



Official Game  
Accessory

# The City-State of Tyr

by

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*Dedicated to the memory of  
Curtis Scott.*

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# Introduction

After a score of days beneath the burning sun, the sight of the great walled city meant trading the stench of beasts for that of beggars. My tongue rasped over my cracked, dry lips in anticipation of the Tyrian ale I'd soon be drinking. The stories heard—slaves freed, Kalak dead, and magic wild in the streets. The truth would soon be known. Such information would fetch a high price with the templars of Nibenay, perhaps an audience with the Most High Concubine of the Palace might even be in order! This was my first trip to Tyr, and I planned to drink my fill of the city.

Some things never change though, like the black heart of a templar. The scrawny vulture at the gate ran his jaundiced eye over our cargo, sizing up the bribe he could extort from “honest” traders. I played the game, passed him some ceramics, and entered the city. A vagrant breeze swirled the dust as we emerged from the caravan gate and, when I'd wiped my eyes, a colorfully dressed, wrinkled man stood before me.

“You paid too much,” he declared.

“What? Who are you? What business do you have with me?” I asked. I let my hand drop to the hilt of my scimitar to punctuate my point.

“I? I am Ojoba, a draqoman. You are new here, that is obvious. You have business to do and assisting with your business is my business. Many are Tyr's wonders, and many are its hazards. I can help you.”

He seemed to expect me to say something. I didn't.

“You will want a place to stay, yes? A place for your mounts? You have no friends here? I am not your friend, but I can help you. I know this city. I know its markets, its inns, its streets. I speak several tongues and know local customs and laws. You want a good price for your cargo. Maybe you have some trade goods that require special handling, away from the prying eyes of the templars, yes? I can help you. You will profit, to be sure. As for my services, I ask only five ceramics for every gold you make. Consider my offer. You'll find none better.”

“Five for every gold! You mistake me for a nobleman or a lunatic! I have dealt with your kind before. Even the

arrogant bloodsuckers of Nibenay ask no more than one silver a day and a ceramic for every gold and hope to bargain for one or the other. I'll give you five ceramics for the day, what remains of it, and no more.”

“Spoken like a true trader,” he said, inclining his head slightly. “Obviously you are neither nobility nor a madman, but surely you would not value an associate who would meekly accept a trader's first offer. The sun already begins its descent, so let us not tarry. A silver for the day and three ceramics for every gold each day after this. Include a drink of water and a morsel to eat, and I am at your service.”

“A silver and two ceramics per gold, and you feed yourself, draqoman Ojoba. Your first job is to guide us to the market where we might sell our goods. Then you show me which winehouse boasts the comeliest serving wenches. Have we a deal?”

“Indeed we do. First things first, now we go to the stadium.”

“I have business to do, you ugly renk! Are you deaf?”

“Yes, yes, business, but the stadium serves as the market in Tyr, except on festival days. It is there that you'll get the best price. Later to Shadow Square, where your thirst for wine shall soon be sated. You see, you do profit by me already, though not a coin has passed between us.”

## About This Supplement

Tyr's new mantle of freedom sets it apart from the other city-states of Athas. The city's inhabitants struggle to survive amid anarchy and turmoil. Assassination, revolution, and reformation have rocked Tyr since it was first described in the original DARK SUN® boxed set. From its clouded past to the painful winds of reform blowing through the city, Tyr comes alive within these pages. Additional information is included for the DUNGEON MASTER™ (DM™) interested in setting up a campaign in or around the city-state of Tyr. Remember to watch your back, for Tyr may be free, but it is never safe.

## Chapter I: Life in Tyr



Tyr lies in a small valley among the foothills of the Ringing Mountains. Although not the largest city of the Tablelands, it's considered one of the most important due to its political clout, location, and great (by Athasian standards) reserves of iron ore in the nearby mountains. A single caravan trading route connects Tyr to the network of roads that link the major cities of the Tablelands. This is not to imply that elven traders do not use other routes of their own devising, but there is only a single navigable pass for the larger caravans.

Until recently, the city of Tyr had been ruled by the great sorcerer-king Kalak. Following the death of Kalak and the ensuing war with Urik (see **History** below), the people of Tyr have begun the reconstruction of their city amid a storm of change. The government has

undergone sweeping reform. Trade and commerce, long neglected due to Kalak's obsession with the construction of his ziggurat, are on the rise as iron once more flows from the mine. The games have begun again as well, now the province of freemen, not slaves, where the only deaths are accidental. Even the more secretive societies of Tyr have emerged from the aftermath with renewed energies.

This is not to say that "all is well" in Tyr. The city still faces an uncertain future. Divergent voices sound within the Council's chambers. Food and water remain scarce, and many have no work or decent lodgings. Mobs of looters and thieves roam the city for, as the saying goes, "Freedom alone will not fill yer belly!" Further, many of Tyr's defenders perished in the war against Urik, leaving the city vulnerable to outside



attacks. Whether these changes are signs of vitality or desperation depends on one's perspective.

As a role-playing campaign base, Tyr offers exciting opportunities for the player characters to become involved with the changing life of the city. The economy is quickly evolving from a slave-based system to one that revolves around free men and women earning their livings. Only time will tell whether the changes now underway will bear fruit or will be swept away by the sands of fate. One thing is sure, the unforgiving world of Athas demands change. Those who adapt, survive. Those who do not are consumed. To appreciate fully the difficulties Tyr now faces, it becomes necessary to review the city's past.

## History

The specifics of Tyr's historical development vary with the speaker.

