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WINDHAMMER PRIZE
FOR SHORT GAMEBOOK FICTION

THIATHROW

AN ENTRY IN THE 2015 WINDHAMMER PRIZE FOR
SHORT GAMEBOOK FICTION

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INTRODUCTION

You will need two 6-sided dice, a pencil and notepad. Once you are done reviewing the rules, go to the Backdrop and read it then set off to paragraph 1 and begin your quest.

STARTING EQUIPMENT

You will start your adventure dressed only in fur and suede. You are equipped with an ordinary sword, a dagger, a pouch containing gold shards and a rucksack to carry all of your items. In the game, you will come across situations where you will find useful objects. Some places will trade you for items you might have found. In shops, you can purchase weapons, armour, and miscellaneous things. The currency is usually in shards. **You will start your adventure with 300 gold shards.**

CARRYING CAPACITY

At any given time, you are only permitted to carry SIXTEEN ITEMS, no more. Gold shards and the pouch that carries them is NOT counted as an item. Your rucksack is not counted either, without it how would you carry your HERBAL POTIONS, SPELL PARCHMENTS or any other things? Most ranged weapons come in bundles and counted as one item such as arrows and throwing knives but that does not include the bow and quiver which is separate. If you have 1 arrow left in your inventory it will be counted as one item but if you find (or buy) more arrows you can add them to your quiver as much you like whether they are enchanted or not and the bundle will still counted as one item. Larger weapons such as spears are unfortunately one item each and do not come in bundles. A spell parchment is counted as one item. In your adventure you may have to sell, trade or drop belongings to make room for something new.

HEALTH

During the entire course of your journey will you have to keep track of your HEALTH. It will go up and down regularly. It is affected during battles, with injuries, hunger and fatigue. You can regenerate by drinking a HERBAL POTION but you cannot go over 12 points. If you are at 10 points and drink a HERBAL POTION that will give you 4 HEALTH, you can only go up to 12. You can exceed a score of 12 only if specified to do so.

To protect your HEALTH level, simply buy a piece of armour to get some "Defence". Defence acts as a shield and takes most of the damage in place of your HEALTH. Defence cannot help you against fatigue or dangers of winter where freezing is concerned. Defence can only help you during battles. When your HEALTH reaches 0 you have died.

DEFENCE

Defence is extra armour that a person or creature is wearing. During battle the defence is attacked first until it is reduced to 0. After it has been put to 0 the HEALTH becomes affected. Once defence has been reduced to zero you're armour or item giving you defence has been destroyed. You have to keep track of your defence status; you may not be reminded of it in paragraphs which are only worried about your HEALTH. Defence is not affected by fatigue or cold weather only your HEALTH is.

RANGED WEAPONRY

Ranged combat is with the use of staves, spears, throwing daggers and bows and arrows.

To use a ranged weapon and discover your hit damage, roll two dice. Keep track of the amount rolled. Now roll again and compare to what you rolled earlier. If the amount was lower than the result, the weapon misses and the enemy gets a hit in on you, causing you to lose 1 point from your health (or defence). If the result was equal to or higher than your result the weapon hits the target! Deduct 2 points off the enemy's health (or defence). Ranged weapons that have been launched are not recoverable.

You will not be informed when to use this feat, use it anytime if you wish to play as a ranger. You may come across items that are enchanted, in order to use their magical abilities you will have to mark off a MAGICK point with each item.

Quivers and bows are counted as separate items in your carrying capacity rule as well as your arrow bundles even if you have just one arrow in your quiver it will be calculated as an object. Some enchanted bows will only shoot enchanted arrows.

You cannot use arrows without a quiver.

POTIONS & SPELLS

You will come across shops and places where potions and spells can be found. Potions are a one-time-use only item. Once used the bottle is rendered worthless and can't be taken a second time. The herbal potion can be taken even during battles. Spells can only be used in battles. Every time you use a spell deduct 1 point off your MAGICK status.

MAGICK

Your spells and enchanted items cost MAGICK points to be used. Every time you cast a spell (or use an enchanted item) deduct 1 point off your MAGICK status.

HOW TO FIGHT

To fight in battles roll two dice. Keep track of what was rolled first, roll again, and compare. If the number you rolled second is equal to or higher than the first result you win a HIT POINT and must subtract 1 point off of your foe's health (or defence if it's wearing armour). If the number you rolled second is lower than the first result you have lost a round and must deduct 1 point off your health (or your defence if you are wearing defence-induced armour). Keep repeating this sequence of rolling the two dice

until either your HEALTH or your adversary's health is reduced to 0.

In some instances certain weapons carry extra hit points, simply add the hit point to your regular score should you win a round. Weapons with a + beside only means how many more hit points you can add to your current HIT POINT score. So if a sword is +1 then when you make a successful roll in combat add the +1 to your current hit point which is the one point you'd normally subtract off your opponent's defence or health. Getting weapons with a + beside it will surely make battles go by faster.

There is no rule saying that you can't switch from using a bow to using your sword. You can switch as regular as you like during combat.

During battle, you can drink an herbal potion or eat a meal and gain HEALTH points from it.

DETERMINE YOUR SCORES

HEALTH – starts at 12

DEFENCE – starts at 0 (until you get some proper armour)

MAGICK – starts at 12

EXPLORING THE REGIONS

There are many hidden objects and missions to find. You should try to explore as much as possible and talk to the people you come across. There may be shops that will aid you and side missions where you will find useful artefacts and allies.

Good luck and may the God and Goddess of Thiathrow guide your strength.

BACKDROP

Althea, forever give my life a purpose

Bring the spirits from the Isles of Warg to overcome the wars

In this depraved world did you bring forth my daughter

Althea, allow me to protect you both

Until there's not a breath left in my body

Until the sun and moon melt out of existence

Althea, banish my nightmares and I will banish yours

You prepare the basin and the cloths. Under the faint yellow dimness of the lamps, you watch your wife lay on the bed panting and pushing. Without a midwife, you both bring your child into this world. Althea screams and you go to clasp her hand tightly. Then the baby slides out, quickly you take it up in your hands and stare down at its little round face then it starts to cry. Althea holds out her arms and after separating it from the placenta using a sharp knife, you wrap the baby in a blanket and give it to her. The mother says quietly, "I will call her Amaranth, a little girl promoted to a long life and a connection to our gods."

The delivery was a short one, Althea has given birth before but none of the children

lived through the procedure, all succumbed to being stillborn. This one has made it past that stage and you dare to keep her out of all harms way. You kiss your wife and wipe the sweat off her brow. You clean the blood from her thighs and then cover her with a heavy fur blanket. Immediately she starts to breastfeed Amaranth as you step outside the tent and walk over to the fire pit to retrieve some elk soup.

There is a loud cheer as those from your clan clap and hug you in congratulation. The women bring gifts of pottery, hand woven blankets and baskets of bread and cooked squash to your wife. You put some of the soup into a wooden bowl and drink it like it was precious goat milk; it drips off your chin and drenches your furry collar. It is time for the tribe to go hunting and bring back a deer in your honour.

In an hour, most of the men have left with their swords, spears and bows. You sit in your tent and hold the baby as Althea sleeps. You hear a commotion outside, open the flap to the tent, and look out to see what the noise is. There are men with skin the colour of moonstone, their ears are long and pointed and they wear no shirt, only baggy pants and high boots. They are riding strange black steeds and chasing nearby women and children with spears. You see one woman dragged by her hair and tents being set on fire. Quickly you wake up Althea and give her the child as you grab your sword. You tell your wife to run in the opposite direction as you both depart from your home. The Thu'lites attack your village cutting the heads off of older children and piercing their mothers and guardians in between the breasts with long thin javelins. Smoke fills the air and the screams intensify, you stab the first Thu'lite in the leg with your short sword and pull him off his horse then slice his throat apart with your dagger. Their blood is not red but blackish purple and it takes only seconds to become saturated in it.

You can't stop the army from burning all of the tents and soon are outnumbered. They grab you and force you to kneel as the leader comes forth and kicks you square in the nose, busting it across your face. Blood spills down over your lips and your vision blurs a bit but you ignore the pain. Then you see your wife and child being brought back to the village. The leader walks over to the warrior you nearly beheaded and lifts his head up by the long hair to examine his face. He takes a small knife and cuts out the man's eyes out. He steps over to you and orders his men to force your mouth open; he then stuffs the eyeballs between your gaping lips. "Now, it is my turn for revenge, *human*."

You struggle to get free as Althea cries out while they steal the newborn from her embrace. The leader holds it up by the ankle, the blankets fall from Amaranth's helpless little body. He glares at you and brings out his sword. A beautifully crafted instrument used only for bringing death. He stabs the ribcage of the infant and yanks the blade back out mercilessly. Blood flows free from the slit and he tosses the howling child to the ground. "Burn all of their offspring in a pyre and string up the women. It appears there are no *men* here to fight. Remember that you face, Khala Kite, leader of the Thu'lite army!"

You are beaten within an inch of your life until your eyelids start to swell up, the last

thing you see is your child being tossed into a pile of dead bodies and your wife being nailed to a cross.

The acrid stench of ash and death is all that is left of your home. You can hear men sobbing and cursing the lords. All of the children were murdered horrendously and the rest of the clan slain. You are only able to open one eye just enough to see this carnage all around you. Then you see Althea, both her palms are nailed to a cross above her head. You call out to her and try to stand up but the Thu'lites have broken both your legs. You try to fight against the agony and drag yourself to her, calling out her name; you can see other men kneeling in anguish before a smouldering pyramid of bodies. She hangs there lifeless; her eyes stare off into the netherworld. You slam your forehead into the ground repeatedly and tears weld up in your eyes. Then you fall asleep, you slip into a coma, a long, dark demented sleep that one who cherishes the light fears.

What brings you back to reality is a familiar voice; you open your eyes and stare up at an old man. All of the wrinkles on his dark face map out timeless years. He is your shaman and he has healed you. You are able to sit up without much resistance from your busted bones. Your eyes are not inflamed anymore. His eyes are swollen with grief, you can tell he has been crying. Quickly you get up, rush over to the pile of dead bodies, and start digging through it. The bodies are half ash and half fiery mounds of flesh. You can't tell who is who; you can't tell which one is your daughter. The shaman touches your shoulder and shakes his head. "There is nothing you can do."

You look over your shoulder and see that they have taken your wife down from the cross, she lies there amidst others, each body lined up and ready for burial.

Hours go by slowly, but you are in denial. They put your wife into the ground and cover her over with earth. The men agree that after the dead have been buried it is time to move back to the western mountains, for there is another clan settlement there. They start to pack up what belongings they have that weren't looted or burnt. You inform them that you are not going with them and this plan perplexes them all. You are their brother, it's their duty to keep you, but you tell them to go to the mountains but you will head far east instead... as far east as your determination will take you.

"You are going after the Thu'lites aren't you?" One brother, Rowar, asks of you.

You nod and pat him on the shoulder.

"We're coming with you then." He says.

Now that you are restored to health, you will follow the tracks of the army that invaded your tribe. You will put to death every single one of them. You slip on your studded leather armour and your suede coat. You wipe your sword with a cloth and sheathe it, Rowan gives you a pouch containing gold shards. You also have a rucksack to carry all of your items and a trusted dagger for beheading rogues. You don't need much just the direction of the wind and the guidance of the God and Goddess.

You don't wait until morning, or nightfall, you head out immediately. You have never left Fdolon before and you wonder where the army went to next? North Fdolon and south Fdolon are forest regions with mountains off to the west. You doubt the army went into the mountains; it is most likely they returned to the ocean. Thiathrow has been ravaged by Thu'lites for centuries; it is hard for colonies like yours to thrive in peace. You always have to hide in the mountains. You decide it's time for a change. What they did to you is reprehensible. They will pay in blood.

TURN TO 1

1

For days you don't eat and you keep having recurring nightmares. Soon sleep becomes nothing but a nuisance and an enemy. All you want to do is walk as far as your strength will take you. There are two towns that you can go to but you're unsure if they still exist after the massacre. One is situated south and there is a port on the border just east. In which direction do you think you will find this army? You all decide to march south toward Banded Onyx. You will search everywhere for those soldiers and slay them, for your main goal is to find that bastard who killed your wife and child.

