A PC is allowed to sell any items she possesses for ½ price.

<u>Search</u>	<u>Item Found</u>
0 to 10	Any random, non-magical book or scroll on any subject desired by the PC. This book will have no in-game effect, and the title should be listed here (the player creates the title)
11 to 14	A book of orcish erotica (not for the weak of heart!) (Price 1 gp)
15 to 17	A collection of astrological notes by Irvyaun Kist, noted stargazer (above ground and under a starry sky, a PC may use these notes to grant themselves a +1 competence bonus to their Intuit Direction and astronomy-related skill checks) (Price 15 gp)
18 to 21	Arcane scroll scribed with the spell <i>Comprehend Languages</i> (Caster level 1 st) (Price 30 gp)
22 to 25	A map purported to be of a cache of treasure hidden in the Delambir Mountains. A PC with this item may spend 100 gp and 10 TU to mount an expedition to recover the treasure. Roll 2d6 and multiply the result by 50 gp to determine how much is found. On a roll of 2 or 12, the map is a false one and yields no gold. The roll cannot be modified in any way and this roll can only be made at the beginning or end of any LSJ adventure, at which point the cert must be voided. (Price 50 gp)
26 to 29	“The Acquisition of Knowledge

Knowledge” by Yulkion Dormass. This book is an enchanted tome. Only one reader may peruse the book at any time; only one person can gain the effects of the tome. Once the book is read from cover to cover, it will bestow its benefit on the reader and then vanish. *Only one reader* will ever gain this item’s benefits! Once read, the reader may choose a Knowledge skill. The skill so chosen becomes a class skill for the character. If the skill chosen is already a class skill for the reader, there is no effect and the magic of the tome is wasted. The skill chosen must be noted on this cert

_____.
(Price 1000 gp)

30 or more A badly battered, shabby-looking, leather-bound book. The book is actually a blank *Blessed Book*. (Price 3000 gp)

Erno Kipley has enormous spectacles and weak, watery eyes. He is a human male in his mid-seventies. His back has long since twisted into a S-curve from remaining hunched over books for days on end. He is a bit nervous around aggressive, charismatic or physical types – such as many adventurers – and is very meek and unassuming. He’ll happily answer any questions that the PCs might have. Some responses to basic questions are provided for the GM below.

Do you know of a leather-bound journal book with three concentric rings on the cover? “Ah, yes. I sold it a few days ago, so you’re out of luck, I’m afraid. I acquired it from an adventurer who had picked it up in the Zur’Oun, the Great Desert. That was a year or two ago. Don’t know anything else about it.”

Where do you get your books? “Oh, many places! Estate sales, libraries that are cleaning house of old titles, and of course adventurers.

They bring in all sorts of things – such as that journal. But I never knowingly purchase anything that’s been acquired through illegal means.” (True, by the way)

Who purchased the book? “A local author by the name of Cooper Marlin. I know the name well. Many of his books are on my shelves and in the bargain bins. His writing isn’t very good, so many of his books end up here, sold second-hand.”

Have you seen or been approached about purchasing a manuscript of Cooper Marlin’s? “Afraid not. The last manuscript I purchased a week ago wasn’t written by Mr. Marlin.”

What do you know about a turban-wearing man that was trying to buy the journal? “Oh yes. Anwar El-Fadim, that was his name. He was a dark, swarthy gentleman, of medium height and build. He came into the shop and was here for four hours before he found that journal. He got very excited, and left a deposit with me on the journal and said he would return to pick it up. After he left, I noticed that he had left foreign currency that was no good in my shop. I don’t accept any money that isn’t Amthydoran you see. He said he would be back, but about an hour later, Mr. Marlin came in and expressed an interest in the book. I knew Mr. El-Fadim would be angry, but a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush, as the saying goes, so I sold the book to him. When Mr. El-Fadim returned, he was *very* angry. I thought he might strike me. He stormed out the door without even taking his money back.”

Do you have those coins? May we see them? “Of course.” (The coins are from Al-Serai. A Knowledge: Geography check of DC 15 tells the PC that this settlement is the last sizable civilized place that northbound travelers would pass through before entering the Zur’Oun.)

Did he say where he was staying? “Yes, actually... if I can find his deposit slip, that is. Hmm... let’s see... hmmm... ah, here it is. It says he’s staying at the Coast and Fish Inn.

That's here in the Port District, very close to the Southern Gate. It's on the corner of Coast and Fish Streets, hence the name."

There is not much else the PCs will be able to get from Erno. He does his best to be polite and helpful (unless given a reason to be otherwise) but doesn't know enough to give any more information beyond what is noted above.

Other Avenues of Investigation

The Diamond Legion: The Legion maintains a fairly heavy guard presence at the city gates. This is of course for security purposes, but also to explain the (many) important laws of the city to newcomers. The South Gate guards will remember a trio of men dressed in turbans, traveling together. All three of the men match the general description of El-Fadim – men with dark hair and complexions, of medium build. They are able to verify that the men arrived within the city three days ago, spoke heavily accented Common, and were inquiring as to a place to stay and as to any book dealers in the city. The guards directed them to the Coast and Fish Inn and the Cup and Tome, respectively.

People around the Cup and Tome: Most people will remember seeing Anwar El-Fadim. PCs seeking an eyewitness will encounter a young man named Kive Tenta, who is apprenticed to a wizard. He frequents the Cup and Tome, searching for this or that writing or scroll for his master. His description will be in line with what Erno's was, with one important addition. He'll note that the Anwar must be a wizard, or attempting to pass as one, as he was wearing a belt with several pouches of the kind commonly used to store spell components.

Encounter Two – The Portal

Read the following upon the PCs' arrival at the Coast and Fish Inn:

The Coast and Fish Inn stands on the western edge of the Port District. The Inn is among the

first of a multitude of new structures being built in the city in general, and the Port District in particular. The proprietor is clearly banking on an influx on travelers and other new arrivals to the city, as the inn is quite large but doesn't look crowded.

The ground floor is a common room bisected by a wall into two portions. One houses poor workers and others without enough money for a private room; they are here because the Diamond Legion actively enforces vagrancy laws. The other half of the area is a small dining hall and taproom where several people sit, eating and quietly talking.

Depending on what time of day the PCs visit, there are a total of four people sleeping or resting in the common room. These folk will berate the PCs if they are awoken.

The innkeeper's name is Magdalore. He's a beady-eyed, greasy looking character, although he is scrupulously honest. He or any of the dining patrons will be able to verify that a trio of men dressed in the manner of El-Fadim shares a room on the second floor. The innkeeper will be able to identify the specific room they are in. Alternatively, the PCs will be able to detect some suspicious activity easily enough by roaming the second floor:

Making your way up the stairs, you immediately hear a soft chanting coming from the end of the hall. From beneath that doorway, wavering purple light can be seen. As you draw closer, you can hear two men conversing over the chanting, in a language unfamiliar to you. Whatever is being done in there, based on the intonations of the chanting, something is reaching a conclusion!

The Ir-Kasi in the room are making small talk and discussing how happy they will be to leave the city and return home. Have any PCs with the Spellcraft skill make a roll against DC 15. If they make it, the listener can determine that the spell being cast is designed to open a *portal* of some sort. At this point, one of the Ir-Kasi (the

spellcaster) is stepping through the portal. The PCs have six rounds (thirty seconds) before the other two men step into the portal. The portal remains open another six rounds before it snaps shut. In other words, from the time you read the boxed text, the PCs have sixty seconds to make up their minds or they've missed their chance!

If the PCs don't act immediately, it's entirely possible that the Ir-Kasi may step through the portal and not be there when the PCs enter the room. This means the heroes will miss a fight (depending on your players' preferences, this may or may not be a bad thing).

The room is twenty feet square, with a bed, bureau, and chamber pot. The door is a simple wooden door (Hardness 5, HP 10, Break DC 15) with a simple lock (DC 15 to pick open).

Here is the sequence of events:

Round 0: Players receive boxed text. PCs spot the purple light coming from under the door and hear chanting.

Round 1: The Ir-Kasi sorcerer (Anwar El-Fadim) steps through the portal at the end of this round. The sounds of chanted spellcasting cease.

Round 6: The first remaining Ir-Kasi steps through the portal.

Round 10: The second remaining Ir-Kasi steps through the portal.

Round 12: The portal closes, and the purple light fades. If no PCs have entered the portal by this point, the adventure is over for your group.

If the PCs break through the door immediately, Anwar will growl to his men, "Nahwah kiran-tee! Kas-sa! Kas-sa!" ("The tomb robbers! Hold them off! Hold them off!") He then steps through the portal. (He will be able to do this before the PCs can react; consider it a readied action triggered by the PCs entrance). PCs will note that he has the journal and Marlin's

manuscript under his arm. If they delay longer than a round, they won't see it.

GM Note: The language of the Ir-Kasi is a radically different dialect of the language of the M'Jir nomads and cannot be casually understood by a speaker of the latter tongue.

Anwar's companions will turn and draw falchions, bent on preventing the PCs from following Anwar through the portal. If possible, they will back towards the portal and disappear through it in Rounds 6 and 10 as described above, fighting defensively if it seems feasible.

If the PCs are having a hard time and taking heavy losses, have the Ir-Kasi turn and flee before the party is decimated, but award half XP for this encounter.

ATL 1:

Ir-Kasi Warriors (2): Male Human War 1/Rgr 1; Medium Humanoid (Human); HD 2d8+4; hp 16; Init +6 (Dex, Improved Initiative); Spd 30 ft; AC 15 (+3 studded leather, +2 Dex), touch 12, flat-footed 13; BAB/Grapple: +2/+4; Atk: Falchion +5 Melee (2d4+2); Full Atk: Falchion +5 Melee (2d4+2); Space/Reach 5ft/5 ft; SA Nil; SQ Nil; AL LN; SV Fort +6, Ref +2, Will +2; Str 14, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 14, Wis 14, Cha 12.

Skills: Handle Animal +6, Hide +5, Knowledge (Nature) +6, Listen +6, Move Silently +5, Search +6, Spot +6, Survival +6

Feats: Improved Initiative, Track, Weapon Focus (Falchion)

Possessions: Studded leather, falchion, 5 gp.

ATL 3:

Ir-Kasi Warriors (2): Male Human War 2/Rgr 1; Medium Humanoid (Human); HD 3d8+6; hp 26; Init +6 (Dex, Improved Initiative); Spd 30 ft; AC 15 (+3 studded leather, +2 Dex), touch 12, flat-footed 13; BAB/Grapple +3/+5; Atk: Falchion +6 Melee (2d4+2); Full Atk: Falchion +6 Melee (2d4+2); Space/Reach 5ft/5 ft; SA Nil; SQ Nil; AL LN; SV Fort +7, Ref +2, Will +2; Str 14, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 14, Wis 14, Cha 12.

Skills: Handle Animal +6, Hide +5, Knowledge (Nature) +6, Listen +7, Move Silently +5, Search +6, Spot +7, Survival +6

Feats: Improved Initiative, Track, Weapon Focus (Falchion)

Possessions: Studded leather, falchion, 5 gp.

ATL 5:

Ir-Kasi Regulars (2): Male Human Ftr 3/Rgr 2; Medium Humanoid (Human); HD 3d10+2d8+8; hp 47; Init +6 (Dex, Improved Initiative); Spd 30 ft; AC 15 (+3 studded leather, +2 Dex), touch 12, flat-footed 13; BAB/Grapple +5/+7; Atk: Falchion +8 Melee (2d4+2); Full Atk: Falchion +8 Melee (2d4+2); Space/Reach 5ft/5 ft; SA Nil; SQ Nil; AL LN; SV Fort +8, Ref +6, Will +3; Str 15, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 14, Wis 14, Cha 12.

Skills: Climb +5, Handle Animal +6, Hide +5, Knowledge (Nature) +6, Listen +7, Move Silently +5, Ride +5, Search +6, Spot +7, Survival +6

Feats: Dodge, Improved Initiative, Mobility, Power Attack, Track, Weapon Focus (Falchion)

Possessions: Studded leather, falchion, 5 gp.

ATL 7:

Ir-Kasi Regulars (2): Male Human Ftr 5/Rgr 3; Medium Humanoid (Human); HD 5d10+3d8+16; hp 76; Init +6 (Dex, Improved Initiative); Spd 30 ft; AC 15 (+3 studded leather, +2 Dex), touch 12, flat-footed 13; BAB/Grapple +6/+8; Atk: Falchion +9 Melee (2d4+3); Full Atk: Falchion +9/+4 Melee (2d4+3); Space/Reach 5ft/5 ft; SA Nil; SQ Nil; AL LN; SV Fort +8, Ref +6, Will +3; Str 16, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 14, Wis 14, Cha 12.

