

WELCOME TO THE SOUTHERN KINGDOMS

“THERE ARE HALF A DOZEN POWERFUL FACTIONS PLOTTING AND INTRIGUING AGAINST EACH OTHER — THERE ARE CONTINUAL BRAWLS IN THE TAVERNS AND STREETS, SECRET MURDERS, MUTILATIONS, AND EXECUTIONS. AND THERE ARE WOMEN, GOLD, WINE — ALL THAT A MERCENARY WANTS!”

Conan the Adventurer is the definitive guide to the lands south of the Styx River, including serpent-haunted Stygia, Kush, Darfar, Keshan, Punt, Zembabwei, and that vast region known to the folk of the Dreaming West as “the Black Kingdoms”.

Rife with mystery and ancient, long forgotten cultures and ruins, this region is brimming with potential for adventure and intrigue.

- New archetypes like the Adventurer, Griot, Tomb Guardian, and Witch-finder, including talents, war stories, educations, equipment, and other background elements to bring them to life.
- Cultural groups such as the Chagas and Gallahs of Shumballa, the dreaming folk of Xuthal, the Aphakis of Tombalku, the Ghanata tribe, and the strange denizens of isolated Xuchotl.
- Important characters high and low: King Ctesphon of Stygia, Ageera the Witch-finder, Tananda of Shumballa, the sorcerer Tuthmes, Thalís of Xuthal, Amalric, King Sakumbe of Tombalku, King Zehbeh of the Aphaki, Gorulga of Kheshan, the roguish Stygian adventurer Thutmekri, and others.
- Stunning art and maps produced by a variety of new and renowned Conan artists.
- A guide to the countries of Stygia, Kush, Darfar, Keshan, Punt, Tombalku, Zembabwei, and the other Black Kingdoms, describing their histories and their cultures, and cities lost to human ken.
- Conan described during his period as a war-chief in the Black Kingdoms.
- Terrifying beasts and monsters: giant scorpions; the pig devil; the Crawler in the Dark; the immortal vampire queen Akivasha; and the and the dreaded Ollam-onga and its devil riders.
- Myths and magic, such as the infamous cabal of sorcerers called the Black Ring, timeless Ghazal, the lost women of the flowery vale, the cults of Ajujo and Jhil, and more.
- Developed with leading Conan scholars, this is the place for exotic Hyborian Age adventure, just as Howard created it!

This book requires the Robert E. Howard's *Conan: Adventures in an Age Undreamed Of* corebook to use.

Due to the nature of its source material, this sourcebook may not be suitable for some readers and discretion is advised. Please ensure you discuss any potential issues before using this material.

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A WORD TO THE READERS

Throughout its development, *Conan the Adventurer* presented more difficulties than any other book in the CONAN line thus far. From the earliest discussions it was obvious that treatment of Robert E. Howard's Conan stories set in the Black Kingdoms risked perpetuating repugnant stereotypes and presenting objectionable treatment of civilizations, cultures, and individuals.

The creative team at Modiphius has labored to craft a treatment of this material that is both authentic to the source material and simultaneously suitable for modern readers and game players.

It is our profoundest hope that readers understand the challenges presented by evoking the Kingdoms of the South in a fashion both true to Howard and suitable for players of all types and see this is a starting point for discussion of these issues.

If we have failed in that regard, we offer our profoundest apologies and will strive to do better in the future. Though Howard was a person of his time, his Hyborian Age should be open to everyone.

INTRODUCTION

CONAN THE ADVENTURER

First there was the blackness of an utter void, with the cold winds of cosmic space blowing through it.

— “Queen of the Black Coast”

Welcome to the world beyond the Styx, that great river that has divided the lands of the south from those of the north for far too long, separating Shem and its neighbors from Stygia and the kingdoms barely understood in the Dreaming West, labeled “the Black Kingdoms” out of ignorance. Some claim that all of civilization itself was born in this region, far before the Cataclysm itself. In the land now called Stygia was born the kingdom of Acheron, which ruled much of the north until its fall, 3,000 years gone by.