You have no choice, you must set up camp, but as you're contemplating where to do this you smell pungent smoke coming up along the path. You are not alone in the Fdolun forest. You unsheathe your sword and dagger and creep up the trail amongst the pine trees. You soon spy a camp and a small group of people are sitting by a fire laughing merrily and drinking out of water skins. There is a striking blond haired woman wearing iron plated armour and two men wearing chain mail. You can hear them talking about how much they were paid by the Thu'lites to kill a group of hunters. Not wishing to ambush them, you boldly step out and confront them. They get to their feet and bring out their swords.

"Who goes there?" The woman shouts. She puts her hands on her hips when she finally catches sight of your face. "A bunch of wanderers, eh? What's your business out here?"

Your brother attacks the closest man who defends himself desperately, trying to block from your brother's blade coming down upon his suede skullcap. You stab a nearby man in the neck with your dagger and kick him in the gut. When he falls over the rest of the crew come to his aid and now you're in for a bloody battle. Every time the woman comes near you you boot her in the stomach and she lands on her rump. An armoured man comes by her side and challenges you, he helps the woman to her feet and they both attack you.

Kill the man first:

MALE MARAUDER HEALTH 8 DEFENCE 2

FEMALE MARAUDER HEALTH 6 DEFENCE 4

When the woman's defence is reduced to 0 she will fall to her knees and stop fighting you. Turn to 78.

2

The flint misfires and he drops it shaking his blackened hand in sudden pain. Quickly you rush to him and run him through with your dagger, your blade slides easily into the cavity of his lower back. When the sailors see him fall to his knees they immediately cease fighting and drop their weapons. It is apparent you have slaughtered their captain. You order them to weigh anchor and get the damned wooden tub out to sea. You ask who is next in charge and a tall man with white curly hair steps forward. He is missing all of his front teeth. "I am the captain's mate, and I hope you know what you're doing?"

You tell him once the ship is at sea that you and your men wish to go to Shear Stone.

He laughs a little but his eyes prove something threatening, "That's a ways away, but I'm sure I can get you there though. Old Proulex is a good ship."

The rest of the trip you arm yourself with a pistol and perch yourself on the poop deck with your back to the sea. Soon you are surrounded by grey waters and a sky full of thick dark clouds. The curly-haired man glances at you as he steers the ship, "Looks like a squall is coming."

You only nod, acknowledging him, for you don't feel to get too friendly.

In an hour he was right, it is night now and the rain comes down in sheets, a torrent of godly tears. The waves burst alongside the vessel and send her keeling over. Men scramble to safety, the helm spins and you find yourself holding on for dear life or risk being washed overboard. The winds howl like a banshee, and you quickly decide to go below deck and see if you can offer some help. It is a miserable sight, only a few men have lit lanterns and everyone is soaking wet. All eyes are on you, and they are glaring or strict, as if sailing out here was all your fault. Was it? All you can do is wait out the storm and it is a short-lived experience. Tensions return and it is the sailors against you and your brothers. You face the acting captain and he stares you down. "You will not take this ship any longer; you will go where we put you. I say we make you walk the plank!"

There is a cheer and your clan comes to your aid.

"All I ask is to be taken to Shear Stone," you say.

"Bugger that." He replies. He tries to stab you with a dirk and you quickly grab his wrist and pull his back to your chest. You hold him there and threaten to jab his throat with his own weapon. "Do as he says, men, get the ship back in order. Get the galleys lit again. We are going to Shear Stone tonight."

You hold him hostage now and the men take his orders without asking any questions. You've been up all night and you're overly exhausted. It is hard to keep your eyes open. Every time you're caught nearly drifting off to sleep you wake suddenly only to see the sailors watching you keenly, ready, prepared to make their move and get their captain and ship back in their control. That night you take the captain to the poop deck and sit at the helm with him. You start to doze off again. Will you wake up in time or stay asleep? Roll two dice: make a note of the first amount, roll again, and compare. If the second was equal to or lower, turn to 47. If it was higher, then you're awakened to somebody knocking you to the deck. You open your eyes in time to see the captain pierce you in the chest with your own dagger repeatedly until you're marked with at least twenty stab wounds.

3

You find some paintbrush and a few odd mushrooms. You eat the paintbrush but it does not fill you up and you're unsure about the mushrooms, for they can be deadly if you eat the wrong species. Will you take the risk and eat them anyways? If so, turn to 50. If you'd rather throw them away and walk on, turn to 69.

4

One sailor rushes to his aid, watching helplessly as you plunge your dagger into the sailor's spine. He falls to his knees at the side of his comrade then glances at you with tears in his eyes.

"You heartless, gutless, son of a bitch!"

You must decide what you will do now. Will you board the ship (turn to 70) or speak to your clan brothers and see what they suggest (turn to 71)?

5

Your brothers are complaining that you are leading them all off the correct track, and they say that the army is not located west but possibly south. You start your mission into the mountains now. A heavy snowfall arrives, thankfully there is no wind and the chill on the air is mild. An arrow thuds in front of you, and then another, and you realise you're under attack. You're not sure if it's an ambush. What will your orders be?

Charge up the path like a bunch of berserkers, TURN TO 55.

Stand your ground and call out, maybe your foes will show themselves peacefully, TURN TO 10.

Make a hasty retreat, TURN TO 21.

6

You jump onto a nearby table and swipe at his throat hoping to take his head off but he ducks swiftly and your blade misses. He brings down his massive club and you have to leap to the side to avoid it. The whole table nearly breaks in half from the weight and force of his weapon. No one comes to your aid, for you are stuck to fight your opponent to the death.

LIEUTENANT LIPSHARKETS HEALTH 6 DEFENCE 10

Should you weaken his health to 2 you finish him off by piercing the top of his cranium with your dagger. He staggers around still clinging to whatever life is left in him; he tries to tug on the dagger but stumbles over chairs and falls flat on his behind. Heavy blood trickles from his head and his eyes glass over. This brute is done and you have Banded Onyx all to yourself now. You yank your weapon from out of the lieutenant's skull and wipe his blood off on his shirt. There is nothing of value in here, but you're here to kill not to be a thief.

When you step outside there is carnage everywhere, dead bodies and shredded limbs

litter the snowy ground. But your brothers stand proud, for they are the culprits but also the victors. They look to you as to what to do next and you inform them you will not stay in this town any longer. You tell them you will all head to Port Prase and continue your search for the Thu'lites farther east even if you have travel vast oceans to find them. They agree and gather more food and water for the journey. You then leave this place and head for the coastline.

Turn to 15 and start your next exploit once your journey takes you east to the coastline and into Port Prase.

7

He lets out a sound of disappointment and walks away. The sailors attack! While your brothers are fighting off the others three of them set their sights on you. Fight them all at one time.

SAILORS HEALTH 8 DEFENCE 0

If you manage to defeat these ruffians you now have no choice, you must leave Prase and find another port. But you could always board the ship and force them to yield to you? If you do this, turn to 91. If you decide to just leave, turn to 27.

8

In a few hours night falls, and you hear a loud ruckus off in the distance. As you near you hide behind a tree and watch what appears to be a military campsite. The loud commotion is a group of men encouraging four horses that prance outward at their command and there is a naked Thu'lite bound by his wrists and ankles to the horses; he is being stretched. He screams in agony and his left arm is torn out of its socket and the horse bound to that limb trots off much to the cheering delight of the onlookers. Blood gushes on the ground for a few seconds and then his right leg rips away. You can hear the sinew snapping, the bones separating, and the Thu'lite groans out loud in pain in intervals. The men standing by come closer and then start beating him to death as the third horse pulls free his other arm. You wonder if you should enter the camp or not.

Will you walk into the site, TURN TO 94.

Go around unnoticed and make your own way, TURN TO 44.

9

What a waste of time and you feel like such a failure. You return to the Fdulon mountains and regroup with your extended family members. More Thu'lites invade the coastline in a week pushing your clan farther back into the snowy caps. You live out the rest of your life in fear of an enemy your brothers were too feeble to destroy. Now that the adversary is all-powerful there is no hope of stopping them now, and one day they *will* venture into your region to finish you.

10

You're all standing in a vulnerable situation, a multitude of arrows come soaring out of the sky and hail down upon you! Your brothers are hit and they fall dead to the ground all around you. Arrows thud into the top of your head and into your face. You grab onto the one which has embedded deep into your left cheek. The enemies never reveal themselves as hoped and you fall on your back and suffer a horrendous demise. As you're breathing your last more arrows fill the white sky and rain down on you. This last attack brings your life to an end.

11

You wait in a tavern as a storm comes through then dissipates, soon after a fleet of ships come in much to your delight and but unfortunately your hope vanishes for the arrival is carrying a militia of armed Thu'lites. They come off the ship and murder every person in that port including you and your brothers. You fought bravely but it was just too much. Your adventure concludes.

12

You lose track of time, you have no idea what the hour is, then a group of men arrive and start in your direction. A man wearing chain mail and knee high boots lends his hand to you. He asks you to tell him your story and you explain to him what has happened to you.

"So, you're in the same mindset as us." He says. "You want the Thu'lites vanquished too."

You nod.

A woman wearing a robe stands by the man and takes his hand, you notice she is a Thu'lite and you glare. "What the hell?" you grumble.

He laughs. "This bitch is my slave; I intend to breed out all aspects of her background. She's from a previous expedition and what a wicked one that was! But we wiped out many of our enemies and most of *her* contemporaries that day. I don't know why I spared her, but she is considered a lucky one." And with that she smiles seductively at you and you try your best not to spit at her feet. She leans over and tries to kiss your mouth but you shove her face away. The men laugh at your reaction.

"You can have her once I'm done with her. Queens of the Thu'lites are as low as the dirt under my foot."

You comprehend this is the couple that was in the tent making love and now you're sickened, what kind of an army is this? The men cackle at you for some reason unknown perhaps it was the expression on your face.

"Tomorrow morning we rally, we're heading far east to where there is a probable Thu'lite site stationed. Are you skilled with a sword?"

You nod again, this time giving him a firm look. You're not sure what exactly you're getting yourself into here.

"Good. Then you can help us. Don't try to leave, that's a warning. Welcome to our group. Listen, I've lost my seven year old son some days ago; we've been wondering around looking for him, have you come across this child of mine?"

You shake your head in a negative gesture.

"Damn it! My poor son," he says and frowns. "I will personally castrate the fuck that harms a hair on his head."

He leaves and his men follow. You sit there pondering what to do. You want to meet the leader of the army that killed your family. You're not sure how you will encounter him. Staying with this military is probably the only way you're going to get anywhere close to that Thu'rite warrior, but you still have no idea where he might be. You are also extremely fatigued. If you decide to take a nap so you won't lose any HEALTH points, turn to 75.

If you're not ready for bed, will you:

Walk around the camp and see what everyone is up to, TURN TO 56.

Get something to eat, TURN TO 48.

Check to see if they have an armoury/weapon store, TURN TO 96.

13

After reaching safety and overcoming the fact that you are a bunch of cowards, you decide to march north. Turn to 27.

14

"*Khala Khite!*" you utter loudly and he gazes down at you as if you a piece of trash. "*Do you remember Fdulon? I am that man whose entire life you have stolen! Come down off that beast and face me.*"

He grins slightly and does just that; he slides down off the creature's back. Soldier's realising they have been infiltrated grab hold of you but their leader ushers them to leave you alone. "So you are that *human*, how far you have travelled, just to die?"

He takes out a nasty looking mace with chains and spiked iron balls on it. It is a threatening piece but you're not afraid of him. "It will be easy for me to gut you," he taunts, thinking this situation nothing but a joke, "To crush your skull. I will add you to my bone collection. You will be utterly obliterated that not even your dead child and wife will recognise you in the afterlife."