Skills: Climb +5, Handle Animal +6, Hide +5, Knowledge (Nature) +6, Listen +7, Move Silently +5, Ride +5, Search +6, Spot +7, Survival +6

Feats: Dodge, Improved Initiative, Mobility, Power Attack, Track, Weapon Focus (Falchion)

Possessions: Studded leather, falchion, 5 gp.

The Portal

The portal to the Zur'Oun is a rectangular purple plane, resembling a legless table stood up on its

short side. The portal is one-dimensional, becoming invisible to anyone standing 90 degrees on either side of it, or in any position behind it. The portal cannot be passed through or otherwise interacted with at angles from which it cannot be seen. The portal emits dim fluorescent purple light.

Any living thing that breaks the plane of the portal is immediately moved to the Zur'Oun (see Encounter Three). PCs cannot look through or touch the portal without being transported. A rope or chain's entire length would vanish and be transported the moment it touches the portal. A *dimensional anchor* spell will prevent transportation, but neither would the PC be able to interact with the portal (no sticking their heads through and looking around, in other words). For plot purposes, the portal cannot be dispelled or otherwise negated.

Spells will not reveal the gateway's destination. It's a leap of faith – the PCs will have to jump through blindly. Of course, by now they should have a good idea of where they are going...

Encounter Three – The Great Desert

Read this to each player as his or her PC passes through the portal. Note that you may have to pull players aside to read them this text individually if they do not all enter the portal as a group.

You feel yourself tumbling the second your body breaks the strange plane of purple light. You panic and flail reflexively as you are overcome with the sudden sensation of falling straight down. This goes on for several seconds, and your body goes rigid, awaiting the inevitable impact. It is then that the light fades, and you feel yourself hit something coarse and somewhat yielding. This impact felt as if you simply fell from a standing position, rather than the lethal crash you expected at the end of the long plummet you just experienced.

A howling whistle fills your ears. Shielding your eyes from the wind, you find yourself laying on your side, pushed into a sand dune. All around you, nothing but sand can be seen in every direction. Your visibility is no more than a foot or two as howling winds drive the sand into you. It is all you can do to shield your eyes as you become quickly covered in a gritty yellow sheen. A few feet away, a sandblasted stone, shaped vaguely like an arrowhead, juts from the dunes.

The PCs have been dumped into a sandstorm. The Ir-Kasi passing through the portal have already beat a hasty retreat into the concealment of the storm, relying on their native survival instincts to keep them safe. The PCs may or may not have the ability to do the same. The stone described is a natural, albeit unusual feature of the desert. It is not magical and is unremarkable. Its purpose is to provide the PCs with a landmark for a map that they will later acquire (see “The Eyrx Ambush Party” below). The stone is large enough to provide the party with some meager protection against the howling wind and blowing sand.

Sandstorm Effects

- Casting any spells with a Verbal component requires a Concentration check (DC 10 + spell level) for any casters with exposed mouths – they tend to choke on a mouthful of blowing sand. Covering mouths with a rag, kerchief or something similar will eliminate this nuisance.
- Any checks involving sight or hearing suffer a –4 circumstance penalty.
- Tracking the Ir-Kasi during a raging sandstorm is simply impossible. Tracks are obscured the moment they are made.

Survival 101

The PCs have two options – travel through the sandstorm, or attempt to ride it out. The storm

has another hour before it abates. A successful Survival check (DC 14 + ATL) will provide the PC with the following survival hints:

- Without the use of magic or some exceptional Survival skills, you run a great risk of getting lost. Then again, you don’t know where you are, so you already ARE lost...
- The best defense against the sand is body covering from head to toe, especially around the face.
- If you wait out the storm, you don’t dare lie down. You’d stand a good chance of being covered over by wind-blown sand.
- You should all hold hands or tie each other off to one another. Anyone separated from the party might not be able to be found, even if they were only a few yards away.

Heat Exposure Rules

The temperature in the Zur’Oun is considered *very hot*. If any PCs are wearing metal armor, they must make a **Fortitude Check every hour (DC 19, +1 for each previous check failed)** or suffer **1d4 points of subdual damage**. A PC who suffers subdual damage from heat exposure will also suffer from heatstroke and will be considered fatigued (**-2 Strength, -2 Dexterity, cannot run or charge**), until the PC has recovered. A PC recovers subdual damage at the rate of **1 point per PC level per hour of rest**.

Sandstorm Damage

Travel through the sandstorm will deliver (5 x ATL) hp of damage. This damage is reduced by half for any PC that states that they covered up. Riding out the storm and not moving reduces this to (2 x ATL) – again, halved if the precautions are taken. All of this is subdual

damage, but will be in effect for the eryx ambush (see below).

Note to the GM: While the sandstorm is meant to be a dramatic inconvenience for the PCs, its main purpose is to effectively cover Anwar's escape. It's vital that the PCs not engage him at this time; rather, they meet him later, when the situation is less likely to break out in combat.

The Eryx Ambush Party

The M'Jir tribes are hardly the only residents of the Zur'Oun. The eryx are reptilian humanoids who haunt the wastes as well. These beings are most often evil raiders who kill and take what they need to survive. Like the PCs, the eryx are vulnerable to the sandstorm's effects, and are riding the storm out. Once the storm dies down, they renew their hunt, finding the PCs in the dunes and triggering a fight to the death.

The Eryx are fully described in GM Aid #2. They are straightforward enemies for the PCs to fight and they can be run easily with only the stat block information provided. The encounter will take place whether the PCs are remaining still or moving across the wastes. The purpose of this encounter within the module is to give the PCs survival supplies they need to traverse the desert, as well as to give them a map as to where they need to go.

All around you, the desert stretches off in every direction. The sandstorm has abated, but the damage is done. Any tracks your nomad quarry may have left have been smoothed over, and you are left in the middle of a nearly featureless wasteland.

A trio of soft "whumps" can be heard as arrows plunk into the sand near you, rousing you from your reverie. Emerging from the other side of a dune, you see a quartet of reptilian humanoids, hissing and with bared teeth. Each stands six feet tall or larger, with reddish scales that are the color of the dunes during sunset. They carry little more than crossbows, scimitars and backpacks, and they

wear leather jacks. The creatures race forward, clearly intent on making you their next meal. Speaking broken Common, the creatures swear and hiss.

ATL 1:

Eryx, Young adult (4); Medium Humanoid (Reptilian); HD 2d8+3; hp 15; Init +3 (Dex); Spd 50 ft, 30 ft burrow; AC 17 (+3 Dex, +2 leather, +2 natural), touch 13, flat-footed 14; BAB/Grapple +1/+3; Atk: Scimitar +3 Melee (1d6+2); bite +3 melee (1d4+2); or javelin +4 ranged (1d6) or light crossbow +4 (1d8); Full Atk: Scimitar +3 Melee (1d6+2); bite +3 melee (1d4+2); or javelin +4 ranged (1d6) or light crossbow +4 ranged (1d8); Space/Reach 5 ft/5 ft.; SA Nil; SQ Nil; AL NE; SV Fort +1, Ref +4, Will +1.

Str 14, Dex 16, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 13, Cha 10.

Skills: Hide +5, Jump +4, Listen +6, Move Silently +6, Search +5, Spot +5, Survival+5, Tumble +5

Feats: Track

ATL 3:

Eryx, Adult (4); Medium Humanoid (Reptilian); HD 3d8+3; hp 17; Init +3 (Dex); Spd 50 ft, 30 ft burrow; AC 17 (+3 Dex, +2 leather, +2 natural), touch 13, flat-footed 14; BAB/Grapple +2/+4; Atk: Scimitar +4 Melee (1d6+2); bite +4 melee (1d4+2); or javelin +5 ranged (1d6) or light crossbow +5 (1d8); Full Atk: Scimitar +4 Melee (1d6+2); bite +4 melee (1d4+2); or javelin +5 ranged (1d6) or light crossbow +5 ranged (1d8); Space/Reach 5 ft/5 ft.; SA Nil; SQ Nil; AL NE; SV Fort +2, Ref +5, Will +2.

Str 14, Dex 16, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 13, Cha 10.

Skills: Hide +6, Jump +5, Listen +7, Move Silently +6, Search +5, Spot +5, Survival+5, Tumble +6

Feats: Combat Reflexes, Track

ATL 5:

Eryx, Adult (4); Large Humanoid (Reptilian); HD 5d8+5; hp 49; Init +3 (Dex); Spd 50 ft, 30 ft burrow; AC 13 (+3 Dex, +2 leather, +2 natural),

touch 15, flat-footed 14; BAB/Grapple +3/+5; Atk: Scimitar +5 Melee (1d6+2); bite +5 melee (1d4+2); or javelin +6 ranged (1d6) or light crossbow +6 (1d8); Full Atk: Scimitar +5 Melee (1d6+2); bite +5 melee (1d4+2); or javelin +6 ranged (1d6) or light crossbow +6 ranged (1d8); Space/Reach 5 ft/5 ft.; SA Nil; SQ Nil; AL NE; SV Fort +2, Ref +5, Will +2.

Str 15, Dex 16, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 13, Cha 10.

Skills: Hide +6, Jump +5, Listen +7, Move Silently +6, Search +5, Spot +5, Survival+5, Tumble +6

Feats: Combat Reflexes, Track

ATL 7:

Fanged Eryx (4); Large Humanoid (Reptilian); HD 6d8+18; hp 58; Init +4 (Improved Initiative); Spd 40 ft, 30 ft burrow; AC 15 (+2 leather, +3 natural), touch 10, flat-footed 15; BAB/Grapple +4/+9; Atk: Scimitar +9 Melee (1d6+4); bite +9 melee (1d4+4); or javelin +4 ranged (1d6) or light crossbow +4 ranged (1d8); Full Atk: Scimitar +9 Melee (1d6+4); bite +9 melee (1d4+4); or javelin +4 ranged (1d6) or light crossbow +4 ranged (1d8); Space/Reach 5 ft/5 ft.; SA Poisonous bite; SQ Nil; AL NE; SV Fort +8, Ref +3, Will +3.

Str 18, Dex 11, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 9.

Skills: Hide +2, Jump +8, Move Silently +3, Survival +3

Feats: Combat reflexes, Improved Initiative, Track

Poison Bite: A Fanged Eryx that makes a successful bite attack poisons its victim. Onset time is 1 minute. Fort save DC 17. Initial damage 1d6 hp. Secondary damage temporary loss of 1d4 Str and 1d4 Con

Equipment: 4 suits of leather armor (fitted for eryx, not usable by other humanoids), 4 scimitars, 4 light crossbows, 36 light crossbow bolts.

* Eryx are especially good jumpers. Their maximum distance is 20' for a standing jump and 15' for a standing high jump.

Tactics: The eryx are intelligent, but they are not sophisticated fighters. Unless non-fighters show themselves to be a significant threat (a wizard lets loose a *fireball*, for instance), the creatures will tend to concentrate on the warriors of the group.

The Eryx's Map

Aside from their gear, the eryx carry several waterskins, though no food (this was where the PCs were supposed to fit in). Also on their possession is a crude map. This is *Player Handout #4*. This shows a rough, arrow-shaped object (representing the rock the PCs spotted near where they emerged from the portal) and a series of dashed lines, presumably a route. The routes travel to the northeast and the north. At the end of the northern route, a series of tents are drawn. At the end of the northeastern route, a square is drawn with what appears to be a door in its center facing. These represent the Ir-Kasi village and the Tomb of Al-Achmar, respectively. In crude common, directions of "North" and "Northeast" are listed. No scale is provided however.

The Eryx do speak broken Common, although it is heavily accented and difficult to understand at times. They know some things that might be of interest to the PCs, specifically:

- The Ir-Kasi are a group of humans that guards a place to the northeast where a dead human is buried. Their village can be found to the north. They are dangerous warriors led by a powerful shaman. There are about fifty men in the village, with twice that number of women and children.
- The eryx don't know how they do it, but the Ir-Kasi come to the arrow-head rock and make a door in the air, allowing them to come and go as they please. Only the shaman Ir-Kasi can do this, however, and claim it is his powerful magic that makes this door come and go. The eryx will grudgingly admit that the power of their

own shaman (the adept eryx in their party) is eclipsed by that of the Ir-Kasi's.

- The eryx possess a crude map that shows where the tomb and the village are in relation to the arrowhead rock.
- If asked about the journal, the eryx will verify that they attacked and killed a small force of Ir-Kasi, finding the book amongst their bodies. The eryx didn't take the book, as they rarely bother with anything that isn't food or a weapon. They left it behind along with the uneaten portions of the corpses. The site of their attack has long since been covered over by sand; the eryx doubt they could find it again even if they wanted to.

