

Captives in the Court of the Sky Lord

BY LOUIS HOEFER



FICTION RATING:
FANTASTIC

PREFACE

Down the depth of a smoggy East End alley beg the echoes of a disgruntle street sweep. "Blimmey man, yer botching up me piles! Are ye barmy? Eigh –I thinks ya' is." The commotion lifts the brow of a stout constable. He drops the lid of a crate he had propped open with his billy-club, and steams off toward the disturbance.

"You there, the man you were talking to, was he wearing a striped jacket?"

"Yeh, constable –bleeding straight jacket it was –he messed up me soot piles too. Took off 'ataway, right after he knicked me broom"

The constable gives a few quick touts of his whistle then proceeds into the courtyard of some apartments. The morning sun is bright beyond the dregs of the alleys. He spins, indeterminate of his next move. Just then, a raving man springs forth from behind a tree. He quickly dispatches the constable with lightning jabs of a broom handle. Temple. Nose. Ribs. Eye. Temple again. This stringy fellow watches the constable fall bloody and limp. Three stories up, a woman pinning laundry shrieks -but the madman pays no attention.

Purposefully, he lightens his victim of his coat. He follows this by plucking up the constable's revolver and wrist irons. Finally, from below the discarded straight jacket, he retrieves a folded bit of newspaper and deposits it in his new attire. A few off-kilter hops sends him away from the reposed body –his laughter lingers to haunt his footfalls as he disappears onto the city streets.



CREDITS

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Editing: As with previous products, we have yet to find a way to profitably obtain professional editing for our books. We have done our best to assure the quality of this product and beg your forgiveness for any typos or grammatical faux pas that may still exist here in...

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This adventure was created long ago as an on-going test play of the Century's Edge adventure game. Back then, it went by the title, Son of Nemo. It was one of the first long-standing campaign settings used for the game. Since then, as a token of gratitude for their generous coverage of our products, we have revamped the entire adventure for the Victorian Adventure Enthusiast web site (www.victorianadventureenthusiast.com). This process turned out to be far more daunting than we first assumed -being that the original adventure was written with rules that were later altered, erased, or replaced throughout the system's development. Furthermore, the maps used in the original run were woefully lacking compared with the quality of maps in our current products, so we set about reillustrating all of them. What you hold now is a great sandbox adventure that still maintains the wide possibilities of long-standing play that its original production was meant to create. The characters and environs presented are a perfect example of what makes Century Earth synonymous with Victorian adventure. If you enjoy this product, please give a word of thanks to our host site and consider the other wonderful stories available for play at www.centurysedge.com. Until next time...

STAY ENTERTAINED!

Louis Hoefler
President Whole Sum Entertainment

Captives in the Court of the Sky Lord

Captives in the Court of the Sky Lord is a story line for the Century's Edge™ adventure game. The story is meant for 4-8 characters of Rank 4 or below. All SCs presented in this story line are considered to have "normal human" stats, except for those individually listed in the appendix. All player characters are assumed to be taking part in the inaugural flight of a high-altitude dirigible designed by some celebrated inventor (perhaps one of the MCs). The characters may be there as friends, dignitaries, scientific observers, investors, deckhands, or even stowaways. The plan is for the craft to ascend through the troposphere to the stratosphere where it will make history as the highest flying dirigible ever created.

At this altitude, the craft has been outfitted to make observations that may one day be useful toward the prediction of weather. Of course, there is a fancy meal and Champaign toast also planned at the summit of the vessel's flight. The adventure really gets started when a deranged stowaway sabotages the craft, causing it to ascend erratically, and throwing all the passengers into a fit of the bends. Soon the players are captives of Sultan Quisquis (the son of Captain Nemo) and experience a cycle of dramatic sights and events while searching for a method of escape...

A Sandbox Adventure

Captives in the Court of the Sky Lord is what is referred to in the industry as a *sandbox* adventure. That is, though it starts off in a structured, scene/plot-driven manner, once the players arrive at Sultan Quisquis's palace, the direction of the story is more or less placed in their hands. The players become like children in a sandbox. -Able to play around with and create situations using the material around them. At that point, the narrator is given a good deal of information about the Sultan's palace, and a detailed list of its inhabitants -focus-

ing on their goals and exploits. He/she is also given a wide selection of "happenings" to help the setting seem to have life outside of just what the characters are doing/pursuing.

It is of the utmost importance in a sandbox adventure that the narrator pick up on what the players seem most interested in and continually turn up the drama around those circumstances. This forces the MCs towards a resolution. You will find there are many, many subplots and adventure leads in this setting, but be forewarned that exploring too many with your players will diminish the crescendoing effects of tension witnessed when just one or two of the plots are focused on and followed through to the end.

Of course, the nice bit about this adventure (and one of the reasons it was created for the original test-runs of Century's Edge) is that it can be used as a bridging point between other, more direct story lines. The subplots occurring at the Sultan's palace can then be brought to fruition somewhere down the road after an arc of stories (all made possible through the character's journey aboard the Sultan's *Aerie*).

AN OUTLINE OF THE PLOT

1. Chapter One: *The Ascent*
 - 1a. Scene One: *Fit for Paper and Reel*: At the invite of its creator or financier (possible one or both are MCs), the MCs are drawn to the inaugural launch of the high-altitude dirigible, *The Jacob's Ladder*.
 - i. Prior to launch, players have a chance of picking up rumors and news reports that foreshadow the existence of "Sky Pirates."
 - ii. At the launch, a constable seems to be nosing around a bit (he is looking for the crazed Dr. Crawford Tillinghast whom he has tracked to this location).
 - 1b. Scene Two: *The Plight of the Mad*: While players are taking last minute photo ops on the deck of *The Jacob's Ladder*, Dr. Tillinghast throttles the controls for the rocket "accelerators" full-out, and jams them such. Tillinghast will meet any MC coming to fix the probable with "pistol in hand." He will attempt to capture them rambling on about "atmospheric beasts" and a once in a lifetime chance to prove their existence -no matter what (even if it is within his death throws).
 - i. Struggling with an MC or by ner-

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vous accident, Tillinghast shatters a man-sized battery pile that runs much of The Jacob's Ladder. Not only does it plague the area with a nasty acid, but it damages the craft's pumps. All this leaves the craft ascending in a tight spiral.

- ii. The motion of the craft combined with the rapid loss of pressure and exposure to thin air and cold temperatures should cause almost all MCs to faint.

2. Chapter Two: *Awakening in a World Above*

2a. Scene One: *Surviving at 10 Leagues*:

When the MCs regain consciousness, the craft's thrusters have spent all their fuel and *The Jacob's Ladder* is in the middle of the mesosphere.

- i. Here, the air is very thin and very cold. MCs must struggle against these environmental hazards to pressurize *The Jacob's Ladder* and start up its furnaces. To complicate things, all surviving MCs are very weak and suffering from bends-like conditions.
- ii. Unfortunately the acid from the shattered battery has ruined the pump used to fill and drain the dirigible's balloonettes. To land, the crew must make a controlled bleed of the balloon from a secondary valve on the outside. This maneuver requires the use of specially designed atmosphere suits.

2b. Scene Two: *Attack of the Roc*: While climbing to the secondary valve on the ship's exterior, a giant falcon (created through Sultan Quisquis experiments with the Herakleophorbia II formula) ravages *The Jacob's Ladder*.

- i. All hope slips away, and the ship begins plummeting; a strange airboat arrives – supported by two lateral brackets holding cavorite spheres. The craft seems to be driven by a propeller attached at the stern.
- ii. The crew of the airboat, entwine, and kill the crazed bird, hauling it off.
- iii. Amid its rapid fall, the crew of the airboat offer MCs rescue in return for a pledge of loyalty.

3. Chapter Three: *At the Court of Sky Lord*

3a. Scene One: *Saved?*: The players find themselves landing on the grounds of a giant floating palace.

- i. Its base is suspended by large spherical orbs featuring the cavorite material. They are anchored into the rock of the floating island and hover like balloons above. Below the palace grounds, several hydrogen-fueled turbines are mortared. These allow the platform to be piloted through the upper troposphere.
- ii. Now saved, MCs are forced to pledge allegiance to the Sultan Quisquis (the lost son of Captain Nemo)

and give up hope of escaping down to the surface.

3b. Scene Two: *Captives in the Court of the Sky Lord*: Before Sultan Quisquis each member is forced to pledge their loyalty. While in his court, Quisquis uses the information obtained by Carne to put the MCs on the spot and assess their character.

- i. Quisquis will single out the character with 0 negative blood luring them into a false sense of friendship until arrangements for a transplant can be made.
- ii. The Sultan and his advisors will assign each MC a place within *The Aerie* to work, and a guest room for the time being.
- iii. While away from *The Jacob's Ladder*, Quisquis's men ransack it, seeing to it that it will not be "fixable" -this is all perpetrated to appear as if the Congolese natives have vandalized it. The men have even given some of the items to the natives.

3c. Scene Three: *Untold Adventures*: here the MCs may become involved in any number of plots brewing on *The Aerie*, taking the story into their own hands.

Life in the Upper Atmosphere

The atmosphere is composed of many layers divided by rough barriers. The lower atmosphere in which we all live is called the **troposphere** and is home to the most violent storms and changes of climate. It extends about 6 miles up to a layer called the **stratosphere**. The **stratosphere** is a section of atmosphere where gas masses form shifting layers. Winds can be quite violent in this region and temperatures quite chilling (32° to -76° F). Above this is the first barrier called the **stratopause**. This layer contains the field of ozone that absorbs radiation and magnetic influx. This extends about 20 miles up from the earth. The last layer dealt with in this adventure is the **mesosphere**. The **mesosphere's** great altitude leaves it with extremely low pressure and hardly any breathable air. It is the coldest layer of atmosphere with an average temperature of -100° F. The **mesosphere** is often plagued with meteorites and other space debris that fire down like missiles and are eventually scrubbed out within the **stratosphere**. Over 40 miles above earth the mesosphere stops at

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a boundary known as the **mesopause** where it borders the high temperature zone called the **Thermosphere**.

Chapter 1: The Assent

❖ **Settings:** *Hyde Park London –outside the Crystal Palace*

❖ **Motivations:** *Dr. Tillinghast is driven to prove that other dimensional creatures are living in the Earth's upper atmosphere. To do this, he has escaped the Velderbalt's Asylum –being pursued by a Constable (Barnum). The main characters are struck by their "stardom" before their ascent.*

❖ **Foreshadowing:** *The Duke gives players some expectations of the giant hawks and Quisquis's pirating enterprises. The players begin to suspect danger upon the approach of the constable, and find their launch schedule bumped up as the "rocket lifters" are ignited by Tillinghast.*

SCENE I: FIT FOR PAPER AND REEL

The game begins on the lawn of Hyde Park. Here, Duke Arthur of Connaught holds tea with the inaugural crew of *The Jacob's Ladder*.

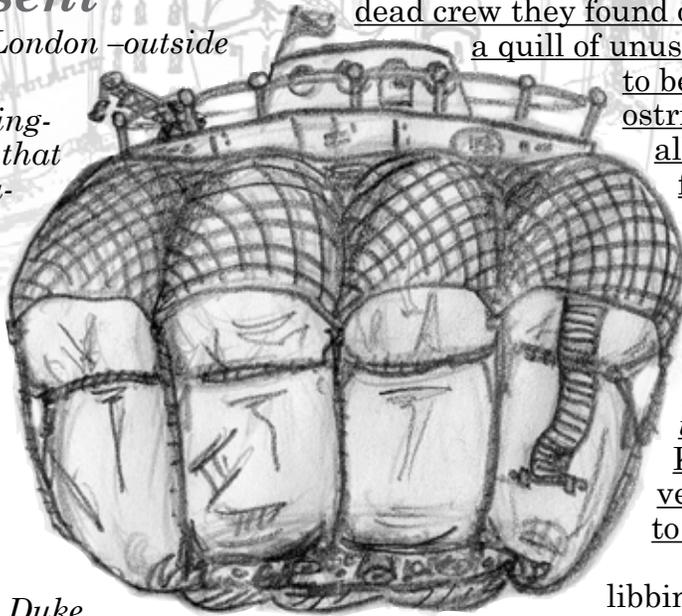
During this public send off, the Duke makes small talk about the weather observation capabilities of the craft. He asks MCs if they could give him warning of, "any other bloody deluges like the one they had last Wednesday –for it made a mess of the Whiteford Golf Invitational." He also makes a remark about keeping their eyes out for 500 lbs worth of British Sterling Silver that disappeared while being flown

out of India last week. The Crown Treasury moved it by blimp –thinking it would avoid the pirates that frequent the Bay of Bengal, but the craft was found shredded –its crew was later discovered miles away, killed in their plummet back to earth. Strangely, the silver was not accounted for. Among the dead crew they found one man clenching a quill of unusual size –believed to be the plumage of an ostrich. The Duke actually has this massive feather in his hat-band and will show it to the players joking that, "it is quite possibly the most expensive piece of crest ever worn." An SR=7 Knowledge Roll reveals the 18" feather to be that of a falcon.

After some ad-libbing with this conversation, the players prepare to debark amid photographic flashes and the spinning of large zootropic cameras. Read below:

The Duke sees you off with his royal guards splitting the sea of newspaper photographers to make room for your boarding.

A frenzy has infected Hyde Park today. The explosions of flash powder (*Blitzlichtpulver*) and steady clicking of Kinetoscope newsreels make it hard to hear the questions raised by the crowd. A few manage to crescendo above the rest, "*Is the air breathable in the upper atmosphere?*" (Allow players time to respond). "*Do you think other forms of life exist beyond the clouds?*" (Allow players time to respond). "*Will information from this voyage truly be useful in*



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predicting and affecting weather patterns?" (Allow players time to respond).

Across the city clocks begin announcing the hour –harmonizing with the deep tones of Big Ben. Together you begin pulling the ballypins on the anchor lines, causing the craft to lurch as it looses itself skyward. (With 3 anchor lines left, an MC with a Wit SV=3 or more will notice something a bit strange. A constable is pushing through the crowd. He is jacketless and his face is a mess of purple bruises and dried blood. He makes it to the edge of the balloon grabbing one of the remaining lines. He calls out to the MCs warning them they have a stowaway, but his voice is trapped within the clamor of the crowd. In consternation he holds up a discarded straight jacket. About this time...)

Without the slightest preamble, the craft's "rocket lifters" ignite –burning dozens of pounds of propellant each second. This sudden upward boost slams most of you to the deck (Reflex Set Value of 4+ to avoid). Alas! The momentum is briefly put in check by an anchor line and a spiraling velocity ensues. The craft turns in tantrumous circles finally snapping the line. Quickly all becomes sky, clouds, and confounded circles...

SCENE II: PLIGHT OF THE MAD

At the ignition of the rocket lifters, the MCs find themselves in a world of chaos. Depending on their location at the time of "launch" and the actions they take during the ascent, they will be facing various obstacles. This scene is broken down by area to help address these variations.

This centrifugal motion threatens to throw all loose passengers clear from the top of The Jacob's Ladder. MCs must make a Merged Prowess and Reflex Roll, SR=3, to get and maintain hold of something –failure sends them overboard, though they are granted one more chance at this roll as they tumble across the netting at the top of the balloon cells. Furthermore, moving around the top deck of the ship requires this same Merged Roll at an SR=5 and is limited to adjacent areas. Any sort of tether or ideal grasp (such as the crane's arm) will grant the MCs a D8 bonus die. The problems faced on the vessel's observation deck are:

- ☛ MCs tossed overboard or caught a great distance from the main door will need others to come to their aide.
- ☛ Many of the supply and equipment boxes under the tarps on the deck are coming loose and flying free of the ship.
- ☛ After 6 turns, characters outside the vessel suffer DF x 1 Health, Lucidity, and Spirit each turn as the G-forces, pressure, and cold begin over take them. Here, a loss of Health should end in incapacitation or a maiming, Lucidity should result in a concussive state, while Spirit Pool losses will only result in apathy.

If the narrator wants to add the Constable Barnum character into the story as a silent protagonist or confidant he/she might add the following encounter:

The Jacob's Ladder shutters in ever-quickenning revolutions while the world around it falls into confusion. The upward haste has put great strain on your bowels and ears. It is but a wonder that you can still make out a distant yelp. You swear you heard -Wait, no, it is real! There is a man calling for help, seized upon one of the anchor lines. He is being thrown round on this attachment like the bit end of a flail...

The Observation Deck

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The man is Constable Barnum. He will maintain his grip on the anchor line so long as the narrator finds it plausible. He hasn't the strength to pull himself up onto the deck rail where it is attached. Currently, he is 20' out on the line. Between his weight and the centrifugal force, it will take an SR=10 to pull him in. When rescued he will strike an unspoken allegiance with his rescuer(s) -and there forth be willing to face grave odds to help them. Once he is secure on deck, he will warn the MCs about Tillinghast -alerting them to fact that he is likely armed with his service pistol.

The Forward Room/Mess Cabin

For the characters starting the ascent just inside *The Jacob's Ladder* read:

You're pushed against the wall as air whistles through the doorway and out the main hatch. You identify the dreadful ruckus below as the rocket-lifters in full ignition. Watching furniture and loose supplies gather around you, it becomes certain the ship is in a tight spin. Meanwhile, the vast ascent has created pressure within your lungs and chest. A metallic taste permeates your palate.

Immediately inside the craft there is a mounting vacuum as the air trapped inside *The Jacob's Ladder* is drawn out (this will be negated once the gangway door is shut and sealed). Within an adjacent distance from the gangway MCs must make an Opposed Prowess Roll verses D8/d6 to keep from being sucked out onto the deck. Else wise, the interior is slightly easier to navigate (requiring only an SR=3 on a Merged Roll of Prowess and Reflex to move an adjacent distance each turn). Inside the forward room and mess cabin the MCs face:

- ☛ Loose debris (mostly furniture and firewood) smashing into them (any MC

with a Reflex Set Value less than +4 must make a solid success on a Reflex Roll every few turns or take a DF x 1 Health Deduction).

- ☛ To ensure the MCs won't get bored, the wood stove near the kitchen pops open at one point and hot coals tumble out threatening to set the wooden floor boards on fire. If not dealt with (rating=D6/d4), they will produce a full-fledged fire within 5 turns (rating D8/d10). Because the thinning atmosphere will naturally put the fire out the character's bigger threat is the smoke which is being sucked through the cabin. It blinds and chokes the occupants, imposing a d8 difficulty die upon them.
- ☛ After 6 turns, the pressure change from the ship's ascent deals DF x ½ Lucidity each turn to all inside (producing bends-like symptoms). Characters reaching zero Lucidity blackout until the next Chapter.

The characters directly inside the hull will most likely attempt to rescue those outside, or travel to the engineering deck to stop the rocket lifters. Gauges on the inside suggest the ship is ascending at speeds nearing 300 feet per second -an impossible speed for the Victorian mind to comprehend. By all calculations, the ship will breach the outer layers of the stratosphere by a quarter after (1:15 PM).

The "rocket lifters" were not meant to be fired until the ship entered the upper troposphere, with its slow, balloon-driven rise buying it all the time it needed to depressurize and adjust to the frigid conditions before blasting onward. The current pace of ascent will place it in one of the thinnest, coldest sections of the atmosphere with little time to adjust. Knowledgeable (SV=4) MCs should fear that the craft could crack apart or even burst under those conditions.

State Rooms and Ship Stores

The safest place for the characters to be during the ascent

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is within their state rooms. This section of the ship was purposefully designed to be a solid shelter in the event of a “splash down” or crash landing. All major furniture in this area is anchored in place. Movement around the area requires a Merged Roll of Prowess and Reflex at an SR=2. Contrarily, the ship stores and area directly outside of the stores will be plagued by flying debris (any MC with a Reflex Set Value less than +4 must make a *solid success* on a Reflex Roll every few turns or take a DF x 1 Health Deduction). Other obstacles include:

- ☛ An slight vacuum resonates around the ship’s stores, for the cargo hatch that leads into this chamber from above has not been properly sealed. Moving within an *adjacent* distance provokes a Health Roll at SR=4, failing this roll causes a horrid popping in the MC’s eardrum leaving them temporarily deaf (until their next Recovery Roll).
- ☛ Trapped! If a character is in the ship stores area they suddenly find some of the equipment crates sliding in on them. An SR=5 Reflex Roll is needed to avoid these heavy objects -Otherwise the character will be pinned beneath them, requiring an SR=8 Prowess Roll to be freed.
- ☛ Loose Linens- MCs within one particular state room must make an SR=4 Reflex Roll or become entangled in a sheet pulled loose from the bed by centrifugal force.
- ☛ On the 8th turn of events (and every turn there after), MCs suffer a DF x ½ Lucidity Deduction from decompression.

A description of events from within

this area might proceed like:

The craft’s position and ascent now come to a bearing in your mind. The last anchor line held just long enough to change its motion into an accelerating vortex. All crew members and cargo are being drawn to the outer hull of the craft. Every way you look about, you see blood leeching from the ears and noses of your comrades.

