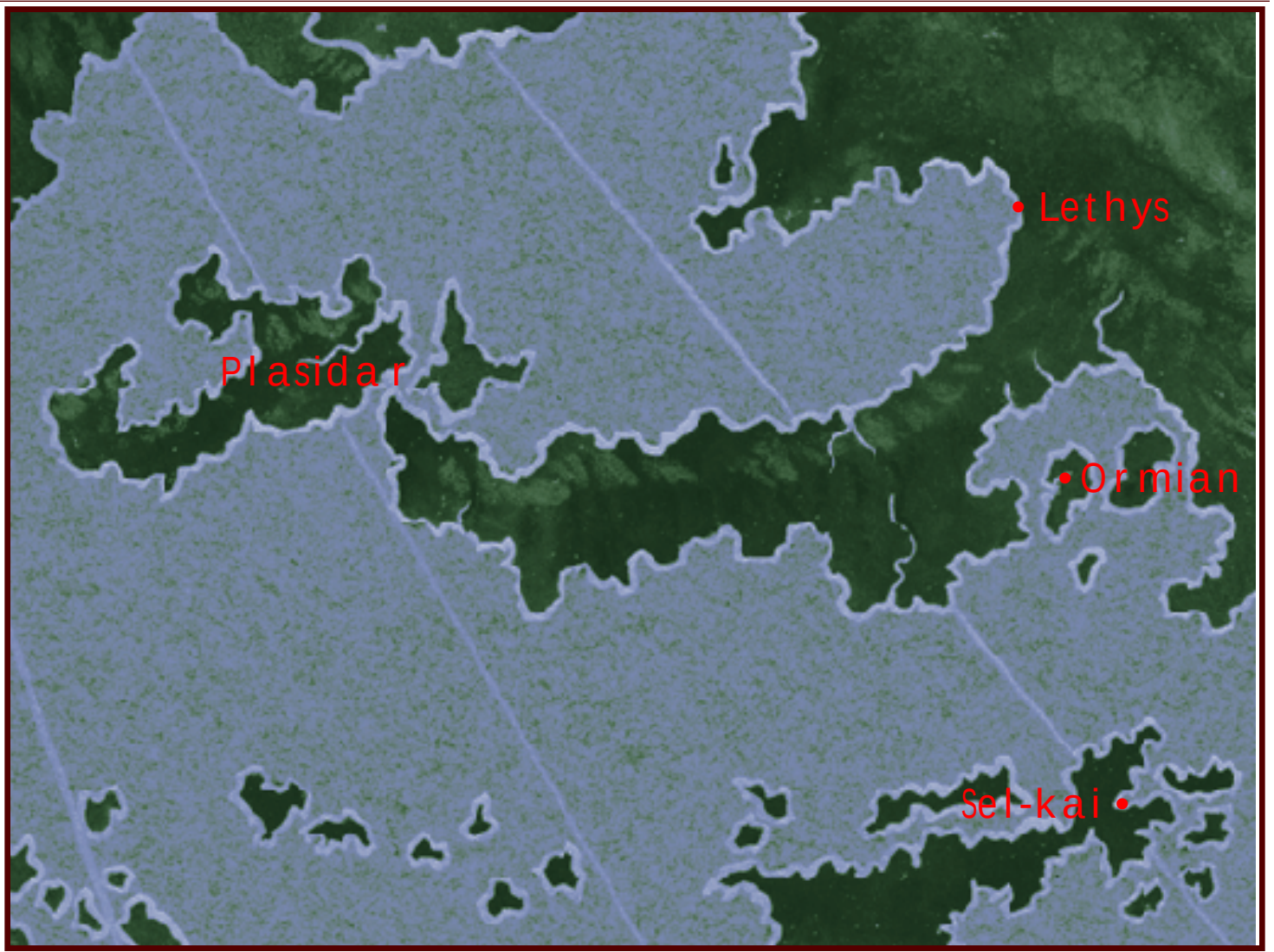




• Southern Jaiman •

• PART V •

LETHYS

SEA-PORT IN RHAKHAAN

A hush fell over the smoke-hazed great-room at the Flask and Mug. Bette leaned over the polished bar, allowing herself a short rest; her sons and daughters could handle the drinks for awhile. At the far end of the room, by the hearth's roaring fire, the bard Randæ was strumming his harp. The singer had a beautiful voice and the ability to hold even large halls under his spell for hours. Bette wondered not for the first time why such a beautiful, talented Elven bard continued to play in low-class taverns like the Flask when he could make several times the silver in the Royal Quarter.

She noticed her youngest daughter Ilene staring at Randæ with glazed eyes and bemused smile. Bette frowned, afraid that the girl had fallen in love with the charming bard. Then the proprietress scanned the other faces in the room and noticed something for the first time: nearly everyone wore the same entranced look. Bette pressed her full lips together as she thought: 'Sorcery, from my little bard? We'll have to have a talk after this set. Maybe I can convince him to suggest that they buy more ale in addition to listening—and to leave my daughter out of his enchantment.' Then she turned back to cleaning ale glasses, taking for granted the fact that Randæ's spell had not enveloped her as well...



ethys and Haalkitain are the two largest cities in Jaiman, and while both are within the Rhakhanian Empire, they could hardly be more different. Where Haalkitain is dark, brooding and claustrophobic, Lethys is bright and energetic. Haalkitain is often cold and buffeted by mountain winds; rain and snow are common. Lethys is sunny and her climate is moderated by mild coastal breezes. Haalkitain is a fortress, her granite walls designed to shut out the world. Lethys is a trading center, her gates open all day and night.

Located along the eastern coast of the Nea Bay, Lethys is a sprawling city, nominally under the control of Rhakhaan. It is considered the gateway to Emer and other points south, and therefore a logical first destination for those seeking adventure (or maybe just passage south to Kaitain).

1•THE GATHERING

Before gathering the players, the GM should have prepared each of them with a reason for their character to have arrived in Lethys. A quick check of their backgrounds shows that all have a motive to be away from their homes; what remains is the explanation of what brings them together.

Beginnings in FRP campaigns are almost always a bit contrived, with very different characters somehow coming together to form a group bound together by (usually) mysterious forces.

While ICE does not generally encourage heavy-handed Gamemastering (forcing characters into a preset series of events), the very nature of a campaign dictates a certain amount of guidance. However, it falls upon the GM to *provide opportunities* rather than *dictate courses*. Below are brief summaries of motivations for the characters which would bring them to this port.

Ajkar Tyrus Faslurin: Ty has no particular goal at the onset of the Campaign, though the thought of going to the Library of Nomikos will secretly excite him; he will offer to go along as 'protector.' Once the nature of the quest begins to unfold, his curiosity will be piqued. His sense of duty (not to mention the opportunity for glory) will carry him from there. He has come to Lethys to see the library.

Ta'a Nør: Like Ty, Ta'a has no direct link to the campaign purpose. She is living in self-imposed exile in Jaiman but has grown bored and discontented in Lethys. She will go along for this purpose alone (though at first she might ask for compensation a bodyguard; if Ty is there he might shame her into going free). She might be encountered in the *Flask & Mug*, having become a regular there. Bette could introduce her to the others.

Terek Al-Arain: He is also an exile, but he seeks to discover the nature of the Phoenix Pendant. The search has brought him to Rhakhaan, but now hints point towards Nomikos, where archives might hold information on such mystical devices. Terek has exhausted the resources of the Haalkitane library, and is in the Lethys stacks hoping to pick up an additional kernel of information.

Vania Kirilin: As an agent of Kel, Vania has no set destination. The appeal of Nomikos is that such a center of knowledge might also be a gathering place of Loremasters exchanging more recent news of world events. She could very well be in the library or in the tavern gathering information. She has already spent several days in Lethys, so will be ready to depart.

Jymsan Ixata-Centarus: Unlike some of the other members of this group, Jymsan is 'along for the ride' (at least in the beginning). He is not particularly driven by a troubled past or seriously seeking a goal. As a result, he will be mildly interested in Nomikos simply because it's a place he has never been before. He might well have run into Ta'a Nør at the *Flask & Mug* before.

Nukiti Melenka: Nukiti might not be particularly interested in Nomikos until someone tells him that there are always rich researchers there (it might be wise to neglect to mention to Keety the Changramai Warrior guards). He might also gain clues to the whereabouts of the Scepter of Khôm. He will be frequenting the *Flask* for a good time and drunk targets.

Morden Nôk: The information he seeks about his father is not likely to be found here, but he might gain insights from unexpected sources. (Andraax comes here often, cloaked in a variety of guises. Morden will see him as he really appears—a striking man with black hair and violet eyes—but it is unlikely that he will realize just who he is looking at). In addition, Morden might seek information

in the Library, though it is relatively inadequate.