It is entirely up to the PCs what they do with any captured eryx. If they are brought to the Ir-Kasi, the desert folk will imprison them and attempt to ransom them back to the eryx's main tribe in exchange for warriors captured by the raiders. The eryx know that the Ir-Kasi won't kill them, so they will be docile prisoners. If the PCs try to do anything else with them, or take them to the tomb, they do their utmost to escape.

Encounter Four ~ The Ir-Kasi Village

Strictly speaking, this encounter is entirely optional. The PCs could certainly head for the tomb and bypass this encounter altogether. However, if the PCs make use of some diplomacy, the stop will be worth their while.

The trip across the featureless wastes instills in you a growing respect for the desert. By day, the fierce heat makes travel too draining. By night, the sands themselves seem to radiate a fierce chill that makes you dig through your supplies for blankets and clothes you thought you would not need. All the while, each step you take sinks into the loose sand, bringing your travel to a slow, painful crawl.

At last, something can be seen on the horizon. The interruption of this desert's monotonous landscape cannot help but be noticed by you. As you approach, you see a village of several dozen tents. Men and boys, dressed like the desert dwellers you seek, can be seen moving around the settlement. One points, and you see the open areas quickly become vacant. Then, several riders mount strange-looking humped animals and begin slowly riding in your direction. When you are just outside the range of a good bowshot, the lead rider puts up his hands in a show of peace. The rest of the riders remain behind as he approaches.

If the PCs allow him to approach, read the following boxed text. If they attack him, the Ir-Kasi will do their best to crush the party.

The man removes a covering over his face, and you see Anwar El-Fadim, the object of your chase. He looks down at you from camelback, his heavy eyebrows arched in curiosity. "The desert has tested you," he says in accented Common, "and found you worthy. Come into my village. Accept the hospitality of the Ir-Kasi, my people, and let us discuss why you have chased us so far over a book and a collection of papers."

Anwar is curious and amused that the PCs have managed to get this far. If it can be seen that the PCs have beaten the eryx (bringing prisoners, or their remains) he is especially impressed. The sorcerer bears them no ill will for fighting or even slaying the warriors that covered his escape through the portal; he notes that "Just as they did their duty, so you did what your felt was yours." The harsh life of the desert has lent the Ir-Kasi a stoic pragmatism.

If Anwar is attacked, he will contemptuously defend himself. Anwar is a powerful sorcerer, and will almost certainly wreck a low (or even mid-) level group of PCs.

ALL ATLS:

Ir-Kasi Elite (4): Medium Humanoid (Human); Ftr 5/Rgr 4; HD 5d10+4d8+18; hp 84; Init +6 (Dex, Improved Initiative); Spd 30 ft; AC 15 (+3 armor, +2 Dex), touch 12, flat-footed 13; BAB/Grapple +9/+12; Atk: Falchion +13 Melee (2d4+5); Full Atk: Falchion +13 Melee (2d4+5); Space/Reach 5ft/5 ft; SA Nil; SQ Nil; AL LN; SV Fort +10, Ref +4, Will +7; Str 16, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 14, Wis 14, Cha 12.

Skills: Climb +7, Handle Animal +7, Hide +5, Jump +6, Knowledge (Nature) +6, Listen +7, Move Silently +5, Ride +6, Search +6, Spot +7, Survival +6

Feats: Dodge, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Mobility, Power Attack, Track, Weapon Focus (Falchion), Weapon Specialization (Falchion)

Possessions: Studded leather, falchion, 5 gp.

Anwar El-Fadim: Medium Humanoid (Human); Sor 12; HD 13d4+26; hp 71 (91 with pre-cast Maximized *False Life* spell); Init +2 (Dex); Spd 30 ft; AC 19 (+4 *Mage Armor*, +2 Dex; +3 deflection), touch 19, flat-footed 16; BAB/Grapple +6/+7; Atk: +7/+2 Melee (Dagger, 1d4+1); SA Nil; SQ Revered Shaman; AL LN; SV Fort +6, Ref +6, Will +8; Str 12, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 19.

Skills: Concentration +17, Diplomacy +5, Knowledge (Arcana) +10, Sense Motive +7, Spellcraft +10, Survival +7

Feats: Eschew Materials, Extend Spell, Maximize Spell, Persistent Spell, Still Spell, Track

Revered Shaman (Su): As the keeper of the Ir-Kasi's portal secrets, Anwar may create a *Gate* at the arrowhead rock. This portal may go anywhere on Raia, although it must be to a place he has seen. (This is why the nomads had to travel to Amthydor overland to find the book). It costs 100 xp for Anwar to open this *gate*, and remains open for two minutes. Anwar may open a return portal anywhere on Raia, but the portal will always lead back to the arrowhead rock. Using this ability is a full-round action that may provoke attacks of opportunity if applicable.

Known Spells (6/6*/7/7/7/5*/6; DC 14 + spell level): Level 0: *Arcane Mark, Detect Magic, Detect Poison, Disrupt Undead, Light, Mage Hand, Mending, Prestidigitation, Read Magic*. Level One: *Color Spray, Detect Undead, Endure Elements, Identify, Mage Armor*. Level Two: *Acid Arrow, Alter Self, Arcane Lock, False Life, See Invisibility*. Level Three: *Dispel Magic, Gaseous Form, Slow, Tongues*. Level Four: *Ice Storm, Locate Creature, Secure Shelter, Shout*. Level Five: *Cone of Cold, Dismissal, Hold Monster*. Level Six: *Legend Lore, Undeath to Death*.

Possessions: Dagger, 50 gp.

* Accounts for pre-cast spells.

The Ir-Kasi Village

Once members of the M'Jir nomads, the Ir-Kasi gave up their itinerant ways to station themselves near the tomb in order to defend it. The village is built around a blue water oasis. The Ir-Kasi value equality of positions, and Anwar is truly not a leader but merely a "first among equals." Women, while not treated badly, do occupy something of a second-class position in their culture. However, women are revered as healers, nurturers and mothers, and no woman in the tribe is taken for granted. Children are reared by nuclear families – divorces are unknown among the Ir-Kasi – but any adult keeps an eye on any child that might be around. These people are content in their lot in life, but are keenly aware of the dangers of the desert. Every woman and child old enough to hold a knife knows how to use one.

Having accepted the hospitality of the mysterious desert folk, you follow Anwar into the village. Now that you are close, you see that it is built to protect a blue water oasis. Women and children peer at you with curiosity from behind tent flaps; men regard you impassively. Anwar finally dismounts near a tent no larger than the others, pulls the flap aside, and gestures for you to enter.

Anwar will be somewhat offended if a PC does not accept his hospitality, muttering, "Here in the desert, the offering of cool shade is not one to be refused." If the PCs get belligerent, he will order them from the camp, by force if need be. For PCs who enter the tent, warn them that there is a lot of boxed text coming at them...

The inside of the tent is mercifully cool. A handful of small sacks seem to contain all of Anwar's worldly possessions. Seated in the far corner of the tent is a lovely young woman with dark hair and eyes. She smiles politely and bows to you. "Honored of my husband, welcome."

Anwar follows inside and closes the flap behind him. He gestures to the woman. "My wife, Festima. We may speak freely before her. Now, my friends, accept my water. Among my people, this is a sign of truce and friendship." His wife passes you a beaten clay jug.

Anwar fills his cup last. "Let me explain why I broke your laws, and took your writer's papers," he says, getting right to the point. "It begins with the tale of our revered ancestor, she who is known as the Night Wolf. She was once a tan'ka – what you folk call a paladin – who wandered this desert, battling evil wherever it might be found."

"Her final act of heroism came at the Tomb of Al-Achmar, the ancient burial place of a powerful necromancer-lich. In those days, this undead sorcerer held the nation of my people in bondage. The Ir-Kasi toiled endlessly, dying by the hundreds, as his conscripted troops attacked oasis after oasis. This lich intended to subjugate the entire desert."

"The Night Wolf heard the cries of her people and took the battle to the lich. She defeated him, but at a terrible cost. To ensure that Al-Achmar would remain trapped in his tomb, she gave her life and remains there, undead, to battle anyone who seeks to disturb the necromancer's tomb."

"She has been patiently waiting for the memory of the tomb and its location to pass from the world of mortals, so she might be released to move on to her final resting place. Over the years, a few persistent adventurers - including the most recent one, described in your author's journal – have assaulted the tomb in hopes of unlocking its secrets and claiming its riches. They were ignorant of the danger they faced if they had freed the lich from his burial place."

"When the adventurers entered the tomb, the Night Wolf attempted to remove them peacefully. Unfortunately, the adventurers would not listen and a battle ensued. Our revered ancestor was forced to slay them all."

Anwar frowns. "We Ir-Kasi are the descendents of those who were victimized by the lich Al-Achmar. We are pledged to protect the tomb from those who would despoil it."

"After the fight, the Night Wolf moved the remains of the adventurers and their equipment out of the tomb and turned them over to some of my tribesmen. They headed back for camp with the remains of the adventurers, but they were attacked by a party of eryx and slain. The eryx are the evil man-lizards that stalk these dunes, ambushing and killing all they find."

"The eryx had no use for a book, and left it at the site of the ambush. A nomad who stumbled on the ambush site later found the journal. Unaware of its importance, he sold it to an adventurer he found at the next oasis. Upon his return to Amthydor, this adventurer sold the book to the old man at the Cup and Tome."

"Meanwhile, we discovered that the journal – a written record of the tomb's history and location – had been lost, and we began a frantic effort to find and retrieve it. I divined its location using a spell of legend lore, and then we made the impossibly long journey to Amthydor. Just the other night, we located that

author's apartment. We broke into the place and took the journal. I also noticed his manuscript and took it as well, fearing that his tale of adventure might inspire other would-be heroes to attempt to travel to the Tomb of Al-Achmar. The remains of the lich must not be disturbed, or it will be a calamity of great proportions for Ir-Kasi and eryx alike."

He finishes his water, and wipes his mouth with the back of his hand. "The book and the papers you seek are now in the safekeeping of the Night Wolf. I turned them over to her in the hopes that perhaps the location of the tomb might finally fade into history once more."

My apologies to the GM for all the boxed text!

The PCs may have questions for Anwar. Some possibilities include the following:

May we bring back the manuscript? "You have shown yourselves to be diligent, and I sense no evil from within you. I will permit you to go to the tomb, if you wish, and petition our revered ancestor for the return of the possessions. It is for her to decide. But I can tell you that as long as the manuscript describes the tomb's location in the detail that it does, her answer will certainly be 'no.'"

What if Cooper Marlin changes the location of the tomb in his story? "Hmmm. I am embarrassed to admit that I had not considered such an option. But at the time, I was too concerned his answer would have been no. Perhaps this might be acceptable, yes. But it is to be decided by the Night Wolf, not me."

Can you lead us to the tomb? "I can escort you as far as the threshold of that place, but I cannot enter within. It is a home of the dead, and as such is ritually unclean to us. Your people have no such taboos, or so I understand."

What were those creatures that attacked us? "They are called eryx. They inhabit the wastes and are generally malicious raiders. They have been enemies of the Ir-Kasi and the M'Jir – our

nomadic cousins - since time immemorial. There are two varieties – one that are man-sized and a larger, less intelligent variety. The latter has a poisonous bite and great strength. They stand about nine feet tall."

How are you able to make portals? "I can call upon the power of our ancestors to open a door to anywhere. I can do this only from the arrowhead rock, although I can open a portal home from anywhere. It is this that enabled us to return here from Amthydor."

Could you open a portal back to Amthydor for us? "I may only call upon the powers of my ancestors but once per tenday. But when I am able to do so, I will."

Where did you get those coins you gave the shopkeeper of the Cup and Tome? "From time to time, merchant caravans wind their way across the sands and ask to use our oasis. As long as they are respectful, we agree. The last such caravan master paid me those coins for my trouble, even though I insisted that they were worthless here in the desert. I paid the shopkeeper with them, not realizing that each nation minted their own such coins and that mine would be worthless in his shop."

Encounter Five: The Tomb of Al-Achmar

If the players have made peaceful contact with the Ir-Kasi in Encounter Four, they may arrive here by escort. If not, they may stumble here, following the eryx map.

Edging your way out of the sands of the desert, you come upon an edifice of black marble. It is burnished to an almost mirror sheen by the blowing sand. A single open doorway leads to stone stairs that descend below the dunes. Around the perimeter of the opening are scrawled dozens of characters of an unfamiliar tongue. Many are sandblasted into illegibility, but in other places the script can be read.

If Anwar is with the PCs, read the following:

Anwar steps forward and closes his eyes in concentration. He holds up a hand to you, in a gesture indicating his need for silence. For a long minute, no sound can be heard but that of your group. Then, Anwar opens his eyes and sighs. "Our revered ancestor sometimes is able to leave the tomb briefly, to manifest out here, but this is not the case now. Enter, then. I know the place is trapped, so be cautious. I would tell you more, but I have never been inside. It is an unclean place, taboo for Ir-Kasi." He smiles. "Good luck, my friends. I will wait for you until you emerge."