This entire part of the continent has been long ignored by the Hyborians, save for threats from Stygia or what trade may be had upon its coasts, but here is a resource to those lands south of the Styx — Stygia, Kush, Keshan, Darfar, Punt, Zembabwei, and the rest of the lands called the Black Kingdoms — spotlighting the territories, their histories, and the cultures found there. As well as those living, thriving peoples whose aspects range from savage to immensely cultured, also described herein are its lost cities, where forgotten, shunned, ruined, or intact and inhabited.

THE KINGDOMS OF THE SOUTH

Conan the Adventurer presents the southern kingdoms in all their glory and their mystery, described at the time when Conan adventured through them, learning much of the cultures and ways of their peoples, exploring and seeing sights few from the north ever had prior.

CHAPTER 1: CHARACTERS

Here we have guidelines for player characters born to the many homelands that make up the southern lands, including new castes and caste talents; stories; new archetypes such as the craftsman, scribe, temple guardian, and witch-finder; natures; educations; war stories; suggestions for appearance and names. and weapons and other equipment.

CHAPTER 2: GAZETTEER

Here is the South, ranging from the “Black Kingdoms” including Atlaia, Amazon, Darfar, Keshan, Kordafan, Kush, Punt, Tombalku, and Zembabwei. Also here are regions such as the Black Coast, the forest savannah mosaic, the central rainforests, Eastern Forest States, miambo woodlands, southern dambos, and the southern deserts held by the Gazali, Ghanata, and Tibu. Lost cities and southern islands round out this chapter.

CHAPTER 3: EVENTS

Though the history of this region spans millennia beyond that of the northern Hyborian nations, it is nonetheless a place of great turmoil and upheaval. Led by its patron god, the Old Serpent Set, the desert kingdom of Stygia grows increasingly dangerous and its schemes threaten, like a serpent's coils, to envelop entire kingdoms into its sinister constriction. The many countries that make up the Black Kingdoms continue to struggle against one another and even within themselves, choked by tribal and regional warfare and the depredations of pirates, slavers, and even wayward armies from the north.

Good day. I am Professor Jack Kirowan.

I understand you are interested in the pre-history of the earth. Particularly, the period known to us now as the Hyborian Age. Your research delves into Stygia, the "Serpent of the South," and the adjacent regions to its south, the so-called "Black Kingdoms".

I have here a volume that goes beyond the mad rants found in von Juntz's *Unaussprechlichen Kulten*... Nameless Cults to those who are not fluent in German. Though much is still in the process of being verified, this volume collects the information of the age from long extant sources left by those who lived it. Pertinently, it tells of the things that are important to the Stygians and to the people of the Black Kingdoms, not from the point of view of an outsider, but from an insider's perspective.

Understanding what these people value makes for a richer, more interesting culture. Understanding what a religion values makes for a richer, more interesting religion.

That's what you are wanting, I think.

Yes, it may be at variance with other sources, but don't think of it so much as a clash so much as is merely a different perspective on the same thing. It's akin to a book on Islam — it'd be different if written by a Christian reporting on what he has seen and heard about Muslims than if it were written by a Muslim. Von Juntz wasn't a Stygian and can only report what he has heard and seen about the cult of Set. That some part of it seems the stuff of fancy, or even madness, is to be expected from a record of the time.

— "Address to the Wanderers Society"

CHAPTER 4: MYTH & MAGIC

The realm south of the Styx is ruled by superstition, myth, magic, and dire sorcery. The priesthood of Stygia dominates all aspects of life, and the Black Kingdoms are plagued by a hundred demons, spirits, and gods, perhaps even more. Here are the religions and traditions of the Black Kingdoms and Stygia, new sorcery, magic and sacred items, and more.

CHAPTER 5: ENCOUNTERS

Within the jungles, swamps, and savannahs of the Black Kingdoms, and the deserts and coast of Stygia, lurk many natural and unnatural foes to challenge player characters, including human enemies and potential followers, and some monstrous foes of note. Finally, a lengthy roster of renowned and infamous non-player characters completes the chapter.