Ræk Torren: In the beginning, Ræk is on a journey of self-discovery as much as anything else. He need to come to terms with his inner spirit and his true nature.

Later, as the focus moves to Emer, his importance as a true descendant of the Order of the Cloak will come to the fore. Ræk could take an important leadership role, standing against the Inquisitors, and even re-founding the true order.

Leena Arien: Leena seeks her brother Arik, who was lost while journeying around Emer. She will not be eager to spend a great deal of time in Jaiman, but the opportunity to go to Nomikos Library is too great an opportunity to pass up. Hints of her brother's fate will be revealed in Jaiman. Leena is most likely to be spending time in the docks area and the taverns, hoping to hear word of her brother.

Rælen Thirok: He is at first on his way to the Mur Fostisyr to join in the rebellion against the Iron Wind, but knows better than to rush foolishly into the fray. He wants to gain what insights he can about the Iron Wind—any tools which could be used against this dark power. He will be in the library to learn background and in the taverns to hear the latest developments. He will not get much on the Iron Wind, except a scroll on which is recorded the passage that appears below, with indications that it is part of a much larger work (this is a copy, unsigned).

From the History Arnak ...

Six Orders like six fingers of the same hand, united yet separate, the Arnak take hold on a continent. Their purpose is the destruction of civilization, the end of life.

Of Gaath is known, the Dragon-cult of the Northern Isles. Few now stand against the Evil which lurks amidst the frozen peaks. Athimurl as well holds sway; the Snow Lion rules the lands of Blue Light.

Of Lyak the Hawk I know little, yet I have heard hints of a dark order in the land known as Tanara...

Dansart is quiet for now. The Desert Wolf rules the windy plains of Zor, dead as the taste of dust. In the silence soon will arise whispers.

Words of the Priest of Thargondaak now echo across the rolling hills of Taldaar; horsemen hear the call and their reward is madness.

Of Yarthraak I hear whispers most ominous. The Cult of the Sea-Drake awakens to a new realm built upon the foundations of old, yet forged reborn terror and hate. By a dark victory a Crown is the tool of the Unlife.

Elor Once Dark
(TEI 4150)

From this (and hints dropped by library clerks) Rælen may get the idea that Elor is a prolific author, whose works might be worth additional research.

GM Note: While this is dated long ago, it still has relevance because of the cyclic nature of the forces involved. As is noted in the timeline, the Priests are moving again after a period of inactivity. In the Mur Fostisyr they are succeeding where they failed two millennia ago.

Also, The GM may wish to begin dropping hints about Elor now: that he is kind of crazy, that he retired from the Loremasters, that he is living somewhere in NW Jaiman, that he knows all kinds of secrets, etc.

2•LETHYS OVERVIEW

A sprawling coastal trade center dominating the Nea Bay, Lethys is the largest city in Rhakhaan. Nearly 20% of the Lethian population of about 50,000 is Elvish, mostly Erlin. Lethys has the largest harbor complex on Jaiman, and not surprisingly is the leading ship-builder.

Lethys and Haalkitane are as night and day in both mood and design. While Haalkitane is a brooding citadel honeycombed with secret passages and court intrigues, Lethys is a bustling seaport, ruled by a flamboyant prince and a council of greedy (if unassuming) families. The emphasis is commerce, and silver will buy you in Lethys what you'd need breeding or blackmail to get in Haalkitane.

Lethys is not only a trading center, it is a renaissance city which owes much of its wealth to banking and astute business ventures by its powerful families (it is a lesser sister to Sel-kai, but nevertheless a wealthy city). Many of these groups have 'offices' in cities all over Jaiman and Emer, lending money to other concerns and even governments. As a result they have grown rich on interest and trade. Lethys is practically an independent city-state, though no one would dare say it aloud in Haalkitane.

LEADERSHIP

Prince Westley Calyon is a very popular leader, especially considering his bloodlines (he is a distaff heir; worse, his father was an Elf); yet there were no other heirs when the last Prince died. (The royal line of Lethys is related, yet separate from, the Emperors of Rhakhaan. Only the head of Lethys is granted the title of Prince, while the other provinces of the Empire are ruled by Dukes, Counts or Barons.) Westley's mother's sister was married to the former Prince, and thus inherited the crown only through marriage. Unthinkable in Haalkitane, yet hardly more than inconvenient here.

While technically the final authority in Lethys, the Prince must answer to his Council, a body of nine men and women who are the heads of the city's economically powerful merchant families. There are also the city guilds to reckon with and these include Shipwrights, Metalsmiths, Stonewrights, Clothwrights, Seamerchants, Landmerchants, the Allied Cults (all recognized churches), the Uscurac Orders (users of Ess  nce), Scribes, Artisans, and Bankers. In addition there are a number of landowners, but while they sit on council, they have less authority and restricted voting powers.

THE CITY LAYOUT

The City rests primarily on the north side of the Bernen River in the southern inlet of the Nea Bay. It is divided into four uneven quarters:

The Port: Including the warehouses, docks and shipbuilding facilities, this is the largest district. There are numerous taverns, Inns and other 'service' establishments catering to every taste and budget. The *Flask and Mug* is here, a few blocks from the commercial docks.

The Trade Quarter: Adjacent to the port, it is where the majority of major transactions take place. The Grand Marketplace runs several blocks and is bustling all day and well into the night.

The Royal Quarter: Smallest of the four, it includes the Prince's palace complex and the barracks of the militia. The houses of the wealthiest families of the city and many temples are situated here. The Lethys Library is here.

The Artisans Quarter: Most of the craftsmen live and work here, residing in apartments behind and above their shops. This is where many finished goods and services can be had.

3•THE LETHYS LIBRARY

While no match for the Library of Nomikos, this archive is still one of the finest in Jaiman. Dedicated to the Lady of Orhan, Valris, it is staffed entirely by women who follow the academic teachings of the Goddess of Knowledge. Many are Astrologers and Scribes. While they don't require library patrons to be followers of Valris, they do screen out 'unsavory' types.

Except for an open reference area, the stacks of the library are closed; searches are done by the staff upon request. Charges for a search run between one and five sp, depending on scope and complexity. Books on the requested subject are brought to the patron, who may view them in the open area or use a "private" cubicle for an additional charge of 1 sp. ("Private" is in quotes because it can be assumed that the patron is being monitored by the staff, notoriously protective of their books.) Books may be viewed for one day free of additional charge, but may be kept 'on hold' for 1 bp per additional day, up to a week. This would be for the purpose of reading long passages, copying, etc. Copying services are available, though pricey.

Anyone found attempting to steal or deface a book is immediately removed from the premises and fined up to 100 gp. Those who cannot pay or attempt truly heinous crimes have been known to suffer very unpleasant (and unexplainable) maladies such as recurring partial blindness, memory lapses, speech or hearing disorders.

AT THE LIBRARY

Visitors are greeted pleasantly and asked to formulate their search request. They are charged and asked to wait or return in a few hours. Searches generally take from    to 6 hours.

■ **PC Roll:** Administration (If no Admin skill, roll at -25. If the player does a particularly good job personally, add up to 30). This is to determine how well the character explains her research interest without causing offense, raising suspicion, etc. For instance, walking in from out of town and asking for all they have on the Dark God Scalu in a religious library would not be advisable. If you want to know about the Dark God Scalu, you have to work your way down there. Use this roll as a guide to how on-target the staff member's search is.

■ **GM Roll:** A plain open-ended D100 as a general indicator to see what is available on the topic. Add 20 for the library size; modify if the topic is particularly bizarre or arcane—or if very pertinent. Note: no matter how good the roll, don't get carried away and give away everything! This roll should also be secret in case a negative result is indicated.

Roll	Result
< -50	Incorrect Information. Character gets very convincing but very wrong data.
-50 — +0	Failure. Nothing available.
01 — 50	Minimal Success. Basic information; what the PC probably already knows.
51 — 99	Moderate Success. Some information unknown to the Character is uncovered, but nothing earth-shattering. The researcher will point out (wistfully) that there are more thorough volumes on Nomikos.
100	Success with a Twist. The researcher finds a rare book with very unique information on the subject—and unrelated information which is also of great value to the character.
101 — 150	Success. At least one very informative and unique bit of data is revealed.
151 — 199	Thorough Success. Two or three new bits of in-

200+

formation are revealed.

Phenomenal Success. Character learns important information, plus related information of great import. (e.g., while searching for information about the Phoenix Pendant, Terek not only gets the basics of it's powers, but references to 'Gryphon College,' where information about attunement might be found.

One way that characters might meet is if their searches indicate a book or scroll that is already 'checked out.' This would lead to another PC's cubicle or table, where a sharing arrangement might be worked out—and from there...