Remember that Anwar has no knowledge of the interior of the temple, nor do any of his people.

All passageways in the tomb are seven feet in height, while all chambers are eight feet in height.

Important Note about the Inscriptions Within the Tomb:

Aside from the usual magical methods of translating an unknown tongue, the Decipher Script skill may be employed. All writings here in the tomb are a base DC of 20 to translate. If the person translating has the assistance of someone who *reads* a language using the Draconic alphabet, they can provide a +2 bonus to the checks. If the translator *reads* a language using the Draconic alphabet, that bonus rises to +4 (and is non-cumulative).

If the PCs show up without Anwar, and no one can translate the writings (magically or otherwise), the PCs are going to have a VERY hard time in the tomb.

Area One:

Making your way down the steps, your boots crunch on the wind-blown sand that has been blown into this narrow shaft. Forced to proceed single file, you descend the stone stairs and

emerge near the northwestern corner of a square room, twenty-five feet on a side.

A stone door six feet in width can be seen in the center of the southern wall. Sconces with long-burned nubs of torches are positioned along the perimeter of the wall. The remnants of a campfire can be seen near the room's center, and smoke has left the ceiling above it dark with soot.

The perimeter of the wall is decorated with faded, two-dimensional paintings, apparently in some kind of historic sequence. As you walk counter-clockwise from the entryway, the murals depict how a great city of magic is founded. Towering spires erupt from the sand, rising skyward. Walls, buildings, fountains, all rising fully formed from the sand itself. These great people seem to create ever more wondrous magic until one wizard seems to attempt to claim the greatest magic for his use alone. Others challenge him, and the power they unleash in their battle for supremacy turns the once shining city into a melted pile of rubble. In short order, only one remains to defy him, and in a last devastating strike, both are consumed in fire as the ground beneath the city collapses inward, and the combatants and the ruins are swallowed by a great desert.

Anyone with Knowledge: History (DC 20) will recognize this sequence as a pictorial history of the rise and fall of the ancient lost city of Thyras, the capital of a lost magical empire. Remind players that while they might know the whole story inside and out, their PCs most likely do NOT.

The last group of adventurers left the campfire; the explorers in this room left nothing besides its remnants behind. The old campfire might serve as a clue to PCs that this is a safe place in which to rest.

Area Two:

This narrow passageway has walls made of carved sandstone. Like the previous room, this

one uses the wall space to tell a pictorial story. Along the western wall, proceeding north to south, the life's story of a wizard is presented. It shows him as a child, through his apprenticeship and becoming a wizard in his own right. He casts ever more powerful spells, and you cannot help but notice that the figure's countenance becomes darker as well. The person represented seems to be a contemporary of the great magical city shown in the previous room.

You can only assume that this is Al-Achmar, the lich imprisoned within this tomb. Indeed, the eastern wall shows, in a pictorial story proceeding back in the opposite direction, the tale of his unlife. The great lich is shown forcing the humans and the lizard-like humanoids you encountered to serve him. The mural ends very abruptly, leaving some ten feet of unused space on the wall.

This passageway is unremarkable aside from the details mentioned above.

Area Three:

This chamber is the same size as the first. It has walls made of sandstone, but these walls are devoid of murals. Instead, something is written in a flowing cursive script across the length of the southern wall. The floor of this room appears to be made of sandstone blocks nearly five feet square, separated from each other by a narrow seam of an inch or two. The floor resembles a lightly traced grid as a result.

The floor of the room resembles a drop ceiling with five-foot square tiles. Most of the tiles in the room are actually fragile sandstone blocks that will collapse under fifty pounds or more, dropping the victim into a pit (see below for information on the pits).

Anyone who speaks Draconic will recognize the alphabet of the cursive script as being of that language. Anyone who can *read* Thyrasan can read the wall; it is actually a sentence in both languages. It says:

The faithful of Al-Achmar may pass through this place safely, my blessed ones. Death to any others that intrude here. To pass, find the way within these words:

Among the standing stones and the howling of wretched wraiths sit skeletons gathered within endless shadow.

Earn the embrace of never ending night.

Distribute Player Handout #1 *only* to PCs who have translated the sentences in some fashion.

Note that if the party cannot read the languages, *and they think of it*, they can transcribe the letters and bring them back outside to Anwar, who can translate the sentence for them (he speaks Thyrasan).

The solution: This is a deceptively simple riddle. The words are gibberish; only the first letters in some of the words matter. Words that begin with letters that are an abbreviation for one of the four cardinal compass directions (i.e. the words beginning with N, E, W or S) correspond to a step along a safe path. Thus, the safe path is South, South, West, West, South, South, East, South, East, East, North, East, and North.

Alternatively, the PCs can try and navigate their way across the grid-like arrangement of stones. A party that cannot or does not figure out the riddle may have a rough time traversing the room. Each square, as marked, is a pit trap. Note that the Search DC is above 20, requiring a rogue or PC with Stonecunning to spot.

All ATL's:

Pit Trap (20 Feet Deep): Mechanical trap, manual reset; CR 1; no attack roll needed (2d6); Reflex save (DC 20) avoids; Search (DC 21); Disable Device (DC 20).

Area Four:

The sandstone walls of this passage show a dark and twisted ritual. It shows in illustrated murals the process by which one becomes a lich. The procedure is shown in painstaking, meticulous detail, and the final ghastly ritual – drinking from a cup fashioned from the skull of a member of one’s immediate family – chills your soul.

Al-Achmar predicted that tomb-robbing wizards would seek out his resting place to wrest the secret of lichdom for themselves. The necromancer had no intentions of making it easy for them. The ingredients so depicted would, if brewed into a broth, almost certainly kill the imbibers instantly (Hate Brew poison; Fortitude save (DC 20); Initial/Secondary damage 1d10 Con/1d10 Con). This is a trap of misinformation, set for those who seek to become liches themselves. A Knowledge: Arcana (DC 30) check reveals this ritual to be flawed.

Area Five:

This room continues the uniform size of the chambers you have found in this tomb. This place appears to have suffered a great deal of damage, as rubble piles are everywhere. A stone door is set in the center of the northern wall.

PCs may make a Spot check (DC 15) to notice that not all of the rubble seems to have come from the ceiling or other visible source. A superb check (DC 25) will notice that one oddly shaped rock appears to be a smashed statue’s head.

This room is a basilisk lair. Once Al-Achmar kept several of these beasts as pets. Over the years, they have died off, and now only one remains (or more, at higher ATLS). The beasts are hidden amongst the rock piles near the center of the room (on the map, where the room number is positioned). They will immediately scuttle atop the pile and begin attempting to petrify anyone that they can. The beasts smash the bodies of anyone they turn to stone, so as not

to leave telltale signs of the presence of a beast with a petrifying gaze.

ATL 1:

Immature Basilisk: Medium-Size Magical Beast (Reptilian); HD 3d10+6; hp 22; Init -1 (Dex); Spd 20 ft.; AC 16 (-1 Dex, +7 natural), touch 9, flat-footed 16; BAB/Grapple +3/+5; Atk: Bite +5 melee (1d8+3); Full Atk: Bite +5 melee (1d8+3); Face/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft.; SA: Petrifying gaze; SQ: Darkvision 60 ft, low-light vision; AL: N; SV Fort +6, Ref +3, Will +2; Str 15, Dex 8, Con 15, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 11.

Skills: Hide +4, Listen +7, Spot +7.

Feats: Alertness, Great Fortitude.

Petrifying Gaze (Su): Turn to stone permanently, range 30 feet; Fortitude negates DC 13.

This creature has no possessions.

ATL 3:

Basilisk: Medium-Size Magical Beast (Reptilian); HD 6d10+12; hp 45; Init -1 (Dex); Spd 20 ft.; AC 16 (-1 Dex, +7 natural), touch 9, flat-footed 16; BAB/Grapple +6/+8; Atk: Bite +8 melee (1d8+3); Full Atk: Bite +8 melee (1d8+3); Face/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft.; SA: Petrifying gaze; SQ: Darkvision 60 ft, low-light vision; AL: N; SV Fort +9, Ref +4, Will +3; Str 15, Dex 8, Con 15, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 11.

Skills: Hide +4, Listen +7, Spot +7.

Feats: Alertness, Great Fortitude.

Petrifying Gaze (Su): Turn to stone permanently, range 30 feet; Fortitude negates DC 13.

Neither of these creatures have any possessions.

ATL 5:

Basilisks (2): Medium-Size Magical Beast (Reptilian); HD 6d10+12; hp 45; Init -1 (Dex); Spd 20 ft.; AC 16 (-1 Dex, +7 natural), touch 9, flat-footed 16; BAB/Grapple +6/+8; Atk: Bite +8 melee (1d8+3); Full Atk: Bite +8 melee (1d8+3); Face/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft.; SA: Petrifying gaze; SQ: Darkvision 60 ft, low-light vision; AL: N; SV Fort +9, Ref +4, Will +3; Str 15, Dex 8, Con 15, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 11.

Skills: Hide +4, Listen +7, Spot +7.

Feats: Alertness, Great Fortitude.

Petrifying Gaze (Su): Turn to stone permanently, range 30 feet; Fortitude negates DC 13.

Neither of these creatures have any possessions.

ATL 7:

Basilisk (4): Medium-Size Magical Beast (Reptilian); HD 6d10+12; hp 45; Init -1 (Dex); Spd 20 ft.; AC 16 (-1 Dex, +7 natural), touch 9, flat-footed 16; BAB/Grapple +6/+8; Atk: Bite +8 melee (1d8+3); Full Atk: Bite +8 melee (1d8+3); Face/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft.; SA: Petrifying gaze; SQ: Darkvision 60 ft, low-light vision; AL: N; SV Fort +9, Ref +4, Will +3; Str 15, Dex 8, Con 15, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 11.

Skills: Hide +4, Listen +7, Spot +7.

Feats: Alertness, Great Fortitude.

Petrifying Gaze (Su): Turn to stone permanently, range 30 feet; Fortitude negates DC 13.

Neither of these creatures have any possessions.

Area Six:

Like other corridors you have seen, this passageway has sandstone walls with painted murals. Stone doors seal the passage at the north and south ends. The murals here depict ghastly images of the summoning of demons and other infernal creatures. Each of these rituals ends the same way; in the horrific death of some human that is slowly eaten alive. Scrawled along the bottom of the murals, running the passage's length is more of the ancient flowing script you saw earlier.

If the PCs are able to read the messages, distribute Player Handout #2. This message reads:

See the fate of those who oppose Al-

Achmar!

But the loyal of Al-Achmar will be delivered!

In the path of the stars you will find the way to me, beloved ones...

This warning applies to the summoning chamber in Area Seven, as a method to avoid the perils therein.

Area Seven:

This chamber is the same size as the others you have seen, but the room is crowded with features. In each corner of the room sits a great statue carved to resemble an awful demon. Each has a disturbing, feral green glow coming from its eyes. Four iron braziers crackle and burn with a heatless, green spectral flame. The center of the room is a pentagram. Lines have been carved on the floor and the recesses filled with melted metal – iron, perhaps. The summoning circle has burn marks some two feet in length within it, and you are unnerved to see that those scorches seem to have the shape of bestial footprints. Stone doors in the center of the western and southern walls are the area's only visible exits.

This room was converted from a summoning chamber into a many-layered deathtrap for interlopers into the tomb. While some guidance can be found in the inscriptions in Area Six, this room is *very dangerous*.

Nothing will happen immediately when the PCs enter the place. If they move *anywhere* except into the summoning circle, the statues and braziers in the room will activate.

The door in the western wall is secured with a pair of extremely thick iron rods that “pin” the door shut until the correct method of opening them has been deduced (see below).

The statues, when activated, will attack intruders into the room. A number of statues (per ATL) will animate and will fight until destroyed. Determine which statues animate at random. Note that the statues are immune to the damage inflicted by the braziers.

The braziers will, when activated by the PCs, burst into small explosions of cold flame. **At ATL 1, these are harmless illusions. At ATL 3 and above,** each brazier will, once per round, burst in a five-foot radius for a total of 2 hp of unholy damage per ATL (Reflex save, DC 13 + APL, for half damage). These traps cannot be disarmed, but they can be neutralized with a successful *Dispel Magic* spell or similar magic (for purposes of the Dispel check, the caster level is 11).

If the PCs flee the room, the statues will resume their previous positions and the braziers will cease to burn. The room is considered “reset” at this point, and the PCs can safely re-enter (although they may very well set the hazards off once more).