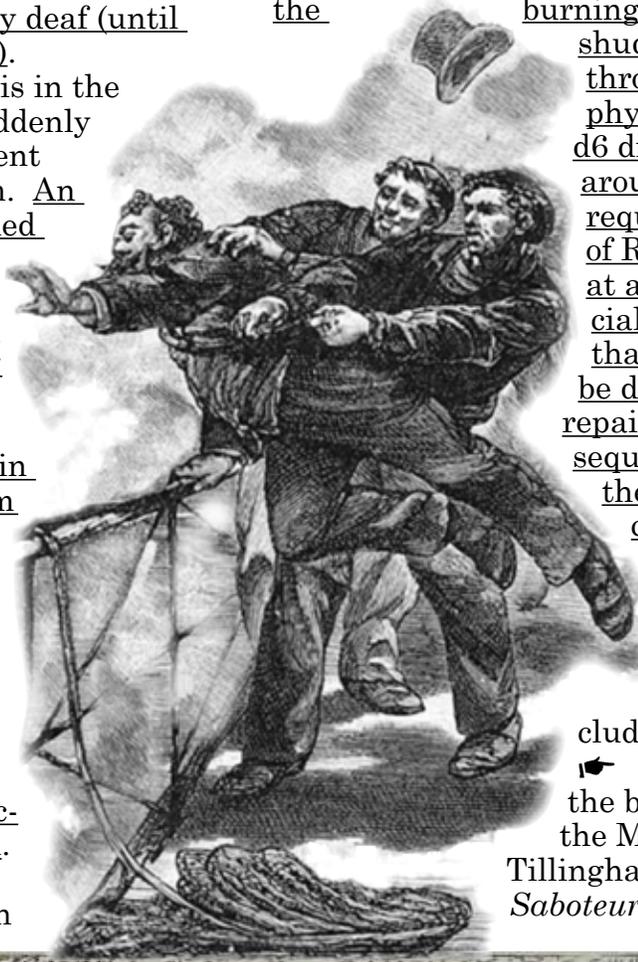
The Pump Room

Certainly there will be one brave player who descends into the “engineering level” to try and stop the craft’s climb. As the rocket-lifters burn, the bottom of the craft (which nears the floor of the pump room) heats up to uncomfortable levels. Further, the

burning rockets create such shudder and convulsion throughout this area all physical tasks suffer a d6 difficulty die. Moving around the pump room requires a Merged Roll of Reflex and Prowess at an SR=4. It is crucial to the story line that the ship’s pump be damaged beyond repair during this early sequence. This may be the result of an accident (as described below) or the direct sabotaging of Dr. Tillinghast. The dangers present in this location include:

☛ Just as they reach the bottom of the ladder the MCs encounter Dr.

Tillinghast (read: *Stowaway, Saboteur, and Madman* be-



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low).

- ✦ Failed physical actions or (especially) attacks are likely to shatter one of the 3 man-sized wet-battery cells near the ship's pump. Tillinghast, himself, may shatter one accidentally while struggling against the MCs. At the soonest available moment he will miss a shot or have an accidental discharge that will shatter the battery pile nearest the pump. The acid in this pile flies out due to the centrifugal motion of the craft. It immediately begins to dissolve some of the rubber hoses and valve gaskets in the machine works. It even hisses away on the exterior metal of the pump. All characters within this the splash radius (closable) are splattered with the caustic substance (rating D12/d6 see pg 178 in the rule book). This includes Crawford. Crawford will immediately discard his acid-drenched jacket and try and move up the ladder. See "*Damaged Pumps*" below.
- ✦ Shutting down the rockets- The crazed doctor has throttled the rocket-lifter control to "full oxidization" -and jammed it so using (unlit) coals from the ship's furnace. Digging these out from the lever's gear works and shutting down the rockets requires 3 turns of action and a Merged Knowledge and Reflex Roll (SR=4). The oxidizing lines can also be shutdown manually by climbing down the access hatches to each rocket's mounting column and turning a valve. However, the heat built up in these areas require's the MC to first roll an SR=5 on Devotion and suffer an extra DF x 1/2 Deduction.
- ✦ Releasing the oxygen- The ship has a backup supply of oxygen stored in a large compression tank. As the craft rises, the air will become increasingly thin outside. Releasing this supply into the ship (if all the other hatches have been sealed) may create a stable environment for the MCs to work in, once

their assent has stopped. Releasing it properly (so as not to create too sudden a pressure change, or too rich of an oxygen current within the ship's hull) requires a Knowledge Roll of SR=5.

- ✦ Starting the ship's furnace- Once in the mesosphere the ship will become painfully cold. If the players have sealed it up and released the backup supply of oxygen, they can then work on igniting the ship's furnace/radiator system. Lighting it (under these conditions) is easy (Knowledge Roll, SR=2). Within 10 turns the radiator system will have the ship's temperature rising -the staterooms will obtain a "bearable temperature" on the 20th turn after igniting the furnace -the rest of the ship follows soon after.
- ✦ On the 4th turn of events (and every turn there after), MCs suffer DF x 1/2 Lucidity and Spirit Deductions from the decompression of the ship and the heat/deafening noise of the rockets.

Stowaway, Saboteur, and Madman...

Having read about *The Jacob's Ladder's* up-coming launch in a newspaper, Dr. Tillinghast wasted no time. He escaped Velderbalt's Asylum and came directly to the launch site. Having the strength and agility that comes with being mad, he climbed one of the rear tethers while the crowd was distracted with the Duke of Connaught's pomp and circumstance. Tillinghast squirreled down to the controls throwing them into play with only a rudimentary understanding of what he was doing.

His entire drive is to ascend to the mesosphere where he believes the atmospheric beasts dwell in their most solid forms... There, the crew of this vessel will be able to see for themselves. -And given the crew's notoriety with the press and heads of state, the world will soon be convinced these monsters do indeed exist. Tillinghast is completely mad and will fight against the MCs' interference so long as he has the means to do so (even down to his last re-

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source pool points).

Any player descending to the lowest level of the craft will find a weapon fixed at their posterior as they descend the ladder.

Read:

Even in the rancor of this catastrophe, you quite clearly hear the cool metallic click of a loaded pistol and the hard poke of its barrel under the back of your ribs, *“You weren’t planning on tampering with the experiment, WERE YOU? Climb down the ladder, reach your arms around it, and put these on...”*

A heavy set of wrist irons lands at the base of the ladder. (Their key resides in Tillinghast’s jacket). **Though fret with shakes and sudden adjustments, the barrel continues to bore away at your back.** (If possible, Dr. Tillinghast will find time to ramble to himself, *“Yes, yes they’ll see -Density and light dispersion at the mesospheric pause should make those parasites quite visible. Its all locked up now, no going back! -They’re invaders -Nasty boogers! You’ll see, they’ll all see. Gossamer vermin of ethereal flesh... They want our air.. THEY’RE INVADING -INVADING! ...and soon I’ll have witnesses!”*)

Damaged Pumps

In the struggles the players will have with Tillinghast (or just by his own nervous carelessness), one of the glass battery piles will shatter, throwing acid everywhere. The loss of this pile brings the ship to ½ its normal power level. Worse yet, several gaskets on the ship’s pumps will be ruined by this substance. The ship’s pumps are designed to draw in and out hydrogen gas from the balloonettes that surround the vessel. Drawing the gas into the inner tanks increases the ship’s density -causing it to descend. Pumping out the hydrogen into the outer

balloons decreases its density causing it to rise (though much slower than the boost by the rocket-lifters). Basically, with the pump out of commission, the balloon will be stuck at whatever altitude its rockets had thrust it to -for a while. The balloonettes, consisting of 5 major and 5 minor cells, can be safely bled manually from external valves -this is discussed in greater detail in the next Chapter.

The Crew’s Last Deliberate Actions

Regardless of how the MCs do at trying to save the constable, finding a safe spot within *The Jacob’s Ladder*, or dealing with Tillinghast, the overbearing pressure difference, thinning atmosphere, and the stress of the centrifugal force will drop most of them into an incapacitated state. The last few to remain conscious will feel the temperatures dropping steadily and notice the ship’s rotation slowing down (as mid-stratospheric winds counter the initial spin). If any of the MCs can make it for 20 turns, the need for most Deductions passes. They must now struggle against the cold and the thinning atmosphere (requiring them to make a standard endurance check with intervals of 5 turns)... Any MCs that have blacked out or ran out of a particular resource, awake again during the events of Chapter 2...

Chapter Rewards

Any character that was able to make it from the outside of the ship to its interior during the ascent will gain 2 Plot Points. Saving the constable (or any other MC) will gain a player 3 Plot Points. Over-powering Tillinghast and shutting down the rocket lifters are each worth 4 Plot Points. Finally, the role-playing allotted during the tea with the Duke and the press inquiries at launch should give MCs plenty of opportunity for Characterization Bonuses.

Chapter 2:

Awakening in a World Above

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- **Settings:** *Marooned in the research vessel The Jacob's Ladder. The vessel is likely floating derelict in the mesosphere -temperatures are -120 F.*
- **Motivations:** *The MCs will be desperate to restore heat to the craft, and spend some time licking their wounds. The constable (if alive) will be content to have survived, but beg for his return just the same. Dr. Tillinghast (if alive) will be confounded that there are no atmospheric beasts to be seen, and will want to probe further (i.e. higher)!*
- **Foreshadowing:** *If alive, Tillinghast will reveal that sulfur is a deadly poison to Atmospheric Beasts. The "Roc" encounters foreshadows some of the experiments (and their troubles) conducted under Sultan Quisquis's watch. Quisquis's men will reveal some about The Aerie and life with the Sultan.*

SCENE I: SURVIVING AT 10 LEAGUES

Those who were wiped out by the ascent may awaken in this Chapter after a solid success on a Lucidity Roll. When the players stir, the craft is in the mesosphere and temperatures are extreme. Frostbite damage (pg 184 in the rule book) occurs every 5 turns; though those dressed in the stratospheric parkas gain a D20 armor die. This is true both in and out of The Jacob's Ladder until an MC can get its furnace going (SR=2 after the craft's pressure and air supply have been restored). Meanwhile, the air is still so thin that MCs must continue to make endurance checks (with 5 turn intervals) to take action. This situation can be negated by the air masks and pressurized tanks crated up under one of the tarpaulins outside the craft. Of course, there is an oxygen reserve near the other tanks on level 3 that can be released into the ship's interior -that is, if it is still airtight. In the meantime, players may attempt firing up the wood stove in the mess

cabin, but the thin air makes this tricky (Knowledge Roll, SR=7).

When players first come to, read:

You awaken from a state all-too-close to death. Your first assurance of life is the stabbing pains that follow each breath. The air here is thin and bitterly cold. Ashen are the tones of your skin. Tendrils of ice have formed under your nostrils and at the corners of your lips. One thing is sure, the temperature is sub zero, and each twist of your body gives you the sensation of pin pricks.

The Jacob's Ladder appears mostly at peace. The shrill whistle of the "rocket lifters" is absent. Only a slight rotation remains in the ship's hull.

Bleeding the Balloons

Eventually (hopefully after they have licked their wounds and had a few meals) the MCs will want to figure out away to descend safely back to the surface. The pump that usually compresses the balloon's hydrogen will likely be neutralized from the battery acid in Chapter One. Bleeding the balloons into the inside of *The Jacob's Ladder* is unsafe due to the volatile properties of Hydrogen. The craft, itself, will eventually begin to descend due to its natural buoyancy, but this will take a few days and will still leave the party somewhere in the upper stratosphere when it reaches equilibrium. This wouldn't be a problem, but the craft was "short-loaded" for the publicity flight. This means that the reserve oxygen is only enough to last the crew a day (with the furnace running).

Their best option would be to use a manual valve (the one used to fill the main tanks) which barely extends out from between the balloonettes. Using this to leak out the hydrogen they crew will descend at a manageable rate. This, however, will require one brave soul to leave

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the warmth of The Jacob's Ladder and scramble down her sides to the valve (using some make-shift tether). Of course players are a resourceful bunch and other ideas may be enacted. The narrator should try his/her best to force them to the exterior of the craft for this operation (making the next scene more thrilling). As players get into the thick of solving their current problems (especially while one or more are on the outside of the craft) move to *Scene II: Attack of the "Roc"*.

SCENE II: ATTACK OF THE "ROC"

If one of the MCs is outside the craft working read the following. Otherwise, paraphrase it as something seen through the cabin's portholes:

Distantly you hear a strident wail –bringing to mind Dr. Tillinghamst's gibbering of atmospheric beasts. The clouds near the strato-pause are alien in nature –rising in vertical spires that twist and resonate shadows of purple, rose and turquoise. Beyond a few of these you see it, a black winged form. –The glimpse is fleeting, denying you any chance at attributing a specific name to your growing terror. It, whatever it was, is now out of sight, but the crowing squawks are ever nearer...

The Jacob's Ladder has caught the eye of one of Sultan Quisquis's giant falcons. The bird has slipped into "dementia" -the culminating stage of the Herakleophobia II formula. It has already broken free of its rider and is being hunted by Quisquis's men -who wish to keep it from being discovered by the nations below. They have chased it higher and higher as it makes maniacal turns and ascents. In its rage, it has identified the players' vessel as some form of food or enemy.

The giant falcon has made a

loop away from the ship (allowing the MCs time to ready for a fight). Now it will careen in with a blinding speed. Players will easily come to believe this giant bird is a "Roc" –the giant winged beasts of Arabian legend. Several of its attacks will perforate balloon cells causing the craft to begin a plummet. Still, the creature's talons will hold tight to the balloons/netting following the craft down in a death spiral.

An Offer They Can't Resist

Mid battle, Quisquis's men will enter the fray on their flying ship, the *Diving Belle*. On deck, her crew is charged with harpooning the "Roc." In a hasty decision, the captain, Hytram Sirru, has decided to attempt the rescue of the MCs' ship -believing it will be of interest to his master. The crew harpoons the ship with a towline. They will demand a pledge of eternal obedience to Sultan Quisquis in return for rescuing the MCs. Anything less and they will cut the towline. If the party is divided, they will require all dissenters to be thrown overboard before they proceed with the MCs' ship back to *The Aerie*. Announce the rescue with:

A shadow grows on the horizon. Perhaps some mirage brought on by the thin air; you believe you see a ship –a water vessel that is. Though it has no sails-masted, the craft looks something like an Egyptian lugger. It is steadily approaching. (Let time pass)

The craft is now plainly insight, only fifty yards off. At its bow men are readying a rather weighty harpoon gun. You now see the ship has strange armatures protruding from both sides. The structures reach out about twenty feet away from the hull where they hold giant metallic balls –forged of two-tone metal. A complicated system of cables and pulleys seems to extend to these spheres allowing them to be turned about.

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The men aboard the craft are apparently hailing you, “*Mujhe tumhare fikar hai! Maapki sadad ker stakra?*” Their tongue is lost on you though, and they begin aiming their enormous harpoon at the giant bird as it circles in again... (When *The Jacob’s Ladder* is falling read on:)

Seeing your eminent peril the men hasten to reload their harpoon. You notice the bimetal spheres on its sides have rotated, and the strange airboat is descending at a pace to match *The Jacob’s Ladder*. One man, perhaps the captain of the vessel, has come on deck. He bends a thin tin sheet he has brought with him into a cone.

Through the makeshift cone the pretended captain calls, “*You, we are saving -No? Tight hold now your is selves.*” With this quizzical phrase the harpoon fires breaching even the metal hull of your ship. Those alien globes rotate and the little airboat levels out and pulls against the downward momentum of *The Jacob’s Ladder*. A taunt 50 feet of cable suspends your ship from the one above.

Bent over the rails the captain calls down again. “*We are servants only of Sultan Quisquis. We would be postponing yours is death, yes -but make of you an honorable pledge of duty to the Great Quisquis Dakar -No? Make this pledge -No? If you are not making this pledge then we are of force to cut you free again... Yes?*” (Play around with the confusion of Captain Hytram’s English and all the double negatives. If the MCs agree to pledge themselves to the Sultan, continue on to the next Chapter).

Chapter Rewards

For each shipboard system the players bring back into operation (oxygen, heat, electric,

etc.) they receive 2 Plot Points. Any characters who revived or otherwise looked after their compatriots gain a bonus Plot Point for each member of the party they helped. If the characters waited until this Chapter to deal with Dr. Tillinghast, they are granted 2 Plot Points for neutralizing him in a humane way, but only 1 if they seriously harm him. Finally, any character that does battle with the giant falcon receives 3 Plot Points -regardless of their success. Characterization Bonuses and Problem Solving Bonuses apply as usual.

Chapter 3:

At the Court of the Sky Lord

- ❖ **Settings:** *The players find themselves stranded on Quisquis floating island -caught between the plotting of his men and the Sultan himself. This location is used as a drop point into many other scenic adventures and explorations all across the known globe.*
- ❖ **Motivations:** *Each major personality of The Aerie has his/her own motives. Primarily, Quisquis seeks to exert his dominance in every aspect of life on The Aerie. Ultimately, he will seek to harvest a kidney from one of the MCs. Meanwhile, the MCs should be drawn to escaping Quisquis rule, if for no other reason than to free the lovely Serrana.*
- ❖ **Foreshadowing:** *Events take place that warn the players about Quisquis medical condition, his experiments with the growth formula, the captive women of his harem, the sinister past of the doctor, and the double crossing of Carne.*

SCENE I : SAFE?

During the tow back to *The Aerie*, the captain of the airboat makes little contact with the players’ craft. If harpooned, the dead falcon will be brought up to the *Diving Belle’s* deck -where its body will be tied up to make a thin bundle.

A ship hand occasionally looks down on *The Jacob’s Lad-*

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der only to make sure everyone is fine –the hand will discourage any climbing of the tow line to the point of cutting it free. Any questions will go unanswered (Hytram has retired to his cabin to use the radio-telegraph and alert *The Aerie* about their refugees). *The Jacob's Ladder* is being carried at an odd slant -though most of its contents settled to this configuration without event. Begin with the following:

The strange airboat drags you onward, the shadow of its indifference falling from above. Perhaps as a fuel-saving measure, it has hoisted sails, no longer using the wide propeller at its stern.

By your watch's testament, you've been slowly descending and sailing to the east for nearly a half-hour. You find yourself in the cloud-scape of the upper stratosphere when IT comes into view...

You look at one another for quiet reassurance that what you're seeing is real. Just in sight, there floats an island of sand and stone. A myriad of features rest across its tawny dunes. Palm trees, hutches, block houses, and a sprawling palace complex dazzle in the twilight of this ethereal world. The only explanation for this fairytale construct's current altitude are some tethered balloons -a thousand if there were one. Upon closer inspection, they are not balloons at all, but those queer bimetal spheres, such as the ones on the airboat's armatures. Each trails down to an anchor point in the rocky base of this sky-isle.

The craft swings wide in a slow approach and a flash of reflection betrays the fact that someone is watching you through the palace's tower window. This land, promising both paradise and prison, may be the last bit of earth you'll ever know...

Once above the sands of *The Aerie* the airboat will cut the MCs free giving them these instructions:

The strange air-boat circles above as your vessel comes to a rest and the dusty sand clears. The captain returns to the bow. Leaning over he calls through his tin megaphone, "*Pardon you myself -for I am called to be serving. The great and merciful Sultan Quisquis will send his men to see that you are safe and have that which is needed for the night -No? When tomorrow is, you will come at noon to present yourself to the court of Quisquis. In the palace it is -you cannot be missing it!*" The black form of the captain motions ahead and you see the glistening marble of a magnificent castle -Eastern in decor and design.

"*Till then, do not partake of wandering. -And if see you the Africans, take care -they are, how you say? -Fickle...*"

The *Diving Belle* will cut around, disappearing behind the palace, then dock on the far side –out of sight. Shortly, the MCs are likely to notice the black-skinned Congolese men on the ridge of a nearby dune -speculating about what the ruins of *The Jacob's Ladder* are. They will be armed and may present a ominous sight as the heroes await the indefinite approach of Quisquis's men.

The players are left in the lurch for over an hour. During this time, some of the natives may grow brave and come down to the craft. Otherwise a wondering cheetah, cobra, or a herd of desert goats might take refuge in/around their crash site (keeping them occupied). Finally, a camel train of men and supplies arrives dispatching these nuisances with mere noise.

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A Greeting Party

For every known occupant of the *The Jacob's Ladder*, the Sultan will send 1 inner legion member along with 2 servants. Disguised among the regular servants is Simon Carne -sent by Quisquis his objectives are:

- Identify and account for each crew member (using whatever information might be in print or available through government or underground sources). He will further stoop to "lifting" any private journals or memoirs the MCs might have aboard the ship.
- Assess the skills and abilities of each crew member.
- Notify him if any of the crew are women or noted scientists

Dr. Gull accompanies this greeting party, dressed as a proper gentleman and carrying his medical bag. He has been sent for reasons far more sinister than the MCs might imagine. He will do the following:

- He will tend to any injured MC/SC directly, seeming quite skillful, yet callous in demeanor. For this he will use his medical Knacks and the supplies in his bag. If any of the crew are severely injured, he will have them transported back to his infirmary in the palace There he can use his operating theater. He will not allow any of the crew to accompany the injured to the palace. Rooms have not been prepared for the crew, and the infirmary is in tight quarters as is.
- He will demand to take a blood sample from each occupant, explaining that, "The Aerie is a microcosmic environment, and all new occupants must be screened for any foreign pathogens they might introduce." Truly he is looking for a possible kidney donor for the Sultan -who is O negative -a hard match to find. Luckily (for the Sultan), one of the MCs happens to have this rare blood type (the narrator should assign this trait to the

MC that would make the best "friend" to the Sultan -granting him/her many excuses to draw the character into private moments with this antagonist).

- If Tillinghast is still alive, Dr. Gull will suggest the euthanization of the poor man -arguing that a madman is too much of a danger in a place such as *The Aerie*. Players may prevent this by objection for the time being, but he will comment that, ultimately, the Sultan will likely side with him.

While the doctor is carrying on his collections/treatments, the men have off-loaded a simple folding table, a few canvas chairs, some blankets, a load of firewood, a firkin of wine, 2 buckets of distilled water, camp-cooking supplies, a dressed bird -bigger than a turkey, some odd leeks (alien to the MCs normal diet), and 5 loaves of hard, spiced bread.

The men (except for the doctor) will interact little with the party -ending all attempts at conversation with abrupt nods or shakes of their heads (most of them only speak Hindi). The servants will work quickly to set up a fire, and begin cooking the food -though they will momentarily transfer this duty over to the MCs once all the items have been set up. The Doctor will be more cavalier with his interactions than Hytram was. He will question the MCs about their pasts (knowing full well Carne is there to observe) and answer the basic questions they might have about *The Aerie*. He will not do anything to betray the Sultan's trust, but he'll definitely put things in a nutshell -so to speak- for the characters. Under no circumstances will he mention the scientific treasures of the floating island, the women who are captive in the shrine-tower, or the docking location of the *Diving Belle*. Before leaving with Quisquis's men, he will reiterate Hytram's directions: the crew of *The Jacob's Ladder* are to report (in total) to the Sultan's Court at noon the next day (because *The Aerie* is moving westward, noon will occur later than what might be

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expected -by about 2 hours). There, Quisquis will have a chance to measure up each survivor and see to it they understand the terms of their stay upon *The Aerie*.