4•AT THE 'FLASK AND MUG'

A mid-range Tavern, the F&G is convenient to the docks without being located too near the rough area known as 'The Planks.' The Proprietress is an amiable woman named Bette. Her sons and daughters work in the inn, as cooks, servers and porters; all share a blond handsomeness, impressive stature and easy nature revealing their Myr origins.

ENCOUNTER: THE CHARACTERS MEET

The various characters find themselves—each for his or her own reasons—in the great room of the Flask and Mug, each drinking and enjoying the evening's entertainment.. A few of the characters may have already met that day, perhaps on the docks looking for a ship to Tanara, or at the Lethys Library (see above). It would not be

uncommon to inquire with a proprietress such as Bette if there are other residents of the Inn headed for a given destination. If they don't look shady, she could be helpful.

Tonight the Greatroom of the Flask is graced by a talented bard. Several have good singing voices and might join in with the youthful singer seated by the fire. The bard seems to project an air of friendship and comradery, and the songs he sings are all familiar ballads and ditties known across Jaiman, Emer and beyond. His name is Randæ, and he is always a big draw at the Flask And Mug.

As the evening progresses, the group begins to gather, make introductions, and lay plans for the trip to Nomikos, on the Isle of Ormian

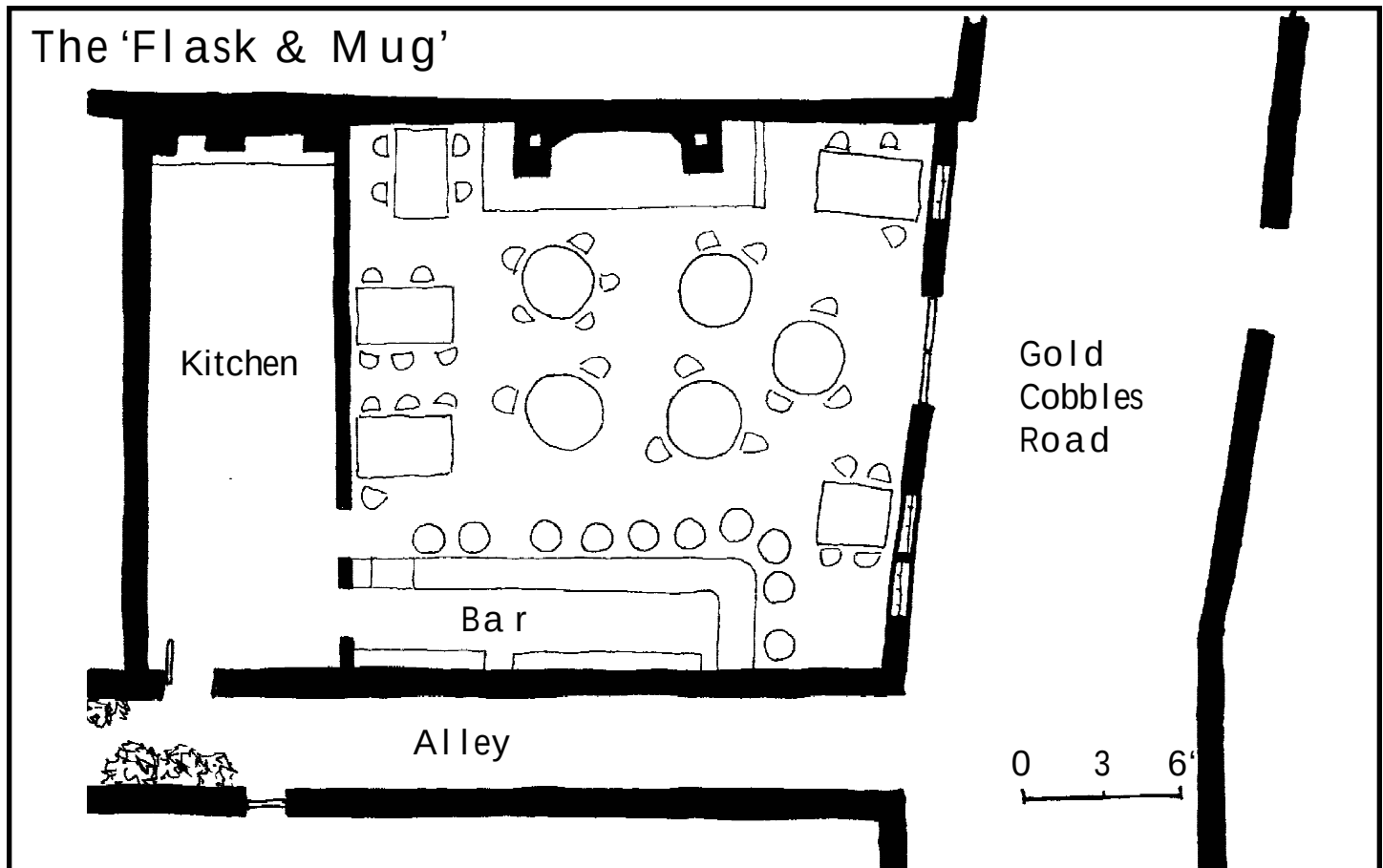
Anyone investigating possible routes will have been told the following: while the coast road through southern Rhakhaan and the Melurian States followed by a ferry ride to Ormian seem to be a direct path, the way is not safe right now. The Y'kin are moving southwest, and there are bandits, and tales of ghosts. Besides, once they get to the bay, they would have to travel far around it to get close to sea level; most of the northern area is rocky cliffs. It would be almost 250 miles, the last half all rough going.

The best way to go is by ship around the peninsula. The usual voyage time is 8 days. Merchant vessels leave almost daily on that route, usually heading on to Tanara or south to Sel-kai afterwards. If the PCs make the wise decision, they will opt for the sea voyage.

Maybe some have already booked passage (the *Seasprite* is the archetypal ship provided); there will be space still available tomorrow; the ship is scheduled to set sail in three days.

ENCOUNTER: THE BLOODY DAGGER

This settled, the group can settle in to enjoy the music. However,



the evening is not to conclude unmarred. There is a handsome young man alone at the next table; perhaps one or more of the PCs notices him; he looks to be part Elvish. He wears simple but fine travelling clothes, sips wine, and wears a blandly pleased expression. A tall woman in black attempts to squeeze between the tables and bumps the man. He stands, and suddenly there is an altercation between the two. One of the PCs (the GM must either set up the scene or choose) is bumped so hard he must stand up and suddenly the man spins around and falls into the PC's arms with a short cry of surprise and pain. About this time Randæ has noticed the commotion and will stop playing. People are turning.

The woman glares at the PC and walks purposefully towards the back of the bar. Trying to help up the man, the PC feels something wet and warm on his hands... it is blood: there is a dagger in the man's chest, and he dies right there. This is what most people see: the dead man in the PC's arms, with the dagger in or near the PC's hand. A few will have noticed the woman and cry out, but it is just about too late.

■ **Roll:** Perception, Very Hard (-20). Very observant PCs might notice a flickering in the shadows: The woman is Alize of the Cult of Stars, and she is using an *Image* to teleport out of the bar. There is no chance of catching her.

The dagger is of obsidian with a silver edge. The hilt-pommel is a black star sapphire. This is the symbol of the Cult of Stars, but of course they don't know that... yet. The victim is in fact a lesser Priest Arnak (he has a ring) of the Lyak group. The ring is a signet with a flat blue stone carved with the image of a hawk. Both items are very evil.

The City Guard will be summoned, and there will be considerable questioning and confusion, but Randæ will step in if necessary to clear the PC (assuming the PC doesn't do something rash like run). He will state that he clearly saw the woman attack, but she moved too fast for anyone to have intervened.

The dagger and the body will be confiscated by the guard. A skillful PC *might* manage to get the ring; if the GM would just as soon not have to deal with players having powerful evil items at this point, he can have Randæ pocket it, *after* the PCs have seen it. In any case, Randæ will conspiratorially tell the accused character to "Watch his step around here" but will not explain.

After the body is removed, things will settle down a bit, and Bette will order a free round just before the curious from neighboring taverns begin to pour in.

5•LETHYS AT NIGHT

One of the group has a nocturnal encounter late in the misty Lethys evening.

ENCOUNTER: A VOICE IN THE SHADOWS

One of the group (Morden if he is a PC) wakes in the middle of the night from a troubling dream he cannot remember. He hears his name called, the voice a breathy whisper. It seems to be coming from outside...

■ **Roll:** Morden must make a RR using his Presence bonus vs 60th level. If he fails, he must stealthily leave the inn and go down to the street.