Do you possess an amethyst dagger? If so, turn to 100. If not, you will not be able to kill Khala Khite, he will not only defeat you in front of his clan and make a mockery of you by adding your twitching corpse to an ensign's pole. You will be carried off by brute

forces after your Thu'lite potion has worn off, and you will be displayed at the front lines to scare off and warn human transgressors of what will happen to them if they try to fight the Thu'lite armies.

15

Put your HEALTH to 12 if you lost any points, you have eaten and are now rejuvenated. Port Prase is known for its lustrous Lapis Lazuli huts. The sand is as pallid as white coral, and there is a heavy wet snowfall but the snow melts upon impact on the ground. There are no Thu'lites here and you decide what you will do next. Your brothers await your general knowledge.

Will you:

Ask some fishermen if they know of any foreign soldiers passing through TURN TO 99

Visit the market to see if you can upgrade your food, armour or weapons TURN TO 36

Talk to a group of sailors TURN TO 74

16

There is an *oooooh* and an *aaaaaahhh* then everyone rumbles the tabletop with their fists. Spinner smiles and says you just drank rum. What next?

Blue, TURN TO 62.

Red, TURN TO 84.

White, TURN TO 92.

Did you drink three and not get the poison? Turn to 72.

17

It starts to drizzle sheets of freezing rain as you step into the Amel region, snow peaked mountains lie before you sitting like unbowed lords. When evening falls again you are heading toward Acyr but will not reach its border until two days. You are sure the general's army lies there, if not, you will still kill as many Thu'lite warriors you come across. In the sky, red and green mist dances and collides with itself. You stand there watching it in awe, for it looks like people (souls of the departed) walking in the sky. Then a single stretch of light touches the ground, and ahead you spy two figures coming toward you, created out of the northern lights. As you near you see them more clearly now, for they are wearing long robes and are each balancing on a ball. There are two of them and as you come closer they remind you of circus acrobats. They are humanoid but their skin is wrinkled and rough and their black eyes are as wide as ostrich eggs.

"What brings you to the mountains? Are you lost?" asks the one on the left, balancing with great accuracy on his misty sphere.

You answer that you are just passing through.

"This is our terrain, and since you are here, we can do with you what we wish."

You rest your hand on the hilt of your sword, ready to yank it out of its scabbard.

They notice your unease and frolic in it. "Let us put you to a test, if you pass you may go about your travels unharmed, but if you fail, you belong to us. Do you see *them* above?" he points to the sky at the emerald lights flickering and wavering. "You will join them, and as long as this world exists, YOU will exist up there *forever wandering like a spirit*. What do you say?"

Do you want to attack them? If you do, turn to 57. If you agree to their test, turn to 93.

18

They look at one another and blurt out laughing, and then they bring out their scimitars and threaten you. "It'll cost you more gold shards, we don't sail foreigners for free. It'll cost you 200 gold *nothing less!*"

Will you ask them where their captain is TURN TO 53.

Threaten them back TURN TO 97.

19

The thing is caught completely off guard as you rush in and attack! Do you possess a dagger with a pearl handle? If so, you will kill the creature instantly and it will fizzle to nothingness. If you do not have this dagger then it drops the girl and turns on you instead. The girl will help you fight off this abomination even though she is terribly weakened. It scratches her face sending an ugly gash across her cheek. You take turns trying to destroy this thing but every attempt on her part is useless, for you are the stronger one and her hope depends on the supremacy of your skills. If it destroys your armour and gets a hit in on your HEALTH score it will infect you with a were inflection and you will become just like it by nightfall and your adventure will be over.

WEREPHANTOM HEALTH 1 DEFENCE 14

If you won the battle, turn to 31.

20

If you have a YELLOW TOPAZ PENDENT he will lower the price to 100 gold shards but will only sail you to Dalk Island. If you can afford this set price, turn to 88. Otherwise, there is nothing else you can do here. Will you leave Prase and head north to yet another port (turn to 27) or attack his sailors, striking fear into their hearts (turn to 7)?

21

You run back to the confines of the forest and decide where to go from there. Most of the men in your group are eager to head south. Will you comply and go south as they wish? If so, you head down the trail for a few hours (turn to 90) or will you go back into the mountains and face whoever was up there (turn to 5)?

22

A storm churns hours later and one man falls from atop the mainmast and smashes his brains on the deck. His blood and body wash overboard as the ship lurches and bangs on the waves like some toy. The swell looks like some monster reaching up to the heavens in every direction. Your brothers are scared and refuse to go above deck now. All of the lamps are doused by the water, plunging you into blackness. Then there is an ear-splitting crack, and the ship is caught on something and is being ripped apart. You urge your brothers to get above deck and into a barge; some ignore you and jump into the icy waters. You and a few of your clan get into a life boat and spy what appears to be land. You're sure it's land and row towards it. The waves smash into the boat and capsize it sending everyone to the mercy of the ocean. You frantically swim against the tide until you reach the waterlogged beach.

A group of savages emerge from the jungle carrying harpoons and immediately attack your brothers, stuffing their spearheads into the gullet of their foes. One scraggy Wildman holding on to a flimsy stick and shield comes at you hollering out some odd obscenity; you bring out your weapons to defend yourself.

MIGHTY SAVAGE HEALTH 10 DEFENCE 1

If you kill him, turn to 45.

If you lost the fight, he hits you over the head with a rock and drags you off somewhere, you are then outnumbered by his tribe, and when you wake you are hogtied and being carried up some trail. The men wearing war paint and dressed in leaves and fur are mumbling and chanting. You are taken to the top of a volcano where a red blazing lake roars and swirls. They swing you a couple of times before letting you go. You fall down into the lava, and your remaining memory is feeling the intensity of being burned to death by the great fire god.

23

They pause for a moment, giving you a breather. They shrug their shoulders and vanish. The light anomaly in the sky still remains but you are now alone at last. When you step over to where they were you find a spear on the ground with an amethyst head. Is your aim any good to use it? You know whose heart it deserves to pierce. Adding this to your possessions you head out into the mountains. You decide to hike south now through winding paths and decrepit mini forests. You must eat or you will lose 4 HEALTH points.

Quickly it'll be nightfall and soon the mountains will be behind you. You're not sure where you're going now and hope your trail hasn't gone cold. Where is that Thu'lite bastard? What is he up to? Is he drinking wine and celebrating? How you loathe his still beating heart, if only it was in your hand, thrashing its last ounce of black blood. You sit on a boulder to take a moment; you are severely homesick, for you have travelled far and lost very much. This damned escapade cursed by the war gods, if only there was justice, if only it were right there in front of you. Just as your eyes start to

water you hear a noise crack a twig, whatever it is it is coming in your general direction.

It is a dust devil by the looks of it but it appears to have a mind of its own, you swipe at it and it knocks you over with such force! Then a face appears in it, and you can smell its acrid milk and its putrid flesh. Quickly you get to your feet and steer clear of its wicked advances. The face of your wife appears in the swirling debris and it calls you by your name. Do you wear the AMULET OF DUST around your neck? If so, the dust devil completely fades away. If you do not wear this piece of protective jewellery then you have to fight for your life because this being is here to steal your soul.

SOUL EATER HEALTH 11 DEFENCE 13

It sorts through all the faces you know back home as it dies, trying to seduce you into believing it's truly honest, but with the last blow you completely render it lifeless. Turn to 61.

24

You walk upstream a bit and drink from there, hoping you don't get sick, but you have quenched your thirst nonetheless. As you march on you hear a loud howl off in the distance, it is not like that of a wolf, but alien to your knowledge. The men are getting restless.

As you trudge on one of the men starts shrieking, everyone stops and takes sudden notice. The one lagging behind is being attacked by some being. His blood speckles nearby trees and splashes through the air as the attack suffices. You take out your sword, run in the direction of the scene, and see a creature the size of a black bear with long fur and beak-like mouth. It is tearing the man to shreds and eating his severed limbs as if it is starving. The man's head comes off his body, rolls down the path, and stops at your feet. You can hear bone crunching and desperate slurping; you can make out the creature swallowing its human tidbits. It stops and growls as you advance, its mouth is dripping with scarlet liquid and drool. In a mere few seconds it has rendered your brother unrecognizable. He is now a mess of shredded flesh and clothing. The beast grabs a nearby man who is about to fight, it holds tightly to his arm and rips it clean from its socket.

You will fight this forest dweller and hopefully kill it. The other men try to help you but they are anxious they will get bitten.

SHADOW BEAST HEALTH 6 DEFENCE 12

This monster is quick, strong and void of fear. If you succeed in killing it, you bury the mangled corpse of your departed brother and mend your other tribal friend's wound. But in two hours he dies of his injury. Angered, you carry on through the forest. The path divides now, one trail heading west into the mountain pass and one is continuing south. Will you go further off track and head into Fdulon Mountains (turn to 5) or will you keep going south (turn to 90)?

25

You find a small corked vial filled with a milky substance. The man's flesh cracks open and hundreds of black insects that had burrowed into him and possibly laid their eggs come spilling out. His mouth opens and a poisonous snake slithers out. This man was executed, for he probably had milk, honey and feces lathered all over him, and he was left to the bugs and reptiles.

Quickly you leave and march on through the forest. TURN TO 8.

26

Sometime down the path you discover twelve monks hanging off random tree branches by their necks. The victim's intestines have been gouged most crudely. Their eyeballs are stuffed between their lips. You're not sure if it was a ritual suicide or a mass execution. Your brothers want to search the bodies for anything valuable; will you let them violate the deceased persons? Turn to 67. Otherwise, you order to move on before it gets dark. In a few of hours you smell acrid smoke and know that you are arriving either at another campsite or a town. TURN TO 42.

27

Now you will have to travel back up north up Fdolun to another port called Schorl and this will take you many hours. Your brothers spend lots of time during the expedition to hunt and gather berries. You do not encounter any enemies and when you arrive at the port it is devastated by a former fire. One ship lies in the harbour in good condition and everyone watches it for an hour to see who exactly is manning it. There are no Thu'lites about but humans scavenging the wrecked haven. Will you approach cautiously and in a friendly manner (turn to 52) or charge out of the woods and attack the pirates (turn to 87)?

28

She has a quiver complete with ten arrows, the tenth one has an amethyst head (add an extra +6 to your hit damage if you use this arrow) . There is also her bow, dagger and an auspicious eye piece over her right eye, but it has been badly damaged after she was thrown into the building. You can take the arrows, dagger and bow but just letting you know that the bow is *enchanted* and only shoots arrows with amethyst heads. The eye piece is no good now and you must leave it behind. TURN TO 35.

29

This is probably not a smart thing to do for all the sailors realise you are there to hijack their craft as you and your men come aboard. You and your clan are attacked with loaded pistols, axes and scimitars. It's a vicious bloody battle and your clan's noble blood spills across the deck's beams. You are still alive, and the sailors tie a rope around your wrists and throw you into the frigid water, every time before you drown they haul you out of the waters. It is fun for them for a while and eventually your body can't take anymore of it and you succumb to death.

30

You are seated across from Cabundy, a drinking champion, and the men tell you he can twist a man's head off his shoulders, that's how strong he is. You smirk and order them to set the rounds up. There are four mini glasses placed in front of you. The stake is an amethyst dagger. If you win, you will own it. The boss of the game called Spinner informs you that although three are alcoholic drinks, one is pure poison. The drinks are marked by colour and you cannot pick the same colour twice in a row. Pick one and begin the game:

Blue, TURN TO 62.
 Red, TURN TO 84.
 White, TURN TO 92.
 Pink, TURN TO 16.

You can't chicken out now, you've come too far. You're not a coward right?

31

After the battle she rises to her feet still rubbing her throat and stroking the hideous scratch that sits on her cheek. "My thanks, traveller."

She notices your sneer, will you kill her too? You perceive she is wearing an auspicious eye patch over her right eye which holds some kind of lens in it.

"My name is Kaliconaa, what is the name of my saviour? Please do tell me."

You don't tell her your name, in fact; you get right to the point and ask her where the Thu'lite armies are stationed.