SCENE II : CAPTIVES IN THE COURT OF THE SKY LORD

At the palace gates, the MCs will be ushered into the dining hall and served a brunch of omelettes, pastries, and lemonade. While dining, Simon Carne will come out on the balcony (#13r) over the dining hall. With a subtle nod and smile he will disappear again -having counted to make sure the entire party has arrived. If there are any missing members, Hytram Sirru will approach the MCs asking about the missing men and directing a group of servants/guards to go and get them. Not long after finishing their meal, the party will hear a loud disturbance in the throne room beyond the dining room. The argument seems to be in Hindi, before sense can be made of it, however, it ends in a series of anguished cries. The Sultan has dealt with a guard who dared to sneak a view of the Sultan's harem in the sacred shrine tower. The Sultan has ordered his men to take the guard down to the dungeons and remove his eyes...

Not long after these strange events, the doors of the throne room are opened and a group of guards escorts the MCs toward the foot of Sultan Quisquis's dais. Read:

Before you stretches a throne room of unsettling proportions. Flanking the approach are massive columns craven with gods known only by their Eastern zealots. Servants and guards kneel in between.

A long length of Persian carpet honors the walk leading to a dais topped by a silk baldachin. Within this plush sanctum, reclines a man who is the exact picture of hedonism.

He wears an arrangement of

white robes wafting about his plump form. On his head rests a silver-threaded turban.

A rough push comes at your shoulder, "When before Sultan Quisquis you will kneel!" Even before you can hesitate, a massive ebony figure detaches from the side of the baldachin and begins descending. This man is wild to behold. Modesty is purchased more by his oversized war ax than by the scant jungle attire he wears. (Allow the MCs a moment of reaction -remind them they are in a room filled with guards ~24. This moment is allowed by the Sultan as a test of the MCs' mettle)

The sultan throws a half chewed fig out of the canopy, choking out, "Enough! These men have come to us from trying times. They are, perhaps, still blind to the compassion I have extended them. Civility will soon return to them. Mr. Carne would you make introductions..."

(Simon Carne steps forward retrieving a pocket journal from his vest pocket. The MCs will recognize him from the balcony at brunch but and possibly from his servant disguise at their landing, SR=7. He will -so long as plausible from his research- introduce each occupant. He will describe their country of origin, affiliations/education, and known accomplishments. Use this as a chance to stroke your players' esteems by glorify the happenings of past adventures. Finally, He will introduce the Sultan to the players using titles such as "Lord of the Sky," "Master of the Globe," and "Ruler of the Atmosphere." Then Quisquis addresses the players:)

Sultan Quisquis has now righted himself into a sitting position. His countenance evolves into something more august as he speaks, "Make no mistake, I am the sovereign of this kingdom, and it is only at my fancy that any man is granted stay upon

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this floating island I call home. It is simple; I offer you two choices. You may stay -each pledging allegiance to my rule and live a life of splendor here at The Aerie. -Or you may choose to reject my hospitality and walk... THE STAIRS OF RUDRA -unto your death. Let each man make his decision.” (Allow the MCs to respond individually. The Sultan will show ebbing restraint against any verbal transgressions -but will not shy away from using the trapdoor or sentencing an MC to descend the Stairs if Rudra, should the situation call for it. After getting the pledges and having the non-compliant removed, he will offer the following privileges to the players:)

“You will find The Aerie to be a paradise of sorts. Given your esteem, I will command my men to allow you passage about the palace, still there are a few places that... for the time being I forbid you from going.

First, no man, but I, am allowed in temple shrine on the far side of the palace wall. Second, you will not approach my personal residence without invitation. Third, you will not descend into my dungeons -lest you be held there as punishment. Forth, you will

not encroach upon any room that is locked -FOR ANY REASON. At times, there is need for me to keep secrets about the palace -much of the time it is for the protection of others.

Oh, one last thing, do not attempt any unapproved contact with the world below. There are many from your world that would wage war upon me to possess what I have come to own. A man of great power must surround himself with great solitude... Hytram, see these men to their chambers then show them around.”

Being in Contempt

Players are used to being rugged individuals, who rather take on an entire army then place themselves under the rule of a supporting character. Many are used to games where their characters can defy a powerful ruler and win such a gambit -not so with Century's Edge. As a narrator it will be important to help the players recognize they are relatively helpless in their current situation and likely to die if they stir up trouble at the wrong time/place. He/she should do their best to encourage the characters to stay by perking their curiosity about *The Aerie's* secrets.

If shown disrespect, the Sultan will bite back his anger and try and combat the MCs' words with wit and wisdom.

He will not, however, take to making deals or listening to ultimatums.

He will order guards to seize and drag off any MC who “crosses the line.”

If desperate, he will use the trapdoor on them. If things get really messy, he will use the trapdoor in his dais to descend



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into the lower levels while his guards (headed by Naggee) restrain and imprison all the riotous MCs. This situation will definitely cut this adventure setting short.

If sentenced to walk The Stairs of Rudra, the MC will be held in a dungeon cell until the dark of night. Then, escorted by guards and the Sultan they will be taken to the guard tower and forced to descend down into the depths of the stairs until they fall from the open bottom. To ensure they move along, the guards prod with their spears (or fire rifles) at them from above. See area 8d for more details.

Setting the MCs up in *The Aerie*

Hytram will take the MCs up to the staterooms, assigning them to joint rooms (with the exception of the “type O” MC who will be assigned a private stateroom -little explanation will be given for this separation). After showing them their quarters, Hytram will take the party on a tour of the palace grounds, giving them a basic idea (without a lot of scientific premise) of how *The Aerie* floats and moves throughout the atmosphere. On the tour, Hytram will answer many questions, but will offer little explanation for areas off limits or locked. Finally, he will give them each a work detail selected for them based on their particular skills. He will arrange with them all meal times and work shifts. After this,

a group of palace servants will be put in their charge to bring items from *The Jacob's Ladder* to the state rooms via wagons and camels.

Dinner will be delivered to their rooms. Thus ends their first day in the palace.

SCENE III : UNTOLD ADVENTURES

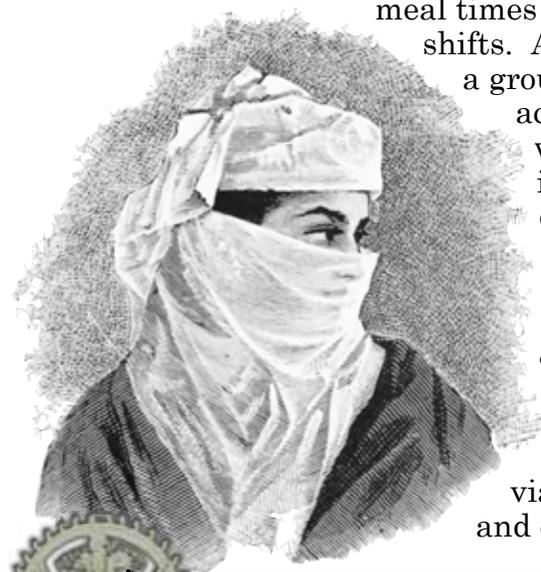
Once on *The Aerie*, the narrator shifts parts, from here out, he/she maintains and alters the environment around the MCs in reaction to their interests and interactions with the SCs. It is crucial he/she pick up on the plots the MCs are most interested in and continue to accelerate them, creating events that force the MCs to take a stand or commit to action. Below is a list of the major plots that may come to surface while the MCs are on the floating island. All the characters involved and their motives are written up in the Appendix of this story line.

Damsel in Distress

There are few ploys that motivate a player to reacted faster than having an innocent damsel in eminent danger. In this plot, the Sultan has freed a Russian criminal from a Siberian prison in exchange for a chemistry manifest held at the Sankt Peterburg Technological Institute. Unfortunately, the criminal tried to hold out for a better deal, so Quisquis kidnapped his daughter (the lovely Serrana) who was acting as a “go between” at the time. Serrana has no desire to remain in the Sultan’s harem. And, even though the Sultan has not forced himself upon her (other than requiring her company at meals and such), she remains scared and desperate.

One night, MCs will see her shadowy feminine form sneaking through the gardens at #12. A team of palace guards will be close on her heels, trying to find where she is hiding. If the players intervene the narrator should play things up so that Serrana is distrustful of them as well and winds up climbing the roof of the poultry shed -crashing through and coming face to face with one of the giant chickens (*frightfully hilarious, No?*).

The players should learn of her fate and the fact that she’s being held against her will. If possible she may beg them to help



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her escape. Either way, the Sultan's men will try to take her back to the shrine tower and secure her in a leg iron -so she won't repeat her escape. Occasionally she may get word to the MCs (through the other women of the harem or the swami, Gishna Gisu) or they might find a way to sneak in to see her. Eventually this will draw the fury of the Sultan and speed up the MCs' need to escape before he sentences them to the Stairs if Rudra, or serves them up to his giant monitor lizard.

This plot crosses nicely with *Murder Most Foul* below...

A Suitable Donor

In this plot, the Sultan Quisquis is stricken with failing kidneys. This condition has worsened over time -there are many days the Sultan remains bed ridden with an intense fever and spasms (this should be played up something like Wolfe Larson in The Sea Wolf, or the lengthy disappearances of Nemo in 10,000 Leagues Under the Sea).

His degenerative condition led him into the company of Dr. Gull (who was becoming a person of interest in the White Chapel murders and needed a place of respite). As a cutting-edge surgeon, Gull has developed a few processes to aid in Quisquis condition. When succumbing to his fits, Gull attends him, filling his peritoneal cavity with a solution of sugars and minerals. This formula absorbs wastes through the semipermeable membrane of the cavity. The waste infused solution is then pumped out by hand. After two or three cycles of this regiment, the load on the Sultan's kidneys is lightened enough to restore him for a while. Ultimately, Gull seeks to replace the Sultan's diseased kidneys with healthy ones -transplanting organs has been a goal of Gull's for many a year now. The doctor faces a few daunting hurdles in this task. First, the Sultan is Type O negative -a rare blood to have to match. Of course the presence of the Type O MC has solved this prob-

lem. The other problem Gull must overcome is that his transplant procedure is strictly experimental. He has only recently begun the use of human subjects in his trial-operations. With secret permission from Quisquis, Gull has been experimenting on the servants who grow ill and even the healthy Congolese natives who make their home outside the palace grounds. He is growing ever closer to success (he has found a herb grown in the garden that seems to prevent organ rejection, but has yet to determine the optimal dosage/distillment).

This plot embroils the MCs if they make constant contact with the natives or if one of the members of the party is subject to the infirmary (especially Tillinghast or Bar-num).

While making contact with the natives, the MCs will learn that several natives have died recently after getting very sick and being taken by the doctor. Investigation will eventually uncover that some of the fruit they are given by the Sultan's men is laced with Strychnine. The natives practice a ceremonial ashing of a dead corpse that has been given back to them -MCs who observe this right before the body is buried will notice 2 stitched incisions in the corpse's back -in line with the kidneys. If the MCs dare insult the Congolese by digging up the others who have died they will find a similar pattern. If examined internally they will find that each has had a kidney swapped with another. Also, there are signs that some of the bodies were at one time refrigerated to stop decomposition (this was done by stowing them on the service track on the underside of *The Aerie*).

If one of the MCs or their party winds up in the infirmary for any significant length of time, they will be selected for a trial run of the experiment. In the case of an MC, the Doctor will try and convince them that a surgery is necessary. They will notice a Congolese native being brought in just before they are put under the ether. In the case of an SC party member

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slipping into the Doctor's care, they will simply go absent for a while -Gull will make up one excuse or another for where they are at (even claiming they were taken down to a *real* hospital). In this scenario, the body of the SC (with the sutured kidneys) turns up in some hiding spot within *The Aerie*.

The real goal here is for the narrator to slowly reveal Gull's transplant experiments while building a *friendship* between the Sultan and the type O character. He/she might even make the characters think Gull is acting alone in this and feel they can safely confide in the Sultan. Soon, however, the players will recognize the reasons behind the Sultan's frequent absences -maybe in time to rescue their colleague from becoming an organ donor...

War in the Air

As stated in the throne room sequence, Quisquis believes himself to be the sovereign of the sky (and all of the Earth for that matter). His array of technological wonders would make this

an easy claim to stake, if it weren't for one man -Robur "The Conqueror of the World." In off-handed conversations with Quisquis's men, the players will come to learn that Robur and the Sultan have faced off on several occasions -each time Quisquis was forced into a retreat (mostly due to Robur's superior use of tactics). The two may even come into battle again while the players are aboard *The Aerie* (likely Robur will be trying to repel some criminal gambit of the Sultan's).

The Sultan hates Robur with a passion and has been plotting to destroy his newest *Albatross* and wreck his island lair -if only he could locate it. Recently, his sources have informed him that one of Robur's ex-ship hands had had a run in with a French policier and made the mistake of killing the officer. Having had his day in court, the ship hand is being sent to Devil's Island via steamboat. Quisquis plans to sink this vessel, rescuing the ship hand (Oliver Domache) in exchange for the whereabouts of X Island (Robur's secret headquarters).

The Sultan has been keeping track of

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the steamship (it is called *La Confiance*). He has confiscated the ship's schedule and manifest from one of his French insiders. These documents might be seen around the Sultan's study along with several newspapers detailing the event where the *Albatross* saved the *Go Ahead* (in the paper's picture he has circled Oliver Domache onboard the *Albatross* -read Verne's Robur the Conqueror for more details). Other papers report Domache's crime and sentencing.

Next, the MCs will notice *The Aerie* has dropped to a low altitude over the ocean and seems to be following a vessel (*La Confiance*). With a little prodding and inquiry they will learn of Quisquis's plan to sink the vessel and kidnap Oliver Domache. This should draw things into a grave moral debate -with Quisquis unwilling to budge.

If the attack takes place, the narrator may allow the Sultan to succeed, the players to intervene, or he/she might just have Robur coincidentally show up to free his man at this exact moment (with a sky battle ensuing).

If Quisquis obtains Domache, he will give the Sultan all the information he requires. Immediately, Quisquis will begin laying groundwork for an invasion of X Island. This plot ends with a massive invasion of the island and a harrowing battle between The Sultan's *Diving Belle*, falcon riders, and *The Aerie* and Robur's *Albatross*, autogyros and his newest invention -*The Terror*. As the battle wages skyward, men will be sent to the island to plant bombs and steal plans. How it ends should be heavily swayed by the MCs' choices and participation.

We have provided a write-up for the new *Albatross*, *The Terror*, and the Icarian autogyro's in the Appendix. Alas, we have left the layout of X Island in the hands of the narrator -but dormant volcanoes are a must-have for any island base! In a pinch, there are plenty of island base maps from various other adventure games that can be pulled and Victorianized for this plot.

Murder Most Foul

It would be a shame to have Jack the Ripper (Dr. Gull) onboard *The Aerie* without shedding a little blood. With the addition of the MCs on *The Aerie*, Gull has gained some bravado and will try and orchestrate an opportunity to satiate his lust for feminine mutilation.

Within the first few days of their arrival the doctor will note their habits, dress, and armaments. He will use his status as a doctor to try and confiscate some personal artifacts from the party (scraps of clothing, shirt buttons, blood samples, even bludgeoning objects from their staterooms). He will then plant this false evidence after gruesomely dispatching one of the women from the Sultan's harem. With skill, he will see to it that the MC has no alibi for the time in question (maybe sending them a note to come see him, then testifying that they never showed up).

The attacks on the women will happen while they are being walked from the Sultan's private residence back to the shrine tower. The doctor will use an ether-soaked rag (made from part of an MC's wardrobe) to knock out the guard escorting the lady, then drag her off to the nearest dark corner and prey upon her.

This plot should develop into a courtroom-style drama. Where the Sultan is led to believe one of the MCs is the killer. Enraged, he seeks the MC's execution. Players are then made to argue their case and prove their compatriot's innocence. Vexingly, the Doctor, himself, will be called on by Quisquis to interpret any physical evidence that turns up (allowing him to lie and twist things to his own liking). Gull's major flaw is that he has saved a trophy from each of his victims and stored them (with any extra items taken from the MCs) in the chest within his tower apartment. Opening this chest of gore will be pretty damning to the Doctor's reputation.

If the tide turns against Gull, he will flee to the *Diving Belle*, hoping to be able to hijack this vessel and

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escape into the night. He will use deadly force against any MC that reveals they can prove he is guilty, or that tries to stop him once his guilt has been revealed.

Big Trouble

This is a pretty simple plot, but a useful one should the narrator decide he/she wants to ramp-up the tension on *The Aerie*.

In this plot, the Herakleophobia II formula leads to some trouble. Because Quisquis stole the formula from Mr. Bensington before its final perfection (Herakleophobia IV), the version he is using has a fatal flaw. When used on any given animal, its hormonal build up is so severe that the animal grows intensely feral in direct proportion to its size increase. When first experimented with, *The Aerie* was plagued by the wrath of a giant rat (the carcass of which is buried in the sands behind the palace walls). Quisquis's men soon discovered this effect was significantly delayed in birds. It seemed the presence of a crop (a digestive organ found in their upper tracts) screened-out some of the formula's more dramatic effects.

This discovery was of great importance and has led to the Sultan keeping a flock of giant chickens (for food) and trained falcons (for flying mounts). Unfortunately, even with the presence of a crop, the formula's self-synthesizing properties eventually surpass the animal's ability to screen-out some of the hormonal toxins, and after several months at the enlarged state, even these avians tend to become enraged and dangerous. Quisquis has commanded the destruction of such creatures at the first signs of chaos. (The Inner Legion members often use these instances as an excuse for a little sport -they loose the rabid creature and then hunt it down).

Experimentation with the formula has been taken in two directions. The Sultan's men are trying to develop a filtering system similar

to what occurs within an bird's crop so as to port the serum safely over to other "non crop-equipped" animals. Beyond this, tests have begun on other animals that have crops -such as a giant monitor lizard dubbed "Korgo" kept in the recesses of the Sultan's dungeon.

The narrator can go in many directions with this plot. While testing the "filtered" formula on a specimen, the specimen may still grow to giant, ravenous form. Depending on what the narrator wants to pick, these beasts may break loose (the formula still not responding correctly) and threaten life on *The Aerie*. Perhaps a giant ape could run amuck -even tearing the cavorite orbs loose from their tethers. Maybe pests in the lab get into the formula creating a horde of giant rats, ants, roaches, whip scorpions, or what have you. Even one of Quisquis's men (or an MC working in the lab) will get the notion to test the formula on themselves and try to use their new found strength/size to take over.

Korgo poses some neat possibilities. The giant lizard acts as a death trap for those who lose favor with the Sultan in his throne room. It can also serve as a element of peril, when the Herakleophobia formula drives it into a rabid killing-spree. With the delicate machinery in the sublevels of the palace, a dragon-sized lizard running foul can create an exhilarating sequence. Picture it, the heroes dashing into a blazing network of caverns trying to stop the creature before it tears up the hydrogen reactor that power's *The Aerie's* propellers. A write-up for Korgo can be found in the appendix of this adventure.

The Hunting Party

As a means to entertain (or manipulate) his new *guests* Sultan Quisquis will direct some of his Inner Legion members to take the MCs on hunting expeditions using the *Diving Belle*. The party will be dropped in some very exotic locations, to be picked up by the *Diving Belle* the next day.

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These expeditions are anything but typical hunts. The first will take place in the Sahara Desert. The party will land near a fresh water oasis. Here, impala come to drink every evening at dusk. This shoot should be simple, requiring little skill for the MCs who aren't very familiar with firearms.

What the Sultan doesn't know is that a pride of lions has dug in nearby to wait for these impala. Not long after the hunting party has taken position in the rocky edging of the oasis, the herd arrives. The MCs should be encourage (by one of Quisquis's men who acts as a guide) to try and pick a specimen with a sturdy frame and a large set of antlers (for trophy purposes). While scanning the herd it sudden stapedes toward the end of the oasis where the expedition has made camp.

The intense rumble of this herd's movement may send the sandstone outcroppings under which the party is hiding sliding down upon them. Soon, hundreds of impala threaten to trample the party, and destroy much of their equipment. Worse yet, it is a pride of 5 adult lions that have driven them in this direction. The lions will engage the hunting party once they get up on them.

In another hunting expedition, the Sultan will land the MCs with some of his men inside the Amazon Plateau. Here, the party will hunt for prehistoric game such as pterodactyls or triceratops.

Finally, the party may make a stop over in southern China/Tibet for an excursion in the ice flows of the Himalayas. On this hunt, the party will be trying to track down a Yeti. They may run into a bit of trouble though, as the neighboring villagers see this creature as sacred and will go to great lengths to confuse, distract, and even destroy the hunting party.

While this plot doesn't seem to have a typical arc, it is well-placed within other plots, helping to divide the players up (some going on the hunt some staying behind) and

allow Quisquis to disappear for a few days (during his health-induced comas) without the MCs being able to poke their noses around. Most importantly, the Sultan may use these moments while the MCs are distracted to obtain more wealth/technology or pick up new members for his crew. Certain clues (perhaps finding new prisoners in the dungeon or news stories that tell of giant birds attacking trains) should be left to let the players know that while their MCs were off hunting, the Sultan was committing some grave offense against the nations below. Players must then decide how they can forgo these expeditions (and stop the crimes being committed) without seeming ungracious to the Sultan.

Allegiance Has Its Price

Simon Carne has spent several years biding time on *The Aerie* -his patience ever-waning while his wanderlust waxed. With his powers of observation he has deduced that the Sultan stores the bulk of his pirated fortune in a sea cave on an unmarked island (Lincoln Island -the site of his father's death/grave).