Outside it is cool, and a dense fog has rolled in. He creeps into a dark alleyway, where he sees a figure in a hooded black cloak, barely visible in the mist. The figure beckons and he must obey. His crystal is glowing dimly with a prismatic light, something he has never seen

it do before.

When Morden is within six feet, he stops and the summoner speaks. His voice is a musical tenor, soft and enthralling:

"Morden, Warlock heed these words:

Your journey long, end out of sight
But be true to yourself and comrades
and for awhile forestall the night.

"To the Isle of books, then a sea of sand
Damp corridors, a city of towers.
A secret vault, and an exile's homeland
The gryphon's roost has hiding powers.

"Lakes and rivers, and fell riders stark,
A desolate land, yet full of fear
A woman's thirst, a man once dark
Beware in the trees, a whisper near.

"The Dragon holds a treasure dear
Take what is owned, beware of greed
The sun will set on Mur Fostisyr
But hope persists; it will awake at need

"The Haunted Land holds a harbinger.
After the spirits learn all you may:
borne of old evil grows a new danger.
Take ship by air—to Sel-kai be away.

"Then rest, and continue another day."

The rhyme and meter of this verse is confusing to Morden, almost hypnotic nevertheless. The words burn in his memory. The figure vanishes into the mist, leaving the youth shivering in the alley.

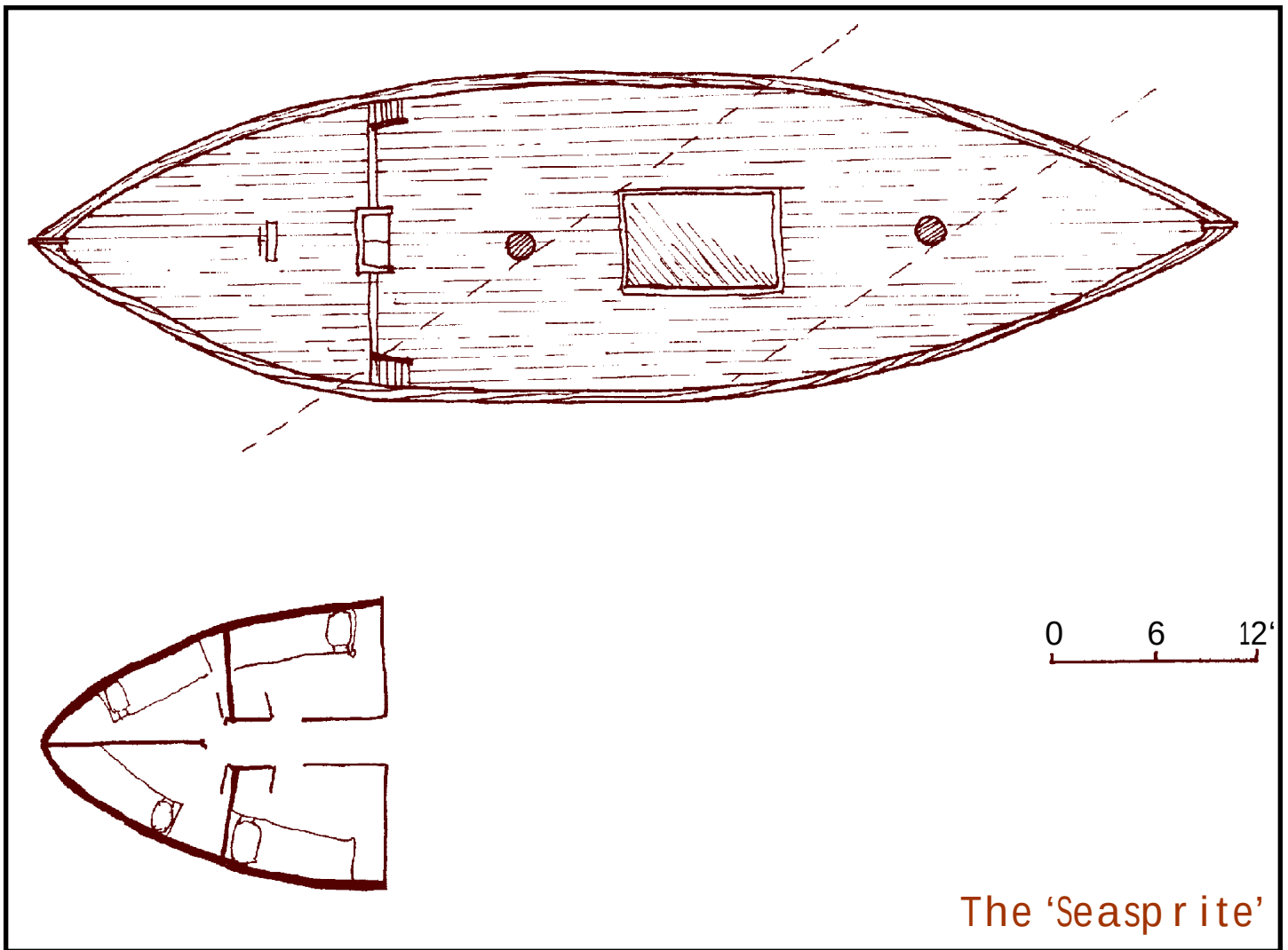
GM Note: The mysterious visitor is Andraax. He has seen the succession of events through his powers. Of course, this does not mean that the PCs MUST follow this path; as with all future seeings, Andraax can only foretell what is likely to occur based on the current situation. Should the characters deviate from this path, the GM may wish to have Andraax appear again with warnings or predictions which will steer them back on a preferred course.

Any remaining time for the PCs in Lethys should be mainly uneventful, but if the GM wishes to run a minor bar or thieving incident, she should do so (there are few city opportunities in this first phase of the quest).

6•ABOARD THE 'SEASPRITE'

A carrack, lateen and square rigged and about 60 feet long, the Seasprite is a sturdy ship. While she is an older vessel, and some of the decoration appears neglected, all the important parts are well maintained. With a crew of 12, the ship can take on up to 10 passengers in four guest cabins. Her captain is a Shay man of middle years, Shan Marr, who makes his home in Lethys.

The trip proceeds uneventfully as the *Seasprite* heads out of the sheltered south inlet of the Nea Bay, then west-northwest towards the Forbidden Sea. To the south, she will pass the isle of Aranmor, then Plasidar. Most sea-captains stick to the open waters, keeping the land barely in sight yet at a respectable distance



n GM Rolls: Roll for weather (*Character & Campaign Law* pg 109) daily; weather is even more important while sailing. Moderate severe effects somewhat while the ship is in the Nea Bay. In storms, some rolls for crew competency may be necessary or there is a slight chance that the ship might be lost.

ARANMOR

An evil place shunned by travellers, Aranmor is surrounded by churning, bubbling seas. The waters around Aranmor are literally boiling (volcanic steam vents on the sea floor) and can be seen for miles. Crewmembers will be happy to tell horror stories to curious passengers. None of these tales are quite as twisted and sinister as the bizarre truth, however. There are wild tales of demons and ancient curses placed on this volcano-tortured land, yet the stories are contradictory and no one has ever returned to tell the truth.

The *Seasprite* sails past Aranmor without incident.

ENCOUNTER: PIRATES!

Beyond Aranmor, to the west stretches a much larger island, which anyone will tell the ignorant character is Plasidar, home of the Pirate Elves.

PLASIDAR

While the waters around this island are not as strange as the boiling seas around Aranmor, they are treacherous. Only the isle's

inhabitants are bold enough to approach, as it is surrounded by many reefs and jagged, submerged atolls. It is said that they depend on enchantments to avoid the dangers which guard the coast. Merchants keep to the northern coast as they pass in and out of the Nea Bay, hoping to avoid both natural dangers and the threat of pirates.

A BLACK SAIL IS SIGHTED

If the *Seasprite* is passing Plasidar just before dawn or in the early hours of the morning on a day of reasonable weather, the lookout cries "Black Sail off the starboard bow!" The pirates prefer to move against ships who have the sun to their back, this way the pirates come out of the darkened western horizon and the sun does not reflect off their dark sails.

■ **GM Roll:** A pirate ship is seen to the south; the GM may wish to have a series of rolls as Captain Marr attempts to outmaneuver the pirate ship. The *Seasprite* is at an ongoing -20 to avoid the 50' pirate sloop.

If the ship bearing the characters cannot make a clean getaway, the pirates will pull alongside and order the *Seasprite* to surrender. Captain Marr will do so, preferring to hand over the strongbox rather than risk the lives of his crew and passengers. The PCs may have other ideas.