"I am an outcast, although I have Thu'lite blood in me, I am not a part of their regime. There *are* armies on the move these days, I saw one some time ago in the desert. Why do you want to know about them? Are you going to join them? You are human. They will *not* accept you, they will kill you. How can I be of service to you for saving my life?"

You ask her if she knows of any merchants in the area.

"There are no civilisations in this region anymore. You will have to travel west to Capricas or Dronich if you hope to meet villages. I am starting to guess that you are not here to join a Thu'lite army then?"

You nod in agreement to her curiosity. "I am looking to kill one of them, one of their leaders."

"I see," she says. "I doubt you will get close to him, for leaders are protected greatly by their comrades." She removes that propitious eye piece and gives it to you. "Take this; it will make your aim true when using a bow and arrow from a very long distance but it

doesn't work in close range. I'd travel with you and fight by your side, but I am heading west, possibly as far as Shear Stone. I fear this land will be conquered by my entire race and it will not be a good thing because they are all blood thirsty."

She digs into her quiver and gives you an arrow with an amethyst head (add an extra +6 to your hit damage if you use this arrow) and her flimsy long bow. "This is all I can offer, and I pray your mission is a success. This enchanted bow only shoots arrows with an amethyst head unfortunately and I only have one left. Also I have a secret stash in one of the buildings, but my stuff doesn't come free. I will sell some things to you."

You go with her to one of the ruined buildings and she goes down a flight of steps and vanishes into the shadows, and a few seconds later comes up with some items. You're amazed at what she has accumulated.

BOOTS of GORGON (2 DEFENCE) 10 gold shards
HEAVY PADDED GAUNTLETS (4 DEFENCE) 10 gold shards
RED CHAIN MAIL ARMOUR (14 DEFENCE) 40 gold shards

HERBAL ELIXIR (heals 4 HEALTH) 25 gold shards

DOUBLE EDGED SWORD +2 for 40 gold shards
THU'LITE BOW +3 for 60 gold shards
BUNDLE OF 10 ARROWS 30 gold shards
FANCY WEAVED QUIVER 5 gold shards

Will buy:

YELLOW TOPAZ PENDENT for 5 gold shards
AMULET OF DUST for 5 gold shards
YOUR ORDINARY DAGGER for 10 gold shards
YOUR ORDINARY SWORD for 10 gold shards
AMETHYST DAGGER for 25 gold shards
THUNDER SWORD for 10 gold shards
DAGGER WITH PEARL HANDLE for 10 gold shards

Kaliconaa has given you more than enough help and you are thankful to have met her acquaintance. She departs from your company now and oddly enough her little store of items (except what you might've bought) fades away. Interesting, you ponder, it must be under a spell against would-be thieves. You examine the eye piece she gave you, it is a magnifying glass and it will help you for sure if at a long distance from your target. You need not get close to the Thu'lite leader, but you want him to see your face as you slowly kill him. You want him to suffer, to taste his own blood, to beg you to spare him. You don't plan on taking the cowardly way out of this and shoot him from a distance where he can't see you and never know where the arrow came from. But you're not there yet, the opportunity hasn't arrived, you will deal with it when it comes. Turn to 35.

32

A fat man comes by and stops the fight about to ensue, "Wait, what the devil is going on here?" You inform him that you're looking for the captain of the ship. "Oh yeah? And what do you want with him?" You tell him you want to be sailed to the coastline on the other end of the Dalk Sea and he lets out a belly laugh. "How much gold do you have and I'll see if I can help you."

Do you have 200 gold? If so, turn to 58. If you have less than this, turn to 7.

33

"We're heading east. There are other human armies stationed at some ports, I understand the Thu'lites have a navy but they are hard to get to. The last I heard there was an enemy fleet leaving the Island Baal heading west."

You tell him there were Thu'lites in Fdulon.

"That must have been them. They're getting around using the sea but we'll find them all, don't worry, they can't hide for long. There is a port in Acyr that we haven't secured, they might be using it."

Ask him how many Thu'lites they've executed, TURN TO 85.

Join the group heading out, TURN TO 63.

34

Not sure what exactly this potion will do to you, you gulp it down and wait for a result. Your ears start to hurt and they begin to stretch outward like a narrow leaf of some exotic plant. Your skin turns as pale as the cold moon and your senses heighten. In seconds you are as Thu'lite as those killers in the desert. So while under the spell of the potion you make your trek down the cliffs and into the desert. No one really pays much attention to you as you enter the site and without making any eye contact you keep your stare on the leader who hasn't noticed you yet. Soldiers tap you on the shoulder in greeting as you pass; they speak in a language the potion has not given you the privilege to understand. Just a few more feet and you will be at the area where the killer sits on his massive reptilian beast. Your heart starts to pound harder and sweat trickles down your forehead, *don't screw this up* your thoughts inform you. How will he know you are the human he had come to bring hell upon when you are disguised as a Thu'lite? How will you make him aware it is *you*?

Will you call out to him and blow your cover, TURN TO 14.

If you have a spear, you can throw it and hope it goes right through him, TURN TO 41.

35

You carry on into the swamplands. To the north you can see the Amel Mountains; a supernatural breeze brings the stench of death from the south. A cloud forms in the sky and moves with great speed in your direction and there is nowhere to hide. You have to face whatever is coming, but perhaps it will go right by you and not stop? This is your

hope. As it nears you can hear buzzing and the cloud takes on eclectic shapes; it's so large it even blots out the sun. When it arrives you realise to your horror that it is a wave of locusts. In seconds you're covered head to toe and the world all around goes dark as they fly by. Their humming is deafening, for they get in your hair and bite your exposed flesh. It's hard to protect your eyes, ears and mouth.

Roll 2 dice and keep track of what was rolled then roll again and compare. If the second result equal to or lower then you are unharmed but only suffer minor bug bites. If the result was higher you must lose 2 HEALTH points due to the injuries you sustain by these ravenous insects.

Eventually these creatures flutter away heading west and you can carry on going in the opposite direction. Turn to 61.

36

As with any port there is always a fish market. Your band has already collected provisions and water so you do not have to worry about purchasing food but if you wish to buy some for just yourself regardless then turn to 60.

To look at a stall that has weapons and armour, TURN TO 86.

Talk to the local wiseman, TURN TO 65.

To ignore this altogether, will you ask some fishermen if they know of any foreign soldiers passing through (turn to 99) or talk to a group of rugged looking sailors (turn to 74)?

37

There is a sharp pain in your gut which causes you to keel over, you are vulnerable now and cannot defend yourself. You recall that drinking night and wish you never bothered but it's too late now. A short Thu'lite, too puny to be called a warrior, sees your anguish and plunges his knife into your gullet. You die by his hands and are now a ridicule and he becomes the hero.

38

Loading the bow and fixing the special arrow, you hope your aim is factual. With the eye piece fastened to your right eye you get a sight on the Thu'lite leader and stretch the string of the bow and hold it until it slices into your fingers. Sweat dribbles off your brow and your heart beats like a nervous drum. There is only one shot at this. Your fingers release the arrow and it cuts through the air like it is made of magick! All you can do is pray and hope and soon you see the arrow thud deep into the leader's chest. He grabs it, trying to pull it out, while blood seeps up through his lips. His eyes roll into the back of their sockets and blood pours down out of his mouth; blood drips off his chin as he falls off his mount. He lands on top of his head hopefully breaking his neck in the process. You are triumphant today and can go home knowing your murderer is dead but still there is a ping of regret that he didn't see you eye to eye, that would've been a more fitting death.

39

"You're talking to him."

You stare at him puzzled for a few seconds then ask him if he will take you and your brothers across the ocean to the coast of Shear Stone and he lets out a mocking laugh.

"You are stupid as shit!" He says and slaps his knees. "If you pay me good I may take you as far as Gwin Fouth. That's the only place I'd trust to disembark."

You take out your sword, angered now, "How much?" You ask and he caresses his chin in deep thought. Obviously marvelling at how much he can *scam* you.

"200 hundred gold shards and I'll take you across the Dalk Sea. 50 gold shards and I'll take you to Dalk Island."

If you agree to pay 200 gold shards, turn to 58.

If you only pay 50 gold shards, turn to 88.

If you refuse to pay you must decide what to do next. Will you leave Prase and head north to yet another port (turn to 27) or attack these sailors, striking fear into their hearts (turn to 7)?

40

The sailors and the captain laugh at you sarcastically as you hand over the gold shards and your brothers are disgusted by your spinelessness. The sailors walk off and now you must decide what to do next. Your brothers want to leave Prase. Will you listen to them and head north to yet another port? If so, turn to 27. If you would rather stick around here and wait for another ship to come in, turn to 11.

41

Your endeavour is swift and the spear strikes him in the chest and he falls off his weird steed, but not only have you avenged your family you do not get a chance to live out your victory. The leader has no idea why he has been struck down and by whom. The nearby soldiers simply stab you to death with their swords and knives until you're nothing but a bloody mess. It is such a waste of time and a little stealth and smarts could have been helpful but not today, not this moment. Your mission, although partly a success, ends in a vile corruption of your honour. You have not stopped the armies either, for they will resurrect a new leader and trample over your corpse as they advance upon Thiathrow.

42

The small town of Banded Onyx comes into view after a few kilometres; it is settled in a clearing in the woods. What is stopping you from just boldly walking into the place are a few Thu'lite soldiers stationed outside the Gnarled Larch Tavern. Your brothers are eager and refuse to wait; they give out a war cry and emerge from the woods shouting at the height of their lungs. The Thu'lites lock swords with your clan members. A

vicious fight ensues and more enemies come out of the inn to join the battle. The silence is broken by clanking and scraping metal, even the odd crack of bone and snapping of sinew marks the airwaves. Snow is soaked in blood, and even the innocent snowflakes, which barely have time to touch the speckled ground, catch the spray of crimson from those who were cut open.

Your clan is winning and without waiting you charge through the conflict and kick open the door to the Gnarled Larch. There are more of the filthy Thu'lites in there and quickly you try to dispatch the first two who abandon their meals

1st **WARRIOR HEALTH 6 DEFENCE 6**

2nd **WARRIOR HEALTH 4 DEFENCE 8**

If you kill these foes you find yourself faced by a very large, muscular, minion. He is a massive brute and carries a club garbed in nails and spikes. Turn to 6.

43

Roll 2 dice and keep track of what was rolled then roll again and compare. If the second result equal to then you have missed the target, and they will not let you in the game again. If the result was lower you have killed the man, but all is laughter and you can take aim again as a new target takes the apple into his mouth. If the result was higher you hit the apple! You win armour which will grant you 16 DEFENCE and 40 gold shards.

Return to 56.

44

You trudge on for miles in the dark, heading east, and you're not sure where you're going. You are following your gut instinct, and it is telling you that that general is stationed far ahead. You are currently walking across Gorgun and you have to sit down, for the walking has brought on great fatigue. You need to eat and drink something, but if you have nothing, so you must deduct 4 points off your HEALTH. While foraging you only find venomous plant life. Will you head into the Amel Mountains (turn to 17) or march into the swampland (turn to 59)?

45

All of your clan is dead and you must run for your life. You clamber up a tree and wait for the savages to clear and once they're out of sight you set out wandering about their island. This is Dalk Island and it's not what you expected, the big storm starts to relent but rain still comes down. In the darkness you walk through the jungle, tripping over tree roots, vines and plants. Then just as you're trying to sort out your bearings there's a harsh feline cry and something slams into your back sending you hurling to the wet ground. Twisting about to see what the heck it is you see glowing green eyes in the night and fangs belonging to that of a black jaguar. Tired, exhausted, and fed up with all of this you must defend yourself regardless, for you have ventured into her territory. But it is *one* opponent surely that's better than a tribe of savages right?

BEAUTIFUL SABLE JAGUAR HEALTH 8

If you live through this, you venture on until you arrive at another beach. There is a raft tied to a palm tree. You use this to get off the island and paddle east until your arms can take no more. Far out into the ocean you lose track of where you are and utterly fall asleep not caring where the raft takes you. Turn to 82.