Quisquis deposits a great deal of bounty in this cave once each year (on the anniversary of his family's arrest, torture and execution). On this date, the Sultan descends from *The Aerie* in the *Diving Belle* taking only his bodyguard, Naggee, and his assistant, Hytram, as crew. He spends 3 full days and nights on the island, depositing his treasures and wandering the remains of the Nautilus -meditating on his father's choices. To date, the sea cave on Lincoln Island contains wealth enough to eclipse the economies of many small countries. Carne estimates that, just within his stint on *The Aerie*, Quisquis has deposited almost 2 million dollars there.

Carne intended to stowaway on the *Diving Belle* during Quisquis next visit and learn the exact location of the cave. However, Quisquis (perhaps sensing Carne's intentions) has scheduled

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him to be off on another errand at this time (doing some of the reconnaissance for one of the other plots?). Carne realizes that such an opportunity won't be afforded him for another year and in desperation may turn to one of the MCs to form a crude alliance.

He will likely seek out an MC Rascalion, or any character likely to be motivated by wealth (an Aristocrat?). He will explain to them the situation and use a few servants he has bribed to get the MC onto the *Diving Belle* before the Sultan disembarks. There, the MC must hideout until the craft has landed. Then, trailing the Sultan, they must create a crude map of the island, determine the location of the sea cave, and copy the specific nautical location of the island from the maps/instruments in the captain's cabin of the *Diving Belle*.

If the MC can pull this off, Simon has plotted to sabotage *The Aerie's* hydrogen reactor (either forcing a meltdown or conceivably, he is the one responsible for loosing Korgo in the Big Trouble plot) and escape on the *Diving Belle* leaving the Sultan and the rest of his court to perish.

Of course, before entering into any sort of allegiance with an MC, Carne will make sure he has a way to blackmail or frame the character should they turn against him. Also, if the plot is carried out, Carne and the men he has bribed to help him (ex. a second mate on the *Diving Belle* has agreed to commandeer it for the escape) will turn on the MC once they have escaped to the sea cave. As you can guess Carne will eventually turn on the others as well -vying to get all the treasure for himself.

This plot is of interest because it places the MCs involved in direct opposition to the Sultan, yet leaves them little moral ground to stand on. Often times, it creates tension within the group of players when they find out the risks/subterfuge one of their own members has become involved in.

Other Realms

This plot adds importance to

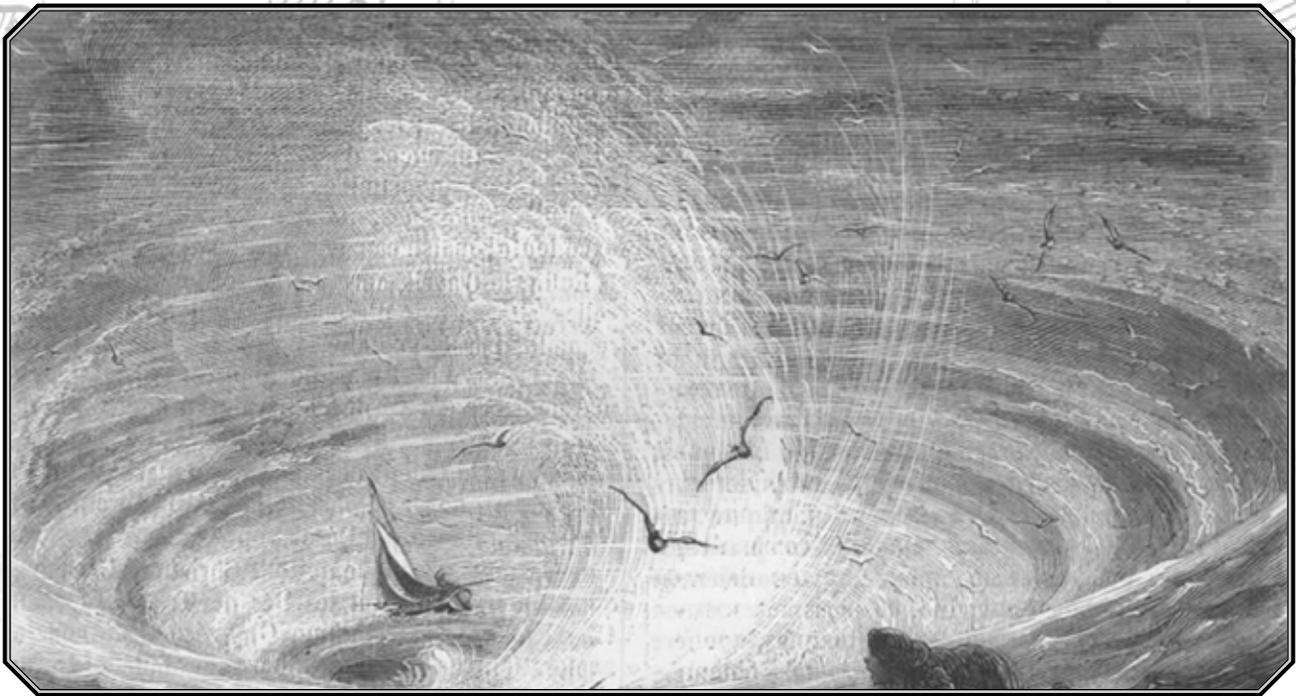
the characters' run-in with Dr. Tillinghast. In it, *The Aerie* unknowingly crosses into a roaming telelocation bubble (see the description of the quantum bubbles on page 195 of the rule book). This bubble houses a extra-dimensional world filled with "atmospheric beasts" -the very creatures Tillinghast warned about. Though this voyage may begin any number of ways, what follows seems apt for adventure. Stats for the atmospheric beasts are given in the appendix.

In this scenario, *The Aerie* encounters a terrible storm that pops up suddenly in the upper stratosphere. Wind gusts of 70 miles per hour and greater threaten to blow its occupants right from its sandy grounds. Bolts of lightning discharge in near horizontal plains rapturing the island and melting some of the tethers that hold the cavorite orbs.

Men (MCs?) are dispatched to fix some of the damage, put out fires, and rescue those who couldn't make it to shelter within the palace. Meanwhile, careful observers will find the island is moving in lazy circles -staying within this storm cloud. If a team is sent to the maintenance tracts below the island, they will find that 3 of the 4 turbines that position *The Aerie* are smouldering. Investigation reveals that they are clogged up with some gummy substances (the remains of atmospheric beasts, known as "star rot"). While trying to clean this goo, the workers not only have to contend with incredible winds, wet surfaces, and occasional lightning -but a few living atmospheric beast survived being sucked up in the turbines and now cling to the bottom of the island, injured and hostile. These hitchhikers will make for trouble as the workers try to clean and repair the turbines.

Before *The Aerie* loses too many cavorite orbs, Quisquis will command his men to rotate the orbs and lift the entire island above the storm (into the mesosphere). This procedure is rarely done, as it requires each tether to be manipulated by hand. In such a severe storm, the Sultan will search for a few brave souls who are willing to adjust the orbs

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anchored on the farthest edges of the island (MCs?).

What happens from here is determined by the narrator's design. As the orbs are rotated, creating more "anti-gravity" lift, *The Aerie* may move up into a telelocation bubble housing the strange ethereal-dimension from which the atmospheric beasts come. In this strange preternatural world, the entire crew must fight against the terrors that lurk within its mist until an exit can be forged.

The exit might be found as a swirling vortex in the center of the ethereal mists (an homage to the maelstrom in 20,000 Leagues), or perhaps the MCs learn that the mists of this world build up charges of sonic energy -in a fashion similar to how earth clouds build up electrical charges. With this knowledge, they may construct a device to lace the mists with sound-energy and create a ethereal storm -a counter part to the storm they travelled through to get into this strange world.

Admittedly, it may be over the top for some players, but, in addition to the atmospheric beasts, this land might be inhabited by djinn, ifrit, or other genie-like beings (feeding into the middle-east, and Indian feel of this adventure setting). These beings might attempt to trick Quisquis into an allegiance of some form that would allow them to pass into the realm of Century Earth where they could rule as gods.

No matter what direction is taken with this plot, it is made to introduce alien worlds to the MCs, governed by strange physics and dangerous terrains. A odyssey into this dimension should push the bounds of what is considered a "fantastic" story line in Century's Edge.

For a less "fantastic" run-in with the atmospheric beasts, the MCs might join some of Quisquis's men for a duck-catch. This excursion entails using the *Diving Belle* to descend into a flock of migrating ducks, while the participants on deck use massive nets to capture these wild fowl. In the middle of this simple excursion, the MCs will witness a nearby brace of ducks inexplicably becoming crushed and disappearing into thin air. Soon, a giant, cephalopodish atmospheric beast becomes visible. Its remains so only for a moment as it finishes digesting the ducks and moves in to harass the *Diving Belle*. Now her crew must fend off this invisible marauder to be able to return the air ship safely to *The Aerie*.

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Adventure Appendix Maps

The Jacob's Ladder

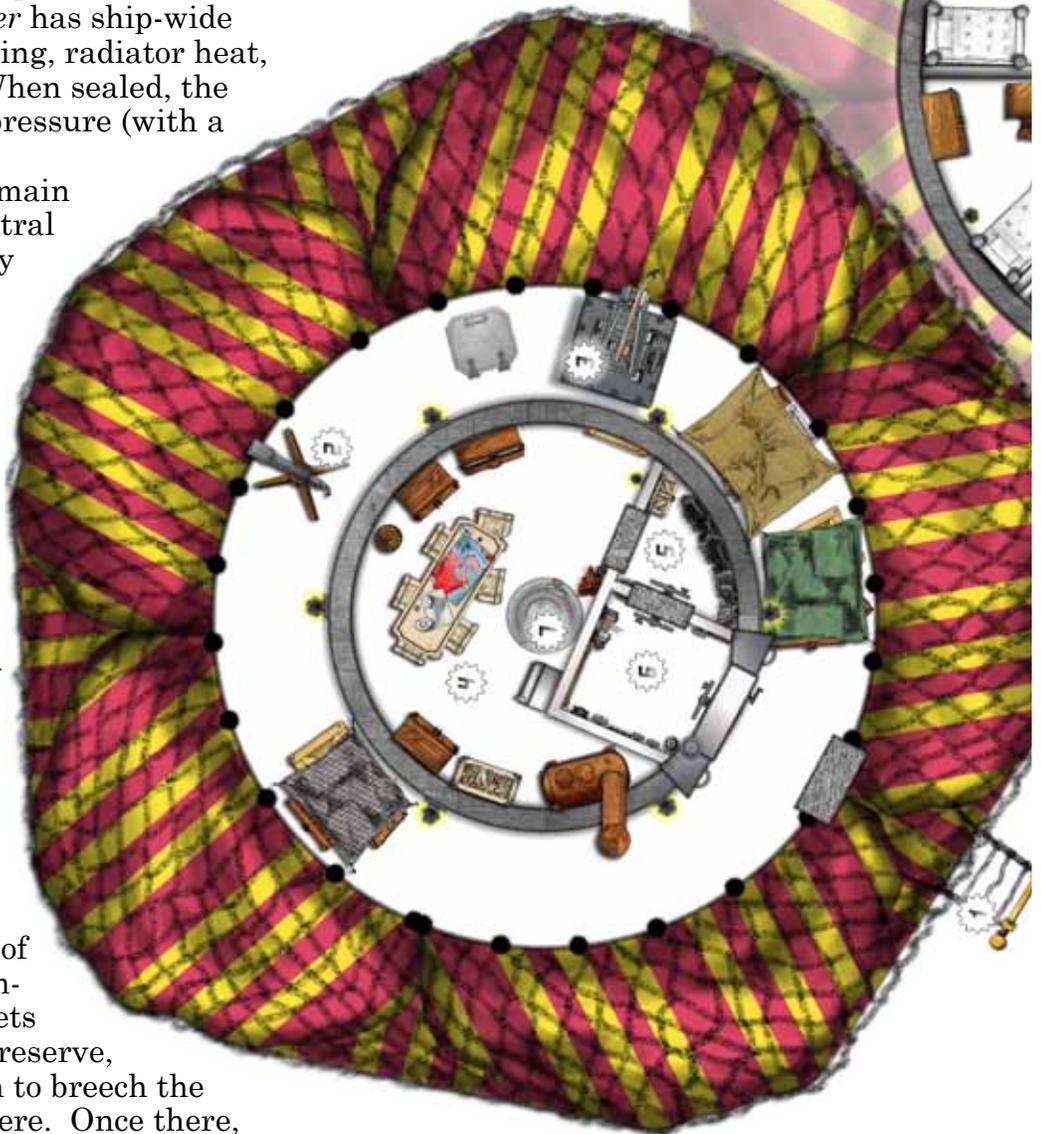
The MC's craft is forged of riveted aluminum and rubberized canvas balloons. The main cylinder of the craft is 30' in diameter. It stands 19' tall with largest overhead being the 7' ceilings of its base level –where bulky tanks and mechanical devices utilize the extra space.

The Jacob's Ladder has ship-wide systems for electric lighting, radiator heat, and oxygen dispersal. When sealed, the ship maintains its own pressure (with a rating of D12/d6).

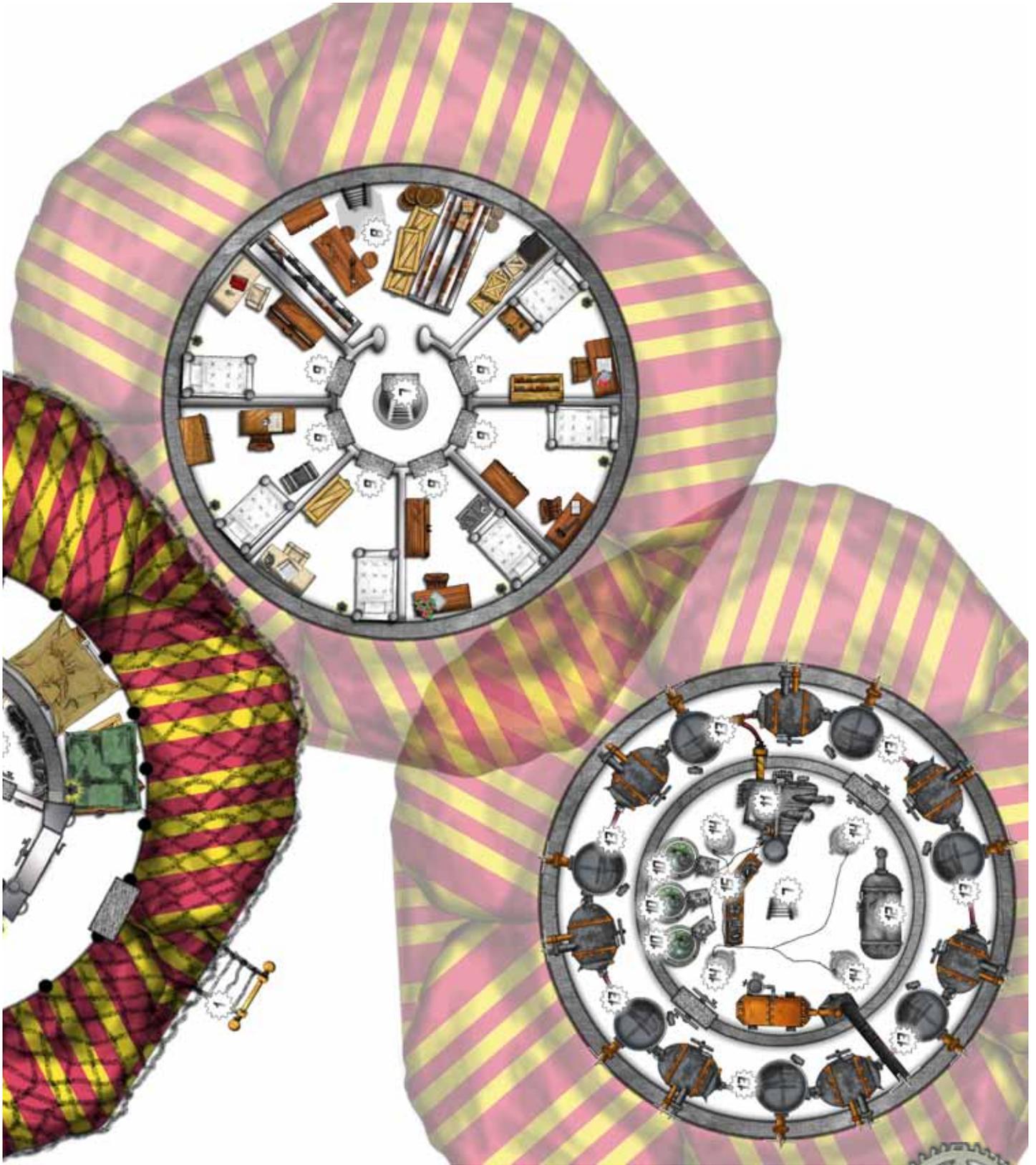
The ship has two main systems for lift. The central cylinder is surrounded by a series of 10 hydrogen-filled balloonettes that can be filled or deflated through storage tanks in the craft's lower level. These balloons (with a durability rating of D8/d4) are more than adequate for moving it through the troposphere. To boost this lift, a system of specially crafted rockets (ordered from China) have been affixed inside mounting columns across the ship's base. Their solid-fuel load is burned in a controlled manner by adjusting of the amount of oxygen fed into their combustion tubes. The rockets have a very limited fuel reserve, but provide enough push to breach the lower mesosphere. Once there, the craft must inevitably drift

back into the lower strata, yet the process is slow enough for many valuable observations/experiments to be made.

THE JACOB'S LADDER



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Key to *The Jacob's Ladder*

1). Ascension Ladder -A ladder of heavy cord allows boarding of the craft when an on site ramp isn't available. It extends from the bottom of the netting (covering the top of the balloonettes) down 10' to the base of the craft.

2). Telescope -This device has been mounted on the ship's deck for observations across the strata and out into space. It has a magnification of 10,000 x.

3). Loading Crane -A system of heavy ropes and mechanical wheels help lift cargo from the ground beside the ship up to the deck of *The Jacob's Ladder*. The system has over 60' of line and has a mechanical force of 10D/4d. A nearby cargo hatch descends into area #8.

4). Forward Room/Mess Cabin -The main chamber of the upper level is used for planning and discussing the ship's missions as well as eating meals. It contains a wood stove, a collection of air current maps, a large table, storage cabinets containing dishes and navigation aids, and a simple icebox. A cage of canaries makes beautiful music in one corner –these are used for testing air quality and are trained to relay messages back to the ground (unfortunately, unless players take action ahead of time, the canaries will die from exposure to the cold).

5). Scramble Hold -This chamber (capable of being sealed off from the adjoining room) contains upper-atmospheric parkas (D20 armor against temperature) and 2 breathing masks (however the oxygen tanks that feed them are still crated up under a tarpaulin on the deck of the craft. If retrieved, each tank holds 40 minutes worth of air but requires the constant

working of a lever-pump).

6). Ship's Gangway -The first room leading into the ship is cluttered with gear commonly used on the deck. This includes many instruments mounted on its walls recording temperature, altitude, pressure, wind variance, gravitational force, and direction. A spindle of rope is fixed to the wall across from the main hatch, it is used as a safety line for those going on deck during turbulence. It stretches around 45'.

7). Access Hatch -Throughout the center of the ship runs a fixed-ladder access hatch. The hatch can be sealed (through pressure doors) from the forward room and state room levels but is open into the pump room where it terminates.

8). Ship Stores -This large antechamber is filled with linens, emergency goods (flairs, lanterns, a fire extinguisher, and a triage kit), scientific reference books, and equipment for various high-altitude experiments (including some lab rats, chemicals, and plant specimens).

9). State Room -Each state room is furnished with a stout bed, wardrobe, and escri-toire as well as the personal affects brought on board for each occupant.

10). Battery Pile -Three man-sized batteries power the ship's pumps, vent fans, and electric-light systems. The acid in a pile has a strength of D12/d6, and produces electrical voltage with a force of D8/d8.

11). Main Pump -This pump fills and extracts hydrogen from the ballast tanks and the balloon cells that surround *The Jacob's Ladder*. Its gaskets, belts, armatures, and hoses are completely ruined by the leaking acid in Chapter One, Scene II, and are not readily repairable with the items found onboard (though given materials from Quisquis's palace it could be repaired 70 Plot

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Points worth of effort).

12). Oxygen Tank -A limited supply of compressed oxygen is stored in this tank and can be pushed throughout the ship via fan-driven ducts –all powered by the battery piles. Without the fans mixing the oxygen, the air might become too rich and oxygen toxicity may occur (as well as presenting a fire-hazard). Dispersing the oxygen without this system requires an SR= 5 Knowledge Roll.

13). Tank Chambers -This donut shaped chamber contains the huge tanks of oxygen used to fuel the “rocket lifters” as well as the storage tanks for the balloons’ hydrogen. Smaller tanks and other mechanical devices rest here as well.

14). Rocket Engine Access -A hatch opens into a crawlspace around the rocket-lifter’s mounting column. Within this tight confine flow a series of pipes and wires, including the oxygen feed that adjusts the burn of each solid-fuel booster. These oxidation feeds can be manually manipulated from this position with a Knowledge Roll of SR=5.

15). Control Deck -A system of levers, wheels, and switches activate the various systems of the ship. Tillinghast has locked the lever for the “rocket-lifters” in the full-throttle position (wedging furnace coal down into its gears). It takes 3 turns and a Merged Knowledge and Reflex Roll of SR=4 to restore it to working order.

The Aerie

The Sultan has created his own floating island, he refers to as *The Aerie*. The island is nearly 1000’ long and just over 300’ wide. It is comprised of a granite/sandstone base with a rolling landscape of amber sand dunes covering its surface.

Near the back half of the island stands a majestic palace of marble -built in

a tradition that seems to mix Persian and Asiatic designs. This grand fortress’s foundations extend into the rock bed of the island and are partially visible dangling out its underbelly. This is especially the case with the guards tower -whose spiraling staircase ends abruptly below as remnants of a once underground portion.

