

FREE LEAGUE

Symbaroum

Adventure Collection

SIX ADVENTURES FOR SYMBAROUM

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Adventure Collection

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Thus spoke Aroaleta

... and the people bowed to different gods,
with different names and different figures,
with different tones and different legacies,
with different tastes for style and shape.

The People fought to honor the gods,
with similar spite and similar weapons,
with similar goals and similar methods,
with similar love and similar hate.

But none of the gods acknowledged the people,
not the mother, nor the child,
not the guard with axe, with spear.
They only spoke to King and Priest.



Preface

ARE YOU SEEKING ADVENTURE, then look no further! Between the pages of this tome, you will find everything from murder mysteries to forest expeditions and witch hunts; set in cities, villages and wilderness; treating you to encounters with darkminded cultists, roaring monstrosities and raging abominations. Yes, the six adventures of the *Adventure Collection* do a great job of exemplifying the wide vetriety of stories that are waiting to be told in the world of *Symbaroum*.

PRIOR TO THE concluding Appendix with rules, artifacts, handouts and player maps, this book is divided into three sections, corresponding to the previous publications featured in the collection. These sections are characterized by different themes, and they were originally written for player characters of different levels of experience.

Together with the adventure in the *Core Rulebook*, *The Promised Land*, the first two adventures in this book constitute a series of tutorial scenarios, introducing you to *Symbaroum*'s rules and setting: *the Mark of the Beast* takes a firm grip on the rules of problem-solving, by giving the player characters a chance to unravel a gruesome murder plot, while *Tomb of Dying Dreams* takes them along on an expedition to the resting place of a long dead king in the depths of the forest of Davokar. As for the level of challenge, both these adventures have been designed for newly created characters, and should be suitable to play before you dive into the *Chronicle of the Throne of Thorns*.

The adventures in the second section deals directly with the central theme of the *Symbaroum*

game world: the conflict between civilization and nature. In *Fever of the Hunt*, the digging and looting of treasure-seeking humans are at risk of awakening a feud between two ancient powers; if they do, and if the player characters fail to act, the bloody effects will likely be felt far beyond the borders of the forest. And in *The Bell Tolls for Kastor* a cult of monster worshippers who recently managed to outsmart and defeat a rival sorcerers' cult have taken control of the town and are brutally searching for information that can help them return their monstrous dragon lord from the Yonderworld. As a suggestion, the scenarios of *Adventure Pack 2* should be played after *Thistle Hold - Wrath of the Warden*, when the characters have gained about 60 points of Experience above starting level.

Finally, the third section present two adventures that were written to be played after the second part of the *Chronicle of the Throne of Thorns*, *Karvosti - The Witch Hammer*. In this case, the plots are related to the growing shism within the Ambrian Sun Church, between followers of the "Lawgiver" and the "Lifegiver". *The Howling*



of *Damned Gods* is about the relocation of a convicted heretic, from a prison in old Alberetor to the dungeons beneath Templewall, while *What's Bred in the Bone* starts off as a murder inquiry but develops into an armed conflict between the two religious factions. Which side the player characters align with, if any, is completely up to the players.

Of course, as Game Master you are welcome to use these adventures however you like, and to adjust them however you want. The challenges can be made easier or harder, by tweaking the stats of the opposition, or by adding to or subtracting from their numbers. You may also decide to relocate the adventure sites, to better suit the story evolving at your gaming table. Always remember that pre-written adventures, such as these, are meant to be adapted to the preferences of each gaming group and the composition of the adventuring party. As designers, our only ambition is to enable fun, and since what is deemed to be enjoyable varies, we are happy to leave it in your capable hands to turn this tome of text, art and maps into a series of great gaming sessions!

SUGGESTED ORDER OF PLAY

In relation to the *Chronicle of the Throne of Thorns*, we would suggest that the adventures are played in the following order.

The Promised Land (Core Rulebook)

The Mark of the Beast (page 8–27)

Tomb of Dying Dreams (page 30–62)

Thistle Hold - Wrath of the Warden
(The Throne of Thorns, part 1)

The Fever of the Hunt (page 66–83)

The Bell Tolls for Kastor (page 86–111)

Karvosti - The Witch Hammer
(The Throne of Thorns, part 2)

The Howling of Damned Gods (page 114–145)

What's Bred in the Bone (page 148–187)

Yndaros - The Darkest Star
(The Throne of Thorns, part 3)



HISTLE HOLD – the town of hopes and dreams. It is also the Ambrian settlement closest to Davokar and therefore the one which is both most favored by and most afflicted by the gifts of the forest. Tense whispers are heard saying that the murderer currently

hounding the northern districts of town is an example of the darker gifts – that he must be one of Davokar's abominations.

Quarrels are flaring up in every dive and tavern. Opinions seem to diverge when it is said that the notorious witch hunter Baumelo is in town, hunting the Flayer. And the same goes for the rumor stating that Mayor Nightpitch has been questioned in connection to the killings. Maybe he has a point, the coachman you heard mumbling to himself the other night: "In the shadow of Davokar nothing is what it seems. It is always worse. Always much, much worse" ...



ADVENTURE 1:

THE MARK OF THE BEAST

Introduction

WELCOME TO THE MARK OF THE BEAST, an adventure for Symbaroum meant to introduce players and Game Masters to the town of Thistle Hold through a series of gruesome murders.