46

His hazel eyes light up at the currency and he pockets it, "Well, I haven't been to Shear Stone in months! Come to think of it, I've never gone to Dronich either. I have no clue what lurks there now."

You ask him if their ship can take you there.

"With plenty of gold we will. Not sure the captain will agree to go."

You ask where the captain is.

He holds out his grubby paw, "More gold if you please, and I'll tell ya."

Will you:

Threaten him with your dagger, TURN TO 80.

Pay him 1 gold shard and wait for him to tell you where his captain is located, TURN TO 39.

47

You awake to a noisy ruckus, you see your brother Rowar hack the head off the captain. With one swipe of Rowar's blade the captain's head comes clean off his shoulders and makes a sickening noise as it rolls up the deck. You demand to know what just happened and Rowar explains that he saw the captain take your pistol out of your clutches and was going to shoot you with it. He also informs you that he heard the sailors talking about a mutiny, for they no longer wish to take orders from you. You decide to round up all the sailors and inform them that they can have their ship back after you're safely on the coastline. They appear reluctant but eventually agree.

As the morning wears on the ship is suddenly jolted violently at the bow. A sailor starts to panic and grabs a pistol, he shoots into the waters. You leave the poop deck and require what's going on. He points, runs past you, and talks to a cohort in a different language that you've never heard before. Water sprays on the deck and with that concern one of your brothers, Nettle, comes over to you.

"It must be a great whale," he says.

Something large and elongated spears from the waters and stabs a nearby curious sailor, the stinger or barb goes right through his chest and comes out his back. Arms

flailing and blood frothing out of his mouth he is lifted from the deck and plunged into the sea. Everyone on deck is in wonder now. They rush over to where the incident happened and peer over the railing. You, however, order your men to stay away from the bow. But it doesn't matter now where you stand, for the whole ship shatters brutally and it lifts out of the water! Everyone slides to one side then to the other side, and some men (including yours) are flung overboard. You take out your sword as you realise you're up against some unknown creature. All you can do is hang on for life as the craft is treated most viciously by some sea monster. The ship is lifted out of the water and thrown a few metres through the air! You, and whoever else is on the deck, are sent flying like rag dolls into the frigid ocean and are now at the mercy of this beast. You watch as it destroys the ship; it crinkles the wood as if it were a paper boat. It looks like a giant water wyvern, it howls out a victory cry and plunges back into the deep. You can feel it brush against your legs.

There is a barge nearby and quickly you doggy paddle to it and slither in. That wicked hungry barb comes out of the water again and starts spearing prey, the ship's crew and your clan brothers are caught one by one. It bumps the tiny boat you have taken refuge in; you ready your weapon and even stab the waves hoping to get at it, all the while it is looking for more blood and meat. It raises its ugly head out of the water and looks right at you with its reptilian eyes. What will you do? Did you buy the Thunder Sword? If you did, turn to 98. If you don't have it do you own enchanted arrows glowing with a bright green substance? You can fire one of these into the thick scaly exterior of the creature and it will leave you alone, but you black out afterward and lose track of where you drift off to, turn to 82.

If you do not have any the sword or these specific arrows, you are doomed. It capsizes the life boat and grabs you in its mouth, then brings you down, down, down into the murky depths where water fills your lungs and your life finally flashes before your very eyes.

48

They're serving porridge and flatbread for breakfast but it only rejuvenates 1 HEALTH point. If you are still hungry you will have to pay for more food.

CHUNKY CHICKEN BROTH (grants 2 HEALTH) 25 gold shards

LOAF OF RYE BREAD (grants 1 HEALTH) 10 gold shards

The camp seems serene since the scourges of last night. All of the tents are taken down. You notice that Thu'rite princess watching you from one of the larger tents which is being dismantled. Her elongated ears protrude through slits in her red and golden floral silken cowl, and her flesh is as white as milky opal. She is in fact rather beautiful and youthful but you stare at her with the intent that you can kill her if given the opportunity. She smiles and walks away. You wonder what was on her wicked mind and why she has chosen to stay with humans. She is a concubine, the captain's whore, but was it her choice? To think! *her* offspring being *his* children. Your blood begins to curdle at the thought and someone brings a hand down upon your shoulder.

“Morning, *sunshine*... like what you see?” It’s Muran, and he’s referring to the Thu’lite princess. You give him a filthy strict stare and he starts laughing. “I’m just kidding, *lighten up*, you’re mood is deadlier than a Drekaovac’s shadow!”

Will you ask him about the Thu’lite army they’re searching for, TURN TO 33.

Ask him how many Thu’lites they’ve executed, TURN TO 85.

Join the group heading out, TURN TO 63.

49

You look through the glass and spy the ugly faces of each soldier, you don’t recognise any of them, but your disgust grows in the pit of your stomach. In that moment you spot *him*, seated upon some great beast, and all the hell that he put you through comes back to the surface; you recall why you are here. Vengeance shall be yours. But how? How will you kill him? You lower the eye piece and sit there contemplating your next move. If you have an ARROW WITH AN AMETHYST HEAD, use your eye piece to aim true and shoot him through the heart. Will you do this? Will this revenge be good enough for you? If so, take aim and turn to 38. Do you have a different plan? Perhaps you want him close up, if you have a THU’LITE DISGUISE POTION drink it now and turn to 34. If you don’t have any of these then there is no hope for you, you will not even get past the first wave of soldiers as you charge in, and you will certainly be captured and tortured if you walk in bearing no proper weapon. You go back home and return to your tribe in the Fdulon Mountains and live out the rest of your life in regret. Either way, your adventure concludes on a sour note.

50

They scarcely have a taste and you eat many of them raw. You will not lose any HEALTH points instead you gain 4 HEALTH points by ingesting the vigorous fungus. You carry on your journey south. TURN TO 26.

51

Roll 2 dice and keep track of what was rolled then roll again and compare. If the second result equal to then they have missed your target, and they will not let you in the game again. If the result was lower you have been killed, the arrow strikes you in the left eye and pierces your brain. If the result was higher they hit the apple and it explodes out of your mouth. For such bravery, you win an herbal elixir which will grant 8 HEALTH and you also win 40 gold shards.

Return to 56.

52

The scavengers are weary at first and frightened by your appearance but soon warm up to your presence. Any berries that your brothers have gathered are given to the sailors and they gobble it all up as if they’ve never had berries in their entire life. You ask them if they can sail you across the ocean and they agree to take you to Shear Stone.

That evening you are at sea and feast upon lobster tails, sea cucumber and pease. The

snow, which has been coming down relentlessly turns into wet sloppy sleet and covers the deck above with a thick film of ice. The waves are scheming to topple the vessel as it hurls it and shifts it. The men are worried that there is a storm coming. You peek up through the hatchway and see the sky full of clouds that are so thick that the moon and stars are no longer visible. You've never seen a sea so threatening. The railing of the ship looks like an old abandoned bridge in some icy mountainous ravine. The salty waters are as cold as an Ice Elemental that relentlessly and almost violently splashes over the portside and seeps into any open crack and hole.

Then there is a loud crack! The beams and ice tear apart as a massive line opens up from the bow all the way up to the stern. The ship is being separated into two. The crew scramble over you and rush above deck and they start cutting away life boats. There is shouting, cries of terror and utter confusion. In a mere few minutes all of you are in the water and the ship starts to sink. The shock of the wintry ocean hits you like a thousand pricks. The water burns like fire. You swim out trying to struggle against the vicious waters as the vessel goes under right beneath your feet. Sheets of liquid swarm over your head and try to drown you. You spy a craft, swim to it, pull yourself in, and in minutes you're unconscious...

TURN TO 82.

53

A rough-looking fat man with hazel eyes steps forward, "*Enough*, listen, I am the captain of the ship. I will sail you to Dalk Island for 200 gold shards. But if you're going to be an ass, I sail nobody. Don't think you and your brothers there can outfight my sailors; you'll have a bloody mess on your hands and then no ship to take you where you want to go. Now, pay up, or get out of Prase."

If you pay the 200 gold, TURN TO 88.

If you try to haggle with him, TURN TO 20.

If you refuse to pay you must decide what to do next. Will you leave Prase and head north to yet another port (turn to 27) or attack these sailors, striking fear into their hearts (turn to 7)?

54

"HA! Wrong." they say and cast some wicked enchantment upon you. Your skin starts to crack open, in agony you fall to your knees watching in horror as your blood and veins spill out onto the ground. Even your armour and clothing are not immune for they tear apart as well. You grab your face and cry out to the heavens for mercy, then look at your hands and see nothing but skeletal remains with bits of skin hanging off. There is no one around to come to your rescue, you are simply at the mercy of the creatures and all they do is express amusement at your gory death.

55

Fearless, that's how you were raised, and in such a time of need you don't care if you

live or die. You race up the path and collide with a small band of Thu'lites arming their bows and arrows. There are about ten of them. You fight the one wearing a wolf's headdress

LEADING THU'LITE HEALTH 10 DEFENCE 6

Your brothers maim the others; you can taste the blood of your opponent on your lips. You lick it off and spit on the corpse. Checking the bodies you do not recognise the killer of your wife and child but you do find a dagger having an auspicious amethyst handle but the dagger is covered in dried blood. Being superstitious your brothers want nothing to do with it. You can take this or leave it behind but there is always the possibility it will bring some sort of ill fortune. Your brothers urge you to return to the forest and carry on south, this you agree to and deduce that there are no more Thu'lite clans in this region.

TURN TO 90.

56

There is a cheering group of men seated around a table. They are drinking liquid out of small shooter glasses and slamming them down on the table. It appears the fat, balding man is winning, for he is far from drunk while his opponent is wavering and soon falls over. Do you want to enter this contest? If you care to join in on the fun, turn to 30. If you think this is childish, then you can go find a resting spot and fall asleep for a few hours. Just as you're speculating what to do you're cordially invited to a gambling game not far off from this area, it doesn't include booze hounds but the chance of luck. They're firing ranged weapons at one another for gold. Do you need more gold shards? This could be the game for you. To join, turn to 76.

If you really aren't interested then you find a spot to lie down and later someone kicks the sole of your boot and wakes you up with a jolt. The sky is turquoise now.

"Time to get up," he says and walks off.

Will you go get something to eat, TURN TO 48.

Check to see if they have an armoury/weapon store, TURN TO 96.

Wait until it's time to march out, TURN TO 63.

57

When you bring out your weapons the whole sky collapses on you, you're embedded into a foggy world of jade and crimson ghosts which cannot be harmed. You watch in dismay as your being turns from solid to smoke. Then the earth gives way and you float up to the sky. You try to escape, you try to get back to the ground, but find you can't. You are trapped in the Northern Lights. You no longer feel the pains of hunger or fatigue or hatred. When the morning light arrives you simply wane to nothing.

58

There is a wicked wind coming in and the captain, who you learn is the fat man, is refusing to sail out. He says there is a storm brewing out there. You inform him that you had a deal and he growls. "All right, pay me more gold and I'll sail this tub of a ship into a deadly squall."

You tell him you have no more gold.

"THEN you'll have to wait like the rest of us. I'm not risking my life for you."

You go to the Pearl Dagger Inn and sit down at a bamboo table. Your brothers are tired, irritable and eager to move on.

"Get your gold back and we'll go to a different port!" they all say and agree, but you refuse to do so. You've come this far, you will not turn back or change your plans but they insist. You return and speak to the captain, but he now refuses to sail you at all and what's worse he has given the gold to his men to spend how they like. When you find his sailors they are all drunk as lords. They have wasted all of your finances. Angered your brothers start a war and begin killing the sailors whether they're able to defend themselves or not.

Once enough blood has been spilled they leave Prase and you have no choice but to follow. Your eldest brother decides it is time to regroup with those hiding in the mountains up in Northern Fdulon. Do you call off your expedition and go to the mountains (turn to 9) or urge them to go to another port (turn to 27)?