One cannot be sure from which real-world location this “island” was taken, but through the use of well-engineered mortises and cable-tethered orbs of the anti-gravity compound “cavorite,” Quisquis was able to raise an entire chunk of desert off the earth and into the sky.

Since its initial construction, the Sultan has made many modifications to this facility. He (and his men) have devised a intake system that can separate out the major gasses of the atmosphere. With this process he has been able to collect hydrogen for a miniature reactor that powers his palace’s equipment. More so, he can create water and oxygen-rich air to supply his needs at any altitude. With the reactor as a power source, Quisquis has fitted much of the palace with electric lights and heat. Finally, he has made the entire island mobile by securing propeller-driven turbines underneath the island. Anchored amid a system of catwalks and maintenance platforms, four carriage-sized turbines create enough force to move *The Aerie* at a steady 30 knots. In emergencies, the tilt of the cavorite orbs can be adjusted to increase the ship’s speed into the 70 knot range.

There are plenty of attractions on *The Aerie* to see, even outside of the Sultan’s palace. The desert landscape is lush with succulents and palm trees. Microcosms of desert life have survived in their new home among the clouds. Foxes, lizards, wild dogs, even a few cheetahs roam the sandy grounds. After passing through heavy rains, small oases form. Here and again one can find the impact of meteors or the nesting of birds. At its midpoint, a cavern stretches back into the base of its largest hill. It

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THE AERIE

is between the bosom of this hill and the plateau on which the palace rests that the airship, *Diving Belle* is secretly moored. Not long ago, in a raid on African diamond mines, Quisquis picked up a band of Congolese natives. These primitive men and women have erected palm branch huts amid the desert and live there, largely off the Palace's table scraps.

The Aerie is no less than an eighth wonder of the world. It should provide a fabulously artistic backdrop for all the adventures suggested in this booklet and many more. Narrators are hereby encouraged to let their whimsy run wild within this floating island, allowing the players to continuously discover new and interesting features. Below is a key detailing the areas of the craft most important to the game.

Key to *The Aerie*

1). Cavorite Orb -With great mechanical effort, heavy bolts and cement pylons create anchor points for the cavorite orbs that float above. The tethers are made of inch-thick cable, with a smaller cable running along parallel used in conjunction with a rotary crank to adjust the tilt of the orb. The cavorite spheres extend sternly into the air -30' above. These spheres appear to be bimetal, with the cavorite fused in patches across one hemisphere. In this fashion, the orb's tilt can be rotated finitely, creating different degrees of "anti-gravity" lift. A skeleton key is required to operate the crank at the base.

2). Congolese Refugee Village -On the crest of the largest hill, a displaced tribe of Congolese natives have built a village of grass huts and stick furnishings. These villagers are highly superstitious, and were saved by Quisquis from a slaver who was bringing them into work a diamond mine (the true target). Not knowing what to do with them, and unable to shake

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their gratitude, Quisquis had his men bring them aboard *The Aerie*. These natives live under the impression that Quisquis is a god and they are passengers on his magical boat. Together there are 8 men, 5 children and 6 women within the village. One of the women (shockingly young and beautiful for the role) is considered to be a witch doctor of sorts (consider her to be a Rank 3 Illuminatus). Many in the tribe tell that she is 70 years old, though she doesn't appear a day over 20.

3). Cave Entrance -Though there are smaller caves throughout the edges of the floating island, all are dwarfed by the scale of this opening. Quisquis's men maintain a corral of giant falcons within this cavern. Not more than a few feet into the opening large doors block further passage. These doors are opened outward when launching the hawks from this "subterranean hanger."

4). Air Dock -A stretch of stone and marble form a causeway out into a gulf of sky. When present, the *Diving Belle* ties up here. With sails folded, she sits in this hollow only visible from the island's starboard side. While docked, 2 inner legion guards regulate passage onto the craft. The wings of the ship are secured upright by padlocks -the keys remain with Hytram and the Sultan.

5). Palace Walls -Quisquis's keep is surrounded by walls of stone 25' tall and averaging 10' in thickness. Their tops are skirted with rounded merlons and a guard walk. Eight individual sets of stairs give access to the wall's walk around -each positioned near the corner towers. At any given moment d6 guards will be making their rounds atop the palace wall.

6). Gate House -This gate house looms above, with its domed top and corners that pull to horn-like overhangs. Its architecture is anything but western. A wooden

portcullis, with uprights the size of small tree trunks, is the first obstacle one must pass for entrance. Bronze-skinned doors are the second. A team of two gatekeepers make quarters in this tower. Additional men can be called on to man the cannons on its roof.

7). Sanctuary Tower -Identical in construction to the intake tower on the island's starboard side, this tower houses the palace infirmary, the doctor's quarters, and a small sanctuary at its summit for Quisquis's men. Guards will rarely use this tower in defense, unless it falls directly under enemy attack.

8). Guards Tower -More than a dozen common guards make residence in this tall, wide tower. The groups work in shifts, patrolling the palace grounds and outer walls. The base of this structure descends clear through surrounding earth, ending as a dilapidated set of spiral stairs -open to the world below.

9). Temple Shrine -This exotic structure ascends in stepped-levels to a marvelous height. Its entire edifice is covered in Hindu statues and designs with a spired dome at its peak. Within the palace grounds, this building is a source of mystery and intrigue. Two of Quisquis top guards bar entrance to this temple at any given hour. Occasionally, perfumed smells and sorrowful cords of music escape from this forbidden enclave.

10). Intake Tower -The original purpose of this tower (the twin to #7) has been forever lost. Many years ago, Quisquis order it to be heavily modified -converting it to house a device that siphons air into its various gasses. From the outside, however, its mechanical core is well hidden. At its top, there are signs that the highest windows have been removed and their openings altered. Further, a pressure valve near a second story window will occasionally huff out a quick burst of nitrogen -resulting in a spontaneous (and minute) shower of snow. The doors to this tower are typically locked

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with few traces of traffic.

11). Poultry Shed -Cavernous clucking and crowing noises are only slightly muffled by the thick timbers of this outbuilding. Obviously a recent addition to the palace grounds, the large door at its front is normally chained shut. Inside its poorly lit interior are makeshift barbwire stalls, holding back a half dozen giant-sized chickens (products of the Herakleophorbia formula). A cage of common chickens is also housed here (candidates for the next use of the formula). On the same wall as its entrance the men keep a pole arm device, ending in a Y shape. It is used to help wrangle these ambitious foragers when collecting eggs or cleaning pens. During their stay, it is likely one of the giant chickens will begin to degenerate into the “maddened” state, and have to be butchered outright. This honor is usually made into a sort of sport by Quisquis’s inner legion. Mounts (donkeys and camels) are often tethered outside this location.

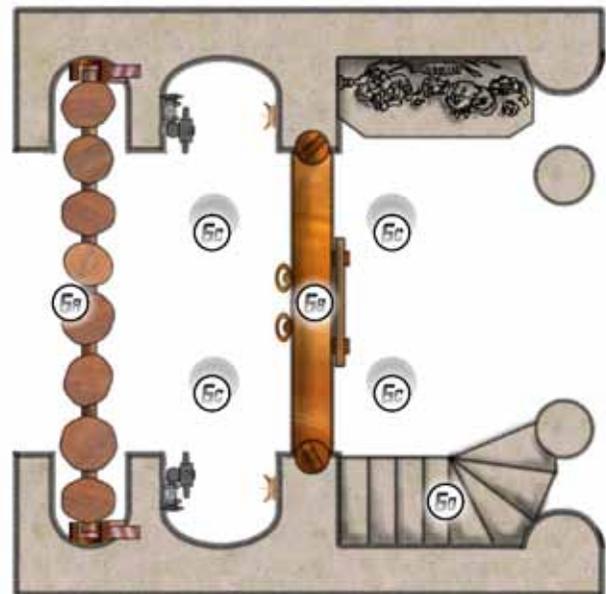
12). Garden Pass -Between the palace keep and the poultry shed, a well-tended garden of herbs and flowers has been laid out. A few intertwining paths cross within it. Collected from across the globe, statues of all sorts complete the relaxing tones of this plot. MCs may find various medicinal herbs or botanical sources for a variety of chemicals here.

13). Palace Keep -The main keep’s decor is a bit more simple than some of the surrounding towers, yet it maintains a high degree of elegance. Its only conspicuous display of ornamentation outlies the front entrance, where a colossal statue of the god Garuda is flanked by two gilded doors. Stairs trail up the front of the keep’s exterior, set with a steep rise. These steps deliver one to the top of the palace roof where Quisquis has been known to keep an ever-changing array of “toys.”

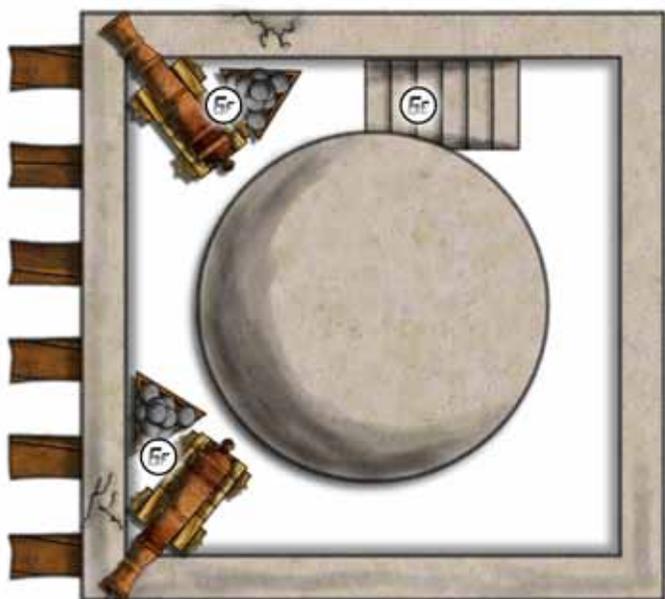
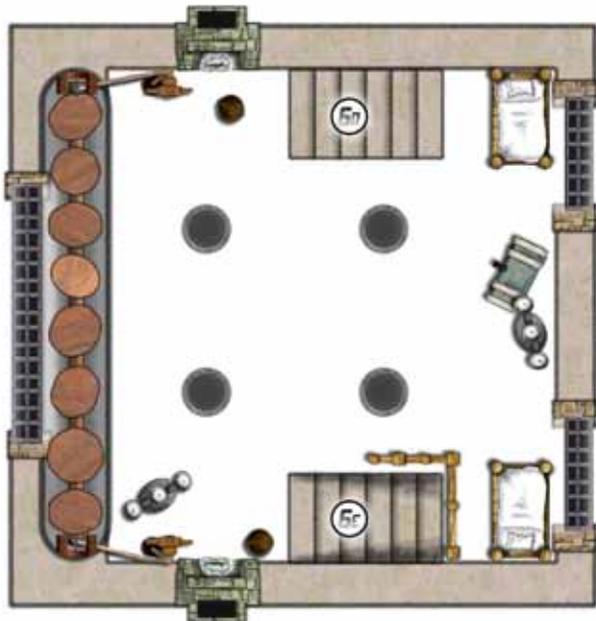
Hot air balloons, German-made gliders, and hydraulic catapults are just a few of the items one might find. A small contingent of guards are usually present on top the palace keep, mostly to protect the entrance to Quisquis’s royal residence.

14). The Royal Residence -On top the main palace, a well-ornamented smaller palace stands, reserved for the Sultan’s private use. The set of stone steps that lead to its entrance are always guarded and an additional guard will often take position around the perimeter of the palace’s dome whenever the Sultan is at rest. Intricate reliefs of lattice, flowers, and scroll work make the exterior of this structure stand out from the simpler fortification it rests on.

THE GATE HOUSE



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The Gate House

This gate house looms above, with its domed top and corners that pull to horn-like overhangs. Its architecture is anything but western. A wooden portcullis, with uprights the size of small tree trunks, is the first obstacle one must pass for entrance. Bronze-skinned doors are the second. A team of two gatekeepers make quarters in

this tower. Additional men can be called on to man the cannons on its roof.

Key to The Gate House

6a). Portcullis -Raised and lowered via mechanical winches, this heavy (1200 lbs.) wooden gate is thick and crude. The operating mechanisms for it lie on the upper story of the tower, with a secondary set on the ground floor in the alcoves beyond.

6b). Main Gates -Solid doors coated with bronze paneling make a secondary obstacle to gaining entrance to the palace. When barred from within, the doors have a material rating of D12/d6 and a pool of 800.

6c). Murder Holes -A collection of 4 stone channels allow defenders in the upper level of the gate house to rain boiling water, oil, or burning ciders down upon any invading force. A remnant from the palace's days as a 13th century refuge.

6d). Stairs Up

6e). Stairs Down

6f). Cannons -These Turkish war cannons have been modified to produce greater trajectories (in order to hit airborne targets). Their stats are: DF x 5r, starting range = *discernible*, maximum range = *amazing*, delay -12, reload = 2 *actions*, ammo = 12, r = *closable*.

The Sanctuary Tower

Identical in construction to the intake tower on the island's starboard side, this tower houses the palace infirmary, the doctor's quarters, and a small sanctuary at its summit for Quisquis's men. Guards will rarely use this tower in defense, unless it falls directly under enemy attack.

Captives in the Court of the Sky Lord

Key to The Sanctuary Tower

7a). Altar -A monolithic altar dominates the entrance to this tower. Reliefs on all visible sides describe the adventures of the Hindu god Balarama and his fight against the demon Kamsa.

7b). Caryatid -On this first floor, a set of decorative bronze pillars hold up the underside of the spiraling stairs. Each pillar contains a frieze of the Hindu god Kurma -his many arms outstretched and interlocking with an identical relief found on the back side of the pillar. These pillars are found quite frequently amid the palace's decor.

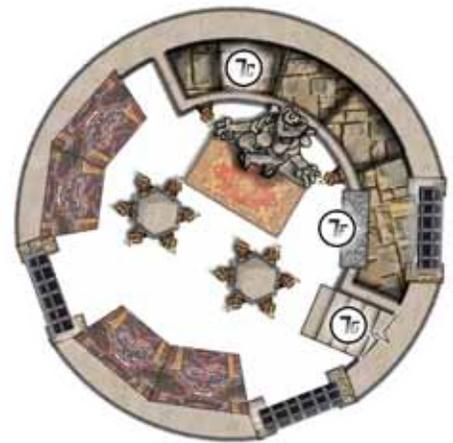
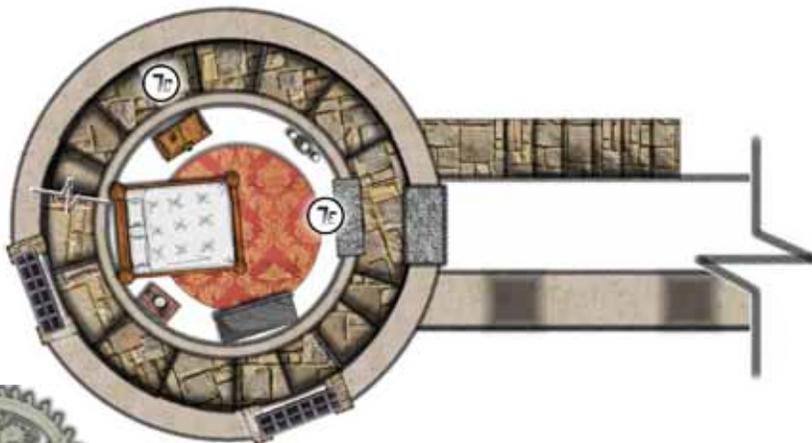
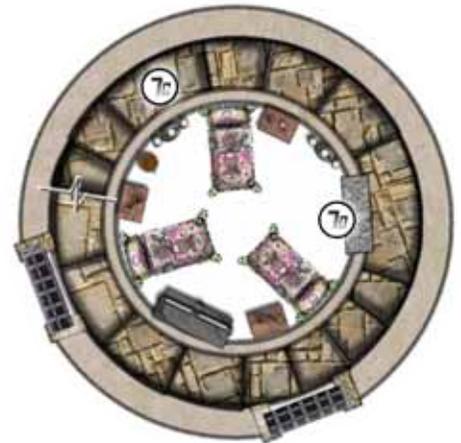
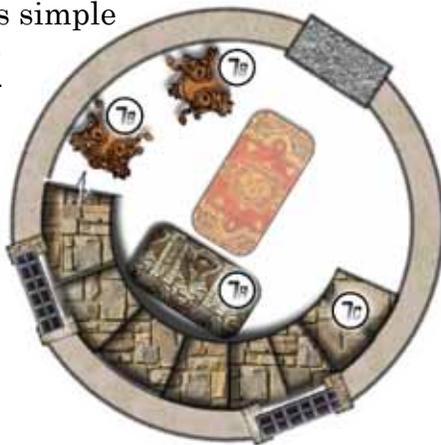
7c). Spiral Staircase

7d). Infirmary -A landing at the second level of the tower opens into a makeshift infirmary. Run by Dr. Gull, this simple hospice is comprised of 3 beds and a towering medicine cabinet. Various drugs and distillments can be found in the cabinet along with surgical supplies. Aside from housing

any MCs or SCs hurt in the first Chapter of the adventure, narrators may wish to place patients in here that could spark an interest in some of the other plots (a servant recovering from a giant chicken attack, a native who has fallen victim to Dr. Gull's transplant experimentation, etc.).

7e). The Doctor's Chamber -Always under lock and key, Gull keeps his chamber immaculate -despite his ghoulish hobbies. Even the perverse collection of "trophies" he keeps locked in his chest are preserved such as to leave little odor. Provoked by his conscious, Gull keeps his pistol and knife close at hand in his chamber. His wardrobe contains a partially used bottle of ether, an envelope of Laudium, and a cruet of absinthe -besides his well-made attire.

7f). The Sanctuary -Offered as a place of



Captives in the Court of the Sky Lord

meditation for Quisquis's men, this level of the tower holds a grand (and ancient) statue of the goddess Saraswati. The sanctuary is completed with 2 grand columns encircled by hanging braziers and 4 painted wall tablets (depicting the Vedic scripts). This is the one area of the tower rarely occupied by Dr. Gull. A swami named Gishna-Gisu serves this shrine, living in the attic-like space above.

7g). Stairs to the Tower Attic -These stairs run steeply up to the nondescript space within the tower's dome. An attic-like area remains there, hot and musty. Gishna-Gisu, the attendant of the sanctuary and Quisquis personal spiritual director, resides in this area sleeping on a simple straw mat.

The Guards Tower

More than a dozen common guards make residence in this tall, wide tower. The groups work in shifts, patrolling the palace grounds and outer walls. The base of this structure descends through surrounding earth, ending as a dilapidated set of spiral stairs -open to the world below.

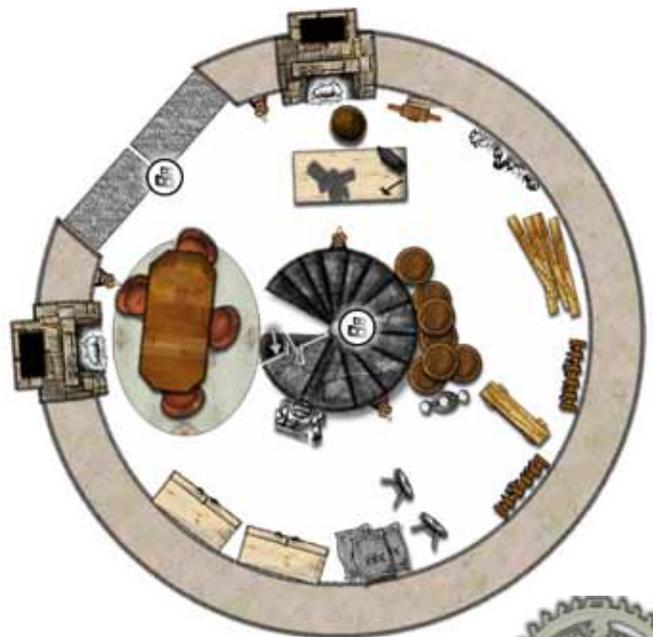
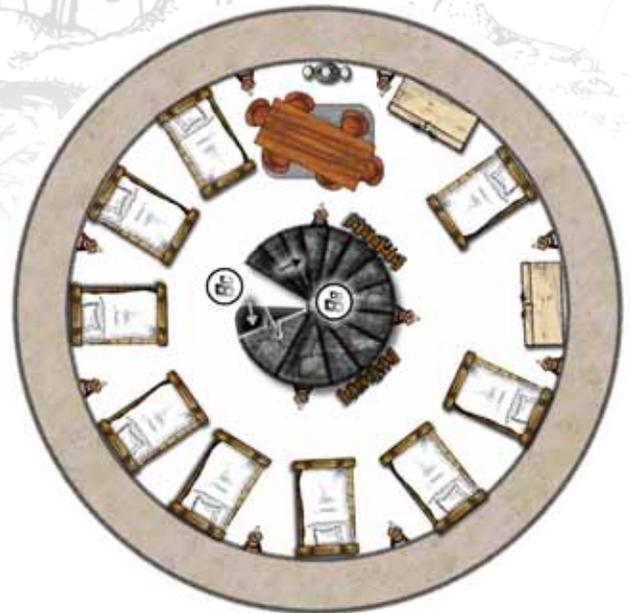
Key to The Guards Tower

8a). Ground Level -At the base of this tower lies a smithy shop, where weapons and defensive mechanisms can be repaired. A practice range and dining area are present as well. Locked in the cabinets on one wall are several dozen (functional) weapons spanning time, nationality, and purpose -a collection many soldiers would be proud of.