THE PIRATE SHIP DAUNTLESS

Lines are thrown across and the ship are lashed together. The

brigands number twenty, captained by a handsome Dyar Elf who leaps upon the deck of the *Seasprite* and introduces himself as Kelson of Talfang. Twelve more men come across, all Dyari Elves, heavily armed. The crew is ordered to lay down all weapons; they comply. Kelson is charming and polite, making small talk with his men, making sure that no one is harmed if they cooperate. Kelson and his first mate wield the beautiful Elven swords called *sareni* (sing. *saren*), which look much like the Terran *katana*, but strike as enhanced falchions. Stats for saren can be found in the Fantasy Weapons Chart on page ???.

■ **GM Roll:** Kelson will insist on seeing all of the passengers, and there is a 750% chance that he will take a fancy to some weapon or item of jewelry that one of the PCs is wearing. It would be an obvious item; he won't search anyone. His main goal is the ship's strongbox and a few cargo items it is known to be carrying. These are being removed by the pirates while Kelson and four other pirates watch crew and passengers. It is up to the PCs whether they are willing to fight for their possessions. If not, the pirates leave without harming anyone.

If Kelson is killed, or if things otherwise look very bad for the boarding pirates, the remaining crew will cut the lines and flee. The *Seasprite* will resume her course as best she can. The rest of the trip should be uneventful until she reaches the mouth of the Ormian Bay.

CREW OF THE SEASPRITE AND PIRATES OF PLASIDAR

Name	Lvl	Hits	AT(DB)	Sh	Gr	Melee Ob	Missile Ob	Mov
Captain Marr	6	95	8(10)	N	N	85 broadsword	35 light crossbow	15
Shay Rogue, Swim45; Brawl30; Gamb15; Ldrshp40; Nav60; Sail75; Signal25; Trade54; WeathWatch55.								
First Mate	3	80	1(10)	N	N	65 shortsword	20 short bow	10
Shay Fighter. Swim35; Brawl30; Nav50; Sail55; Signal5; Trade30; WeathWatch40.								
Other Sailors (Average)	2	25	1(10)	N	N	40 shortsword	—	10
Shay Fighter								
Kelson of Talfang	8	25	1(10)	N	N	118 saren‡	80 longbow	20
Age: (Looks 25) Eyes: Grey Hair: Black Build: Lean, muscular Height: 6' 3" Skills: Dyar Rogue. Swim60; Brawl55; Gamb172; Ldrshp85; Nav62; Sail70; Seduct78; Signal30; Subdu60; Trade45; WeathWatch61. Magic Items: +10 broadsword, boots of water-running.								
Meleken (First Mate)	4	25	1(10)	N	N	90 saren‡	70 longbow	15
Dyar Rogue Age: (looks 25) Eyes: grey Hair: blond Build: lean Height: 6' 5" Skills: Swim34; Brawl45; Gamb135; Ldrshp25; Nav48; Sail60; Trade35; WeathWatch. Magic Items: +10 dagger								
Other Pirate s (Average)	2	65	1(60)	N	N	50 broadsword	35 longbow	15
Dyar Fighter								

* Indicates a Shield or Greave protection is due to magical garment, shield spells, etc.

† Indicates special race powers; see *Shadow World Inhabitants Guide* for details.

‡ Elven sword, looks like a katana, strikes as a falchion +20 vs unarmored foes; +15 vs leather armor

• PART VI •

NOMIKOS LIBRARY

Books, like men their authors, have no more than one way of coming into the world, but there are ten thousand to go out of it, and return no more.

ATTRIBUTED (PROBABLY ERRONEOUSLY)
TO ANDRAAX



A library of unsurpassed size and scope, Nomikos is arguably the pre-eminent academic center of all Kulthea. According to popular belief, it was founded in SE 2530 by Andraax himself. It was intended as an open center of knowledge apart from the Loremaster Archives, which of course are on the hidden isle of Karilôn and not accessible to the common man.

The Nomikos complex is located in the southernmost part of the Jaiman continent on the island of Ormian, just east of Meluria. The island is a self-sustaining community, including the Scribe hierarchy and supporting society of farmers, fishermen and craftsmen. In addition, the wealth of the isle is assured through library use fees, making the entire populace quite well-off.

No other power has ever attempted to annex Ormian or claim sovereignty over the island, which may seem strange since it has no army or fleet of any size. However, the Scribes are said to have a battery arcane powers at their disposal.

A high bluff overlooking the Port of Ormian is the site of the Library complex, several buildings which cover nearly half a square mile.

1•ARRIVAL AT ORMIAN

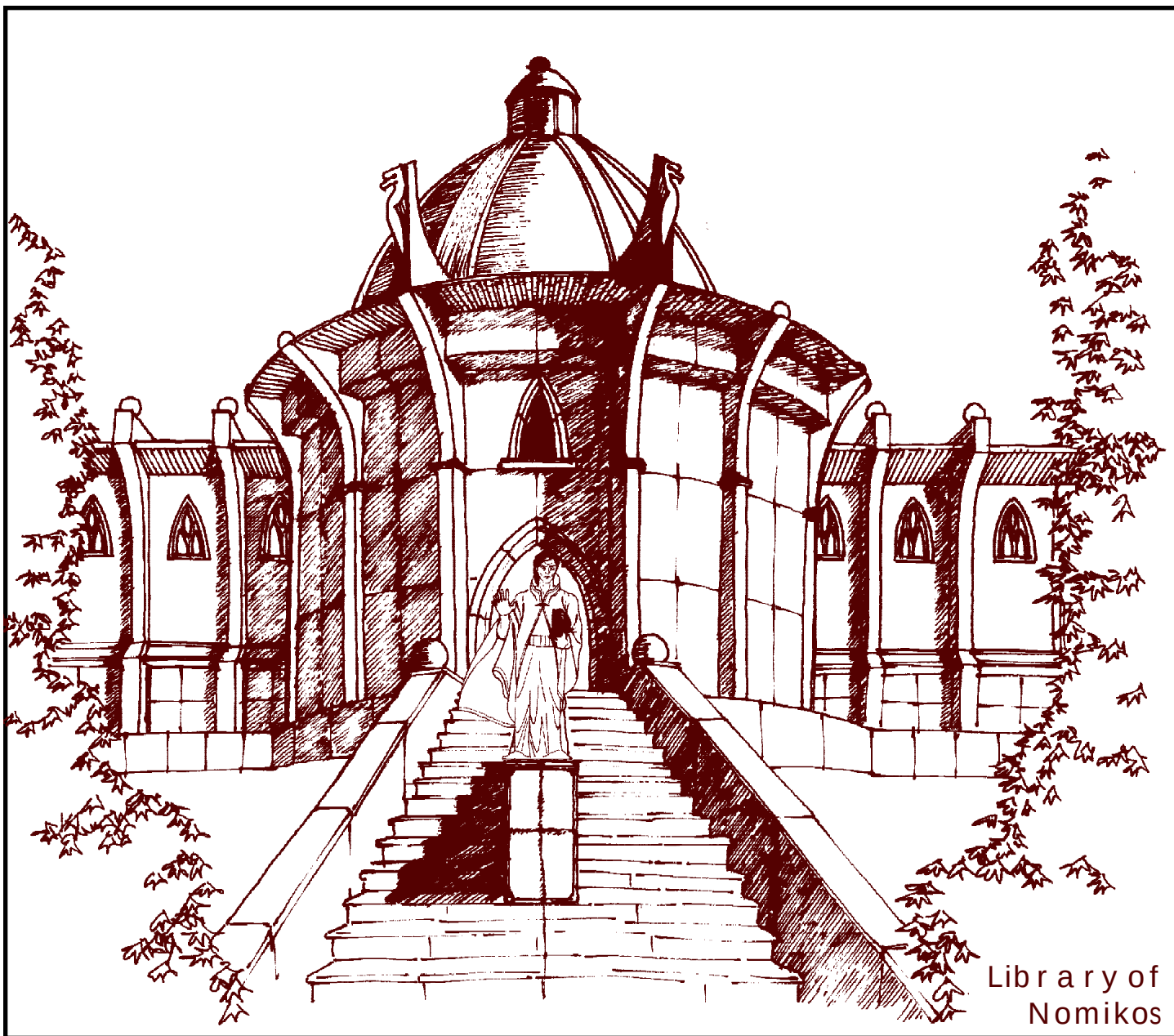
Assuming that the *Seasprite* survives, she continues on her way around the isles, then hugs the Melurian coast until she enters the bay which protects the isle of *Ormian*. The ship passes by a small, rocky island on the way, and Captain Marr might mention that this is the *Watching Isle*, an uninhabited rock which is reputed to be haunted. Some legends claim that it guards Ormian from looters. (Exactly how it does this is unknown.) Soon, however, the *Watching Isle* slips past, and Ormian itself looms ahead. It, like its neighbor, juts out of the sea, with rugged coasts. The Library is located on a bluff above the Port of Ormian, on an inlet about halfway up the length of the island. The ship will pull into a small but busy harbor. The town of Ormian is perhaps surprisingly large—about 5,000—but it is a convenient stopping point between Lethys and Sel-kai. Also the inhabitants trade in wool and certain finished goods. The *Seasprite* will be leaving with the tide, but the characters need not worry about being stranded, there are plenty of passenger-carrying ships coming in and out of Ormian every day. They will have no trouble finding passage.

