

THE POSSIBILITY CHALICE™

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Part Two of the *Relics of Power™* Trilogy





TORG - Relics of Power II: The Possibility Chalice

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"These are days of arduous tasks
and bitter rewards. Storm
Knights must cling desperately
to whatever scraps remain of
their resolve."

— Tolwyn Tancred

Prologue



India: 1199. Were there angels singing somewhere? The knight stumbled, half blind, through the unfamiliar greenery, out into the clearing, to stand before the massive stone gate.

There was only silence, for the angels had stopped singing and the animals had fled. The temple guards were nowhere to be seen. He had only a few minutes before they came back, though, he was sure.

With increasing vigor he stumbled to the dark entryway, his heart pounding a charge in his breast. The ragged mail armor he wore clanked against the old stone. Heedless, he plunged into the darkness.

Here his near blindness served well, and he moved without mishap through the narrow, winding corridors, down, ever down. The angels resumed their singing, guiding his steps, filling his mind with sound. This place was similar to, yet larger than, the first temple — the one that had shown him the way.

He remembered the first temple well: the simple chambers, the blue fire of the map on the far wall ... and the fiery outline of the Grail pulsing its holy beacon to him. There was heat then writing there as well, but he could not read it. He did not need to. The pictograph of the Grail was clear to see, and the contours of the country had been burned into his mind during his travels after the Crusade. He knew to within a hundred miles where the Grail must be.

And now, years later, he was sure he had found it. The singing was louder now, and a fearful buzzing joined the harmony. There were bodies around him, and the buzzing was the flies that fed on the stinking, rotting corpses of the seekers who had come before him. Could this truly be the resting place of the Grail? Aye, a test it was. He pressed on. A glowing blue aura beckoned to him from the bottom of the stairs. God be praised.

Thailand: 1766. Was that singing? He smiled, knowing he was imagining things in his excitement. And yet ... the clues, the hints, the fascination and taboos that surrounded this area. Surely there was something big, something valuable here. Morty caressed the revolver, and crept quietly on.

The clearing appeared suddenly, Morty moving from darkest green to blinding light. He heard a shout, and knew he had been seen. The dazzle cleared from his eyes as he brought his pistol up. He saw a shadowy figure moving toward him. Was it the glare, or was the head truly that of a monster, as big and waveringly as it looked? With a yell of fear, Morty fired five times. The figure fell. The jungle was completely still.

And there was a great stone entrance! Maybe Stevenson wasn't barmy after all! He'd given Morty a look at things and made him swear a sacred promise. A promise not worth beetle spit to Morty. And now here he was, the one who'd figured it out, figured it all out from what Stevenson had told him, and from listening to the natives (no one else had the brains to listen). And here it was, the sacred prize. Super valuable, enough to retire on. Aristocratic wife, hunting parties, liaisons with maids and serving girls ...

He strode through the door with a half-smile on his face, but cried out in surprise as his ankle caught at a taut vine set low to the door. Bloody creepers! He looked back, saw that it was a turbaned native he'd shot, and moved further into the temple. There was a steady hum coming from further inside.

The world began to move.

The rumbling was quiet at first, almost soothing. Then the jungle began to roar and squeal and cry out, and hundreds — literally hundreds — of animals came racing through the clearing, hooting and barking and cawing. Earthquake! Surely nothing to do with his presence. Morty stepped back, out

into the clearing, over the broken vine. The rumbling did not stop.

A great fissure appeared parallel to the entranceway, and dark water roiled up from below, frothing and gushing, claiming the screaming animals, the natives, poor Morty and, indeed, the entire peninsula. The water had risen up like an avenging cloud of insects, devouring all in its path. Eventually, the rumbling faded away, leaving only the calm surface of the newly-formed bay.

England: The Near Now. It was a terrible day when the bridges came down and all those people were slaughtered. The beasts that came were terrible ... terrible. All of Casper Babbidge's studies and researches were put on hold that day, and the museum was turned into a staging area for troops. At first, it seemed that his studies would be ended forever — that he would never unlock the secret of the fabulous jeweled cup which had become his life's work.

Then things changed. The invaders lost their meanness, their spite, and their leader underwent a change of heart and announced her friendship with Earth. Casper wasn't sure he understood all the politics of it, but if it meant fewer troops and more chance to study, he was in favor. That was the first big change. Then there was the change Casper underwent.

It was almost a week after the invasion that he discovered his magical talents. It was a simple invocation of a fire-sprite that he was reading about in one of the ancient tomes, mouthing the unfamiliar words as he usually did. It didn't summon up the sprite, exactly, but all the candles, sconces and torches in the house suddenly lit as he pronounced the final word.