59

Sometime later you arrive at an abandoned town, it is in ruins and overgrown with wildflowers and weeds. Then a loud shrill cracks the silence and you rush in its general direction and hide behind a structure, ahead you spy a female Thu'rite warrior fighting off what seems to be some malevolent green phantom. It has her by the throat and she is stabbing at it with a small dagger but it is doing nothing to help her desperate situation. You understand your hatred for the Thu'lites but this scene is an unfair one. What will you do? Will you let her die at the hands of this merciless entity (turn to 73) or will you step in and help her (turn to 19)?

60

There is smoked fish that attracts your attention but it is expensive. An elderly man with white hair and dark leathery skin is cooking oysters and clams in a big iron skillet. He points out to you what is ready for purchase.

SMOKED FISH STRIPS (1 meal, restores 2 HEALTH) 40 gold shards

SPICY PRAWN CRACKERS (2 meals, restores 3 HEALTH each meal) 60 gold shards

FERMENTED SHARK MEAT (1 meal, restores 8 HEALTH each meal) 80 gold shards

When you are done return to reference 36.

61

Along your lengthy journey and as the sun sets you can smell something burning off in the distance, there must be a village close by, but as you near you find it to only be some temporary campsite. Four skinny humanoid are dancing around a fire pit, and they're cooking up something sinister. It's definitely not a dwarf but the body of a young boy, the smell is utterly repulsive but the creatures seem to delight in the fact that they'll be eating good tonight. Feeling remorse, disgust and anger, you attack these buggers and hope to make them pay. Perhaps you can put them on the pit and watch *them* burn instead? They pick up their spears and knives and attack you as you step on their site.

IMPS HEALTH 3 DEFENCE 8

Should you survive this, you find that there is nothing you can do for the little child, he is dead. You give him a proper burial and kick dirt over the corpses of the Imps; let the worms, flies and beetles be their demise. That night you use the campsite and rest your weary feet, it is hard to fall asleep but you must, for tiredness will only weaken you. You must also *eat* something from your provisions or you will lose 2 HEALTH points. There is still nothing to forage here that would be safe to eat. Turn to 79.

62

It tastes bitter. The onlookers massage your shoulders with intensity, they too are getting anxious. Spinner tells you it's tequila you just drank. What next?

Red, TURN TO 84.

White, TURN TO 92.

Pink, TURN TO 16.

Did you drink three and not get the poison? Turn to 72.

63

If you didn't eat, you must lose 2 HEALTH points. Four hours, you trek through the land of Thiathrow from Gorgun and into the swamplands, then into a portion of the Amel Mountains. To the north is the province of Acyr and straight ahead is a desert stretching as far east as the eye can see. The army halts momentarily and soon a scout returns reporting that a Thu'rite militia approaches.

The men leave the confines of the mountain range and head into the desert. Your anticipation starts to rise, is it fear or is it eagerness? In less than an hour the enemy is in range. Arrows fill the sky appearing like the hairs of a spiteful hag and soar in your direction. Do you have a shield to protect yourself with? If so, the arrows thud into it, if not then you must suffer an arrow hitting you in the left arm. If you have a corked vial filled with milky substance, drink it now and heal your wound; otherwise, you have lost the feeling in that arm and can't use it. Since you can't even lift it now you must deduct 2 HEALTH points permanently (you cannot get them back not even by drinking a HERBAL POTION).

The men charge roaring out battle cries, the Thu'lites race in your direction and in seconds the battle ensues all around. Blood sprays on you as you fight for your life and cut down anyone who dares oppose you. You've never been in a fight like this before and it is very exhilarating. Someone hands you a vial filled with inky black liquid. No one else has had this prior, just you, so you're wondering if it's safe? Just as you're about to question the person who gave it to you he is struck down by an enemy's callous arrow.

Will you drink it now (turn to 89) or throw it away and defend yourself (turn to 68)?

64

You keep the point of your weapon pricking the skin just above his jugular vein in his neck. Any quick brave move by his cohorts and you'll slice him open. You demand that the sailors find the captain but nobody does as you wish, they all stand there befuddled. The man you're holding as a hostage tells one man to get Harbrush and he races off with his new command.

You stand there on the deck holding the fat man until the sailor returns with this tall person. "This is Harbrush, he is our captain." The fat man informs you. "Now, let me free."

You ask that you and your men be sailed across the Dalk Sea and everyone starts laughing. You feel a sudden perforation in the back of your neck and pluck out whatever caused it. You find a small dart with a poisoned tip. Someone aboard the vessel has finally had enough of your antics. The world starts to go fuzzy and now you will never reach your destination and who knows whatever becomes of your brothers.

65

He lives in a little shack just at the edge of town, and he calls you in the minute you arrive at his beaded doorway. Did he know you were coming to see him? Inside you spy hideous voodoo dolls, hexing potions of all sizes, jet black beads painted with red skulls, and eerie life-sized masks used for ceremonies. This man means business in his special practice and the very host is seated on the floor on a precious weaved rug. His hair is yellowish grey and twisted into long knots hanging down over his shoulders, his do reminds you of ropes, something an experienced sailor might concoct in boredom or perhaps the knots that a witch might tie up for protection. Either way, he is old and frail, and all that garbs his bony frame is a thin colourful orange robe.

"You have lost everything, and this will not be the end." He says. "You will lose much more."

You lower your eyebrows wondering if he truly knows your story.

"Please, sit down before me so that I can read you better, my eyesight is not good these days."

You do as he bids; sitting crossed legged on the mat and in front of him. His eyes as you can see have cataracts; were his irises once the colour of a blue sky or a vivid green sea, you marvel?

“I can see your hatred for the Thu’lites; it burns in you like the forest when struck by an angry hair of lightning. That one tree which sparked the blaze is what you are, the lightning being your enemy. But it is most powerful and hard to get at once vanished. How will you ever find that force of nature again when the clouds separate?”

He hears you sigh out of frustration, for you’re not there to be given riddles or wise-man gospel.

“You are in a hurry? *It* will come to *you* soon enough, you need not go out looking for it, but you’re heart is set on chasing, and this could be your downfall. I can get you too close your enemy; I can get you very close to the one who murdered your family.”

You ask how, intrigued now, but still stern.

“In order to destroy what destroyed you, you must become your enemy; you must take to it with all your might. How would you feel if you were a Thu’lite? Would you detest yourself? I can make you one quite easily; I can make a potion that will give you the sinful ears of a Thu’lite, the skin of repulsion, and a worth of courage a warrior possesses. What do you think? Do you want that?”

You ask him to be clearer.

“Pay me 25 gold, and I will give you a potion where you will be able to infiltrate their defence and offence without detection. I feel how badly you want to kill your killer. Do you long to see him suffer under your merciless claw?”

This is true. Do you have 25 gold? If you do, give him the gold shards and add THU’LITE DISGUISE POTION to your belongings. He will not help you anymore after this and you must leave his premises.

Return to 36.

66

He tries everything to parry your blows with his intense skills; he has a great fear of amethyst and doesn’t want it grazing his flesh, it is said that certain Thu’lites are sensitive to the gemstone and it is the only way that they can be killed. Every time you get in a successful hit you have damaged his armour.

KHALA KHITE HEALTH 1 DEFENCE 24

If you get his defence down to 0 he falls to his knees, and stares at you with hope of

mercy and tees out his arms as if accepting what fate you will give him. Do you have Amethyst embedded into one of your weapons? If so, you ready it steadily in your grasp. But if you do not own this then he kills you rather swiftly. He takes out a concealed weapon and jabs it deep into your groin, then he pulls you closer to him and stabs you in the chest. You do not avenge Althea and Amaranth on this fateful day.

But if you do have the amethyst item, then with the noise of the war dying down everyone watches as you plunge the tip of your weapon heartlessly into his throat. He grabs it and gurgles; you can see all of the veins in his face pulsating from the stress; blood spurts from between his purple lips, you can see him swallowing hard, trying to hold on to his life. You force the blade farther in until his head nearly comes off and his eyes roll up into the back of his sockets. When he falls over your cohorts cheer.

The battle is over for now. Of course, there will be more for the soldiers but *your* conflict is over. You have avenged your family. You are escorted back to Fdulon in high honours and there the remainder of those from your clan who were hiding in the mountains greet you. You go into the mountains and live out the remainder of your days. Of course, you remarry one day, but that is years off.

67

The smell around the corpses is strong and there are so many bot flies, you can't prevent from being attacked and bitten by them. You can already see their maggots squirming inside the exposed flesh, something that makes you sick to your stomach but you will not bury the monks, no, you will let them hang there. Before you're ready to leave you spot a MAROON SUEDE QUIVER and TWO ARROWS (the arrows bundled together can be counted as one item), the arrowheads are glowing with a bright green substance. There is also a feeble SHORT BOW nearby which will probably only fire twice before it gets broken. Add these items to your list if you wish. If you use the bow and arrows, use the same rules for archery and with each successful hit mark an extra +4 hit points off your opponent's health. These arrows are etched with a powerful toxin. Just remember that since these arrows are *enchanted* you will have to mark off a MAGICK point with each use of an arrow or their extra hit points won't count.

They find nothing else but an agate amulet and being very superstitious they believe it to be cursed. You can take this or leave it behind but there is always the possibility it will bring some sort of bad luck like as it did to these poor souls. If you wish to put this around your neck, make a note that you are wearing the AMULET OF DUST and head out on your journey. In a few of hours you smell acrid smoke and know that you are arriving either at another campsite or a town. Turn to 42.

68

You fight bravely and stab as many warriors as you can but someone sticks a dagger in your back and slits your throat open. You see your blood gushing out all over your chest and you're dead before you hit the ground never knowing who it was who got you.

69

Lose 4 HEALTH points. You must subtract 2 for lack of sleep and 2 for being hungry. You're remorseful that you didn't stop to forage and eat.

TURN TO 26.

70

The news of the murder you committed reaches all ears of the sailors and they attack you and your brothers. Apparently the sailor you just killed was very popular. You will not be boarding their ship, and they will surely not sail you to ANY destination. Instead they overwhelm you and chase you out of Prase. Now you will have to travel back up north up Fdolon to another port called Schorl. This will take you a few hours. Your brothers spend lots of time during the expedition to hunt and gather berries. You do not encounter any enemies and when you arrive at the port it is devastated by a former fire. One ship lies in the harbour in good condition and everyone watches it for an hour to see who exactly is manning it. There are no Thu'lites about but humans scavenging the wrecked haven. Will you approach carefully and in a friendly manner (turn to 52) or charge out of the bush and attack the pirates (turn to 87)?

71

They want to leave this port and try another one further up north. This will take you off track from your original plan but maybe Khala Khite is still stationed off in that area? You're argued with by an older brother that you should've gone there in the first place. Not gallivant around the Fdolon Forests and Mountain passes like some deranged fool. Yes, you killed more soldiers, yes, you struck fear into the locals and yes revenge still sits high on her throne and still so far away from you but you must now listen to your brothers. They are the wisdom.

"We're going to the other port with or without you," he says to you.

You decide to follow them back into the forest and head north. No one says a single word to each other. TURN TO 27.

72

Spinner hands you the amethyst dagger and Cabundy grabs it greedily, but Spinner yanks it back, "Nah, old man, it's *his* now!" Add it to your possessions, you've earned it. You decide to lie down somewhere and get some needed sleep.

Later on, someone rudely kicks the sole of your boot and wakes you up with a jolt. The sky is turquoise now. "Time to get up," and the man walks off.

Will you go get something to eat, TURN TO 48.

Check to see if they have an armoury/weapon store, TURN TO 96.

Wait until it's time to march out, TURN TO 63.

73

The thing wrenches her neck violently until every bone and sinew is snapped apart, blood spurts from out of her mouth and her body falls limp, her fingers let loose of her dagger. After killing her successfully, it throws her body against a building and wanders off on its own until you lose sight of it. You're not sure if it's safe to stay here since it might come back. Will you:

Examine the dead female Thu'lite, TURN TO 28.

Leave this place, TURN TO 35.

74

They are not keen on talking to a bunch of strangers and tell you that any information will cost you in gold shards. If you wish to buy information what then will your paid question be?