CHAPTER 6: HITHER CAME CONAN

Conan himself is described at the time he was an adventurer striding through the kingdoms of the south: set apart by the color of his skin but nonetheless kin in spirit to many of the peoples of the Black Kingdoms. From his period as a war-chief of the Bamulas, a leader of the riders of Tombalku, to his brief sojourn as a general in the army of Keshan, this section describes his path and progression, allowing him to be used as a potential non-player character or even as a player character.

CHAPTER 7: THE WAY OF THE SOUTH

This final chapter discusses the means by which the game-master might evoke this vast and diverse region in gameplay and create exciting adventures and campaigns based there, or as the setting for individual adventures. From tone to themes, with a plethora of suggestions about the elements that make it unique and distinct from the other Hyborian lands and those other kingdoms to the north. With the advice in this section, adventures in the southern lands will be both exotic and full of danger.

CHARACTERS

Nor did master Tito pull into the broad bay where the Styx river emptied its gigantic flood into the ocean, and the massive black castles of Khemi loomed over the blue waters. Ships did not put unasked into this port, where dusky sorcerers wove awful spells in the murk of sacrificial smoke mounting eternally from blood-stained altars where naked women screamed, and where Set, the Old Serpent, arch-demon of the Hyborians but god of the Stygians, was said to writhe his shining coils among his worshippers.

— “Queen of the Black Coast”

Stygia and the kingdoms of the south encompass an enormous region, almost as vast as the whole of the dreaming west in size and variety. Just as the River Styx marks a sharp divide between the lands of the sons of Shem and the kingdom of the Serpent, Stygia's southern deserts mark a clear demarcation between it and the lands of Kush, Darfar, Keshan, Punt, Amazon, Atlain, Darfar, Kordafan, Tombalku, Zembabwei, as well as the grassland tribal lands and others of the Black Kingdoms.

SOUTHERN HOMELANDS

Stygia and the lands of the Black Kingdoms south of the Styx are vastly different in culture, so much so that players can follow the character creation steps outlined in the *Conan* corebook, or can follow the alternate steps outlined here to be more customized for the South.

STYGIAN CASTES

All the castes presented in the *Conan* corebook are suitable for Stygian player characters. Any from the crafter caste (*Conan* corebook, page 19) are considered artisans, but are otherwise identical to crafters. Two additional castes exist in Stygia: laborers and scribes. A Stygian player character can come from either of these new castes or choose one from the list provided on page 19 of the *Conan* corebook. As Stygia is a theocracy, the priesthood caste is described in additional detail.



ANCIENT BLOODLINES OF THE SOUTHERN KINGDOMS

As described in the CONAN corebook (page 17), a character with a value of 13+ possesses the Ancient Bloodline talent, representing inheritance of a great and ancient lineage. South of the Styx River, these are represented as follows:

- **DARFARI:** Music and song suffuse most of day-to-day Dafari life. A Dafari failing a Personality test is overwhelmed by legends of ancient ancestors, as relayed by the *griot* storytellers of their land. They may begin humming, singing, or otherwise chanting intensely, a sometimes disquieting practice to those who do not expect it.
- **KESHANI:** A tightly-knit warrior culture, a Keshani who fails a personality test often becomes impatient and curt with outsiders — anyone not from Keshan — and may be quick to challenge them to an honor duel, particularly with hand-to-hand weapons such as spear or blade.
- **KORDAFAN:** Inheritors of a culture that was old when Acheron was founded, Kordafans are among the most ancient of the post-Cataclysmic bloodlines. They regard their lineage as almost divine, and when failing a personality test, a Kordafan is gripped with this sense of superiority and aloofness, regarding all others as being lesser in stature.
- **KUSHITE:** Kushites are divided into the Gallah and Chaga castes, described fully on page 42. When creating a Kushite character, the player picks a lineage. The Gallah, native to Kush, inherit a proud, tribal ancestry and sense of wanderlust. When failing Personality tests, Gallahs are roused to pride, scoffing at the ways of the upstart Hyborians. In contrast, Chaga are Stygian descendants whose blood has intermingled with the native Gallah for centuries but share the Stygian temperament. However, they are more passionate, and prone to violence when failing a Personality test, which is how they have held onto the leadership of Kush for centuries: by harsh reprisals when challenged.
- **PUNTIAN:** The people of the Puntian grasslands are wealthy due to their gold trade and exports, which instilled in them a sense of disdain for material things. Whatever one has, no matter how precious, can be gotten again. What matters is one's honor. When they fail a Personality test, they may try to bargain or buy their way out of any threatening situation, demanding to know what it would cost to rid themselves of it.
- **STYGIAN:** Descended from the Lemurians who fled to the West and supplanted an ancient kingdom, the Stygian bloodline is ancient, corrupted by long association with the Old Serpent Set. Stygians with the Ancient Bloodline talent who fail a Personality test feel the presence of the god and will view any situation as an opportunity to do Set's bidding. Though not beholden to commit an evil act, the desire to do so is there, and must be suppressed.
- **TOMBALKAN:** The people of Tombalku are torn between two bloodlines: the Aphaki, Shemitish in origin; and a mix of many different cultures that have blended into one. The Aphaki, when failing a Personality test, become fiercely independent, even discounting the efforts and value of allies, believing that they can stand any challenge alone. Other Tombalkans, being formed of a variety of influences, can pick any other Black Kingdom ancient bloodline characterization as their own.
- **XUCHOTLAN:** Founded by Old Kosalans on a western exodus, the Xuchotlan bloodline resulted of their intermingling with indigenous people of the region. A Xuchotli with the Ancient Bloodline talent failing a Personality test feels the long lost ancient ways in their heart. They rage at the loss of their high technological civilization and the comparatively diminished fortunes of their people.
- **ZEMBABWEIAN:** Zembabweian culture emphasizes a duality of spirit: they have two kings, two almost opposed gods, and they are famed for both trade and defensive architecture. A Zembabweian failing a Personality test may be torn by indecision, wondering which of two opposing paths to follow to resolve any conflict they are caught up in.
- **OTHER BLACK KINGDOMS:** Amazonians, Atlaians, Suba, Gazali, Ghanatans, Tibu, or one of the many other peoples that make up the rest of the Black Kingdoms, the player is encouraged to pick traits from another Ancient Bloodline, as desired, or to craft a new characterization, with the gamemaster's approval.

HOMELAND, TALENT, AND LANGUAGE

Roll	Homeland	Talent	Language
1–2	Darfar	Savage Court	Darfari
3–4	Keshan	Savage Court	Keshani
5–6	Kordafan	Hunter	Kordafani
7–8	Kush	Strife	Kushite
9–10	Punt	Gilded	Punt
11–12	Tombalku	Honest Corruption	Tombalkan
13–14	Zembabwei	Desert-born	Zembabwein
15–16	The Black Kingdoms	Hunter	Various
17–19	Stygia	Desert-born	Stygian
20	Zuchotl	Strife	Xuchotli (Old Kosalan)

LABORERS

Caste Talents: *Subject, Tradesmen*

Skill Gained: Craft

Social Standing: 0

Most Stygians living in the cities are from the laboring class. They do not have the skills to be crafters or artisans, nor do they perform the specific work available to farmers or herdsmen. These are porters and diggers, the ones who work arduously at the bidding of the artisans, priests, and administrators. Though they may worship Set in name, they mostly keep their heads down and hope not to incur the wrath of the priests. Most within this caste are of multiple heritages, although all consider themselves Stygian. Few, if any, of this caste can read unless they have had training as a scribe. No one from these classes may legally carry weapons unless conscripted into the military. Failure to comply with the law usually means a trip to the sacrificial altars of the priests of Set.

SCRIBES

Caste Talents: *Hyperliterate, Subject*

Skill Gained: Lore

Social Standing: 1

Scribes are the record keepers and intellectuals of Stygia. Only the most educated of Stygians know how to read and write, giving the scribes prestige and influence, opening the doors for social advancement. They may be accountants, barbers, priests, doctors, government officials, or serve within the court of the Stygian king. The profession of scribe is generally handed down from parent to child since the fall of the Giant-kings, but a few honored individuals gain apprenticeships as reward for services well-rendered. The scribes know full well their status and jealously guard their secrets. Anyone who learns the rudiments of reading and

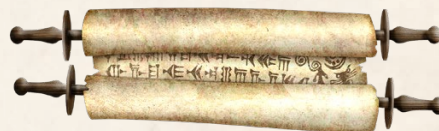
writing the complex Stygian hieroglyphs must apprentice and train as a scribe or join a school that trains scribes — the alternative is a one-way trip to the sacrificial altar.