That was only the beginning. Now his study of the cup took a new twist; there was an aura of powerful magic about the item. Sometimes, when he pronounced the right words, the gems encrusted in the ancient vessel, swirled



red and blue, seemed to glow and roil. When he learned to cast the signal spell properly, he left messages everywhere, in places where he might find information about the cup. Then he sat back and waited.

England: The Near Now.

"This is him," the dark-cowled figure said. The piglike creature across the table craned what little neck he had, looking at the strange flat icon the man called a fotoe.

"I knows 'im," the creature squeaked. "What's you wants dun wis 'im?"

From somewhere in the cowl, a chill came forth as of an opening crypt, a puff of laughter, perhaps, or a death-cold sigh.

"Get several of your friends, however you can." A dark-gloved hand dropped six gold coins on the table, down low, out of sight of the rest of the room full of ruffians and footpads. "Go to his house at midnight. Kill him."

"Sure thing, guv," the creature replied, deftly scooping the coins into his clawed fingers. He rose from the table, casting furtive glances around the room to see if anyone had noticed the money changing hands. "By the by, guv ... wots 'e done?"

The cold, unseen glare sent the creature scurrying from the room, his question floating unanswered in the air like heavy smoke. The cowled figure, dark and cold, did not move at all. It remained motionless, staring at the seat the creature had vacated.

After a time a man approached the table, hesitated, then sat in the chair. He was dark himself, and his features were handsome in an exotic, dangerous way. His hair was black, save for the orange and white tips, and shaved in an intricate pattern. He was of average height, but extraordinarily compact and muscular.

The two sat in silence, both nearly unmoving, until the cowled one stirred and spoke.

"You are Gallios. You have access to the talisman-making woman."

"I don' know what you talkin' 'bout, mon," the man replied in an island accent. "What be a tal-is-man?"

Again that puff of cold air from beneath the cowl. "Aye. But if one did know what such a thing was, and had access to one, and went to a certain wizard's abode tonight at ... oh, say ... one o'clock, one might find a multitude of interesting things."

"What tings?"

"Dead goblins strewn all about. A complacent wizard who believed his magic was invincible. It would be an easy thing to penetrate his defenses, if one had a talisman."

"Now dat you say it again, I does remember some ting about de talisman, mon. I remember dey wicked expensive. What good to see dis dead goblins and magician, eh?"

More gold appeared, and this stack of coins had the sheen of reality lacking in the earlier stack. It was also far larger. "About this expensive?" the cowled figure asked.

The black man's eyes widened for a fraction of a second, and he licked his lips before speaking again. "Almost," he rasped.

A second stack of gold, as high as the first, appeared on the table.

"This should be sufficient," the voice said from beneath the hood. "The talisman is necessary to negate the wizard's magic. The wizard has in his possession an ornately jeweled artifact of some kind, a cup or urn, perhaps. Very distinctive red and blue gems decorate it. We want the wizard and the artifact delivered here tomorrow morning."

"Cup or urn," muttered the black man, his orange, spiked hair quivering. "Sounds valuable. Maybe that get lost on the way or someting — could be dangerous, you know?" His breathing was fast, and his eyes constantly strayed to the twin piles of gold on the table.

"It is a dangerous game you play," the hooded figure said, leaning forward. "But it must be done. After delivery, there will be guard duty." He held out a gloved hand, forestalling a comment from the other. "And

after guard duty, as much gold as this again. Bring him to this building, but not inside. It must be done." He rose and strode from the room. Many eyes were raised, then quickly lowered as he passed.

"It will, mon," the other said softly, taking the gold piece by piece. "It will."

Japan: The Near Now.

"Report!" barked Yabu, all traces of politeness, all attempts at niceties, gone. The minion bowed before the divine wrath, tried to steady his voice before speaking.

"No word from Osato, Lord," the minion, whose name was Taro, said in a calm tone. "He has disappeared and is presumed dead."

"So he has failed to obtain the tiles." Yabu stroked his chin, musing. "We are no closer than we were when this began. What about the reclamation project?"

"Almost ready for human habitation, Lord," Taro said. "But without the tiles, the project expense will outweigh the profit."

"Agreed," said Yabu, slightly calmer now. "But we must first confirm if in fact we have stumbled upon the temple that all seek. The rumors were of a temple in India, yet the remains we found were off the coast of Thailand. It is actually likely that this is not the temple of the Destiny Map. We must know. Accelerate the process. Make the project ready for human habitation within the month! Cut safety measures to a minimum if you have to, but get it done!"