### Senior Templar Timor on the History of Tyr

*"Templars and the informed public know well the story of how the great sorcerer-king Kalak saved Tyr. Tyr was no more than a barbaric outpost before Kalak arrived. The ruling nobles, rife with greed, fell to fighting amongst themselves and divided the city in civil war. As if that were not enough, the neighboring cities, sensing weakness, attacked the fledgling city intent on seizing the valuable iron mines. Beset by civil war and besieged on all sides, Tyr had nowhere left to turn.*

*"In this time of trouble Kalak, a mighty sorcerer and visionary, united Tyr under his power. He brought peace to the city, a peace that was enforced by his faithful templars. Yes, he was a tyrant. His rule was often brutal. What of it? Life is harsh. The strong survive. The weak perish. It is the natural way of things; Tyr and its people are the stronger for it! Without the just rule of the King and his loyal templars, the masses would be little more than beasts scratching at the land for their pitiful existence. Under King Kalak's rule, the*

*squalid warren of Tyr grew into the magnificent city one can see today. The Golden Tower, Kalak's opulent ziggurat, and the gladiatorial arena will stand forever as reminders of his great power."*

### Matthias Morthen of the Veiled Alliance

*"What was Tyr like before that tyrant, Kalak? Not the dusty wasteland that lies before you now, I tell you! Water flowed freely, above the ground. Do you think the channel running beneath the Elven Bridge was carved by some great serpent? No! Not just one, but two rivers flowed through the city in its days of glory.*

*"In those times, the land was rich and alive with great trees. Fertile grasses carpeted the ground, thriving in the moisture that permeated the soil. Woodlands blanketed the land from the Crescent Forest, which was a swamp in those days, to the Forest Ridge. The people and animals lived in harmony with the land and fed on its abundant fruits. Life was good.*

*"Then the wars began. Ambitious, powerful men had discovered new secrets of magic. They perverted it to their will and gained vast powers without the studies and sacrifices of traditional, balanced magic. But, there was a cost, a terrible cost. The cost was life. Yes, life, and it was the land itself that paid it! The sorcerer-kings and their defiler lackeys drained the land of its life and used that life to fuel their unholy spells. Great forests were blasted into ash during their vicious battles. The plants withered and perished as their spirits were torn from them. The animals, their homes and food destroyed, soon perished as well. The very land rose in agony, and changed the face of the world. Famine and plague followed in the wake of the defilers. It was a dark time.*

*"The rivers still flowed, though their drainage systems had collapsed under the weight of the sorcerers' battles. A vast swamp quickly filled the valley. Tyr became a refuge for those displaced by the war.*

*"Into this carnage, the Dragon ascended, and the surviving sorcerers sought to establish their own*



## Life in Tyr

*strongholds in the aftermath. Alas, Tyr fell once more to the ravaging hordes of the sorcerer-kings. The defilers needed plants to fuel their magic, you see, and they had stripped the land so relentlessly, that there remained only a handful of areas that still supported any life at all. These, in turn, were conquered by the sorcerer-kings, who destroyed the remaining foliage and drove the life-giving water deep underground.*

*“A new city was built on the carcass of the old, as it had been built on the ruins of the previous city. This is the Tyr we know today. The plants and animals that populate our world are the twisted descendants of their noble ancestors. They survive, like us, because they’ve adapted to the harsh, unforgiving world we’ve wrought upon ourselves. Still, the Elven Bridge stands, a memento of the past and a hope for the future. This is Tyr’s bloody history, and if we cannot learn from it, this could well be our bloody future.”*

**Dote Mal Payne, Defiler,  
Former Necromancer to King Kalak**

*“Tyr. Tyr is death, a city steeped in blood. Thousands died building the city, thousands more died defending it. Thousands disappear each year when the Dragon comes. Even more have died in the arena, blood-frenzied fans cheering them on to their deaths. Legions of displaced spirits inhabit UnderTyr and walk the abandoned underground streets . . . waiting! I have seen them! I know! The future of Tyr is the same as its history . . . Death!”*

### Timeline

Today, Tyr fights to rebuild its economy and withstand radically changing politics and social upheaval. Even the lowliest kankherder has heard of Kalak’s death and the events that followed. Post-Kalak Tyr has faced greater challenges than any other city-state in the region. King Tithian and the Council of Advisers

passed sweeping reforms, angering the old nobility and bringing hope to the common people. Here are some of the major events in chronological order:

1. Tithian appears before the stunned arena crowd holding aloft the crown of Kalak and proclaims himself king. The crowd, reeling from Kalak’s life-draining attack and news of his death, accepts Tithian as king. As his first act, King Tithian frees all Tyr’s slaves.

2. Agis calls an emergency meeting of the Senate. Following much debate, the Senate passes profound reforms. The legislation is taken to Tithian who, trying to win the senators’ support, signs the majority of the laws without reading them. Later, Tithian is angered by some of the reforms passed, but takes no action, fearing a revolt. The Senate then disbands (under much protest from the older senators) in order to form a new governing body—the Council of Advisers. The Council is comprised of representatives including former senators, tradesmen, craftsmen, ex-slaves, and templars. King Tithian approves the reformation, and the new Council.

3. Tithian and Agis devise methods to reopen the iron mines, brickyards, and the markets, and to establish subsistence farming for the disenfranchised. Amid the news of freedom and liberation, it is announced that the armies of Urik are marching on Tyr in order to seize its vital iron mines. Agis, Neeva, Rikus, Sadira, and others march to stop the threat.

4. Agis and Sadira, fearing a double-cross on Tithian’s part, leave the war with Urik’s forces and return to Tyr. The battle goes well initially, but the Tyrish army is eventually crushed in Urik. Losses on both sides are heavy. Rikus and Neeva manage to escape with their lives.

5. The mines reopen with paid laborers rather than slaves. Lawbreakers are still sent to the mines as punishment for heinous crimes. The arena opens as a market except during special gladiatorial events. Trading companies from across the Tablelands flock to the newly freed city-state to revive old trade routes and establish new ones.