"Have you seen any Thu'lites come this way?" 2 gold shards TURN TO 83

"Where are you headed?" 2 gold shards TURN TO 77.

"What news is happening in Thiathrow?" 2 gold shards TURN TO 95

Ask them if you can board their ship? TURN TO 18

75

You have a dream where you are sailing on a ship. The swell is high and the sky is filled with heavy cobalt coloured clouds. You decide to stand by the railing and peak over and you see your brothers come out of the water. They scale the portside like spiders and jump through the air like gymnasts. In your dream you have this feeling that they are evil entities, but some inner voice is telling you that they you're your true brothers. Their skin is fish-eaten and their clothes are rotting off them. You can even see barnacles on their furry tunics. There's something about their eyes that sets you off; it is a stare into eternity, a world far away, a place you will never understand until it's *your time* to die. They have seen the other side and it is being reflected in their ghostly gaze.

"There he is!" One exclaims with such a frightening growl that your heart skips a beat. "That's our brother who led us to our death!"

They grab hold of you and start pulling you through the deck. You're amazed that your legs actually break the boards. You cling onto the deck desperately, for you don't want them to drag you down through the ship. They will take you into the lowest point of the ocean where the light doesn't shine. You sense how terribly they want you with them in their graveyard. You can see their fangs, and you beg to be left alone... the sailors in the rigging laugh at you as you scream for their help...

Someone kicks the sole of your boot and you wake up with a jerk. The sky is turquoise now. You are no longer on the ship but in the camp. Such a vivid dream, what does it mean if deciphered? "Get up, the sun is rising," the man says and walks off, unaware of what you just dreamt. Are you going crazy?

Will you go get something to eat, TURN TO 48.

Check to see if they have an armoury/weapon store if you haven't already, TURN TO 96.

Wait until it's time to march out, TURN TO 63.

76

The host explains that in order to win the bets placed on the ground you must strike the apple out of the mouth of the man standing in the field and do it with just one arrow and a crossbow. Or YOU can stand in the field with an apple in your teeth and if the shooter misses you get the prizes which are higher. So which will it be? Do you agree to stand with an apple in your mouth and await fate (turn to 51) or will you be the one who fires instead (turn to 43)? There is already one corpse of a soldier lying in the grass with an arrow sticking out of his head.

77

They sort the money you gave them amongst one another. One sailor smirks at you and pockets the gold shards, "We're headed to Dalk Island."

Will you:

Ask if you can board their ship, TURN TO 18.

Pay them 2 gold shards and ask them if they seen any Thu'lites come this way, TURN TO 83.

78

After the fighting has ceased and all her comrades are dead she pleads, "Please, I beg of you to spare my life! I will do anything you want. I will go to bed with you; I will be your *slave*. What do you want from me?"

You ask her where the Thu'lites are and jab her throat with the tip of your sword so it hurts her enough to confess everything you want.

"There's a squad of them in Banded Onyx. Go to the tavern Gnarled Larch, that's where we first met them. I'm sure they are all still there. Now can I go?" She rises to one foot bravely, staring you in the eyes, trying to seduce you with her wicked, exceptional emerald eyes.

In response to her charm, you grab her by the hair to warn her you're not ready to let her off just yet.

"Do you want to ravage me? Most men do. Am I not beautiful? I can send you to a world you can only dream about. I know all of the secrets men like; I can make you feel really good." She rubs her gloved hands over the intricate armour shielding her tunic trying everything she can think of to dissuade you from hurting her.

"Let me give you a kiss, baby." She says and quickly brings out a hidden dirk from her

boot and pokes your thigh with it just missing your groin by inches.

You yank her hair harder, drop your sword suddenly and pull out your dagger in defence. She asks for pity and tries to fight her way free from your control but you take the blade of your weapon and rip a gap in her throat so wide that her head nearly comes off. Her blood gushes out fiercely at your feet and you can almost hear your dagger licking her flesh before she falls limp seconds later. You angrily drop her to the ground and wipe your blade with her cape. Your brothers feel your anger and are astounded that you'd be so *vicious* but there is a biting hatred in your gut that can't be fixed with such murder. You also don't find any shards when you go to rummage through their corpses.

You wrap your wound and sit up against a tree. It's difficult to fall asleep; you watch the fire instead and see Althea in it. She is in her wedding garb. There should be pain in your heart but all you can feel right now is anger. You look at the corpses of the marauders, these pathetic pieces of crap, and spit on the ground. They were drinking milk and eating bits of dried pork. You will not lose any HEALTH points with this meal and for staying here tonight.

You're not sure how long you were out but sleep finally comes to you. You had a dream about your wife on the cross, and soldiers from the Thu'lite army were prodding her with spikes, and then they started to dismember her lower limbs. You watched as her blood splattered on the ground and her oppressors were rubbing it all over their bodies as if it were war paint. You couldn't move, you were paralysed from the waste down, you couldn't protect her. You shouted out words of warning but no one seemed to hear you. Then she looked up at you as if she never died...

You open your eyes and quickly get up cursing yourself for falling asleep and you and your tribe walk toward Banded Onyx now. Restore your HEALTH to 12 is you lost any points, the sleep and your meal last night has replenished you for now. The days are getting colder, it is autumn now and the air is crisp with a chilly breeze. You trudge on through the forest not stopping for anything, thirst is building up in your body and soon you come to a creek. As you lean down to scoop up a quick drink you see a dead caribou in the water. Do you still wish to drink of this water that might be contaminated with feces and urine? If so, turn to 24. Otherwise, your brother Rowar predicts there might be another brook further south. Turn to 90.

79

After camping for the night you carry on before the sun rises, the scenery gives way and becomes flat, soon you come to a cliff and below is a great desert spreading into the infinite heat waves. The sun is boiling hot but it is not the temperature that invokes your senses it is the sight of an army, a Thu'lite one, and it is massive. You will not go down there to greet them, they will easily finish you for sure, and so what can be done? If you carry an eye piece and wish to put it on now then turn to 49. If you do not have this or don't wish to use it, do you have a Thu'lite Disguise Potion? If so, turn to 34. If you do not have any of these, what more can you do but sit here and ponder? You want

your revenge, it is killing you inside, you have come so far and now it's staring you right in the face! You can boldly stride into their offence, but you will be slain; you can sit and wait for them to come to you, but you will be found by their hounds and mauled to death; or you can go back home and return to your tribe in the Fdulon Mountains and live out the rest of your life in regret. Either way, your adventure concludes on a sour note.

80

His fellow sailors come to his aid with scimitars drawn. Your brothers gather around you and the sailors back off. You grab hold of the chubby sailor by his collar and rattle him. You jab your dagger into his throat but not enough to break the skin and demand that he tell you where his captain is. He smiles and shakes his head. "Now that you've attacked me, he will never speak to you."

"Where is he?!" you shout so loud that seagulls fly away in shock.

The fat man points at his ship. "In there, where else?"

Will you bring him with you (turn to 64) or board the ship without the sailors (turn to 29)?

81

Your answer is incorrect and by proving this a meteor shower arrives and you realise there is nowhere to take shelter. You cover your head with your arms and pray you're not struck, but in seconds you are pounded to death by these fiery rocks from the sky.

82

When you wake up you are on some beach with a jungle stretching south and north along the shoreline. You look out to sea and spot no sign of human life. You fall to your knees and start to cry out, for some minutes you reflect on going back out in the little boat to search for your brothers but it is useless. For some time you sit there and try to gather the motivation to move on, you must finish the mission even though it is only just you now. You get up and march through the greenery, hacking away with your sword, tripping over vines and roots, getting lost and not caring where you end up. You soon stumble upon a naked man sitting upright against a tree; he is bound tightly to it. His flesh is gangrenous and covered in red ants. Will you search the area around him (turn to 25) or leave him be and keep moving (turn to 8)?

83

They all start to bicker quietly and laugh as if you've asked a dumb question and they take your money and sort it out amongst each other.

One sailor with a missing eyeball flings a shard out of his fingers and catches it again. "No. We haven't seen any Thu'lites." He turns his back on you and walks away.

Will you bring out your dagger and stab him in the back? If you do this, turn to 4.

If there's more you wish to say, what will it be?

"Can we board your ship?" TURN TO 18

"Where is your captain?" TURN TO 53

84

It is extremely acrid going down. Your eyes water up and everyone laughs. Spinner reveals to you that you just drank vodka. What next?

Blue, TURN TO 62.

White, TURN TO 92.

Pink, TURN TO 16.

Did you drink three and not get the poison? TURN TO 72.

85

"Shear Stone and Dronich are emptied of the rubbish enemy. I hear Capricas and the Thiathrow regions are safe. Not sure about far south down in the Gwin Fouth and Rhynan provinces, but we'll get there soon enough. The Thu'lites are like earwigs, cockroaches, when you think you've gotten rid of them they've found a crack to hide in, ready to multiply again."

You ask him if they've killed any Thu'lite generals.

"They all look the same to me; most of the armies have a general and a queen. I don't know and I don't care."

Will you ask him about the Thu'lite army they're searching for, TURN TO 33.

Join the group heading out, TURN TO 63.

86

Inside of a hut with a straw roof is a fancy little shop stock piled with all kinds of kick-knacks. This is what's available to purchase from their local merchant:

POISONOUS BOLTS

Item – Spell Parchment

Damage – deduct an additional 1 point off with the usual hit points

Magick Deduction – 1 point

Cost – 25 gold shards

THUNDER SWORD +1 for 25 gold shards

DAGGER WITH PEARL HANDLE +1 for 25 gold shards

HELM of THIATHROW (4 DEFENCE) 10 gold shards

HEAVY GAUNTLETS (2 DEFENCE) 5 gold shards

LEATHER ARMOUR (8 DEFENCE) 30 gold shards

CHAIN MAIL ARMOUR (12 DEFENCE) 40 gold shards
 WOODEN SHIELD (1 DEFENCE, will sustain 2 hits before shattering) 5 gold

HERBAL POTION (heals 2 HEALTH) 25 gold shards

RANGED WEAPONRY

SHORT BOW +1 for 50 gold shards
 BUNDLE OF 5 ARROWS 30 gold shards
 LEATHER QUIVER 10 gold shards

Will buy:

AMULET OF DUST for 25 gold shards
 YOUR ORDINARY DAGGER for 10 gold shards
 YOUR ORDINARY SWORD for 10 gold shards
 AMETHYST DAGGER for 25 gold shards

When you are done return to 36.

87

They're caught completely off guard and your brothers slay most of them easily. Now you're stuck with a ship that has no captain. Do you think you could sail this thing out to sea yourself? Do you think you have enough men to man the rigging? You risk it and take her out to sea but in a few hours of sloppy man-handling you're caught in a massive squall. The ship sinks into the icy swell taking every person with her.

88

You have to wait a few hours but soon you're on the ship Proulex on route to Dalk Island. There is a bit of a storm and your nerves are shaken a bit by the waves shifting the vessel almost violently. You're gripping a pole in the hold as water splashes down upon your head. Water *whooshes* about the floor and all of the lamps are doused. You can hear men shouting and the sheets of lightning stretching hairs of death across the evening sky. Eventually, the tempest subsides having caused minimal damage and you and you men are dropped off at this supposed island. The captain wastes no time and simply abandons you there. You soon realise why, for it is inhabited by wild savages who come out of the jungle with their pikes and wooden shields. Their hair is feral and they're covered in war paint. They cry out in shrilling tones as they attack.

Your brother Rowar grabs you and points at a raft. "Go to it, brother, I'll keep them at bay!"

You beg that you will die alongside him.

"You must avenge our village, if we all die then this mission is in vain."

You do as he says and untie the raft, you watch helplessly as your clan fights off these wicked predators. As the raft goes out to sea you see your brothers' fall down one by

one as the savages poke and kick at their victims mercilessly. You even see the natives rip off the head of Rowar and throw it in your direction. It splashes in the waters and then bobs on the surface, you shout out obscenities but it is useless.