2•THE LIBRARY

The following excerpt from Kalen's Travel Journals provides a descriptive and personal view of the Nomikos Library:

"The port town of Ormian was already far below us, and we had not yet reached the gate of Nomikos. The day was cloudy and not terribly warm, but the humidity was oppressive, and there seemed remarkably little wind for a coastal location such as this. I was winded and felt a trickle of perspiration run down my back, but our Loremaster guide Randæ Terisonen continued up the steep road tirelessly. Everyone else in our small party was gasping audibly, and even the usually inexhaustible Jad seemed to be puffing as we finally arrived at the main entrance. A great arch curved at least fifty feet above us in warm brown sandstone, the blocks large and set with the skill of an older civilization.

We were granted passage and proceeded along an avenue paved in luminous white marble. Tall wrought-iron fences



separated the road from ornate gardens on either side, then we passed through an inner portico. At the far end of a carefully manicured green courtyard towered the greatest library in the known world. The golden dome glowed even under the overcast sky, and hundred-foot tall buttresses of grey stone marched all about the perimeter of the monstrous cruciform structure. Standing amidst the wide staircase leading to the library's entrance was a mighty statue, carved of lustrous obsidian. It depicted a man with long straight hair and wearing a flowing robe. Under one arm he carried a book; the other hand was held at chest height, with the palm facing outward but close to the body. His expression and posture were difficult to decipher, though they seemed less than welcoming.

"Who's the statue of?" Jad asked idly.

For a long moment no one answered. Then, as we mounted the steps and the statue loomed above us, Randæ muttered, "It's *supposed* to be of Andraax, who *supposedly* founded this place many thousands of years ago."

"You seem a bit skeptical." I couldn't help pursuing Randæ's comment. Meanwhile, Jad seemed to involuntarily shrink away from the statue as we passed it.

"I just have trouble believing that this Andraax character could possibly have managed as many accomplishments as he has been credited with—even if he is immortal."

—KALEN AVANIR

RULES OF THE LIBRARY

GM Note: for those who may not have the Shadow World Master Atlas, the rules of Nomikos Library are reprinted below.

When one enters the complex, one must sign a contract agreeing to abide by the rules of the Library. "Signing" Includes writing one's full name and birthplace.

The Rules are:

1. To pay 1 gold piece per day in the complex plus surcharges if using the special collections.
2. To pay repair fees as set by the Library for unintentional damage to books.
3. To pay fines set by the Library if caught attempting to deface, disassemble or steal a book.
4. To follow without question instructions from any Library official, including Security personnel.

Although book access varies depending on the collection, *no book* is ever allowed outside of the complex. There are reading and copying carrels available for storage of books to those making extended visits—sleeping rooms are available for rent, but the rule barring removal of books is absolute. Patrons caught trying to smuggle books out of the library are severely fined and permanently barred from the library. Changramai warriors—fearsome experts at unarmed combat—guard the exits to the Library. It is said that they can see things invisible and know a liar by his voice. They are not to be trifled with.

THE COLLECTIONS

The library is made up of three basic parts: Public Collection, Research Collection, and Special Collection.

Public Collection: The largest of the collections in sheer number of volumes, it is designed for public consumption. This contains language translations, maps of various areas of the known world (*GM discretion how much of this is to be revealed*), and histories.

Several copies of each book are available, and books may be 'checked out' to the reading areas for as long as a month for study and copying. None of the works in this collection is an original; time and the ravages of a corrosive atmosphere would have long ago rendered them to dust. Instead, these manuscripts are constantly being copied and recopied so that there are volumes available for use.

Research Collection: Only scholars with approved research proposals are permitted in the research library (though admittance is not difficult, there is a 10-day waiting period). Many rare and original manuscripts are kept within the research complex, and there is a copying service available should a researcher need access to passages of manuscripts for an extended period of time.

Special Collection: The most closely guarded collection; only those with permission of the Chief Scribe may have access to its books. No one but the Scribes are actually allowed into the stacks; researchers consult a catalog of books, select what they desire, and scribe-assistants gather the materials. All Special Collection books are viewed in cubicles, under the close scrutiny of a Scribe.

GM Note: Additional details of the Library are available in the book Jaiman, and while not necessary to doing research, would add flavor to the events.

ENCOUNTER: CHANGRAMAI

As the group approaches the imposing library walls, Rælen will naturally be getting rather tense. Will he be recognized? A disguise would be in order if anyone thinks of it.

Rælen sees a former classmate from the Changramai Monastery.

■ **GM Roll:** Roll D100; if 91-00, a monk that would recognize Rælen is on the island while he is there and will see him. Roll D100 again for percentage of the way through the visit that the monk and Rælen will intersect. When this happens, give the monk a *Perception* Roll at +10 to see and recognize the errant Changramai. (Note that if Rælen is disguising himself in some way, the chances of his being recognized drop precipitously.) If he sees Rælen, he will immediately summon his fellows to capture him, but discreetly, and in a way that does not compromise their responsibilities as guardians of Nomikos.

■ **PC Roll:** Assuming there is a monk here who can identify Rælen, at the time of the meeting, give Rælen a *Perception* Roll with his bonus. Give him an additional +20 if he mentions that he is keeping a lookout just preceding the meeting (e.g., as the group enters the library that day, he mentions that he is looking for monks he knows).

If Rælen is spotted, things could get very ugly very fast. While the Nomikos Scribes have nothing against Rælen, they will not interfere in a private Changramai matter (i.e., they won't grant any sort of immunity).

DOING RESEARCH

■ **PC Roll:** All PCs researching must make a research roll for each topic they intend to pursue. They may only roll once for each topic.

Use the chart given under "At the Library" in the Lethys library Page ???, but add +100 to rolls (this is Nomikos after all). Depending on how smart the players are, (and how well they make their research rolls) information on the following topics might come to light:

GM Notes: The following are obviously passages, taken either from books, or in most cases, scrolls. The GM may wish to describe in detail some of these fabulous old items, bound in leather with wood or even iron covers, some great books as large as three feet tall with ornate hinges and locks. Each parchment page is rendered by hand in lovely calligraphic styles in colored and metallic inks.

THE PHOENIX PENDANT

1. From a scroll entitled *On the Making of the Jaimani Royal Artifacts*, dated SE 3890, by Fenrik Elvar, Alchemist of Arion:

...Tethior and Andraax took thought, and together they devised the recipes which would bring forth wondrous devices of steel and laen and jewels. First came six crowns for the kings and queens, enchanted diadems which could take on the practical form of an ornate helm of war. Next followed glorious blades to be wielded by the Kings' Champions. Aid for these was given by Tethior's younger brother Krelj—a promising swordmaker...

Finally, with the aid of Andraax's powerful spells, the most subtle items of all were made: the Six pendants to be worn by Royal Councillors. Lovely glittering orbs, imprisoned in each the heraldic beast of the realm...

It was not surprising that the design if not the wondrous powers of the Pendants was copied by many of the apprentices at Arion and elsewhere. No doubt there are many baubles now made in flattery of the Six, but pale and dim by comparison...

2. Regarding attunement, a scroll gives an account by Ajkara III, Empress of Rhakhaan, who visited a woman at a place called the Gryphon Tower. It was there that she learned how to attune the Phoenix Pendant. The location of the tower is secret, though the text mentions that it is in western Rhakhaan
3. The scroll by Zener Morndaak, which appears at the beginning of Part X, might be revealed.
4. Several other recent manuscripts (and perhaps a Scribe) make mention of a scholar on the Crowns (and swords and Pendants): the Loremaster Zener Morndaak, who reportedly now resides in northwest Tanara.

THE PHOENIX SWORD

1. A copy of an accounting of the royal artifacts of Rhakhaan indicates that the Sword, Pendant and Crown are all placed in separate vaults at about 4515 TE. They remain there until Ajkara III's ascension in 5087, when she removes the pendant and wears it as a sign of office (along with a small crown she has fashioned for herself.) The Crown and Sword remain locked far beneath Haalkitane until 5380, when Alaek has the crown brought out. His successors do not wear the crown until 5899, when Queen Italana VI dons it. She orders the Sword brought forth as well, but when the vault door is unlocked, the sword is gone. There is a gaping hole in one wall leading to a rough-dug tunnel. The hole in the wall seems to have been dug by some sort of clawed beast.. Soldiers are sent down the tunnel, but it leads to an endless warren of passages too small to navigate.
2. The scroll by Zener Morndaak, which appears at the beginning of Part X, might be revealed.
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the Loremaster Zener Morndaak, who reportedly now resides in northwest Tanara.