The solution: The inscriptions in the previous room are a hint on how to proceed. Anyone stepping on the line formed by the pentagram will notice that the line glows with a green light (the same radiance as in the braziers, although it does no damage). Once a line is illuminated, it may be safely traversed.

To move safely through the room and unlock the exit door, each line must be “activated” by stepping upon it. Once every line forming the “star” of the pentagram has been lit, the iron pins securing the western door can be heard withdrawing, and the door will shift ajar. The braziers will cease to flame, and the evil glow from the eyes of the statues will now abate. *The room is now safe to traverse.*

ATL 1:

Note that at ATL 1 the statues are carved of crystal, giving them a Hardness of 3.

Animated Object, Medium (1): Medium Construct; HD 2d10+20; hp 31; Init +0; Spd 40 ft; AC 14 (+4 natural), touch 10, flat-footed 14; BAB/Grapple: +1/+2; Atk: Slam +2 melee (1d6+1); Full Atk: Slam +2 melee (1d6+1); Face/Reach: 5ft./5ft.; SA: Nil; SQ: Construct, darkvision 60 ft, Hardness 3, Improved speed,

low-light vision; AL: N; SV: Fort +0, Ref +1, Will -5; Str 12, Dex 12, Con -, Int -, Wis 1, Cha 1.

ATL 3:

Note that at ATL 3 the statues are carved of stone, giving them a Hardness of 8.

Animated Object, Large (2): Large Construct; HD 4d10+30; hp 52; Init +0; Spd 40 ft; AC 14 (-1 size, +5 natural), touch 9, flat-footed 14; BAB/Grapple: +3/+10; Atk: Slam +5 melee (1d8+4); Full Atk: Slam +5 melee (1d8+4); Face/Reach: 10ft./10ft.; SA: Nil; SQ: Construct, darkvision 60 ft, Hardness 8, Improved speed, low-light vision; AL: N; SV: Fort +1, Ref +1, Will -4; Str 16, Dex 10, Con -, Int -, Wis 1, Cha 1.

ATL 5:

Note that at ATL 5 and above the statues are made of iron, giving them a Hardness of 10.

Animated Object, Large (3): Large Construct; HD 4d10+30; hp 52; Init +0; Spd 40 ft; AC 14 (-1 size, +5 natural), touch 9, flat-footed 14; BAB/Grapple: +3/+10; Atk: Slam +5 melee (1d8+4); Full Atk: Slam +5 melee (1d8+4); Face/Reach: 10ft./10ft.; SA: Trample; SQ: Construct, darkvision 60 ft, Hardness 8, Improved speed, low-light vision; AL: N; SV: Fort +1, Ref +1, Will -4; Str 16, Dex 10, Con -, Int -, Wis 1, Cha 1.

Trample (Ex): An animated object of at least Large size and with a hardness of at least 10 can trample creatures two or more sizes smaller than itself, dealing damage equal to the object’s slam damage + 1-1/2 times its strength bonus. Opponents who do not make attacks of opportunity against the object can attempt Reflex saves (DC 10 + ½ object’s HD + object’s Str modifier) to halve the damage.

ATL 7:

Note that at ATL 5 and above the statues are made of iron, giving them a Hardness of 10.

Animated Object, Large (4): Large Construct; HD 4d10+30; hp 52; Init +0; Spd 40 ft; AC 14 (-

1 size, +5 natural), touch 9, flat-footed 14; BAB/Grapple: +3/+10; Atk: Slam +5 melee (1d8+4); Full Atk: Slam +5 melee (1d8+4); Face/Reach: 10ft./10ft.; SA: Trample; SQ: Construct, darkvision 60 ft, Hardness 8, Improved speed, low-light vision; AL: N; SV: Fort +1, Ref +1, Will -4; Str 16, Dex 10, Con -, Int -, Wis 1, Cha 1.

Trample (Ex): An animated object of at least Large size and with a hardness of at least 10 can trample creatures two or more sizes smaller than itself, dealing damage equal to the object's slam damage + 1-1/2 times its strength bonus. Opponents who do not make attacks of opportunity against the object can attempt Reflex saves (DC 10 + ½ object's HD + object's Str modifier) to halve the damage.

Area Eight:

Just as you are beginning to wonder if you are headed in a circle, this passageway is the first to go in a direction other than straight. The sandstone walls extend fifteen feet west before turning south. Facing you, against the far wall, is yet another mysterious inscription.

The inscription is below. Distribute Player Handout #3 to any group that can decipher it.

You grow nearer to me, loyal ones.

Approach me with care.

Approach me as you would your lord and master, for such is Al-Achmar!

A flame jet trap has been installed to deter any that may have made it this far. The warning refers to the fact that the trap is set at around four feet above the floor. Those who crawl on all fours (or who are of Small size) have no need to worry about the trap, as the flame jet will erupt over their heads. This mechanical trap may also be disarmed by the usual means.

The trap will be set off by anyone entering the 5' square immediately in front of the southern door.

Note: The length of the flame jet is twenty feet, not as depicted by the map symbol.

ATL 1:

Flame Jet: magical trap, 3-ft.-wide, 20-ft.-long stream of flame (2d6); Reflex save (DC 13) avoids; Search (DC 25); Disable Device (DC 26).

ATL 3:

Flame Jet: magical trap, 3 ft.-wide, 20-ft.-long flame jet (4d6); Reflex (DC 16) avoids; Search (DC 27); Disable Device (DC 28).

ATL 5:

Flame Jet: magical trap, 3-ft.-wide, 20-ft.-long stream of flame (6d6); Reflex save (DC 19) avoids; Search (DC 29); Disable Device (DC 30).

ATL 7:

Flame Jet: magical trap, 3 ft.-wide, 20-ft.-long flame jet (8d6); Reflex (DC 22) avoids; Search (DC 31); Disable Device (DC 32).

Area Nine:

This chamber is smaller than the others you've seen, being only fifteen feet on a side. A heavy stone door can be seen against the southern wall. This wall curves outward, and the door appears to be the entryway to a vault of some sort. The door is bound in iron chains and silver, softly glowing glyphs adorn the portal.

Along either side of the room, a short line of sandstone statues can be seen. These statues show an armored knight, with a feminine figure, standing stoically with a sword in her hand. The statues do not appear to be an original part of the crypt, but a later addition.

This chamber feels oddly peaceful – almost jarringly so, considering what you have encountered so far in the tomb. A cool, gentle breeze suddenly blows across your cheeks, and a shimmering form appears before you, standing just before the vault door. The figure is identical to the one depicted on the statue,

except that she carries her helm under one arm. Long hair cascades down her back; she is truly beautiful. She regards you with a mournful look. She speaks in heavily accented, antiquated Common.

“Tomb robbers, explorers... call yourselves what you will,” the ethereal figure moans sadly. “This place is sacred to me, for the lich Al-Achmar lies beyond. I have sworn to keep him bound within. If you have either sense or morals, I beg you to leave this place at once.”

This spectral figure is the Night Wolf. This young Ir-Kasi woman gave her life to defeat Al-Achmar, and she will do so again in undeath to prevent the vault door from being breached. She is a ghost, albeit a good spirit like those that are sometimes found on Raia. Note that she does not have the *Horrific Appearance* or *Malevolence* qualities normally associated with ghosts.

All ATLS:

The Night Wolf (Ghost): Medium Undead (Augmented Humanoid) (Incorporeal) Pal 9 (Peliron); HD 9d12; hp 87; Init +6 (Dex +2, Improved Initiative +4); Speed: Fly 30 ft. (perfect); AC 22 (+6 armor, +2 Dex; +4 deflection); BAB/Grapple: +9/+11; Atk: Incorporeal touch +11 melee or +13 against ethereal foes (1d6 or 1d6+2 against ethereal foes); or ghost touch greatsword +13 melee (2d6+2); Full Atk: Incorporeal touch +11 melee or +13 against ethereal foes (1d6 or 1d6+2 against ethereal foes); or ghost touch greatsword +13/+8 melee (2d6+2); Space/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft.; SA Corrupting Gaze, Corrupting Touch, Draining Touch, Frightful Moan, Smite Evil, Telekinesis; SQ: Darkvision 60 ft., Detect Evil, Divine Grace, Incorporeal traits, Lay on Hands (36 hp), Manifestation, Rejuvenation, Remove Disease, Turn Resistance +4, Undead; AL: LG; SV Fort +8, Ref +10, Will +9; AL LG; Str 14, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 13, Wis 14, Cha 19.

Skills: Concentration +13, Diplomacy +18, Handle Animal +9, Knowledge (Religion) +13, Ride +8.

Feats: Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Cleave, Great Cleave, Weapon Focus (Great sword).

Special Attacks & Qualities:

Corrupting Gaze (Su): A ghost can blast living beings with a glance, at a range of up to 30 feet. Creatures that meet the ghost's gaze must succeed on a Fort save (DC 18) or take 2d10 points of damage and 1d4 points of Charisma damage.

Corrupting Touch (Su): A ghost that hits a living target with its incorporeal touch attack deals 1d6 points of damage. Against ethereal opponents, it adds its Str modifier to attack and damage. Against non-ethereal opponents, it adds its Dex modifier to attack rolls only.

Draining Touch (Su): A ghost that hits a living target with its incorporeal touch attack drains 1d4 points from any one ability score it selects. On each successful attack, the ghost heals 5 points of damage to itself. Against ethereal opponents, it adds its Str modifier to attack and damage. Against non-ethereal opponents, it adds its Dex modifier to attack rolls only.

Manifestation (Su): While manifested a ghost can make touch attacks or use a ghost touch weapon.

A manifested ghost can be harmed only by other incorporeal creatures, magic weapons, or spells, with a 50% chance to ignore any damage from a corporeal source.

Frightful Moan (Su): All living creatures within a 30-foot spread must succeed at a Will save (DC 18) or become panicked for 2d4 rounds.

Telekinesis (Su): She can use Telekinesis once per round as a free action, as cast by a level 12 sorcerer.

Ethereal: Natural armor is the same when ethereal. When manifesting, natural armor is +0, but gain a deflection bonus of +4. Against

ethereal creatures, use her base damage. Against non-ethereal creatures she can deal no damage, but can use special attacks or *Ghost Touch* weapons.

Rejuvenation (Su): If she is "destroyed" she is restored in 2d4 days with a successful level check (1d20+6) against DC 16.

Turn Undead (Su): Can turn undead 7 times per day. A turning check is made on 1d20+4; turning damage is equal to 2d6+10 on a successful check.

Detect Evil (Sp): At will, as the spell

Divine Grace: The Night Wolf adds her Charisma bonus (+4) to all saves.

Lay on Hands (Sp): As a standard action, she can heal herself or someone else. She can cure a total of 36 points of damage per day. These points can also be used to harm undead

Aura of Courage (Su): She is immune to fear. All allies within 10 feet of her gain a +4 morale bonus to save against fear effects

Smite Evil (Su): Twice per day, if the creature she strikes is evil, she can add +4 to her attack roll and she inflicts an extra 9 points of damage

Remove Disease (Sp): She can cast remove disease 2 times per week, as the spell

Memorized Spells (3; DC 12 + spell level):
Level One: *Magic Weapon, Divine Favor*; Level Two: *Sound Burst*).

Possessions: *Ghost Touch Greatsword +1, Ghost Touch Chainmail +1.*

Negotiating with the Night Wolf

The Night Wolf will be very circumspect and suspicious of the PCs at first – she can't afford not to be. She will acknowledge that she has the manuscript and journal, and will validate

Anwar's story about the tomb and her presence within it.

The center statue in the eastern row has a hollow base (Search DC 23 to find), wherein the journal, the manuscript, and some magic items taken from other adventurers are stashed. These include a *Necklace of Fireballs* (Type I, see below) are being kept. If the PCs attempt to take the items without first gaining permission, the ghost will assume the party are treasure hunters and will attempt to utterly destroy them. Likewise, tampering with or even touching the seals on the vault door will invite an attack.

The Night Wolf is not invulnerable. A powerful group of PCs might be able to destroy or turn her, and they could recover not only the journal and manuscript but possibly the necklace and her *ghost touch* armor and sword as well.

The main subject of conversation should, of course, be the return of the manuscript. The ghost will initially refuse (regretfully, if the PCs have been behaving themselves), citing the danger that the tales will lead others to the tomb in search of adventure. If the PCs suggest that they could ask Cooper Marlin to change the story's details enough to protect the location of the tomb, the Night Wolf will pause, considering, and then will speak:

"It is not enough to prove your good faith by your promise, honorable ones. I fear I must ask you to act with your hands as well as your hearts." The spectral beauty purses her lips and gestures to the row of statues bearing her likeness. "On the right, the center statue... in the pedestal you will find your manuscript, the journal, and some items of magic. One of them is a necklace studded with golden spheres. The last item is one of magic, taken from a tomb robber slain long ago. The gems, when hurled, burst into great balls of flame."