The Mark of the Beast is a classic type of adventure, with a beginning, a middle and an end. The text is structured according to a number of scenes which are likely to emerge as the player characters strive to unravel the murder plot. But as always, the GM must be prepared to improvise. In order for Ambria and Davokar to come off as living and breathing, it is imperative that the players' initiatives are allowed to influence both the course and the final outcome of the adventure.

The Game Master's Introduction

THE MARK OF THE BEAST is an adventure that features numerous agents besides the player characters. The basic plot is simple, but dealing with the situation may prove a challenging task.

The murderer known as the Flayer is a changeling named Alahara, whose goal is to keep his beloved Gorak alive. Gorak has been infected by an artifact that he stole from a tomb in the forest of Davokar – a withered human cranium wearing the crown of a king. Within the skull the corrupt spirit of the long dead king lives on, vindictive and full of hatred.

Alahara is fighting a losing battle, taking drastic measures in the hope of saving his love, or at least postponing the inevitable. While studying his books on sorcery, the changeling has read that the consumption of certain human glands may cure or alleviate symptoms of corruption.

Sorcery aids Alahara in other ways too, not least through the ritual *Blood Shrouding*: he dresses up in the skin of others and wanders the streets on the hunt for glands.

Below is a description of the story's main characters. The Game Master needs to understand who they are, what they want and what they are prepared to do to get there. This will serve the GM well when the player characters, as expected, do the unexpected in their attempt to save the day.

HURIAN-LO APAK, THE KING'S SKULL

During the era of Symbaroum, a long line of emperors and local rulers came and went. For a period of time the region now dominated by Davokar was governed by numerous regional kings. One of these was named Hurian-Lo Apak.

King Hurian was neither the greatest nor the smallest king at that time, nor was he the cruelest (then again, he had a lot of insane rulers to compete with in that category). Despite being a capable sorcerer he ended his days like most of his colleagues: in a crypt surrounded by his most precious belongings. But for the venerable King Hurian, death was not the end but the start of a long, long wait.

The Mark of the Beast and The Promised Land

The Mark of the Beast is an independent sequel to the tutorial adventure in the *Core Rulebook*.

It is not necessary for the player characters to have made it through *The Promised Land* to be able to take on this adventure, but it will add to the experience.

The bitterness over an all too premature death combined with well-developed mystical skills made his spirit cling to the lifeless body, waiting for a second chance to rule. That chance appeared when the treasure-hunter Gorak entered his crypt.

GORAK, BLIGHT-MARKED FORTUNE-HUNTER

Along with his friend Alahara, Gorak led an expedition to an ancient tomb deep in the forest of Davokar. The grave proved to be from Symbaroum's early days, a remote resting place for a barbarian king, as well as a virtual gold mine of treasure. Gorak was especially fascinated by the mummy king himself, especially his crown. Unfortunately, the copper crown had merged with the skull wearing it, so the whole cranium had to be removed and brought along. Adorned and burdened by the tomb's treasures the expedition returned to its point of departure, Thistle Hold.

Back in town the members of the expedition lived like kings for a while. The boastful Gorak even showed mayor Nightpitch the king's skull during a drunken evening at the Salons of Symbaroum. Rumors began to spread about elves being sighted within the town walls and soon thereafter the expedition members began to die in more or less spectacular ways. A couple of them managed to flee south but were later hunted down and killed by the elves (or by the characters who played the Promised Land). Gorak and Alahara went into hiding, taking the king's skull with them.

BAUMELO, FALSE WITCH HUNTER

There are many small villages along Davokar's southern border. Among the population of these, the black cloak Baumelo became known as a vicious witch hunter, especially after he burned the village of Anamark to cinders when hunting a blight-marked resident. In another village close to Davokar, Glimmervann, the charismatic cultist Odako lived with his followers. There the black cloak's hunt for abominations ended, as the cultists ambushed him and thrust a handful of daggers into his back.

Shortly thereafter, when Glimmervann was visited by a blight-marked treasure-hunter who rambled on about a whispering skull and a catastrophic expedition led by Gorak and Alahara, Odako and his followers devised a plan.

Odako was already acquainted with Gorak, since they had discussed the possibility of preparing and launching an expedition together. So he and his not so merry men travelled to Thistle Hold hoping to get a closer look at the talking king's skull, and they did so dressed up as Baulemo and his

witch hunters. Dressing like this allowed them to move freely and interrogate those involved without interference, since next to no one dares get between a notorious witch hunter and his prey.

MASTER VERNAM, AGENT OF THE IRON PACT

Thistle Hold is a vibrant city and things are quickly forgotten, even when it comes to a series of gruesome deaths where all victims had been part of the same expedition. When the victims of the Flayer appeared, one after the other, no one made a connection between the curse of the king's skull and the new wave of murders. That is, no one except the tutor Master Vernam, who had been informed of what happened during the adventure the Promised Land by his allies: the elves of the Iron Pact.

Adventure timeline

- ◆ *The Early Days of Symbaroum*
King Hurian-Lo Apak is buried
- ◆ *About a year ago*
Gorak and Odako meet
- ◆ *About 8 months ago*
Gorak's expedition reaches the tomb
- ◆ *About 6 months ago*
The expedition members live as kings in Thistle Hold
The members of the expedition start dying
Gorak goes into hiding
- ◆ *About 4 months ago*
Odako kills the witch hunter Baumelo and assumes his identity
- ◆ *About 3 months ago*
The last surviving members of the expedition are caught by the Iron Pact (*The Promised Land*)
- ◆ *About 1 week ago*
Alahara kills for the first time in Thistle Hold
- ◆ *Two days ago*
The false Baumelo (Odako) enters Thistle Hold