THE PRIESTS ARNAK

1. A scroll: (The Elor passage, Intro Part IV, page ???).
2. Something about the Iron Wind for Rælen. He discovers this account from the *Chronicles of Elor*, with annotations by the historian Salthay Ryne:

...Astride twin peaks of sheer stone rests the tower of Oran Jatar. From this citadel, the White Drake commands his priests Arnak: the Order of Gaath. Jatar is master of the creation of artifacts of power as well as a lord of mind and arms. Greatest among his items is perhaps his helm: fashioned after the form of a dragon's head, it allows him to assume human form and yet permits him to employ his deadly breath at full potential. Chill he is of lungs and mind, and his minions know no mercy for those who would stand against the Dragonlord. I know, for I have faced Oran Jatar, and it was one of the rare occasions of my life during which I knew true fear. Jatar is a terror beyond even the Ordainers in some ways, for he—as one of the Dragonlords—is not one of the creations of the Unlife, but an independent being who serves the Iron Wind willingly. Those are the most dangerous of its brood, for they are the most wily and clever.

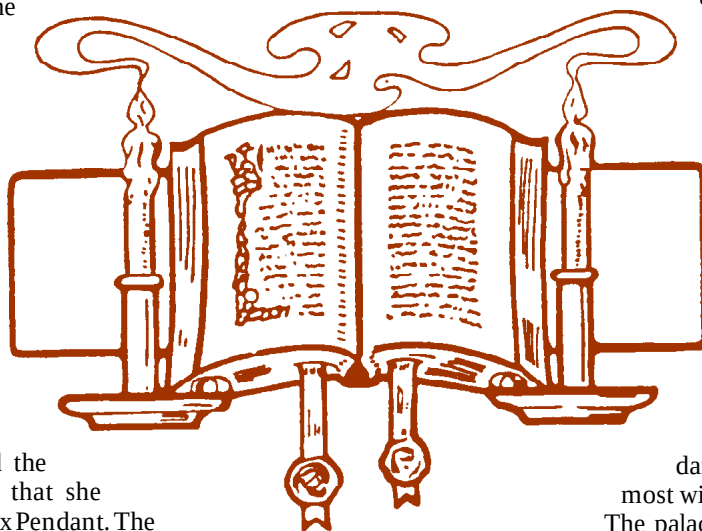
The palace of Oran Jatar also houses the six priests of Gaath, their High Priest, and the elite of the order of Athimurl.. Though Jatar is not their true master, his voice carries weight amongst their ranks as well. In the caves below the tower they perform their dark rituals of sacrifice and torture by the flickering light of smoky torches.

More of the Aalk Gaath I will not tell, it is such an unpleasant memory. To those foolish and brave enough to seek riches and adventure (and indeed is an ample supply of both), I wish good luck, and suggest that they set their affairs in order first.

Comments: It is known now that the centers of Gaath and Athimurl are elsewhere, though representatives of those cults might reside in the Aalk Gaath. In addition, Jatar probably considered himself an ally of the Iron Wind rather than a servant. He essentially seized the order of Gaath and has placed it under his control. It is believed that the Smith Krelj aided Oran Jatar in the fashioning of the Dragon Helms.

3. Elor Himself: he is reputed to be mad, residing somewhere in northern Saralis (see *Elor*, below)
4. For Rælen, he might uncover a reference to the holy sword of his people, in an account by the Ky'taari Scholar Rylen Alnesh:

...Gaath holds the Sword of the Ky'taari, locked behind doors of cold iron in a citadel upon foundations of ice. Beware the Unseen Guardians.



THE SCEPTRE OF KHÔM

Keety may wish to research this. He uncovers two things. First, an accaount by the Loremaster serving as advisor to the Hutarn at the time the Sceptre was stolen, and second, a cryptic verse written on a scroll of grey parchment. A few notes by the scribe who copied the verse follow it.

"We had known that the Man with no Name was in the city for nearly an hour; it was inevitable he would come to the palace. Nevertheless, there was a stir at the gates to the throne room. The Hutarn's stocky guards stood ready with their maces, while his advisors and I clustered to one side. Sidran rose from the bejewelled Butterfly Throne in a rustle of golden silk and nodded to the doorwards.

The wide doors swung in, and, amidst four impressive Changramai, the Nameless One entered the chamber. Against the white and silver of his guards, the plain ebony robe of the foreteller of doom seemed almost anticlimactic. However, the Nameless One carried himself like a lord, and his hood was thrown back to reveal is face—the face of a K'ta'viir.

Not that his outward appearance meant anything. I cast every spell of detection and analysis I dared against this visitor, though I know it was poor manners. So was not revealing your name. I was not surprised when my probing revealed exactly nothing. He was there in the flesh, but beyond that I learned nothing. I could not even be sure whether he was Man, Elf, or other.

It was only as the visitor drew close that I could see the fine work of his robe. It was embroidered along the hem and cuffs and collar with beautiful silk designs. The tailoring was exquisite.

All the while Hutarn Sidran waited stoically, his almond eyes betraying no emotion.

The Nameless One stopped a few paces away and bowed low. "Thank you for seeing me, Hutarn."

"I would welcome you to the land of the Nuyani, but my words would be empty."

"I understand. But I do not cause these misfortunes; I am merely a harbinger. What you do with my warnings is your responsibility."

"Speak then." Sidran settled into the throne.

"Your most prized possession other than the lives of your loved ones will be taken from you. Then and even worse, even those you cherish will be in danger from a killer who comes by night and day, a murderer whom locks cannot bar and armies cannot stop. The most vigilant guard falls to his invisible daggers." The Nameless One paused and pulled his hood up to cover his face again.

"That is all?" The Hutarn whispered, a man stricken

"That is all." The unwelcome visitor turned and left the hall.

Reported by Loremaster Nelden Viirs

TA 6019

Transcribed by
Looma T'tornian
Scribe of Nomikos
TA 6023



The Land of the Butterfly shall suffer a winter.

The passing of the Shadow

will bring much sorrow.

But first the Hutarn's hand will be empty.

Heed the whispers in the gale.

Gargarax... Urkanian

The brief unstructured verse above was copied from what is assumed to be the original, delivered to the Hutarn of Nuyan Khôm in TA 6019, 8 days before the Sceptre was stolen. The original was written in blood on a parchment. Under analysis, the blodd was found to be Elven, the parchment of human skin.

The meaning of "Gargarax... Urkanian" remains problematical,

Xian Hoojta
Scribe of Nomikos
TA 6033

THE JERAK AHRENRETH

The following are cryptic verses, found on scrolls, which turn up as the result of a search for the Jerak Ahrenreth.

Servants turn to betray the master

One land, one rule, eight lords

The west shall be east.

Gargarax... Urkanian

Orders of a lost time

return again to serve the Secrets

their blades are sharp

The Shadow lengthens.

Gargarax... Urkanian

ELOR

1. (Summary) The history of Elor is somewhat muddled, though it appears that he is far older than even what is indicated by his records from the Mur Fostisyr (which would make him at least 2,000 years old). It is possible that he is a survivor of the Wars of Dominion, and might have even fought for the Unlife, then reformed after the conflict (thus the moniker "Once Dark"). At any rate, Elor had the reputation of being somewhat of a loner and rebel, and though his reports were very valuable, his activities became increasingly erratic. He apparently retired sometime in the mid sixth millennia, though his present location is unknown.

2. The following Scribe report dated 5988 TE:

While travelling in northern Saralis, I met a man who claimed to be Elor Once Dark. He resembled descriptions I had heard, but of course any physical description is meaningless when dealing with Elor. This man lives in a strange house of eclectic design near the mouth of a river in the southern foothills of the Saral March. The house was built upon a small island in the middle of the river, reached by nearly a dozen strange and unique bridges. When I asked the man about them, he laughed and replied that he was indulging a fascination with engineering. He possessed a vast library but kept diverting me from serious research with bizarre anecdotes, most of which were completely meaningless. I stayed for several hours while he talked at his ease, but at the chime of midnight he leapt from his chair and ordered me to leave. 'It is the Iron Wind!' he cried, and insisted that I flee the area immediately. He could not be dissuaded, and so I left, without ever opening a book. I have tried to return on several occasions, but cannot find that strange house.