Training as a scribe is an arduous process that begins in childhood, although older students who show promise often receive an invitation to the school or are offered an apprenticeship to a master scribe. Mastering the basics of reading and writing to the point of being functionally literate is an effort that often takes years to accomplish. Scribes must master over 700 hieroglyphs representing objects, ideas, and sounds. Mathematics as a field of study is common. If the student graduates, they face a life without labor. If a student does not graduate, they face a short life as a sacrifice to Father Set.

All communities value scribes. Armies, cities, towns, farmers, and temples all need their services. Military leaders receive training as scribes because most commands in the field are sent by letter. Scribes may hold government posts. Just being a scribe gives a player character a +1 bonus to Renown. Scribes wear clean white linens and have soft hands, both indicative of a privileged life.

“A god must have his sacrifices. When I was a child in Stygia the people lived under the shadow of a priest. None ever knew when he or she would be seized and dragged to the altar.”

— Thalís, “Xuthal of the Dusk”



STYGIAN PRIESTS

Caste Talents: Priest, Subject

Skill Gained: Lore

Social Standing: 2

Priests hold the reins of power in the government and in the temples. Stygian priests are the most able throughout the society. They grow wealthy from donations to the gods, for all Stygians give gifts to Set and the other gods. Priests and nobles pass their position down from father to son. Priests are not just religious votaries standing in front of altars or haunting temples. Priests in Stygia are the bureaucracy of Stygia. Priests are diplomats, foreign dignitaries, doctors, embalmers, viziers, advisors, and supervisors. Only a select few are sorcerers: those seeking that level of power must seek out the Black Ring.

Part-time priests, called *phyles*, come from the lower castes and function as porters, painters, or scribes. Outside of symbolic knives, most priests travel unarmed, preferring to use warriors for defense. All priests have titles, usually beginning as acolyte and progressing through novice, adept, overseer, and high priest.

Priests, whether full-time or part-time, become initiates into the priesthood. The rituals involved take place over the course of a lunar month and involve rites of scarification, ritual purification, and frequent applications of the Black Lotus.

CASTE TALENTS

This new talent is unique to Stygia, but at the gamemaster's discretion, may be taken by other characters.

HYPERLITERATE

Those with the *Hyperliterate* talent go beyond the simple literacy of the everyday scribe. They have studied multiple languages equal to their literacy focus and while unable to speak them in any meaningful way can read and write them fluently. Should the character later gain the *Polyglot* talent, the languages they gain from *Hyperliterate* add to that talent as well.

STYGIAN STORIES

Stygia is a codified and stratified society. Everyone has their place, or the entirety of the system breaks down. Set sits at the top, his priests divine his will, the scribes write that will down and enact it at the middle level, and laborers go about the work of making Set's will manifest in brick, stone, pottery, sweat, and blood. Such is the way of Set, and of Stygia. Someday, such will be the way of the entire world.

LABORER		
Roll	Event	Trait
1-3	Plenty of Work	Survivor
4-6	Typically, Unemployed	Solid Work Ethic
7-10	The <i>Corvée</i>	Obedient to Authority
11-14	Work Has Its Risks	Thrill-seeker
15-17	Too Much Death	Cautious
18	Chosen as a <i>Phyle</i> Priest	Minor Title
19	Apprenticed as a Scribe	Ambitious
20	Conscripted	Disciplined

APPRENTICED AS A SCRIBE

As a child, your cleverness and diligence were noticed, or perhaps your parents bought your way into an apprenticeship, thinking that this training would put you on a path into the bureaucracy or even the priesthood. Growing up as a scribe-in-training, you spent your early years doing the drudgework the role required, from cleaning the archives and scriptorium to making fresh brushes and scraping papyrus for re-use. When you were finally copying and transcribing ancient documents, you began to pay attention to them. Did what you read inspire you to seek a new path, or did you come across something that filled your soul with terror?