You float on the raft all night and soon at dawn you spy land. With the one oar you row yourself to the slab that looks like it could be mistaken for a cloud. When you finally reach the beach you pull yourself off the raft and fall on to the wet sand. You cry out a hundred tears, not because you're not at sea anymore but because you feel like a hopeless coward, an inadequate fugitive of your tribe. You left your men to die so you could live. They were outnumbered, but how could you survive also if you stayed and fought? Now you are alone and now you must face the difficulties without aid. You get up and scan your surroundings; there is flatland, a massive moor. With fear in your heart but determination in your brain you walk on through the land without stopping to make camp. The blisters on the soles of your feet pop and burn but you still keep going, your legs ache and your body calls for a rest but you go on. Soon you come to a sign which reads Gorgun; you apparently have been traveling in Windcrest in a northerly direction for quite some time now. Now it is evening again and you've been walking a portion of the whole day. You do not have any food. You must lose 1 HEALTH point due to starvation and foraging for food is pointless, for all you find are poisonous weeds and flowers. There aren't any rabbits or deer to hunt either while on your trek through this bleak land. The death of your brothers still weighs heavily on your mind as you head north into Gorgun. Turn to 8.

89

Whatever the hell is in that bottle it tastes like shit but you gulp it all down and in seconds feel strangely invigorated. A Thu'rite warrior holds his palm out to you and a red ball of fire shoots from it, whether or not you're wearing armour or have a shield, the magnitude of this power knocks you on your backside. If you have no defence, then mark 4 HEALTH off your status. You can fight him with any weapon or spells of your own, but combat goes as normal and in any way you choose to destroy him. If you are wearing armour simply mark off 1 point if he gets a hit in and every time he hits you if you aren't wearing any defence you will lose 4 HEALTH points.

WARRIOR HEALTH 8 DEFENCE 10

If you manage to kill him you don't stop there you cut open his throat, rip his head off, and bite his nose off. Your associates, your comrades nearby stare at you in disbelief at first. You don't know what has gotten into your own actions, so what was in that black liquid? You attack adversary warriors without any trepidation, gutting them, smearing their blood, ripping their intestines out, stabbing them even after they're pretty much dead. The battle is bloody and your side is winning. You're having so much fun the war goes by rather quickly.

It is then that you see him, the bastard who killed your family. He even recognises you, and kills your companions with ease. He is covered in war paint, blood, and very fine-looking armour. He points at you and then makes a gesture by pretending to slit his

own throat with his thumb. He carries two scimitars and uses them with great skill and charges in your direction screaming bloody murder.

Do you have POISON written in your notes? If so, turn to 37. Otherwise, turn to 66 to begin the battle.

90

You do not have any food with you and you're starving. How can you take on spiritless warriors when you're tired and weak? If you do not find anything to eat you will lose HEALTH points. Do you wish to risk foraging the area for food (turn to 3) or keep trudging toward Banded Onyx (turn to 69)?

91

This is probably a stupid idea but you and your men take the sailor's ship by storm and demand that they run the ratlines and loose leaf! You tell them you are the captain now and that they will all be flogged with a hundred lashes of a salty cat-o-nine. They looked confused at first but do as you say. Sailors come aboard and attack. A fat man fires a loaded pistol at you. Roll two dice: make a note of the first amount, roll again, and compare. If the second was equal to or lower, turn to 2. If it was higher then his aim is true and you find a lead ball nudged between your eyes; your brains splatter all over the deck and in seconds you're stone dead.

92

Much to your confusion everyone sighs and walks away from the table. Spinner tells you that you just drank poison and have lost the game.

Write POISON in your notes.

You will not die instantly. You decide to lie down somewhere and get some needed sleep. Later on, someone kicks the sole of your boot and wakes you up with a jolt. The sky is turquoise now. "Time to get up," and the man walks off.

Will you go get something to eat, TURN TO 48.

Check to see if they have an armoury/weapon store, TURN TO 96.

Wait until it's time to march out, TURN TO 63.

93

The two creatures argue amongst themselves as to what exactly they are going to do to you. "You may be lucky and just get a riddle or you may fall upon bad fortune and have to venture far and wide in a never ending search for virtue." The one on the right says. "But we'll just give you a riddle for now and if you fail to answer correctly you will suffer the consequences by DEATH."

An eye in the sky

Half blinking nearly sinking

All hope lost for such a cause

*Let us sacrifice the virgins then
Sending their souls to heaven
Until the winking eye returns
We kill, splurge and merge*

What is the correct answer?
The moon, TURN TO 23.
The sun, TURN TO 81.
The stars, TURN TO 54.

94

This sight has caused a little shiver run down your spine, but this is a camp full of humans and when they spot you you're welcomed with open arms, it appears most of them are intoxicated.

One man introduces himself as Muran, "Where did you come from?"

You explain you're from Fdulon.

"I see, and why are you alone?"

You tell him that you were with your clan but they were lost at sea.

"If you join this army you will be fed and looked after. We're killing those fuckers, the Thu'lites as we catch em. They not only get killed but tortured as well. Will you aid us? We need as many allies as possible."

You are hesitant, you're not sure if you seriously want to join this group and he notices your apprehension.

"I'm just going to warn you now that if you try to leave we will hunt you down and tie you to a tree. Have you heard of Scaphism?"

A band of men larger than you surround you, for they are possibly trying to intimidate your nerves. You can't fight your way out of this situation, you have come in here, you have no choice but to do as they say.

"Will you join our cause?" He holds out a hand covered in a leather gauntlet.

You shake his hand and the men pick you up by the legs. You're lifted high off the ground and bounced around like a little child. They sit you down and nearly force alcohol down your gullet.

In a few hours it is still dark out and now that you're trusted not to escape the camp you sit there and take in your surroundings. Men sit by bonfires drinking, some are napping, and others are tearing a screaming wild boar apart and tossing it bit by bit

into the open fire. The camp has calmed down a bit since your arrival. You hear moans of pleasure, glance to your right at some tent, and see a shadow of two figures engaged in a ballet of seduction. You look away and sigh, wondering if you should try to escape or not.

Will you try to sneak out of the camp? If you try this, you must roll two dice. Roll the dice and keep track of the first amount rolled then roll again and compare; was the second result equal to or lower than the first? If it was, turn to 44. If it was higher, the men notice you disappearing into the thicket and come after you. You can't outrun them, they have dogs and when the dogs find you, you realise that they're not trained to hold you in one place until their owners arrive but are taught to maul. Before you're found by the militants you're beyond saving.

If you dare not risk leaving this site, you wait until someone comes to speak to you, turn to 12.

95

They greedily take your gold shards and divide it amongst each other. One sailor, a short chubby one, huddles up to you, "There is great turmoil as always. It's not just on this coast but other coasts, but that's only a guess. Why?"

You ask him if there are army units situated along the coastline on the other end of the sea.

"Uh, uh, it'll cost you more gold if you wish me to tell you." He blurts out with an ugly smirk on his warty blotchy face, a face you'd just love to punch.

Will you:

Take out your dagger and threaten him, TURN TO 80.

Pay him 2 gold shards and wait for his reply, TURN TO 46.

96

They're holding a store inside the blacksmith's tent. He is making more swords and shields. The heat is unbearable and the noise very annoying but he smiles, pauses, and points out what he has for sale. You examine the weapons resting on a black cloth covered table. There are also special spell parchments you're not familiar with. This is what's available to purchase:

LIGHTNING BOLTS

Item – Spell Parchment

Damage – deduct an additional 2 points off with the usual hit points

MAGICK Deduction – 1 point

Cost – 60 gold shards

POWERFUL FIRE BOLTS

Item – Spell Parchment

Damage – deduct an additional 3 points off with the usual hit points
 MAGICK Deduction – 2 points
 Cost – 80 gold shards

HORNED HELM (6 DEFENCE) 10 gold shards
 CHAIN MAIL SHIRT (8 DEFENCE) 12 gold shards
 PLATE MAIL (14 DEFENCE) 40 gold shards
 SHORT SWORD +2 for 80 gold shards

x20 ARROWS 60 gold shards
 CROSSBOW +2 for 60 gold shards
 CLOTH QUIVER 5 gold shards

HERBAL POTION (heals 4 HEALTH) 40 gold shards
 CHUNKY CHICKEN BROTH (grants 2 HEALTH) 25 gold shards
 LOAF OF RYE BREAD (grants 1 HEALTH) 10 gold shards

Will trade:
 YELLOW TOPAZ PENDENT for *spell parchment below*

POWERFUL FIRE BOLTS

Item – Spell Parchment

Damage – deduct an additional 3 points off with the usual hit points
 MAGICK Deduction – 2 points

If you haven't already, will you walk around the camp and see what everyone is up to (turn to 56) go get something to eat (turn to 48) or go take a nap somewhere (turn to 75)?

97

There are six sailors ready to fight you and your clan brothers.

SAILORS HEALTH 14 DEFENCE 0

If you kill them all, the captain introduces himself and stands with twenty or so more sailors. He is a chubby filthy looking man with striking hazel eyes, "So you think you're tough huh? Think you can just get away with killing my men huh? Now you've got a battle on your hands. I overheard your conversation, and either you pay me gold or I'll sick my men on ya! Now, let me put it bluntly so your thick Barbarian brain can understand, you're paying me not to have you killed. You're not paying for me to have you sailed outta here, no that's altogether a different price. Can you afford both deals, you idiot? I wouldn't sail you a nautical mile if me life depended on it."

Do you pay him 100 gold shards if you have it? Turn to 40.

If you refuse you must fight again. You can escape this if you wish and run back toward

Banded Onyx, turn to 13.

SAILORS HEALTH 12 DEFENCE 0

If you overcome this combat, the white sand is still soaking up the spilled blood and the captain is no where to be seen, he must've run off during the fight. Now, you have no one to sail you out of Prase, you and your brothers leave as a threatening crowd begins to form. Will you exit the seaside town (turn to 27) or board the ship and try to sail it yourself (turn to 22)?

98

At a swipe of your magical sword a Water Elemental forms out of the waves and attacks the dragon. You stab the ocean bearing beast in the eye and quickly row the boat away from the battle between the two creatures now. In an hour you have lost consciousness due to exhaustion. Lose 1 HEALTH point.

TURN TO 82.

99

All you do is *ask* them a simple question and the look that floods their expression is that of great fear. You're not sure if they think you're there to harm them but regardless they are afraid of you. They drop all of their possessions, their nets, their rods and fish and run up the beach in the opposite direction. One has dropped a YELLOW TOPAZ PENDANT. You may add this to your list. What will you do next? Will you speak to the sailors now? Turn to 74.

100

His eyes widen at the weapon, the very sight of the amethyst has caused him to drop his mace in great fear, and bring out a sword from a scabbard on the saddle of his beast. He will try everything to parry your blows with his concentrated skills; he has a great trepidation of amethyst and doesn't want it grazing his flesh. Every time you get in a successful hit you have damaged his armour.

KHALA KHITE HEALTH 1 DEFENCE 24

If you get his defence down to 0 he tries to take out a knife from his shoulder scabbard but you are quicker and plunge your dagger deep into his exposed throat. He holds the weapon, trying to yank it out, as blood pours from between his quivering purple lips and he falls to one knee.

"Now my family is avenged upon your death, Thu'lite." you growl and watch his eyes start to water. He is trying to say something but it only comes out in garbled mutters. You think he is trying to say that he is *sorry* for what he has done to you but falls to the other knee and then over on his side, breathing his last depraved breath.

You look around, everyone is hushed then there is a loud cry, an army is advancing on

them and it is a human one. No one will bother killing you for what you did but instead turn their attention on the militants coming their way. You have turned back to your true form, for the potion has worn off now. Quietly, you walk through the bloody carnage, and yet you are untouched, unchallenged. All around is the clanking of swords and the *thunk* sound of shields being struck violently. You can smell the Thu'lite's sour blood as it decorates the dry ground. It is a smell of victory in every way; it is a smell you will take with you back through Thiathrow, back to the Fdulon Mountains, back to the place which once again calls for your safe return.