AHN SYE ZANAR

1. (General knowledge). The Order of the Cloak is a group of ostensibly religious zealots who travel the countryside converting to the religion of Zanar by the sword (or the mace in their case). They are known by their crimson cloaks.
2. More *might* be available in Emer, perhaps in a library in Kaitaine, or Sel-kai? However, the prevailing attitude in Jaiman about Emer is that the only remaining 'civilizations' are along the coasts; the interior has been reduced to barbarism, warring city-states, or is depopulated.

ENCOUNTER: A RE-SEARCHER

This is just a harmless meeting between Morden and an Elven Scribe. They pass in the great hall, and the Elf looks at him strangely. He say "I'm sorry, and I hope you don't take offense at this, but you have the most remarkable eyes. They have a very unique color, almost like those of a K'ta'viir. May I ask your ancestry.

No matter what Morden answers, the Elf will clearly be disappointed and murmur "I'm terribly sorry, I won't trouble you further..." and wander away.

WHERE TO GO NOW?

Information gleaned from Nomikos is likely to lead the characters to want to visit the Loremaster Zener Morndaak in Tanara. The group should have little trouble finding passage on a ship headed East, and soon set sail.

3•ABOARD THE 'FAIRWIND'

THE FAIRWIND

Captain Virs Tenak and a crew of 10 man the lateen-rigged caravel from Sel-kai. It is 65 feet long and can carry up to 18 passengers.

■ GM Rolls: Roll for weather (*Character & Campaign*

Law pg. 109) daily. Weather is very changeable in these straits. In storms, some rolls for crew competency may be necessary or there is a chance that the ship might be lost.

OTHER PASSENGERS

Among the other passengers are a jewel merchant from Kaitaine and his son, two women and a bodyguard from Sel-kai, and a nondescript Shay couple.

ENCOUNTER: WALL OF DOOM

The journey towards Tanara proceeds uneventfully for the first few days, but this belies a disaster which comes upon the *Fairwind* in the mid-morning of the fourth day...

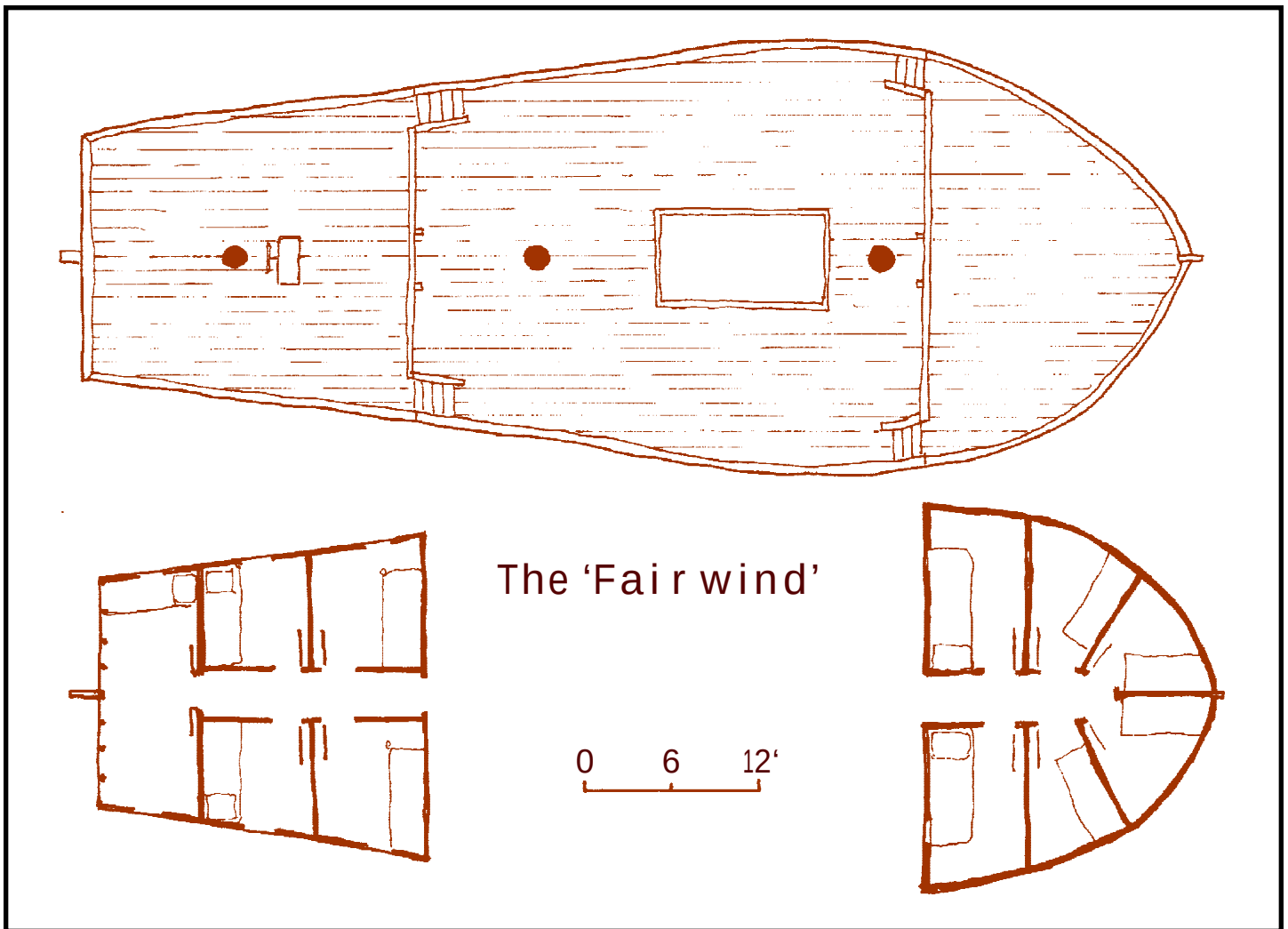
A STORM APPROACHES

South of eastern Meluria, the *Fairwind* is making good time in front of a western wind, and the weather seems fine... until the lookout spots darkness on the eastern horizon.

At first it looks like a severe thunderstorm. The captain is concerned but not overly so. He decides to swing north to take advantage of the sheltering coastline, but the wind shifts, driving the ship southeast. The sea begins to take on a strange luminescence.

Several things happen almost at once. All Essence-users feel a tingling, and the short hairs on their necks stand up. Morden's





crystal and Terek's Phoenix will glimmer with a sullen greenish light. Jymstan will feel queasy. Then green, twisting lightning will flash out of the eerie grey darkness to the southeast and a moment later the sea will become smooth as glass and the sails will go limp as the air becomes perfectly still. In that silence, the first mate will cry out "Essænce Storm!" Then the shock wave from the lightning hits the ship, followed by a huge swell of water which carries the *Fairwind* several hundred feet high, then sickeningly down into a trough. No waves break, but the wind resumes from the northwest (actually it is being sucked in from the southeast). The sails furl and the ship surges forward with a great creaking of timbers. Several ropes may break; anyone on deck or in the rigging should roll to not be lost.

PCs may think of trying to escape by using spells or in a lifeboat. The use of any spell at this time is highly inadvisable: add +90 to all spell failure rolls from the moment the storm is detected. Chances of escape in the lifeboat are also nil, as it has even less chance of escaping the energy of the Essænce Storm.

INTO THE STORM

The captain orders the sails stowed and turns the ship into the storm; it's all that can be done as the green-grey wall of churning energy rolls towards the doomed *Fairwind*.

Between the initial storm surge and the actual penetration of the energy membrane is a period of about an hour. During that time the ship moves deeper and deeper into what resembles a standard sea-

storm, but with no rain. The waters foam and lash the ship, multi-colored lighting forks across the sky, and the wind blows in furious gusts from all directions. The one constant is a churning darkness which grows to seemingly span the horizon as the ship draws nearer.

There is little left for the characters to do but batten down the hatches and get below (they will be ordered to do so by the captain anyway).

■ **Roll:** Con RR -20 to avoid nausea. Failure by 01-30 means at -30 for all actions due to queasiness; failure by 31-60 means vomiting and at -60; failure by 61+ means at -90.

THE LANDING

Things get progressively worse, the ship lurching in impossible directions as it nears the membrane. As it enters, there is a sensation of falling which lasts several (eternal) seconds. With a shriek of tearing metal and splintering wood, the whirling ship comes to a sudden halt.

■ **Roll:** Con RR -50 to remain conscious. All take 2-20 hits and an "A" Impact Critical.

As each player awakens, they realize that the ship is not moving, that the cabin is lying on its side, and sunlight is streaming through a huge hole, torn in the hull. They emerge from the wrecked craft to discover that they have plowed into soft sand... in the middle of a desert.