"Aye, Lord. It will be done."

"Taro."

"Yes, Lord?"

"Osato failed, and paid the proper price for his failure." Yabu stood and turned to leave the room. "Do not seek to emulate him, and perhaps one day you may surpass him."

Taro bowed. "Hai, Yabu-Sama!"



Introduction



The Possibility Chalice is an adventure for *Torg: Roleplaying the Possibility Wars*. You must have the roleplaying game to play

this adventure. Adventures for *Torg* take place on Earth in the Near Now — an Earth that has been invaded by six powerful beings from other realities. These invaders, called *High Lords*, have the power to conquer the reality of our universe and impose their own in its place.

Our world was invaded because it was discovered by the High Lords that Earth is rich in *possibility energy*, a spiritual force that courses through every human. It is the goal of each of the High Lords to steal that spiritual energy from every person on Earth — a theft that will eventually destroy the human race.

It is this same energy that is responsible for the existence of *Storm Knights*, a select group of heroes who are the only true obstacle to the plans of the High Lords.

Although the High Lords worked together to bring about the invasion of Earth, the disappearance of their leader, the Gaunt Man, has allowed each of them to pursue his own goals unchecked. Each High Lord is now competing against the others to gain enough power to claim the Gaunt Man's self-proclaimed title of *Torg*.

To help gain this power, the High Lords scramble to collect the numerous *eternity shards* scattered throughout the world. These mysterious relics allow their owners to shape the nature of reality itself. Many of the pieces are tied directly to Earth's own ancient history (the sword Excalibur, for example). The High Lords have been very busy digging into our world's past in an attempt to find obscure clues that might lead them to these objects — objects that will enable them to rise above the others, and to rule the cosmverse as *Torg*.

The Possibility Chalice tells the story of one such pursuit of an eternity shard. Although this adventure can stand

alone, it is also the second part of an adventure trilogy called the *Relics of Power*. The story began in the first *Torg* adventure, *The Destiny Map*, and following this adventure, it leads directly into the final adventure in the series, *The Forever City*. But each adventure can also be played independently of the others.

Adventure Format

Aside from certain props, the contents of this adventure are for the gamemaster only. Anyone reading this book who is going to be a player in the adventure is ruining the adventure for themselves and everyone else.

The gamemaster should read the book completely before attempting to run the adventure. By doing this, he can familiarize himself with the various characters and situations involved in the adventure and the motives and circumstances that drive them. This way, if the players have their characters do something unexpected during the course of the adventure, the gamemaster will be able to handle it in a manner that will not conflict with later details of the story.

Torg adventures follow a standard format that makes running adventures easy for the gamemaster. It is assumed that the players will often have their characters do things that neither the author of the adventure nor the gamemaster could possibly have anticipated. Because of this, the format is set up to allow the characters to leave the established path for a while but eventually, out of necessity, return to the basic storyline of the adventure.

Following this section on the adventure format, you will find a section called "Background," which gives information on events leading up to the start of the adventure.

After the background is an "Adventure Synopsis." The adventure synopsis gives an overview of *The Possibility Chalice*, outlining what

happens from the start of the adventure to its conclusion.

This *Torg* Adventure

Torg adventures are divided into large sections called "acts." *The Possibility Chalice* has four acts. Each act starts with its own synopsis, called "The Major Beat," which outlines what the player characters (also called Storm Knights) must accomplish before they can move on to the next act. Within an act the Knights can move about rather freely, perhaps even skipping over some scenes or encounters — but until they finish "The Major Beat," they cannot move forward in the adventure. In this way, the gamemaster can be confident that if things get out of control, they will only be out of control for a discrete section of the adventure.

Acts are broken into smaller segments called "scenes." Scenes are defined as either *standard* or *dramatic*, and this determines which conflict line of the drama deck is used for conflict resolution (see page 59 of the *Torg Rulebook*). Each scene begins with "The Situation" and is followed by "The Action." If applicable, a scene also may contain sections entitled "Events," "Flags," "Variables," and "Cut To ..."

"The Situation" section gives the gamemaster the basic information for the scene from the point of view of the Storm Knights. Parts of this section can be read out loud to the players or paraphrased by the gamemaster to set the scene.

"The Action" section describes what is going to happen in the scene and gives details to be revealed to the players as the scene unfolds. This is the part that covers *what happens* in a scene, in a linear sequence. Sometimes, however, it is convenient to have events occur in a more fluid manner. In these cases, the "Event" sections provide new bits that can occur at almost any time within a scene. "The Action" usually gives guidelines as to when within a scene events should