CHOSEN AS A PHYLE PRIEST

Your acceptance into the *phyle* priesthood brought immense honor to your family and set you upon the true path to power in Stygia. Though the hours of study and discipline were arduous, you nonetheless learned much about the true nature of your home country and its state religion. Before you were a teen you were hardened to death, having seen many sacrificed to the serpents that haunt the halls of your temple. What made you leave the temple? Do you still honor the worship of Old Set, or are you a heretic, keeping your skepticism a secret, lest you face death at the serpents' sharp teeth.

CONSCRIPTED

The military conscripted you for an action or two where they required infantry fodder, and not enough warriors were at hand. You gained some rudimentary skills in combat and taught discipline. Did you go back to the work force after your conscription was over or did you stay in the military to free yourself of a life of hard labor? Did you resent conscription into the military or did you relish the opportunity?

THE CORVÉE

As a form of taxation, the government can draft workers if there is not enough for work, often farm labor, used for building monuments and temples. This system of forced labor is called the *corvée*. Evading the *corvée* puts one's family at risk of punishment. Entire families become sacrifices to Father Set for one member refusing the *corvée*. Men and women alike are eligible for the *corvée* at the government's discretion. Your family became conscripted *corvée*. Did you go? Did your family go? If not, how did you avoid the punishment?

PLENTY OF WORK

Whether you were a basket maker, a dye maker, a warehouse worker, a porter, a cutter of stone, a rower, someone who moved stone blocks, or whatever, you always found work and learned a solid work ethic. You understand the value of work, and of keeping busy. Laziness and idleness frustrate you. You also understand the value of your Renown as a solid worker all can depend on to be there when needed, and of doing the work that is necessary. Do you value the same in others? Do you hold yourself superior to those born to a life of luxury, or those who take advantage of the system to do as little as possible?

TOO MUCH DEATH

You've seen too much death and dismemberment in your labors. Perhaps you saw someone crushed by a falling block of stone or eaten by a crocodile while working near the water. Maybe scaffolding collapsed or someone plummeted off a monument. Whatever it was, it has instilled a sense of caution in you. You know you are replaceable, as everyone who dies on the job is. No one cares for your safety, so you need to care for your own. Who died? How did it affect you? Do you also look toward the safety of others, or just for your own survival?

TYPICALLY, UNEMPLOYED

Either due to bad finances, poor planning on the part of the priests, or just your own unreliable work habits, you found yourself constantly unemployed. You may have a reputation for being unreliable, or maybe you no longer trust the plans of others, but at the end of the day you know how to get what you need to survive another day. Why were you unemployed so much? Do you blame yourself or others? Do you make excuses, or are you embarrassed?

WORK HAS ITS RISKS

When the job was dangerous, you wanted it. Haul stones into a crocodile-infested canal to build the foundation for a bridge? It'll have to do. You can wrestle crocodiles, drive off hippopotami or giant scorpions, ascend to the pinnacles of monuments to clean the statue or polish its shine, hang upside down from a rafter to apply a little paint or gilding to a tomb painting or temple wall, or agree to clean out the pen of a Son of Set. If it's a dangerous job, you want it. If it pays extra, you want it more. Do you enjoy the thrill, or do you just know it sets you apart from the common laborer? Do you do it for the extra pay or do you do it because you love it?

SCRIBE

Roll	Event	Trait
1-3	Surrounded by Death	Nervous
4-6	Military Duty	Tactical-minded
7-10	Government Posting	Trusted
11-14	Well-placed, But with Strings Attached	Traitor
15-17	Chosen as a Priest of Texts	Minor Title
18-20	Unconverted Incompetence	Back-stabbing Ambition

SURROUNDED BY DEATH

Your father was a scribe and you were born to be a scribe, going into the school at the age of seven with many of your friends. Many of those friends, including your best friend, did not graduate. The priests dragged them to the altars of Set to be sacrificed. You were not at the top of your class and nearly did not make the grade as it was. You understand all too well the price of failure and you are always worried. How have these deaths affected you? How do you face failure now? Are you afraid to take tasks that might result in failure or do you play it safe and only perform activities you know you can handle?