"Here is what I would ask of you, honorable ones," she continues. Her voice has become very soft. "I have long desired to bury this place beneath the sands, to hide its secrets once

and for all. I would ask the Ir-Kasi who have aided me so faithfully, but they cannot enter this place. Before you, anyone else that has entered this tomb has been an enemy.”

“I ask you to do this for me. This tomb was badly damaged and is no longer stable. The room to the southeast, where you encountered the stone-lizards, is near collapse. I would ask that you remove the largest gem from the necklace. Take the necklace and place it in the center of the room. Cast the largest gem atop the necklace; this will cause all of them to burst at once. This explosion should be enough to cause the chamber to collapse, sealing off the summoning room, this room, and the lich’s vault behind me.”

“Once this is done, make haste and leave this place, for the rest of the tomb may collapse as well. If you do this, the manuscript may be taken with my soul at ease that, even should you renege on your word, the tomb will be buried so deeply in the sands that it would be beyond the grasp of those who would seek to defile it.

You are welcome to keep the other items hidden under the statue. But if you attempt to take the necklace, without fulfilling your charge, you will face my wrath before you escape this place.”

“When you have done the deed, travel to the Ir-Kasi encampment. Speak with the Revered One of the tribe, Anwar El-Fadim. He will magically transport you home, with my blessings.”

“What say you, honorable ones?”

This is an offer in good faith, and if the PCs give their word, the spirit will allow the manuscript, necklace and the journal (should the PCs want the latter) to be taken from the statue’s secret niche. This niche also contains a periapt of wisdom, a Mithral shirt, magical arrows, and a +1 hand crossbow (see treasure summary). Night Wolf allows the PCs to take everything,

pending the completion of their task.

However, unknown to the PCs, the lich is able to manifest some of its power, and although it will not be able to stop the PCs from using the necklace to collapse the tomb, Al-Achmar will have a nasty surprise for the PCs when they attempt to leave (Al-Achmar’s minion will not attack the PCs until *after* they have destroyed the necklace; he knows the power of the necklace would destroy his servant).

If the PC’s follow the spirit’s instructions, proceed to **The Great Escape – Heroes!** If they attempt to leave with the manuscript without collapsing the tomb behind them, proceed to **The Great Escape – Tomb Robbers!**

Area Ten

If the PCs, after all of this, break the seals or enter this place (see below), Al-Achmar will destroy them. The GM is urged to terminate such PCs with *extreme* prejudice. (It is the author’s earnest hope that the only use for this section will be to provide a description for those who magically scry the vault’s interior.)

This small chamber is a vault ten feet in diameter. A massive stone sarcophagus dominates it. Behind the sarcophagus, a hideous corpse-like being kneels in study over a massive tome that has been laid open on the stone lid before it. This place is dark, a true heart of evil.

The chains binding the door are iron, with a hardness of 10 and 50 hit points. Furthermore, the door is sealed with melted iron. This prevents the door from being opened by spells such as *Knock* and increases the Break DC of the door to 28. The door itself is Hardness 8 with 200 hit points.

Al-Achmar will destroy any intruders, utterly and completely, before emerging from the tomb to begin his plans to once again subjugate the Zur’oun. The lich is detailed below (it can only be hoped that a GM will not need this

information!)

Al-Achmar: Medium Undead (Augmented Humanoid) (Lich) Sor 16; HD 16d12; hp 150; Init +6 (Dex +2, Improved Initiative +4); Spd 30 ft; AC 21 (+5 armor**, +2 Dex; +4 deflection); BAB/Grapple: +8/+7; Atk: Touch +7 melee (1d8+5 negative energy plus paralysis) or quarterstaff (*Staff of power*) +7 melee (1d6+1); Full Atk: Touch +7 melee (1d8+5 negative energy plus paralysis) or quarterstaff (*Staff of power*) +7 melee (1d6+1); Space/Reach: 5ft./5ft.; SA: Damaging touch (Will save DC24 for half damage), fear aura (will save DC24 to resist), paralyzing touch (Fort save DC24 to avoid paralysis), spells; SQ: +4 turn resistance, damage reduction 15/bludgeoning and magic, darkvision 60 ft., immunity to cold, electricity, polymorph and mind affecting effects, undead traits, SR 18**;

AL NE; SV Fort +9, Ref +13, Will +16**; Str 8, Dex 14, Con --, Int 16, Wis 14, Cha 22.
Skills: Concentration +19, decipher Script +9, Intimidate +15, Knowledge (Arcana) +23, Listen +20, Profession (Alchemist) +23, Spellcraft +23, Spot +21.

Feats: Enlarge Spell, Eschew Materials, Improved Initiative, Maximize Spell, Quicken Spell, Silent Spell, Spell Penetration**, Still Spell.

** From the *Robe of the Archmagi*

Special Attacks:

Damaging touch: A lich fighting without weapons deals a touch attack that uses negative energy to deal 1d8+5 points of damage to living creatures; a Will save DC24 halves the damage.

Fear Aura (Su): Creatures less than 5 HD in a 60' radius must make a DC 24 Will save or be affected as if by a *Fear* spell cast by a 16th level sorcerer.

Paralyzing touch (Su): Any living creature a lich hits with its touch attack must succeed on a Fortitude save or be permanently paralyzed. *Remove paralysis* or any spell that can remove a curse can free the victim. The effect cannot be

dispelled. Anyone paralyzed by a lich seems dead, though a DC20 Spot check or a DC15 Heal check reveals that the victim is still alive.

Special Qualities:

Immunities: Cold, electricity, polymorph and mind-affecting attacks.

Known Spells (6/16/8/7/7/7/5/3; DC 16 + spell level): Level Zero: *Arcane Mark, Daze, Detect Magic, Disrupt Undead, Light, Mage Hand, Mending, Open/Close, Prestidigitation, Read Magic*; Level One: *Comprehend Languages, Identify, Mage Armor, Magic Missile, Shield*; Level Two: *Acid Arrow, Protection from Arrows, See Invisibility, Shatter, Hideous Laughter*; Level Three: *Dispel Magic, Haste, Magic Circle against Good, Nondetection*; Level Four: *Confusion, Enervation, Ice Storm, Stoneskin*; Level Five: *Cone of Cold, Dismissal, Feeblemind, Prying Eyes*; Level Six: *Chain Lightning, Disintegrate, Globe of Invulnerability*; Level Seven: *Limited Wish, Finger of Death*; Level Eight: *Mass Charm Monster*.

Possessions: *Ring of Protection* +4, *Ring of Wizardry (I)*, *Staff of Power*, *Black Robe of the Archmagi*.

The Great Escape – Heroes!

Read the following boxed text to describe the detonation of the *Necklace of Fireballs* and the immediate aftermath:

After placing the necklace on the ground in the center of the basilisk lair, you move to the edge of the doorway. The golden sphere in your hand is warm to the touch. Gritting your teeth, you lob the orb into the room. It lands with a sharp crack near the necklace and then erupts in a blinding flash of flame and heat. There is a brief tugging sensation as the consumed air creates a brief vacuum in the room. Almost immediately, the room begins to collapse, and voluminous amounts of sand fall from the

ceiling. But you also notice that a fissure has streaked down the east-west passage, and sand begins raining down as well. It doesn't take a dwarf to realize that this whole tomb is going to fall in upon itself!

The PCs have two minutes (20 rounds) from here to exit the tomb, or they will be buried alive. Keep careful track of how quickly the PCs make their exit. From this point forward, Areas 5 to 10 are now buried under the weight of tons of sand.

Al-Achmar has one last token of his "esteem" waiting for the PCs. The lich, enraged at the destruction of his tomb, casts a *Limited Wish* to summon a powerful mummy (a mummy fighter at APL 4) to destroy the infidels that have destroyed his tomb. The mummy will be waiting for the PCs at the foot of the exit staircase.

Standing before you and blocking your exit from this collapsing deathtrap is a dried-out corpse with blackened flesh. It trails what appear to be funerary wrappings from its body. It wears a pair of battered leather gloves with iron rivets and a burnished copper ring. The frightful creature moans and clenches its fists.

The players might be tempted to stand at the far end of the room and deal damage from a distance; the urgent need to get out should be an incentive to carry the battle to their foes! The mummy will attempt to keep a hero trapped in here until the room collapses, preferably by grappling them and forcing their fellows to struggle to free their companion from the mummy's grip in time to escape the tomb!

Note that at ATLS 1 & 3 the mummy does NOT have the Despair quality.

ATL 1:

Mummy: Medium-Size Undead; HD 4d12+3; hp 29; Init +0; Spd 20 ft.; AC 20 (+10 natural), touch 10, flat-footed 20; BAB/Grapple: +2/+6; Atk: Slam +6 melee (1d6+4 plus mummy rot); Full Atk: Slam +6 melee (1d6+4 plus mummy rot); Space/Reach: 5ft./5ft.; SA: Mummy rot;

SQ: Undead traits, darkvision 60 ft, damage reduction 5/-, fire vulnerability; AL: LE; SV: Fort +3, Ref +1, Will +6; Str 18, Dex 10, Con -, Int 6, Wis 14, Cha 15.

Skills: Hide +7, Listen +8 Move Silently +7, Spot +8.

Feats: Alertness, Great Fortitude, Toughness.

Possessions: *Ring of Protection +1, Gauntlets of Ogre Power.*

ATL 3:

Mummy: Medium-Size Undead; HD 8d12+3; hp 55; Init +0; Spd 20 ft.; AC 20 (+10 natural), touch 10, flat-footed 20; BAB/Grapple: +3/+14; Atk: Slam +14 melee (1d6+10 plus mummy rot); Full Atk: Slam +14 melee (1d6+10 plus mummy rot); Space/Reach: 5ft./5ft.; SA: Mummy rot; SQ: Undead traits, darkvision 60 ft, damage reduction 5/-, fire vulnerability; AL: LE; SV: Fort +4, Ref +2, Will +8; Str 24, Dex 10, Con -, Int 6, Wis 14, Cha 15.

Skills: Hide +7, Listen +8, Move Silently +7, Spot +8.

Feats: Alertness, Great Fortitude, Toughness.

Possessions: *Ring of Protection +1, Gauntlets of Ogre Power.*

ATL 5:

Mummy Ftr3: Medium-Size Undead; HD 8d12+3d10+3; hp 77; Init +0; Spd 20 ft.; AC 20 (+10 natural), touch 10, flat-footed 20; BAB/Grapple: +4/+11; Atk: Slam +11 melee (1d6+10 plus mummy rot); Full Atk: Slam +11 melee (1d6+10 plus mummy rot); Space/Reach: 5ft./5ft.; SA: Despair, Mummy rot; SQ: Undead traits, darkvision 60 ft, damage reduction 5/-, fire vulnerability; AL: LE; SV: Fort +7, Ref +3, Will +9; Str 24, Dex 10, Con -, Int 6, Wis 14, Cha 15.

Skills: Hide +8, Listen +9 Move Silently +8, Spot +9.

Feats: Alertness, Dodge, Great Fortitude, Toughness x2, Weapon Focus (Slam), Weapon Specialization (Slam).

Possessions: *Ring of Protection +1, Gauntlets of Ogre Power.*

ATL 7:

Mummy Ftr6: Medium-Size Undead; HD 8d12+6d10+3; hp 100; Init +0; Spd 20 ft.; AC 20 (+10 natural), touch 10, flat-footed 20; BAB/Grapple: +10/+17; Atk: Slam +17 melee (1d6+10 plus mummy rot); Full Atk: Slam +17 melee (1d6+10 plus mummy rot); Space/Reach: 5ft./5ft.; SA: Despair, Mummy rot; SQ: Undead traits, darkvision 60 ft, damage reduction 5/-, fire vulnerability; AL: LE; SV: Fort +9, Ref +4, Will +10; Str 25, Dex 10, Con -, Int 6, Wis 14, Cha 15.

Skills: Hide +8, Listen +9, Move Silently +8, Spot +9.

Feats: Alertness, Dodge, Great Fortitude, Power Attack, Toughness x2, Weapon Focus (Slam), Weapon Specialization (Slam).

Possessions: *Ring of Protection +1, Gauntlets of Ogre Power.*

Despair (Su): At the mere sight of a mummy, the viewer must succeed at a Will save (DC 16) or be paralyzed with fear for 1d4 rounds. Whether or not the save is successful, that creature cannot be affected again by that mummy's despair ability for 24 hours.