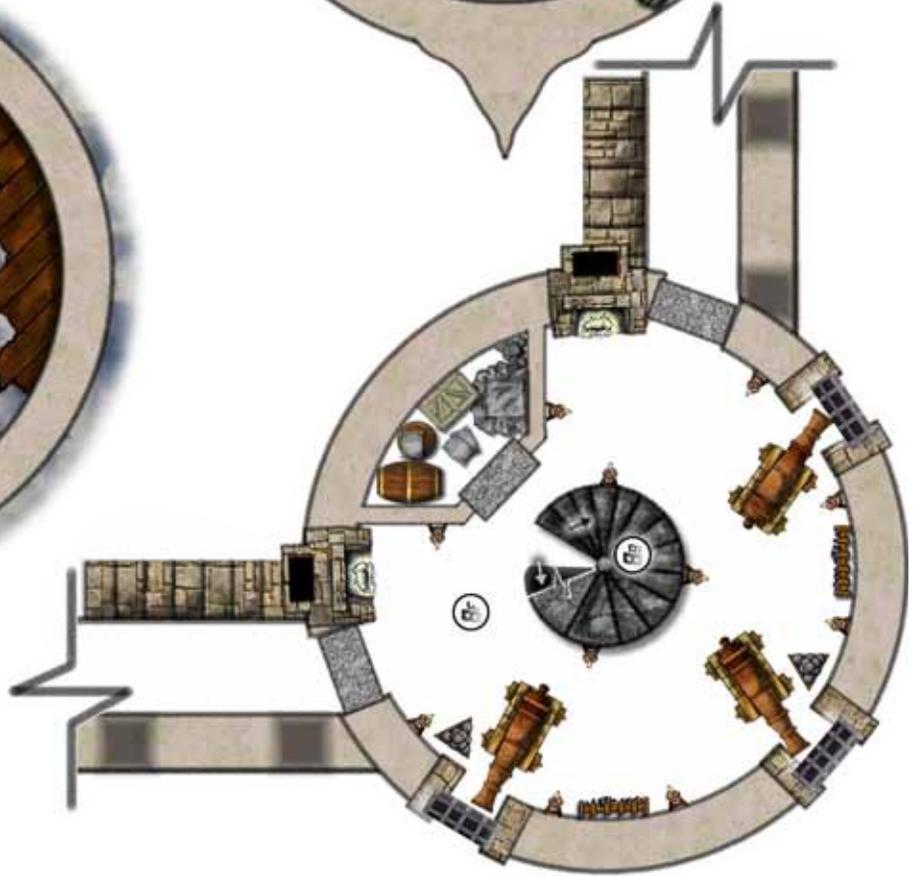
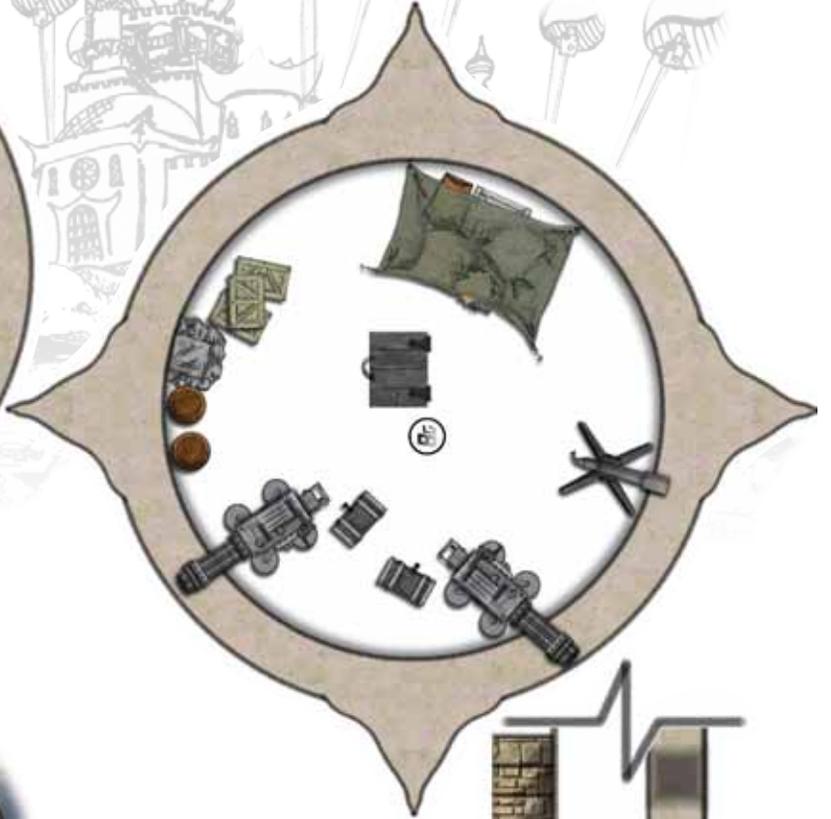
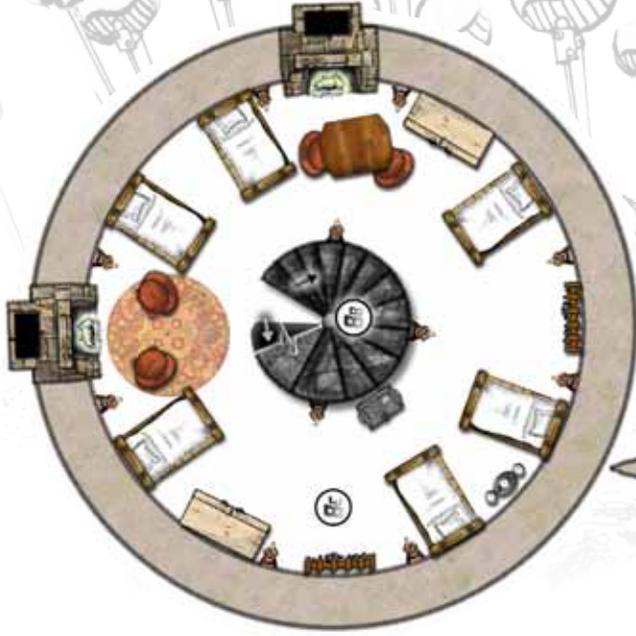
8b). Staircase -A column of spiraling stairs runs through the center of the guards tower giving passage to the different levels above and below. The stairs come to a shocking end at #8d -for this reason they are some times referred to as "The Stairs of Rudra"

8c). Lower Barracks -A den of 9 beds and few bits of furniture take up the first sub-level of this tower. The chamber is very dim (lit entirely by torch light) and often cold. A constant rush of wind curls up from the stairwell below. This space has been assigned to

GUARD'S TOWER



Captives in the Court of the Sky Lord



Captives in the Court of the Sky Lord

the lower-ranking members of the guard. Because they sleep in shifts there will be d6 men in this room at any point.

8d). The Stairs of Rudra -The ceremonial execution referred to as “*Walking the Stairs of Rudra*” is a favorite punishment of the Sultan’s. It is somewhat akin to *walking the plank*. Prisoners (often restrained in manacles) are pressed (at the tip of a spear or rifle) to descend the tower’s stairs to the lowest basement. At this point the tower is in ruin. Long ago, when Quisquis raised *The Aerie* into the sky, this tower snapped free from the rest of its foundation. Now, the well-mortared column of stairs opens into the sky below the floating island. Harsh winds (intensified as they spiral around the remains of the tower’s wall) encircle the stairs, easily blowing one off the crumbling steps (rating = D10/d6). Walking the Stairs of Rudra is usually preformed at night -with the entire level too dark to even see the edge of the steps. The condemned is never told what is at the bottom of the steps, simply that they must walk them and there they will meet their end. The name of this execution comes from the ancient Hindu wind god Rudra whose name also means “11” within the Hindi language (a clue to the number of steps before the drop off). Surviving this execution may be possible. A skirt of rotten floor boards jut out from the remains of the tower wall and some of the cat walks for the maintenance and repair of *The Aerie’s* propeller-turbines aren’t too far from the tower on the island’s underside. Due to the darkness of the level, most times the executioner takes the horrid shriek of the condemned as proof-enough they have met their death.

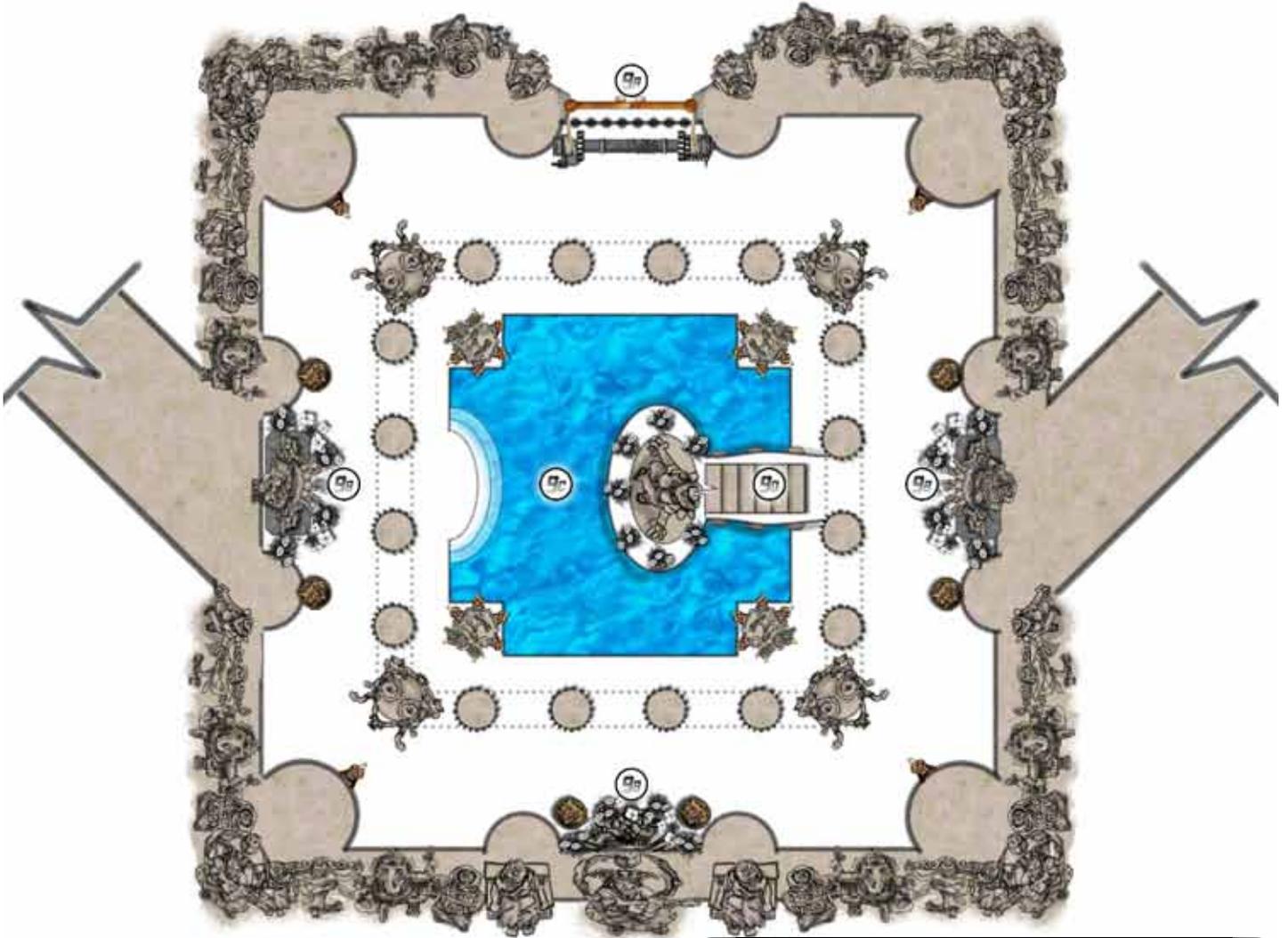
8e). Upper Barracks -The barracks on this level is more spacious and warmed by the heat of two fireplaces. This chamber is occupied by 8 higher-ranking members of the guard, men whom have served Quisquis since the creation of the floating palace.

Using the 6 beds in shifts, there are usually d4 guards within this room at all times.

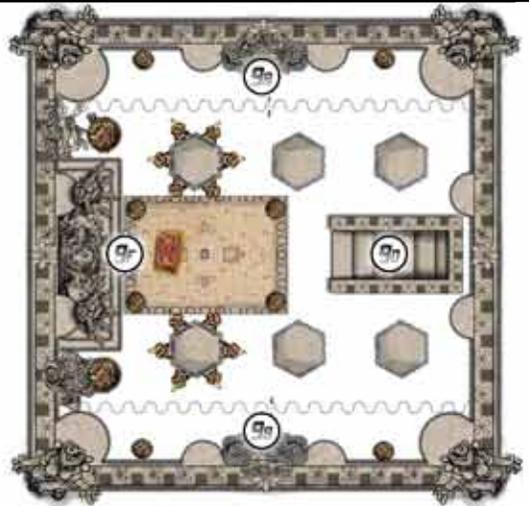
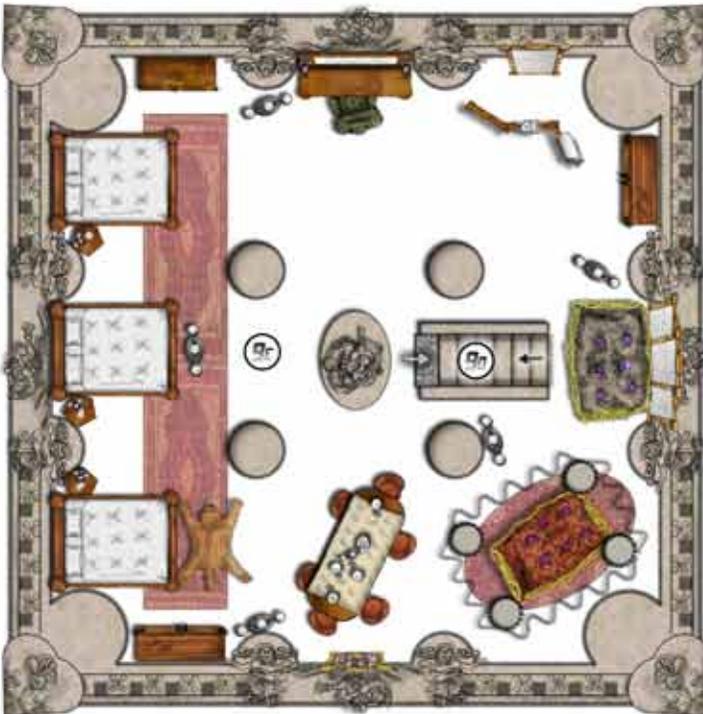
8f). Cannon House -At level with the palace walls, the guards tower contains 3 modified Turkish cannons. The cannons are aligned to fire out from the windows whose iron lattice work can be swung out like shutters. The supplies for the cannons (such as fuse, gunpowder, shot, etc.) are locked in a powderhouse near the back. The cannons are: DF x 5r, starting range = *discernible*, maximum range = *amazing*, delay -12, reload = 2 actions, ammo = 12, r = *closable*.

8g). Tower Roof -The most deadly weapons in the Sultan’s arsenal are set up at the top of his guards tower. Rising through a hatch at the top of the stairs, one finds themselves surrounded by the sleek weapons of modern warfare. Two identical weapons (prototypes built under the direction of Quisquis himself) are mounted on pods looking out into the sky. Their rigging gives them a versatile arc, able to defend forces both on the ground and in the air. On close inspection, the parts to these machine guns are an amalgam of the British Maxim Gun and a late model Gatling. With a few modifications, Quisquis has turned these pieces into a devastatingly fast, magazine-fire weapon. Spare parts and additional magazines are stored under a canvas sheet to the rear of the tower. A telescope resides here as well. Quisquis’s machine guns have the following stats and are considered fully-automatic: DF x 3, starting range = *closable*, maximum range = *indiscernible*, delay -6, reload = *sub-action*, ammo = ~100 mag. (x20).

Captives in the Court of the Sky Lord



TEMPLE SHRINE



Captives in the Court of the Sky Lord

The Temple Shrine

This exotic structure ascends in stepped-levels to a marvelous height. Its entire edifice is covered in Hindu statues and designs with a spired dome at its peak. Within the palace grounds, this building is a source of mystery and intrigue. Two of Quisquis top guards bar entrance to this temple at any given hour. Occasionally, perfumed smells and sorrowful cords of music escape from this forbidden enclave.

Key to The Temple Shrine

9a). A Secure Entrance -Two members of the inner legion stand at attention outside this temple shrine at all times. Even beyond them, there are two heavy, locked doors and a iron gate blocking all entrance into this shrine. Only Quisquis and his swami, Gishna-Gisu have the means to access this area of the palace.

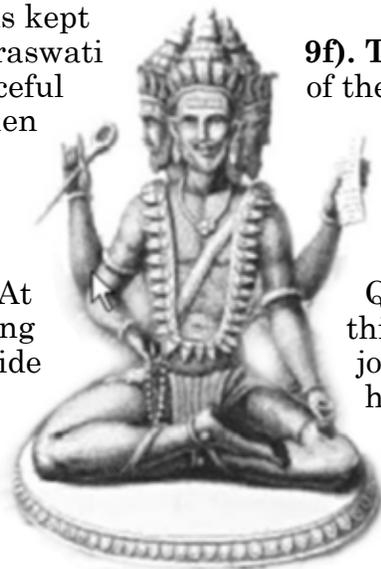
9b). Shrine -A great many altars and shrines bedeck this temple. They honor the Vedic gods and goddess known in the east -many of these deities seem horrific and bizarre to the Western eye. Most are venerated with flowering plants while a few dance in the flicker of braziers.

9c). Meditation Pool -A pool is kept around a towering statue of Saraswati (similar to the one at #7f). Peaceful and calm, occasionally the women of Quisquis's harem will bath or swim in it. -Perhaps this could-be an affront to an MC's modesty, should they be snooping around at the wrong time. At these times the muffled splashing and laughter can be heard outside the temple shrine.

9d). Stairs -The stairs in the shrine tower are layered one over the next. The first

begins upon a bridge crossing the meditation pool. Each enters into the next level within a stair well.

9e). The Harem -In this overly lush bed chamber, the Sultan keeps his harem of women taken and traded under what Quisquis considers fair circumstances. None of the women are forced to give themselves to Quisquis, though many have found that doing so is a path to greater luxury. The chamber is in fact a bit dark and cool -making a trip to the Sultan's personal residence delightful if only for its warmth and brightness. All women here are captives, and most haven't even an understanding of where they are or why they've come into the Sultan's possession. The women (There are currently 6) are incredibly diverse in age, race, and build. As with any other member of his court, should a harem girl forget her place she is likely to be fed to Korgo or forced to walk the Stairs of Rudra. Gishna-Gisu acts as the direct servant of these ladies, his pious and disciplined nature making him trustworthy beyond the other men. He is the one that serves the women their meals and brings them the material goods that Quisquis sends as gifts. One woman (the former Russian peasant, Serrana) has been brewing plots to escape and trying to entice the other women to help her.



9f). The Great Altar -At the summit of the temple shrine is a grand altar room, honoring the gods Ganesha, Shiva, and Ram. Hulking columns, burning censures, and regal ornamentation spell out the sacred nature of this shrine. Quisquis visits here to discern things and meditate. He is often joined by Gishna-Gisu who advises him on his spirituality.

Captives in the Court of the Sky Lord

The Intake Tower

The original purpose of this tower (the twin to #7) has been forever lost. Many years ago, Quisquis order it to be heavily modified -converting it to house a device that siphons air into its various gasses. From the outside, however, its mechanical core is well hidden. At its top, there are signs that the highest windows have been removed and their openings altered. Further, a pressure valve near a second story window will occasionally huff out a quick burst of nitrogen -resulting in a spontaneous (and minute) shower of snow. The doors to this tower are typically locked with few traces of traffic.

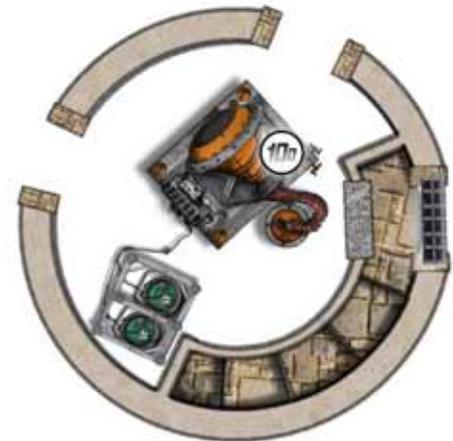
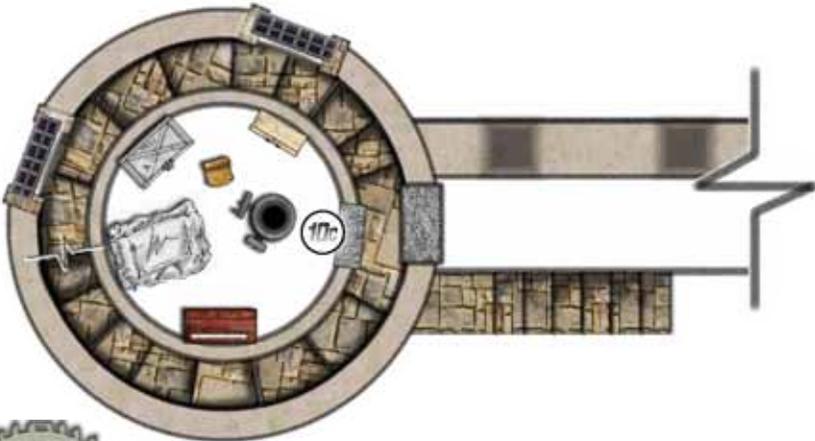
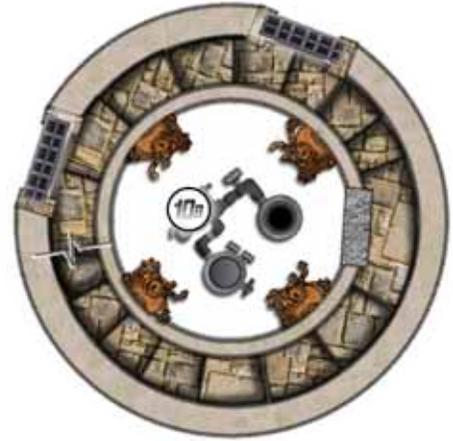
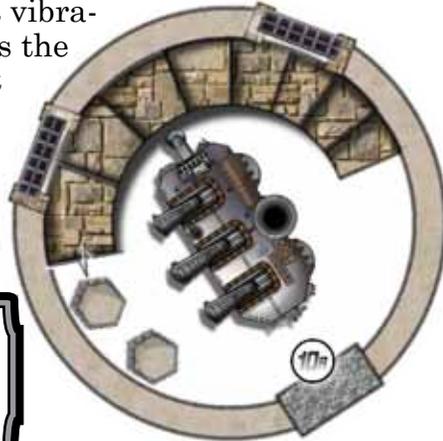
in the room difficult.) The pump itself is a masterpiece of engineering, containing 3 spinning cyclotrons that separate out portions of the air as pressed through the chambers at high pressure. The separated gasses are then plumbed on down the line while the nitrogen and other wastes are pushed back out an exhaust pipe.