MILITARY DUTY

When you left the school, your aptitude for strategy and tactics put you in a leadership position in the military. Officers draft their orders to avoid inadvertent (or advertent) changes that couriers might make to oral orders, especially if travelling for days to reach a military unit. While not a general by any means, you advised military officers or devised tactics for your own units to succeed. You may have even come up with a maneuver so impressive the military named it after you. What officer did you advise? Did you have a tactical move named after you? If so, what was it?

GOVERNMENT POSTING

You had a plum assignment in the government. You may answer to a priest in charge of whatever you are doing, or you may answer to a higher-ranking scribe. You were accounting for all taxes collected in a region, or administering to public works, or keeping inventories of arms for the military. What is your role in government? What do you oversee?

WELL-PLACED, BUT WITH STRINGS ATTACHED

Your assignment within a temple or with the government at a position was far above what your accomplishments probably deserved. Of course, the placement came with a price: you betrayed your supervisor to the patron who placed you. Perhaps you serve a high priest suspected of plotting against Thoth-amon, and another priest who wants Thoth-amon's favor has placed you in a position to reveal the high priest's treachery. Do you do it? Do you betray the man you now serve, or the man who got you the high placement? Who do you work for? Who placed you? Why?

CHOSEN AS A PRIEST OF TEXTS

You served as a scribe for a temple, a position of some prestige. There are five main divisions to the various temples of Stygia: The House of the Black Ring, the Harem of the God, the Laborers of the Temple, the Craftsmen of the Temple, and the Administrators of the Temple. While higher ranking scribes write magical or sorcerous texts — especially those serving in the House of the Black Ring — you are still a low-ranking scribe, relegated to writing out decrees and generic books of the dead. Still it is a great honor to be a scribe. Do you serve in the temple of Set, or in one of the lesser temples? Which division do you serve in?

UNCOVERED INCOMPETENCE

You served as a scribe for a temple, as per the Priest of Texts previously described, but you uncovered the incompetence of another and were given a promotion. You've realized the power in stabbing others in the back to climb over them toward power. What did you uncover? How did you betray them? Was it your direct superior, or was it simply another priest or scribe?



STYGIAN PRIEST

Roll	Event	Trait
1-3	Additional Duties	Dutiful
4-6	Kher-Heb	Rising Star
7-10	Competence Noted	Busy
11-14	Crossed the Line	Hunted
15-17	Ambition Rewarded	Power-hungry
18-20	Ambition Squashed	Punished

Priest characters can use the *Priesthood* table in the *Conan* corebook (pages 27–28), or they may use the alternate table above.

ADDITIONAL DUTIES

Not only are you a priest, you were also assigned the titles and duties of Priest of the Morning. In this capacity you perform the rituals to open the shrine, disrobing the statue and purifying it, burning incense to stimulate the god's sense of smell, dressing up the god, and offering food and drink to the god to stimulate its sense of taste, while dancers stimulate the god's sense of sight. You performed these extra duties with compliant care. Has this advanced you further in your career? Do you continually take on additional responsibilities, or only when they are pushed upon you?

KHER-HEB

The *Kher-Heb* is the Priest of Rituals. They are the officiating priest at any given ritual who holds the ritual papyrus. They are charged to recite from the papyrus scrolls exactly as written because a single mistake can anger Set and send doom upon all gathered. Any priest of any rank can be named *Kher-Heb* for a given ritual. Acolyte and novice priests are often named this for non-sorcerous rites to give them practice at reading scrolls later in their sorcerous training. Higher level priests are given this title for more sorcerous rites. You were named *Kher-Heb* for a public ritual which gave you public exposure. Who noted your performance and marked you as someone to watch? Is their interest to their benefit alone, or can you profit by this as well?

COMPETENCE NOTED

Your competence was noted by another division of the temple and you were given training in a second division, giving you a second title. After you choose an archetype for your priest, choose (or randomly select) a second division to hold an acolyte rank in. What did you do to be noticed? What office is your second title in?