Mummy Rot (Su): Supernatural disease—slam. Fortitude save (DC 16), incubation period 1 minute; damage 1d6 Con and 1d6 Cha. Unlike normal diseases, mummy rot continues until the victim reaches Constitution 0 (and dies) or cured as described below.

Mummy rot is a powerful curse, not a natural disease. A character attempting to cast any conjuration (healing) spell on a creature afflicted with mummy rot must succeed on a DC 20 caster level check, or the spell has no effect on the afflicted creature.

To eliminate mummy rot, the curse must first be broken with *break enchantment* or *remove curse* (requiring a DC 20 caster level check for either spell), after which a caster level check is no longer necessary to cast healing spells on the victim, and the mummy rot can be magically cured as any normal disease.

An afflicted creature that dies shrivels away into sand and dust that blow away into nothing at the first wind.

Undead: Immune to mind-affecting attacks, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, and disease. Not subject to critical hits, subdual damage, ability damage, energy drain, or death from massive damage.

Vulnerability to Fire (Ex): A mummy takes half again as much damage (+ 50%) as normal from the effect, regardless if whether or nor a saving throw is allowed, or if the save is a success or failure.

Read the following as the PCs escape the tomb:

You throw yourself into the sand and begin to scramble away. The sand beneath you is being sucked in, as the tomb of Al-Achmar implodes upon itself and the desert shifts to fill this new sinkhole. Just when you think the shifting sand might consume you, the desert settles, and you extricate yourself from the grip of the relentless implosion. Looking behind you, no evidence of the tomb's existence can be seen.

If the PCs have already made peaceful contact with Anwar, he will be waiting for them. (He ran off to a safe distance to escape the destruction of the tomb, thinking the heroes were surely dead.) One their deal with the Night Wolf is explained, Anwar will be greatly pleased. He will offer to send the PCs home through a portal.

If the PCs have not yet made contact with Anwar, they can approach the camp and do so. Assuming they are civil, and especially if they explain their actions, Anwar will offer to send the PCs home through a portal in gratitude for their service to the Night Wolf.

If the PCs don't make contact with Anwar, or have made an enemy of him, they have a long walk ahead of them. Each PC will receive the *Marooned in the Great Desert* certificate.

Assuming they make it back to Amthydor and return the manuscript to Cooper Marlin without becoming *Marooned*, proceed to **Conclusion A**. If they didn't, proceed to **Conclusion B**.

The Great Escape – Tomb Robbers!

The players absconding with the items won't be nearly as dramatic, but just as dangerous. The Night Wolf will bar their passage out in Area One, and will attack using every method at her disposal. She will also curse the PCs as tomb robbers. Each PC present - slain, escaped or otherwise - gains a *Curse of the Tomb Robber* cert. This cert is gained and retained even if the PC dies and is subsequently brought back to life.

The actions of the PCs will also make it highly unlikely that they can receive Anwar's aid in returning back to Amthydor. He will of course ask the PCs what happened. If they confess, he will angrily banish them from his sight and renege on his offer to send them home by portal. If the PCs attempt to lie to him, have them make an opposed *Bluff* check (Anwar's Sense Motive is +7). If they fail, he will see through their deception, with the reaction noted above. PCs who don't receive help are *Marooned in the Great Desert* (give each of them the cert of the same name).

Assuming they make it back to Amthydor and return the manuscript to Cooper Marlin without becoming *Marooned*, proceed to *Conclusion A*. If they didn't, proceed to *Conclusion B*.

Conclusion A: Success!

Cooper Marlin is ecstatic to receive his manuscript from you. As you explain your tale, he hangs on every word. "What a tale of adventure," he says with a smile. "Exotic locales, a deadly tomb... why it's marvelous!"

"Heroes, I cannot thank you enough for returning my manuscript. And you've done so much more! I intend to tell your story... er, with a great many details changed, of course. Wouldn't do to have an angry ghost show up on my doorstep, would it? It will make a great follow-up to my first story. I'll call it..." He

pauses, thinking hard, and says, "I'll call it 'Death in the Sand II!'" Seeing your blank stares, he frowns. "Well... maybe the name needs a bit of work."

*Cooper's first tale – with some judicious editing – is an enormous sell. His follow-up story, featuring your own greatly exaggerated exploits, is a great hit among your fellow adventurers, and soon you find that you've become something of a celebrity within the *Shining Jewel of the Free Lands*. And the five percent cut of Cooper's profits from his first story are welcome, too.*

But you cannot help but wonder if you have seen the last of the lich, Al-Achmar. Can you truly ever escape the wrath of such a creature?

THUS ENDS "AUTHOR, AUTHOR!"

Conclusion B: Failure (or, all this for a BOOK!?)

It takes you months by caravan, boat, or simply walking blindly overland to make your way back to Amthydor. You're hardly surprised to find out that Cooper Marlin sold everything he owned and fled the city in the middle of the night to escape his creditors. Your attempt to recover Cooper's manuscript and return it to him in time for him to use the story to pay off his debts has met with spectacular failure.

Ahh, the dreaded "Conclusion B." If the PCs happen to have the manuscript, no one will purchase it from them. Marlin's style of writing is easily recognized, and since he was run out of town anything associated with the man is seen as a losing proposition.

THUS ENDS "AUTHOR, AUTHOR!"

EXPERIENCE POINT SUMMARY

Total the XP earned from the following:

Encounter 2

Defeating or circumventing the Ir-Kasi to enter the Portal 50 XP

Encounter 3

Defeating the eryx 50 XP

Encounter 4

Making peaceful contact with Anwar and the Ir-Kasi 50 XP

Encounter 5

Successfully traversing Area Three 50 XP

Defeating the basilisk(s) in Area Five 50 XP

Successfully traversing Area Seven 50 XP

Surviving or avoiding the trap in Area Eight 50 XP

Overcoming the Night Wolf (this includes by negotiation or force) 50 XP

Defeating or evading the mummy 50 XP

Destroying the tomb 100 XP

Discretionary Roleplaying Award Up to 100 XP

Total Possible Experience:	650 XP
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Treasure Summary

If it's not on this list, the PCs cannot keep it.

Encounter 1

- *An Item from the Cup and Tome Bookstore:* Place a check next to the item that you've found. All the items below share the following in common – Size: Small, Tradable: Yes, Rarity: Common, Legality: Legal.

[] Any non-magical book or scroll on any subject desired by the PC. This book will have no in-game effect, and the title should be listed here (the player creates the title):
_____.

[] A book of orcish erotica (not for the weak of heart!) (Value 2 gp)

[] A collection of astrological notes by Iryaun Kist, noted stargazer (above ground and under a starry sky, a PC may use these notes for a +1 Competence bonus to their Intuit Direction and astronomy-related skill checks) (Price Value 50 gp)

[] Arcane scroll scribed with the spell *Comprehend Languages* (Caster level 1st) (Value 50 gp)

[] A map purported to be of a cache of treasure hidden in the Delambir Mountains. A PC with this item may spend 100 gp and void this cert to mount an expedition to recover the treasure. Roll 2d6 and multiply the result by 50 gp to determine how much is found. On a roll of 2 or 12, the map is a false one and yields no gold. The roll cannot be modified in any way and this roll can only be made at the beginning or end of any LSJ adventure. (Value 75 gp)

[] “The Acquisition of Knowledge” by Yulkion Dormass. This book is an enchanted tome. Only one reader may peruse the book at any time; only one person can gain the effects of the tome. Once the book is read from cover to cover, it

will bestow its benefit on the reader and then vanish. *Only one reader* will ever gain this item's benefits! Once read, the reader may choose a Knowledge skill. The chosen skill becomes a class skill for the character. If the skill chosen is already such for the reader, there is no effect and the tome's magic is wasted. The skill chosen must be noted on this cert

(Value 2,000 gp)

[] A badly battered, shabby-looking, leather-bound book. The book is actually a blank *Blessed Book*. (Value 9,500 gp)

Encounter 3

4 suits of leather armor (fitted for eryx, not usable by other humanoids), 4 scimitars, 4 light crossbows, 36 light crossbow bolts. Sale value: 122 gp.

Encounter 5

Note: The *Ghost Touch* items should only be given out if the PCs defeated the Night Wolf and took those items after her ghost form dissolved.

- *Ghost Touch Chainmail +1* (Value: 16,300 gp, Size: Small, Tradable: Yes, Rarity: Common, 15th level caster, Legality: Legal). A paladin, the Night Wolf, once owned this fine mail. The taint of undeath hangs heavily upon it.
- *Ghost Touch Greatsword +1* (Value: 8,350 gp, Size: Large, Tradable: Yes, Rarity: Common, 9th level caster, Legality: Legal). A paladin, the Night Wolf, once owned this fine sword. The taint of undeath hangs heavily upon it.
- *Necklace of Fireballs (Type I)* (Value: 1,650 gp, Size: Tiny, Tradable: Yes, Rarity: Common, 11th level caster, Legality: Legal). Mark each *fireball* gem off as it is used:
 [] 5d6 *fireball*
 [] [] 3d6 *fireball*

- *Ring of Protection +1* (Value: 2,000 gp, Size: Tiny, Tradable: Yes, Rarity: Common, 5th level caster, Legality: Legal).
- *Gauntlets of Ogre Power+2* (Value: 4,000 gp, Size: Tiny, Tradable: Yes, Rarity: Common, 6th level caster, Legality: Legal).
- *Periapt of Health* (Value: 7,500 gp, Size: Tiny, Tradable: Yes, Rarity: Common, 5th level caster, Legality: Legal).
- *Mithral Shirt* (Value: 1,100 gp, Size: Medium, Tradable: Yes, Rarity: Common, Legality: Legal).
- *Arrows +1 (10)* (Value: 207 gp each: Tiny, Tradable: Yes, Rarity: Common, 5th level caster, Legality: Legal). Mark off these arrows as they are used: [] []
 [] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] []
- *Hand Crossbow +1* (Value: 2,400 gp, Size: Tiny, Tradable: Yes, Rarity: Common, 5th level caster, Legality: Legal).

Conclusion A (Only)

- *A share of Cooper Marlin's profits for "Death in the Sand"*: This comes out to 100 gp per PC.

Miscellaneous

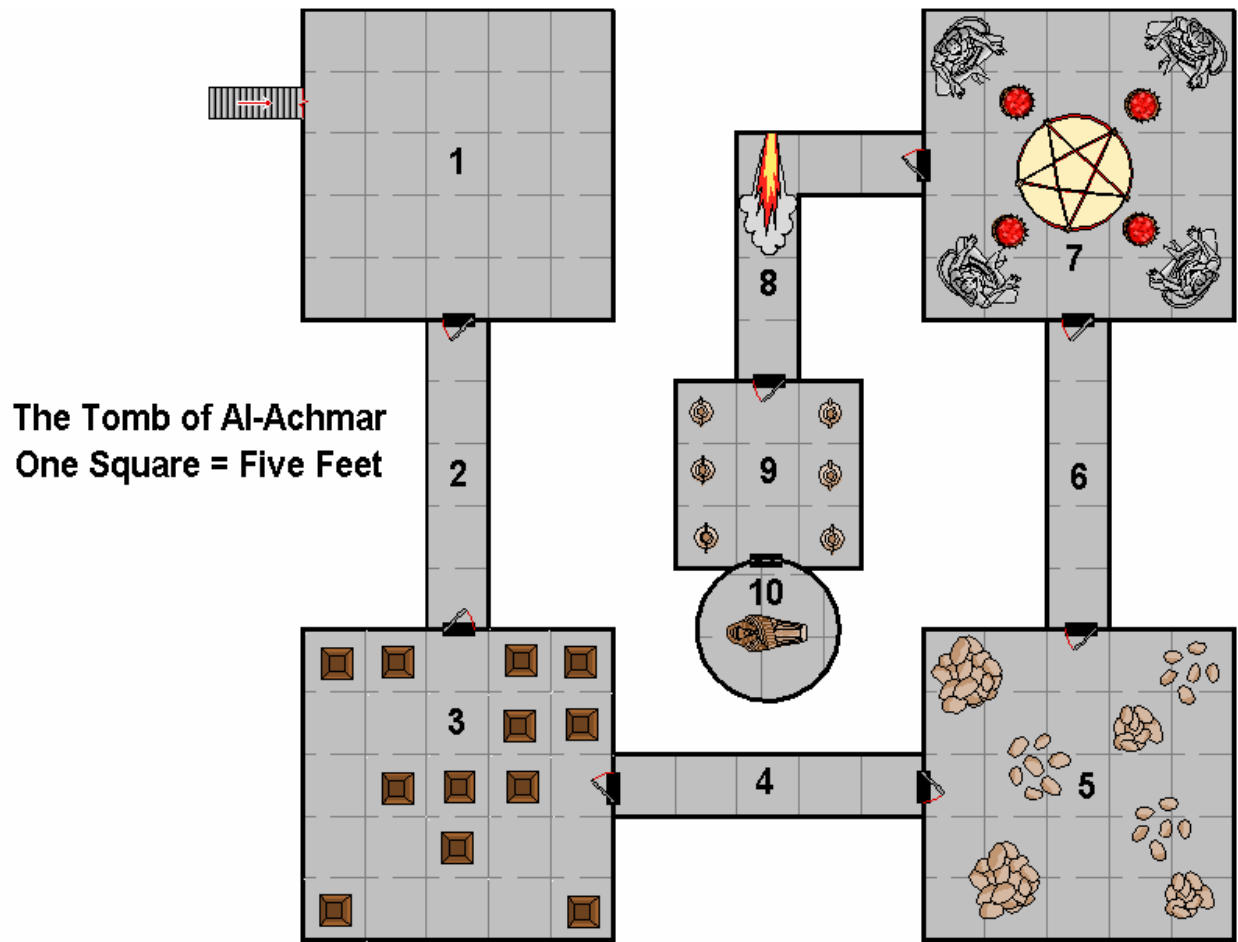
- *Marooned in the Great Desert*: You have managed to strand yourself in the Great Desert of Zur'Oun. You have been either unable to find a way home, or have alienated yourself from those who may have helped you. In any event, it's a long walk home... Note the date that this module was played on this cert; your PC may not participate in any *Legend of the Shining Jewel* adventures

for a period of time not to exceed three months from this date. During this “blackout period” you are free to adventure with any other player characters you may have.