Key to The Intake Tower

10a). Pump House -The very stone of this tower's base gives off faint vibrations as a large pump pulls the air from the intake unit at the top of the tower down to the reactor room in the caverns below. Inside, the pump is quite loud (making conversation

10b). Valve Access -A chase of pipes take up the majority of this tower chamber -providing pressure readings and a gambit of valves that control the speed and quantity of gasses being pulled from the intake unit. A release valve sends off a spray of nitrogen-rich gasses every so often (a roll of 1 on a D10). This plume of frosty gas is mostly ejected through the window, however any MC in that area or between the valve and the window faces a D12/d6 environmental hazard (rolled against Health -any amount

**INTAKE
TOWER**



Captives in the Court of the Sky Lord

over the MCs roll is deducted from their pool).

10c). Abandoned Room -Once featured as a guard's room, this bed room has been abandoned. The intense whistle of the machinery above, the rumble of the pump room below, and the cool breezes from the air flow all around have made it particularly unpleasant. The room's exterior doors are locked. If examined, the lock has been compromised by rust and may easily be broken off.

10d). The Intake Mechanism -A stately contraption (reminiscent of an over-sized phonograph player) stretches the room's dimensions, leaving just a faint amount of space around it and to its left where several giant battery-piles are nestled in a protective cage. The wind in this chamber is ferocious (D20/d8). Any character entering this chamber while the pump at the tower's base is running must struggle against the wind's rating or be sucked into the cone of the mechanism. Likewise, the rating must be over-come or loose and hand-held items on an MC will be sucked in. These items (or the MC themselves) will be trapped within the cone against the grating of a filter. Inside the cone is a virtual vacuum (trapped characters begin to suffer the effects of suffocation -see page 183 in the rule book). The windows facing out from the palace are open to the world outside. They invite the possibility of a fall, should the characters not move with caution.

The Palace Keep

The main keep's decor is a bit more simple than some of the surrounding towers, yet it maintains a high degree of elegance. Its only conspicuous display of ornamentation outlies the front entrance, where a colossal statue of the god Garuda is flanked by two gilded doors. Stairs trail up the front of the keep's exterior, set with a steep rise. These steps deliver one to the

top of the palace roof where Quisquis has been known to keep an ever-changing array of "toys." Hot air balloons, German-made gliders, and hydraulic catapults are just a few of the items one might find. A small contingent of guards are usually present on top the palace keep, mostly to protect the entrance to Quisquis's royal residence.

Key to The Palace Keep

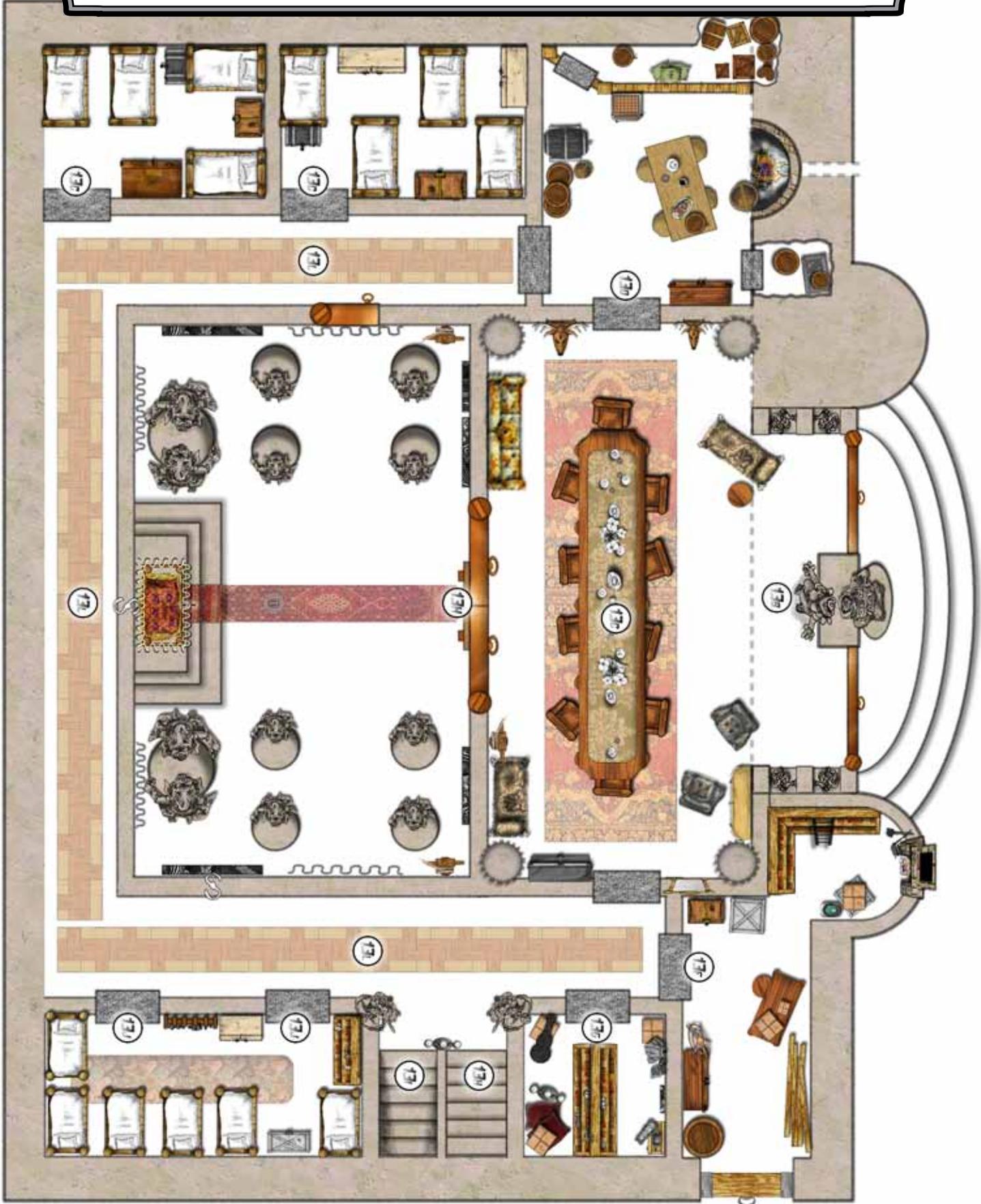
13a). Exterior Stairs -An stretch of crude stone steps rises along the front facade of the keep to its roof. Because of their placement, the rooms at the front corner of the keep are shallower than those on the opposing corner (where the stairs are much higher).

13b). Foyer -Entering past the grand statues of the main doors, one finds themselves in an arched entryway flanked by lesser sculptures. An impressive dining room adjoins.

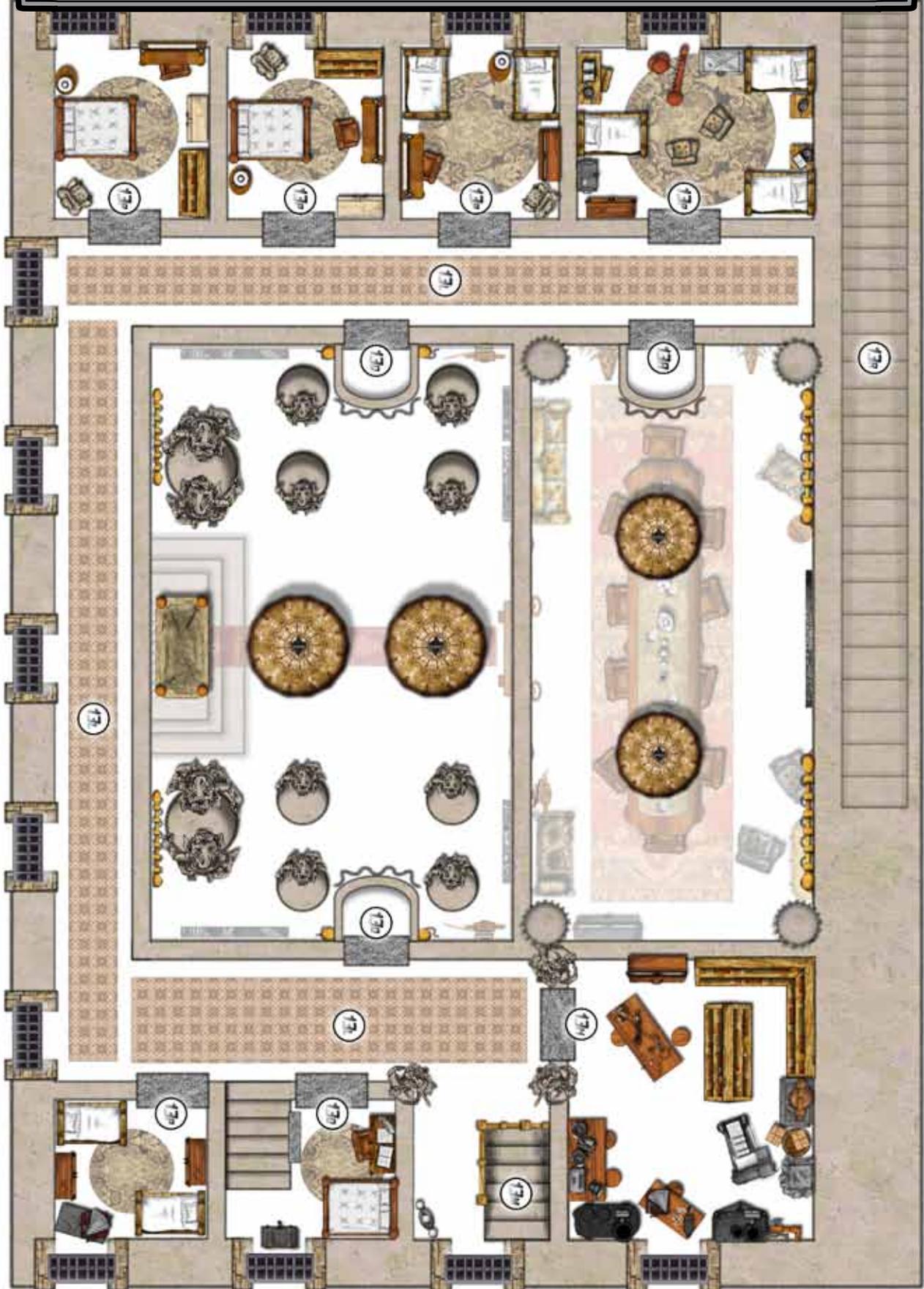
13c). Dining Room -Here lies an elegant dining hall doubling as a waiting parlor for the throne room. Grand chandeliers hang amid a vaulted ceiling casting amber glows on the finely polished wood of the table. The table is lengthy and always dressed with fresh fruits and pitchers of water (while "new guests" are on *The Aerie*). Ottomans, overstuffed chairs and cabinetry out lies the table. Two ornate doors, gilded in brass, block the entrance to the Sultan's court. When locked, the doors have a material rating of D12/d6 and a pool of 500.

13d). Scullery -The kitchen beyond the dining room is comparatively squat and inglorious. A great hearth blazes in the northern wall. Meanwhile, a wooden wall has been constructed to create more pantry space on the far side of the room. Another pantry has been dug into the stone of the north wall, adjacent to the fire. Throughout the day, 2 cooks labor here creating delicacies for the Sultan, and fine cuisine for

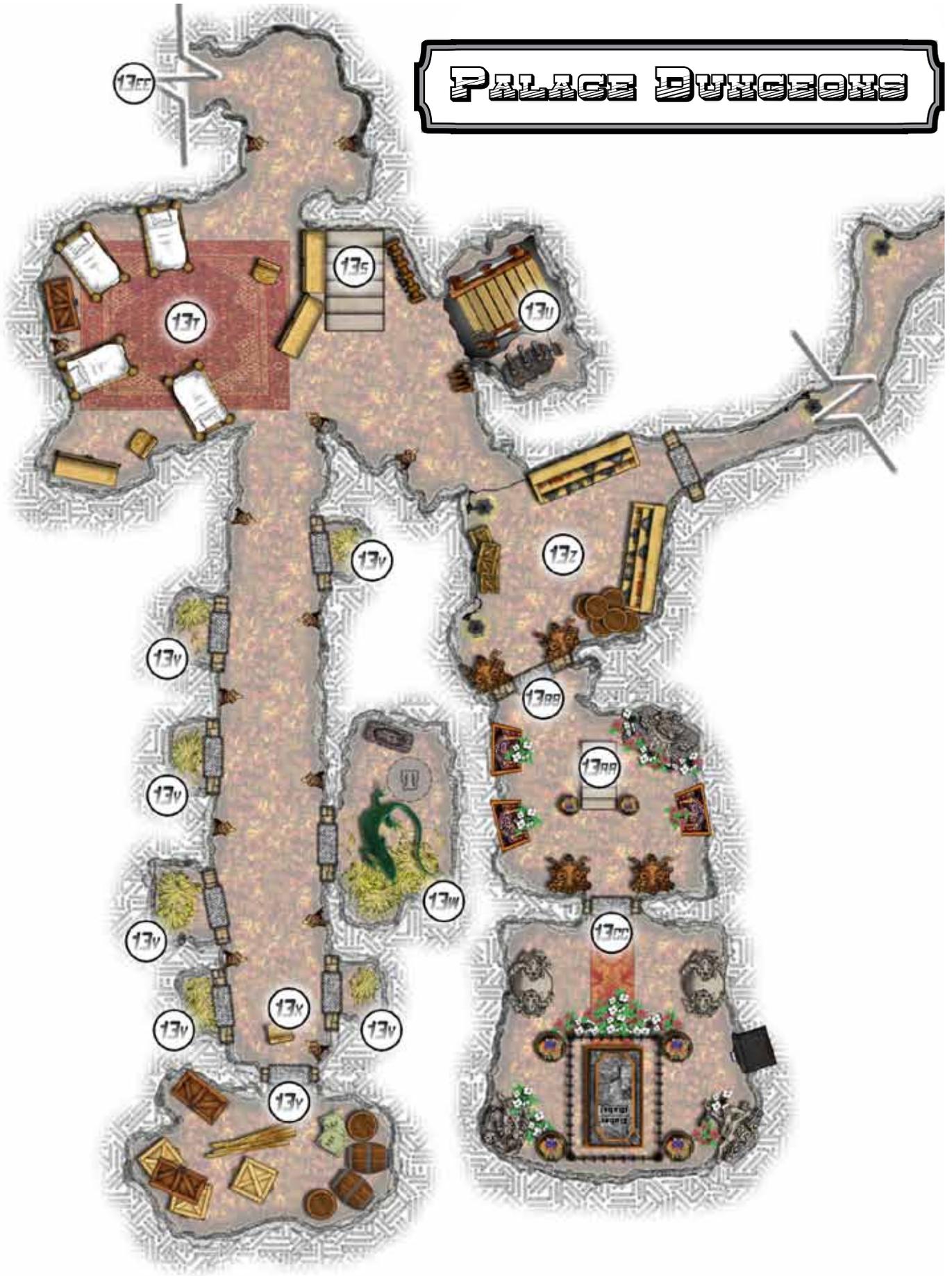
PALACE KEEP GROUND FLOOR

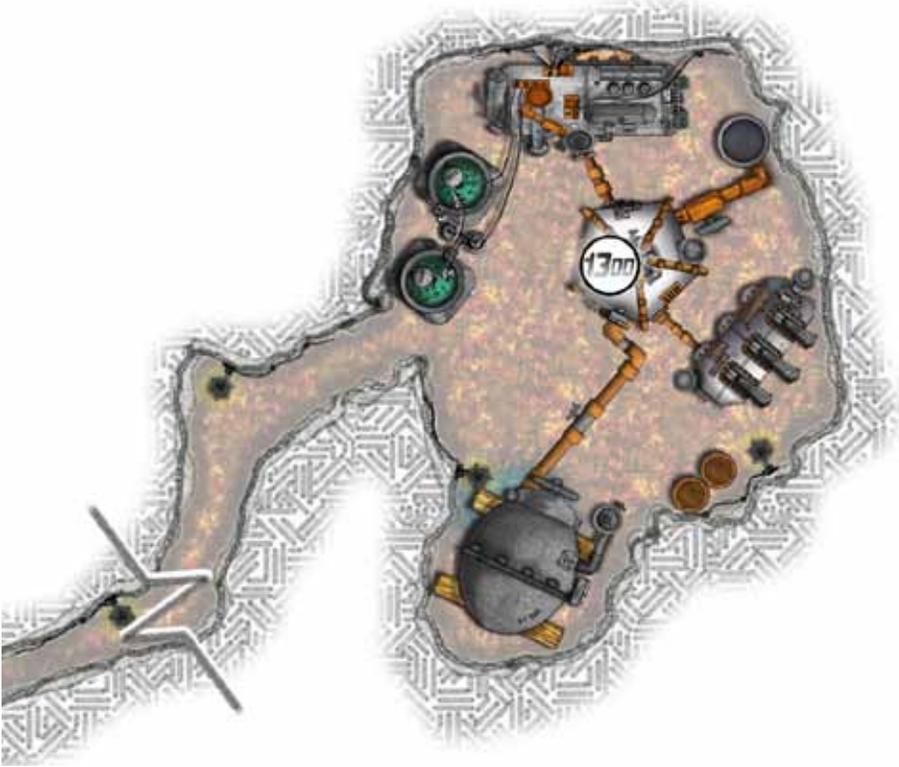


PALACE KEEP SECOND FLOOR



PALACE DWIGGONS





SUBTERRANEAN HAZARD

Captives in the Court of the Sky Lord

the rest of *The Aerie's* inhabitants. Inside the icebox one might find a giant egg or two from the enormous chickens keep at #11.

13e). Servant Quarters -A simple collection of beds, wardrobes, and chests fill the living space of the palace servants. These laborers include those who clean, cook, run messages, and make needed repairs. These men are treated well, but do not carry the same rank or access as the armed guards of the palace.

13f). Workshop -A large room with high ceilings gives space enough to build and repair many of *The Aerie's* components. A heavy exterior door allows the larger creations to be taken in and out of the shop without much hassle. Much of the time this section of the palace is commandeered by the scientists serving Quisquis.

13g). Storage -Behind the locked door of this room are quantities of household goods and unused/ill-repaired items.

13h). Stairs Up to Second Story

13i). Stairs Down to the Dungeon

13j). Palace Guard Barracks -Most of Quisquis's inner legion of soldiers take leave in this chamber. Bunked beds house a dozen such men here -all working in shifts to secure the palace. At any given time there will be d4 guards still in this room.

13k). The Court of Quisquis -The greatest portion of the palace's first floor is taken up by this cavernous throne room. A ever-winding stretch of carpet runs up to the Sultan's baldachin. Aside, pillars adorned with sculptures of Ganesha reach through the expanse. Two electric chandeliers -both the size of rooms themselves- light this grand approach. While at court, Quisquis remains in the comfortable silken pillows of his baldachin.

A detachment of 6 inner legion members, 2 servants, 4 guards, and his personal guard, Naggee are always in the chamber. A lotus design on one brass pillar of the baldachin functions as a button, releasing a trapdoor that drops the victim right into the large cell at #13w (currently holding the Sultan's giant lizard, Korgo). A sliding panel under the Sultan's mattress reveals a set of stairs leading down into the dungeon (area #13aa). Another secret door is hidden by the giant portrait of a woman (favoring the Sultan's features) on the rooms starboard side. The court is overlooked by two hanging balconies accessible from the second story.

13l). Hallway

13m). Stairs Down the First Story

13n). Quisquis Laboratory -Under lock and key, the Sultan and his science advisors work on breaking down the secrets of all the stolen technology he acquires. It was within the very furnaces of this lab that Quisquis forged the cavorite orbs he uses to float *The Aerie*. Up to 3 scientists will occupy this lab, working on a multitude of problems (they are housed among the servant's quarters). A qualified MC might find a job puttering about in this area. The shelves here are cluttered with many items of great scientific value -though some are only prototypes or mock-ups. Narrator's are encouraged to add to Quisquis's collection from any novel he/she likes -perhaps MCs will find one of Dr. Jekyll's formulas or a part from a Martian heat ray... The best technologies from this lab are stored in the vault at #13cc.

13o). Hytram's Bed Chamber -The palace has been constructed such that the only direct access into the Sultan's residence is through the bedchamber of his prime minister (Hytram). The bedchamber here is well-furnished. A sizeable closet runs under the stairs that ascend the Sultan's residence. Hytram is rarely in his room except to sleep

Captives in the Court of the Sky Lord

and work on correspondence as directed by Quisquis. The door to this room is always locked -an SR=10 to pick.

13p). Guest Chambers -These well decorated rooms are reserved for the “special guests” of Quisquis. Initially, the players will be assigned some of the doubles or triples. Simon Carne takes the single room at the far-end of the hall. As the narrator decides to bring other SCs into *The Aerie*, they may occupy some of the remaining chambers. Guards frequently make passes through the halls outside, making sure the occupants are safe -and Quisquis’s secrets are even safer...

13q). Throne Room Balcony -Typically locked, these balconies look 20’ down onto the floor of the Sultan’s court. It is a habit of Carne to frequent the balconies when passing by.

13r). Dining Room Balcony -20’ below, one looks down upon the luxury of the dining area -the table stretching across their field of vision. A set of chandeliers hang level with the balcony’s base.