Adventure Date: _____

- *Curse of the Tomb Robber!* The Night Wolf has cursed you for betraying her trust and your word. Now, the shadow of death hounds your every step. Show this certificate to your GM before every LSJ event. Every time that you are struck by a foe for non-subdual damage, and the blow is a potential critical hit, this certificate will automatically confirm that attack as a critical hit. Damage is still rolled normally, however. This cert may only be removed by the willing intercession of a cleric of 12th level or greater, who must cast *Remove Curse* on you to rid you of this cert. (No priest in the LSJ campaign will remove this curse at this time; there may be a chance to have it removed in the future, however)

GM Aid 1



GM Aid 2

The Eyrx

Eryx; Medium Humanoid (Reptilian); HD 3d8+3; hp 25; Init +3 (Dex); Spd 50 ft, 30 ft burrow; AC 17 (+3 Dex, +2 leather, +2 natural), touch 13, flat-footed 14; BAB/Grapple +1/+3; Atk: Scimitar +3 Melee (1d6+2); bite +3 melee (1d4+2); or javelin +4 ranged (1d6) or light crossbow +4 (1d8); Full Atk: Scimitar +3 Melee (1d6+2); bite +3 melee (1d4+2); or javelin +4 ranged (1d6) or light crossbow +4 ranged (1d8); Space/Reach 5 ft/5 ft.; SA Nil; SQ Nil; AL NE; SV Fort +2, Ref +5, Will +2.

Str 14, Dex 16, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 13, Cha 10.

Skills: Hide +6, Jump +5, Listen +7, Move Silently +6, Search +5, Spot +5, Survival+5, Tumble +6

Feats: Combat Reflexes, Track

Background: The Eryx are a race of evil bipedal, desert-dwelling lizard men, with large amber-yellow eyes and sandy brown to rust red skin, who make their homes in Raia's temperate deserts. Though they are reptilian, Eryx are warm-blooded, and do not suffer from a reduced metabolism during the cold desert night. Eryx are extremely well adapted to their desert home, and do not suffer the normal penalties for travel in the heat. Males stand 5 to 6 feet tall, with females being slightly smaller. They live in tribal groups, in tunnels and caverns beneath the sands. Eryx may serve as mercenaries or guides for humanoids crossing the desert.

Combat: Eryx are stealthy hunters, preferring to attack from ambush. A typical eryx hunting party consists of 4-8 individuals, plus a leader of 3rd – 6th level. A tribal settlement typically has 12-36 adults plus 50% young/noncombatants plus 2 lieutenants of 3rd-6th level and one leader of 5th-10th level

Fanged Eryx; Large Humanoid (Reptilian); HD 6d8+18; hp 58; Init +4 (Improved Initiative); Spd 40 ft, 30 ft burrow; AC 15 (+2 leather, +3 natural), touch 13, flat-footed 15; BAB/Grapple +4/+9; Atk: Scimitar +9 Melee (1d6+4); bite +9 melee (1d4+4); or javelin +4 ranged (1d6) or light crossbow +4 ranged (1d8); Full Atk: Scimitar +9 Melee (1d6+4); bite +9 melee (1d4+4); or javelin +4 ranged (1d6) or light crossbow +4 ranged (1d8); Space/Reach 5 ft/5 ft.; SA Poisonous bite; SQ Nil; AL NE; SV Fort +8, Ref +3, Will +3.

Str 18, Dex 11, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 9.

Skills: Hide +2, Jump +8, Move Silently +3, Survival +3

Feats: Combat reflexes, Improved Initiative, Track

Background: Fanged Eryx are larger, stronger and less intelligent than their smaller Eryx cousins, and have a poisonous bite. 10% of any Eryx community will be Fanged Eryx. Fanged Eryx stand 8 to 9 feet tall.

Poison Bite: A Fanged Eryx that makes a successful bite attack poisons its victim. Onset time is 1 minute. Fort save DC 17. Initial damage 1d6hp. Secondary damage temporary loss of 1d4 Str and 1d4 Con

Player Handout #1

The mysterious inscription on the southern wall of the second chamber:

The faithful of Al-Achmar may pass through
this place safely, my blessed ones.

Death to any others that intrude here.

To pass, find the way within these words:

Among the Standing Stones and wretched
wraiths, singing skulls and endless shadows earn
the enmity of never ending night.

Player Handout #2

An inscription beneath a ghastly mural depicting the conjuration of demons:

See the fate of those who oppose Al-
Achmar!

But the loyal of Al-Achmar will be delivered!
In the path of the stars you will find the way to
me, beloved ones...

Player Handout #3

An inscription found at an “L” shaped corridor:

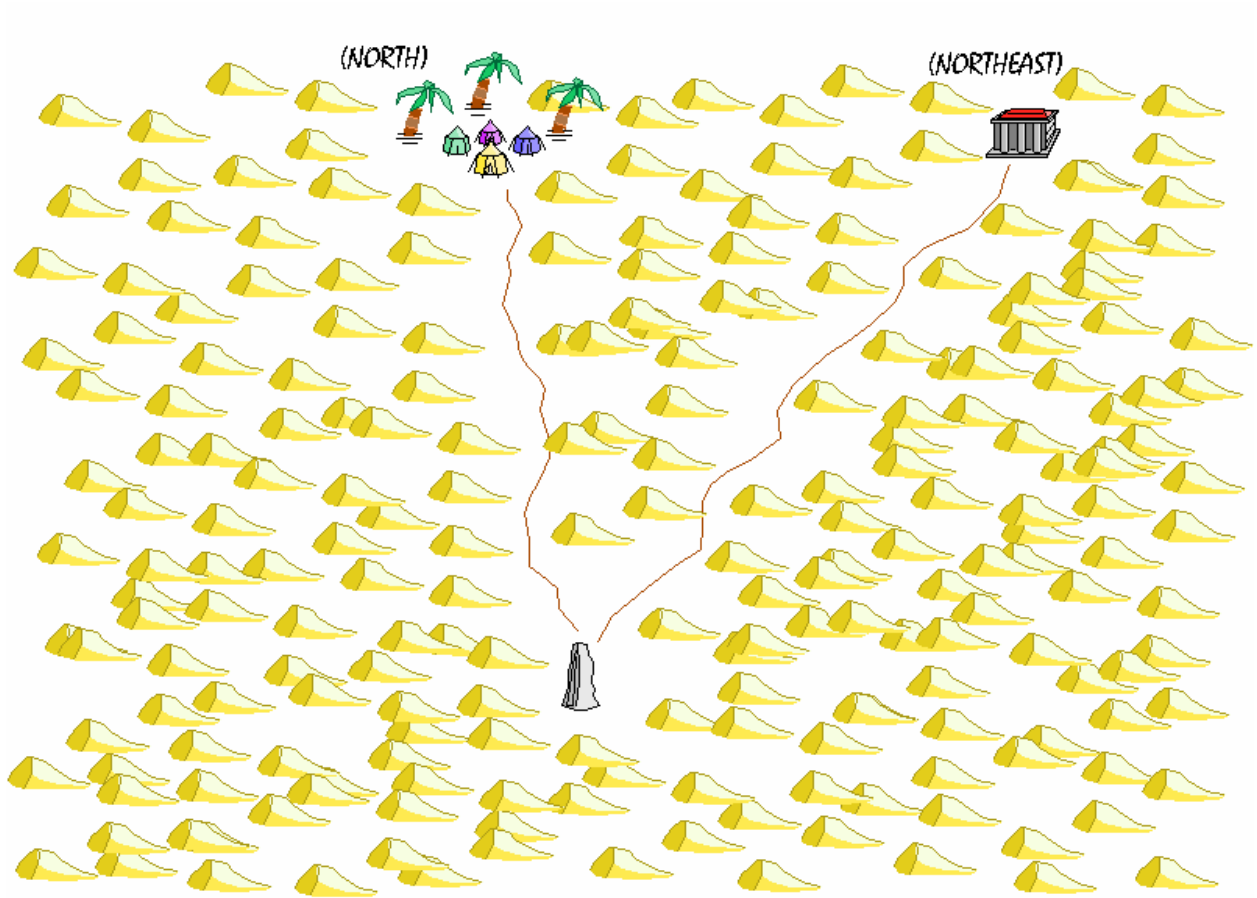
You grow nearer to me, loyal ones.

Approach me with care.

Approach me as you would your lord and
master, for such is Al-Achmar!

Player Handout #4

A map recovered in the desert.



Critical Event Summary: Author, Author!

1. What was Al-Achmar the lich's status at the end of the module? (Circle all that apply)

Undisturbed Awakened and rampaging

Awakened and destroyed by the PCs (yeah, right!)

2. How did the heroes treat Anwar El-Fadim? (Circle whichever applies)

Befriended him Grudgingly accepted him Disrespectful to him

Attacked him Slew him

3. What was Anwar El-Fadim's status at the end of the module?

Alive Dead

4. How did the heroes deal with the Night Wolf?

Worked with her Attacked her and were defeated

Attacked her and were victorious

5. Did the heroes recover the manuscript? Yes No

6. Did the heroes destroy the tomb? Yes No

If the answer is "No" is it because the table ran out of time to finish the module? Yes No

7. Were the heroes *Marooned in the Great Desert*? Yes No

8. Note any other important information on the back of this form (PC arrests, etc.).

Return this form to: Jay Fisher, 8932 Manor Loop Apt 107, Bradenton, FL 34202 or by e-mail to lsj-plots@ucc-online.com.

Please send completed form to: Joanne Clarke-Stein, 15 Manor Crescent, Bldg. 20, New Brunswick, NJ 08901-1680, or email to lsi-roster@ucc-online.com.



Roster of Heroes: Author, Author!

Judge Name: _____

Convention: _____

Date: _____

Player Name: _____ Home State: _____

Email address: _____ (optional)

Hero's Name: _____ Sex: _____ Race: _____

Class: _____ Level: _____ Region/City: _____

Special items or comments: _____

Gained a level: Out of Play: Dead: Lost level(s):

Player Name: _____ Home State: _____

Email address: _____ (optional)

Hero's Name: _____ Sex: _____ Race: _____

Class: _____ Level: _____ Region/City: _____

Special items or comments: _____

Gained a level: Out of Play: Dead: Lost level(s):

Player Name: _____ Home State: _____

Email address: _____ (optional)

Hero's Name: _____ Sex: _____ Race: _____

Class: _____ Level: _____ Region/City: _____

Special items or comments: _____

Gained a level: Out of Play: Dead: Lost level(s):

Player Name: _____ Home State: _____

Email address: _____ (optional)

Hero's Name: _____ Sex: _____ Race: _____

Class: _____ Level: _____ Region/City: _____

Special items or comments: _____

Gained a level: Out of Play: Dead: Lost level(s):

Player Name: _____ Home State: _____

Email address: _____ (optional)

Hero's Name: _____ Sex: _____ Race: _____

Class: _____ Level: _____ Region/City: _____

Special items or comments: _____

Gained a level: Out of Play: Dead: Lost level(s):

Player Name: _____ Home State: _____

Email address: _____ (optional)

Hero's Name: _____ Sex: _____ Race: _____

Class: _____ Level: _____ Region/City: _____

Special items or comments: _____

Gained a level: Out of Play: Dead: Lost level(s):

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