Key to The Palace Dungeon

13s). Stairs Up to the First Story (these stairs are always guarded see #13t)

13t). Guard Barracks -This crude passage holds 4 bunk beds meant to house the guards that work in the belly of *The Aerie*. At all times a guard is posted near the base of the stairs. Additionally d4 guards will be in the bunks -and easily roused by any ruckus.

13u). Maintenance Platform -Operated by levers on the outer wall of this alcove, a wooden lift descends down a stone shaft, reappearing under the base of *The Aerie*. This platform connects up with a grid work of narrow catwalks and platforms used to

service the propeller-driven turbines that move the floating island.

13v). Dungeon Cell -Only a light pallet of straw defends the occupant against the cold stone surfaces of this cell. A heavy iron door has been mortared into blocks that seal the chamber’s front. Often times, Quisquis’s men will be placed in these cells for minor offenses or to wait out more severe punishments (such as *Walking the Stairs of Rudra*).

13w). Large Dungeon Cell -Once used to hold prisoners *en masse*, this larger prison now contains the Sultan’s prized pet -a monitor lizard named Korgo -made giant by the Herakleophobia formula. Aside from the iron door of the chamber -a vertical stone slide leads 10’ up from the roof of the cell to a trapdoor in the Sultan’s court (#13k). Anyone entering Korgo’s area will be view at as “lunch” unless they are able to use their skills and equipment to prod the lizard away -even this method will fail should the monster get hungry enough.

13x). The Watcher’s Chair -One guard is always positioned in this chair to keep watch on the Sultan’s prisoners. The job is mind numbing at best, and quite often snores echo down this dungeon hall.

13y). Cold Storage -The stone core of the island is quite frigid making this hollow chamber well suited to store meats and other perishables.

13z). Equipment Storage -Gear to fix the machinery found in the reactor room and the turbines below *The Aerie* is stored in this antechamber. Shelves and crates line the walls, but bright electric lights chase away most of their shadows. Both doors leading out from here are locked.

13aa). Secret Stairs -A simple set of stairs lead up to a sliding door giving access to the Sultan’s Court. The

Captives in the Court of the Sky Lord

door opens within Quisquis baldachin, just below its pillow-like mattress.

13bb). Shrine of Mourning -This cavern holds a shrine dedicated to the dead. It is lit by two eerie braziers at the foot of the secret stairs. Another door, honored by ornate bronze pillars, proceeds into a tomb. It is locked.

13cc). The Tomb of Mahaul Dakar -Quisquis has moved his mother's tomb into this sacred chamber of the palace. The room is pristine, and decorated with such grandeur as to befit a queen or empress. A wrought iron gate surrounds his mother's sarcophagus. Recessed into one wall is a vault containing the best of Quisquis's loot. Depending on how recently he has visited the sea cave, the vault will contain thousands and thousands of dollars worth of precious gems and metals. It also contains his notes on the process for making cavorite and the Herakleophobia II formula -among other scientific secrets. Only the Sultan himself has access to this room and knows the combination of the vault.

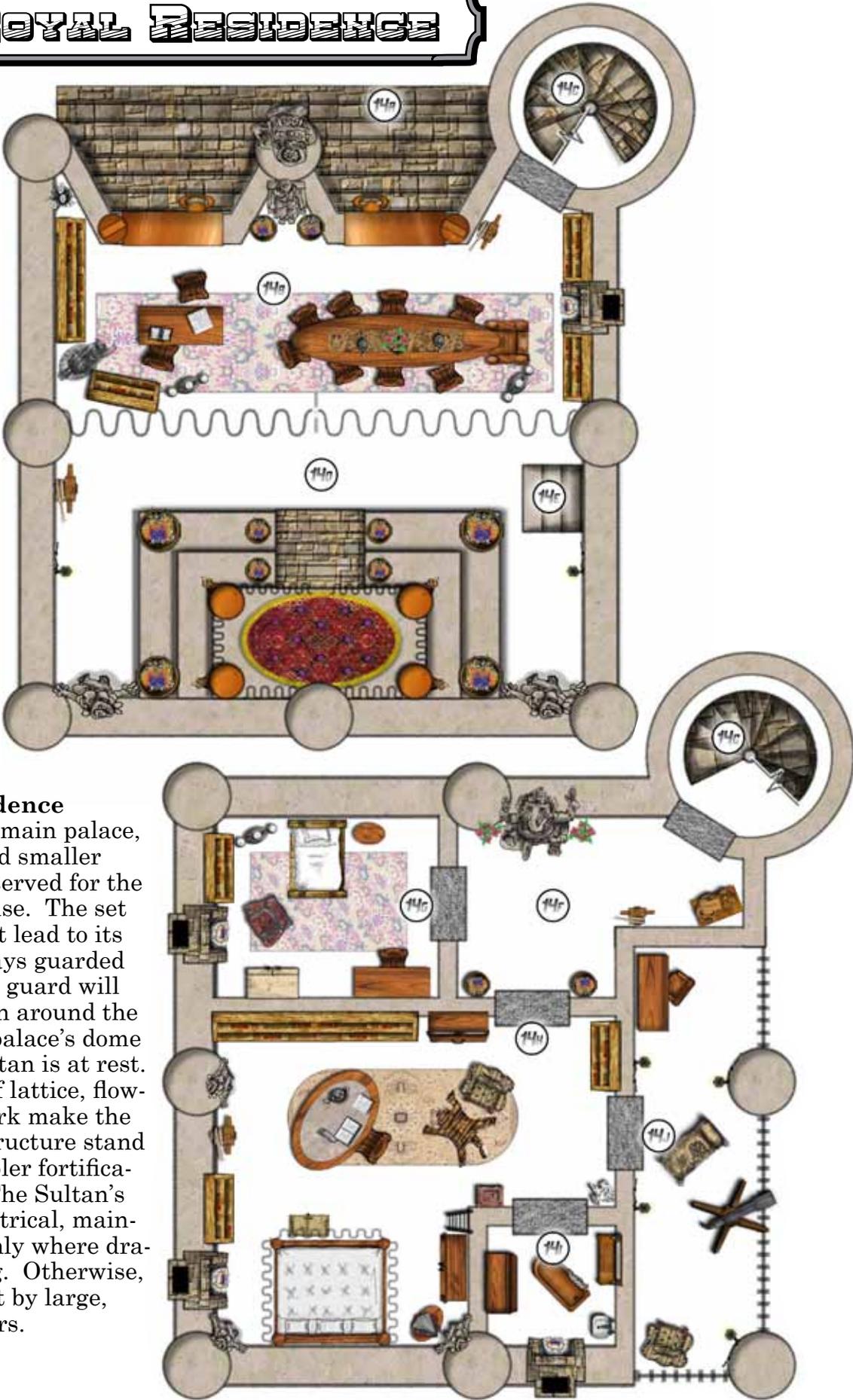
13dd). The Reactor Room -Down a long stretch of lit hall lies the entrance to the reactor room -the heart of the Sultan's island. This room is always abuzz with rumbling engines and the whine of an electric generator. Throughout these machines, gases from the intake tower are stored and converted as fuel for a hydrogen reactor. Though crude, this reactor is decades beyond the technology of the time. Ironically, it was constructed under the direction of Quisquis, himself, after seeing some conceptual sketches that survived the destruction of his father's *Nautilus*. The equipment within presents many hazards. Should the reactor be damaged, it is likely to meltdown and explode -destroying *The Aerie* and everything on it.

13ee). Winding Passage -A twist of cavern moves across the island to the cave at #3. The passage is lit by torch light. Guards and members of Quisquis's inner legion traverse the tunnel quite randomly (a 1 on a d12 indicates their presence). The MCs will not be granted passage down this length of cave unless escorted by one of the members of Quisquis's inner court.



13ff). The Aviary -The girth of this cave allows the men of *The Aerie* to cage several (3-5) giant falcons within. All the gear used to saddle and ride these beasts is placed about as well. Three wranglers make a permanent home here, taking care of and training these enormous birds. Unlike the chickens at #11, the falcons are well-conditioned and will not attack humans unless commanded to do so (or in the ravenous stage of the Herakleophobia formula). Manacles used to hold the birds down during training are anchored throughout the cave's walls. Two massive doors open out on to the surface of the island. These act as hanger doors for the launch and return of the hawks.

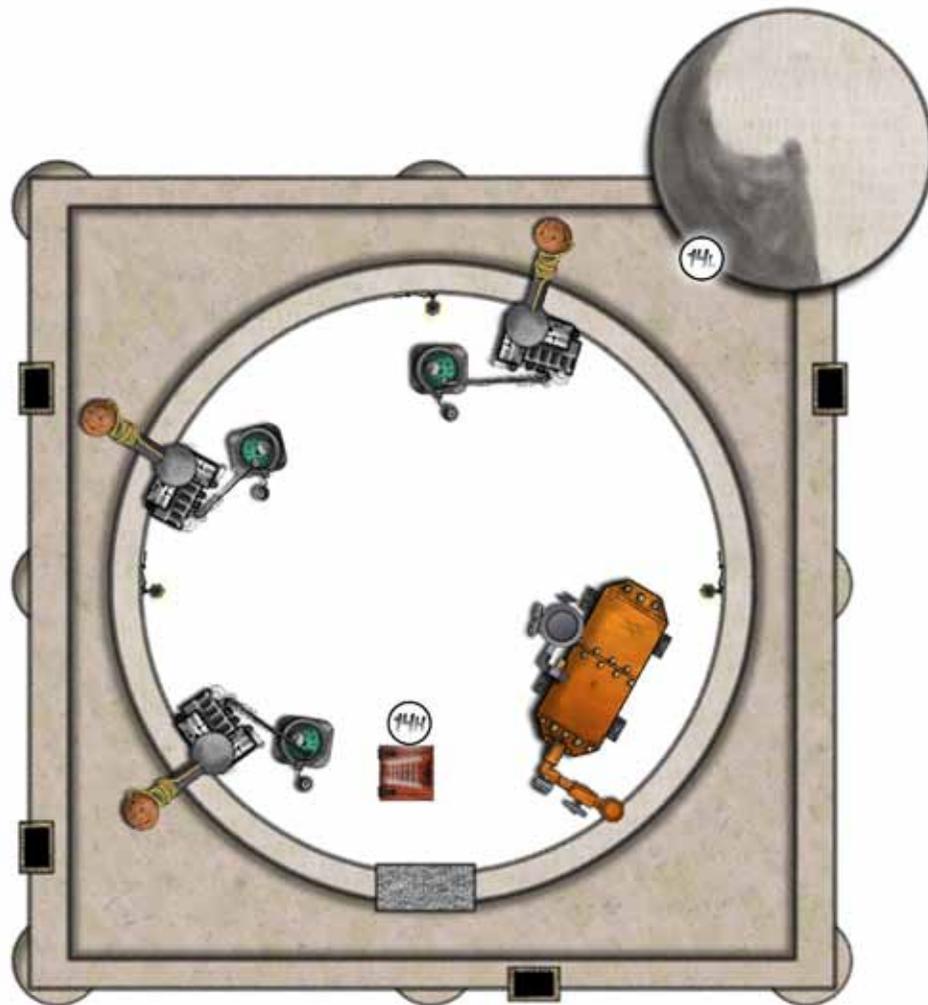
THE ROYAL RESIDENCE



The Royal Residence

On top the main palace, a well-ornamented smaller palace stands, reserved for the Sultan's private use. The set of stone steps that lead to its entrance are always guarded and an additional guard will often take position around the perimeter of the palace's dome whenever the Sultan is at rest. Intricate reliefs of lattice, flowers, and scroll work make the exterior of this structure stand out from the simpler fortification it rests on. The Sultan's abode is fully electrical, maintaining torches only where dramatically alluring. Otherwise, most rooms are lit by large, electric chandeliers.

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Key to The Royal Residence

14a). The Approach -An embankment of stone steps rises to the daunting set of doors of the Sultan's private abode. The steps are crowned by a single marble statue -seemingly the god Ram. The doors themselves are inlaid with gold leaf and depict a water garden scene. This entrance is always guarded by at least 2 sentries, and the doors are barred unless the Sultan is expecting company. When secured, the doors have a material rating of D12/d6 and a pool of 500.

14b). The Sultan's Study -Beyond the initial entrance resides a

lush study. Bookcases, statuary, and an inviting fireplace surround a long meeting table set with candles and exotic center pieces. A smaller table sits off to the side, its surface always cluttered by material for the Sultan's most recent fancies (here the MCs might find clues to whatever plot line they are pursuing -such as the shipping manifest and newspapers from the *War in the Air* plot). Quisquis uses this room to entertain personal guests or meet with the upper echelon of his men. A heavy curtain of tapestry separates this area from area #14d.

14c). Stair Well -This spire of stairs leads up and down the floors of the Sultan's private residence. At its summit a simple door

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opens onto the roof.

14d). The Royal Lounge -A brisk dais is topped by an ornate baldachin, much in the style of the palace throne room. Inside, an opulent mattress offers recreation to the Sultan and any “guests” he might be entertaining from his harem. This section of room is intensely bright from the burning braziers on the dais and the over-sized sconces mounted to the poles of the baldachin.

14e). Stairs Down -These stairs break steeply through the surface of the palace roof descending into Hytram’s room at #130.

14f). Sultan’s Antechamber -At this landing an antechamber provides two exits. A simpler door opens into the private quarters of Naggee -Quisquis’s personal bodyguard. The more ornate one -inlaid with carvings of lotus flowers- leads into the Sultan’s bedchamber (it is usually locked). A sizable statue of Ganesha (a favorite of Quisquis’s) looks out over the doors. This particular statue is set with an amazing trap. If a pressure plate in the floor is triggered, its four arms swing down upon the intruder, encaging them in a stone grip. Avoiding this trap requires a Wit Set Value of 6+ or a Reflex roll, SR=8. The arms deal DF x 3 damage and grip the target(s) with a force of D10/d4. The levers and cranks that release and reset this trap are hidden behind a panel within the adjacent column.

14g). Naggee’s Bed Chamber -An elegant stateroom sits in pristine order. The only signs of having been used are the rather large indentation in the bed’s mattress and some burning embers within its hearth. The books and bobbles of this chamber are other wise marked with light dust. If Naggee is present in the room it will be unlocked -even if he is sleeping. He has exceptional senses and will likely hide in ambush if the MCs decide to enter uninvited. When

sleeping, Naggee places his elephant axe at his side.

14h). The Sultan’s Bed Chamber -Quisquis has surrounded his bedroom with a library, rivaling the one found below in the study. The books in this room tend to be of a rarer nature, espousing scientific concepts and histories traditional scholars would claim sensational. Several personal journals have ended up among his possessions (such as a copy of Saknussem’s travels, an atlas comprised by Gulliver, and a few medical books authored by Dr. Moreau). An accounting ledger at his desk describes the (monetary) treasures he has secured -going back for over a decade. Occasionally Quisquis will lock one of the girls from the harem in his quarters while he is off dealing with business. A ladder leads up to the room created inside the palace’s dome. The door leading out to the balcony is usually locked.

14i). The Sultan’s Bath -A small bathroom has been erected here, complete with running water (heated via electric coils in the dome room). A beautiful brass tub and water closet rest here as well. Lead piping drains the fixtures of this room through the outer wall of the residence. The luxuries of this bathroom are often used by Quisquis as a mark of his pedigree.

14j). The Sultan’s Balcony -Quisquis often takes his meals out on this terrace. From here the view is spectacular. A well-crafted telescope grants precise observation of every object in the heavens and on earth.

14k). The Dome Room -Built into the dome of the Sultan’s residence is a chamber of electrical wonders -the impetus behind the electrical lights and running water within this structure. Funneling draws rain water off the dome into the pressure tank in one area of the room. There, coils of wire heat the water in a separate tank. All this waterworks is meant to serve

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the Sultan's private bath. Meanwhile, all across the room, armatures extend through the surface of the dome ending in probes capable of collecting the charged ions of passing clouds. This energy is then relayed to three voltaic cells where it is stored and used throughout this residence. Quisquis has dreams of expanding this set-up to eventually spread electrical power and running water throughout all of the palace. However, for now, this grand-remodeling would require the addition of too many artisans to his island.

141). Roof Access -The stairs within the palace tower end here, with a door leading out onto the roof. On the roof, a thin strip of space allows movement around the residence's golden dome.

Creatures & Personalities

Below are short descriptions of the major personalities and adversaries for this adventure. Many of the people the players run into do not have specific game stats. If needed, assume that an SC has the "Average Human" stats listed below.

Human (Average)

Fiction Rating: *Realistic*

Demeanor: *Neutral*

Socialization: *Any*

Native to: *Any*

Size: *M (5'+)*

Base Run: *200'*

Attributes

P: <i>D6/d6</i> +0	R: <i>D6/d6</i> +0	H: <i>D6/d8</i> 18
W: <i>D6/d6</i> +0	K: <i>D6/d6</i> +0	L: <i>D6/d8</i> 18
D: <i>D6/d6</i> +0	F: <i>D6/d6</i> +0	S: <i>D6/d8</i> 18

Innate Abilities

Knacks: *Every basic human is likely to have 2 skills for which*

they receive a BF x 2. These skills are probably related to the person's occupation or upbringing.

Innate Weaknesses

Limitations: *Every basic human is likely to have a physical, social, or psychological drawback placing a DF x 2 to related actions.*

Disquisition- Beyond deviations in customs, beliefs, and civilizations, all humans share three basic drives: love, power, and wealth. These motives seem to drive all men and women regardless of where they are found. With a bit of optimism, one can only hope the human drive for love/camaraderie will be found to be the strongest of the three passions.

Humans are adept at overcoming obstacles through inventive genius and enduring labor. They possess a fundamental will to be free, a guiding curiosity, and a propensity to fear anything they don't understand.

Duke Arthur of Connaught

Disquisition- The third son of Queen Victoria and Prince Albert, the Duke is best known for his interest in all things militaristic. Serving the Royal army he quickly rose to the rank of lieutenant and was commissioned to oversee Her Majesty's military affairs in such diverse places as India, South Africa, Ireland and eventually Canada. His demeanor is rumored to be kind, free of some of the pomp one would expect from the royal family. Still, many say his focus is too narrow, and that aside from the affairs of state and war, he generally has little conversation to make.

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Constable Peter Barnum

Fiction Rating: *Realistic*

Demeanor: *Law-Abiding*

Size: *M (6')*

Base Run: *200'*

Attributes

P: <i>D6/d6</i> +0	R: <i>D8/d6</i> +2	H: <i>D6/d8</i> 18
W: <i>D6/d6</i> +0	K: <i>D6/d6</i> +0	L: <i>D6/d8</i> 20
D: <i>D8/d6</i> +2	F: <i>D6/d6</i> +0	S: <i>D6/d8</i> 18

Knacks

Firearm Training: *This grants a D4 bonus die to targeting.*

Knowledge-Criminal Elements: *DF x 2 when investigating crimes or second guessing criminals.*

Limitations

Bound by the Law: *Barnum suffers a DF x 1 Spirit Deduction, each time he steps outside the limits of the law.*

Disquisition- The Constable is just and "Average Joe" who happened to be on duty when the asylum escape was reported. In the chaos of the balloon's ascent he will have lost most of his useful possessions. If present for the bulk of the adventure, he will be quite endearing to those who may have helped him survive the balloon's ascent. He is brave enough for a civilian, but will try to reason against any plans that seem to involve an inordinate amount of risk. Beyond this he has the following motives:

- ☛ *To escape The Aerie with any other captives he can motivate to join him.*
- ☛ *To thwart Quisquis's criminal endeavors, especially those that would make him more powerful than he already is.*

Dr. Crawford Tillinghast

Fiction Rating: *Incredible*

Demeanor: *Obsessive/Impulsive*

Size: *M (5'10")*

Base Run: *200'*

Attributes

P: <i>D6/d10</i> -4	R: <i>D8/d6</i> +2	H: <i>D6/d8</i> 30
W: <i>D8/d6</i> +2	K: <i>D8/d4</i> +4	L: <i>D8/d4</i> 16
D: <i>D8/d4</i> +4	F: <i>D6/d6</i> +0	S: <i>D6/d8</i> 20

Knacks

Obsessed: *Tillinghast receives a BF x 2 against any situation or action that would pull him away from his focuses.*

Meta-Science: *While sane, the doctor was a leading expert in physical and metaphysical sciences, especially those dealing with alternate forms of perception and high and low end light waves.*

Knowledge- Atmospheric Beasts: *Crawford has done extensive research on these creatures to the point of jeopardizing his own health and sanity. All rolls relating to this knowledge receive a BF x 2.*

Strength of a Madman: *Once per encounter, Tillinghast may gain a BF x 3 to any Prowess-related roll.*

Limitations

Mad: *The Doctor is totally obsessed with proving the existence of atmospheric beasts, working on any other, unrelated activity hinders him with a Lucidity Deduction. Further all acts of normal persuasion and attempts at social influence receive a DF x 2.*

Possessions

Smelling Salts: *13 packets of sulfur-based packets taken from Velderbalt's Asylum.*

Crude Knife: *DF +1, starting range = incapable, maximum range = touch, delay -2.*

Syringe of Quinine: *Used for its muscle relaxant properties at the asylum, this syringe contains one dose powerful enough to make a character paralyzed for*

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D8 hours. It has a poison rating of D12/d4 and an SR=8. After injection, it takes d6 turns for its effects to set in).

Other Items: On the inside of his jacket he carries a newspaper clipping announcing the launch of The Jacob's ladder in Hyde Park.

Disquisition- Dr. Tillinghast still perceives himself to be a sophisticated man of science –worthy of high esteem, even though outwardly his madness has brought him to the brink of animalistic behavior and looks. His clothes are soiled and ragged -hair long and bunched in tangled nests. His hands are claw-like, and his mouth is nearly toothless. Nothing is of any consequence to the doctor beyond his experiments with the atmospheric beasts. He will put on a visage of sanity, if only as a ploy to escape his bounds and pursue his scientific passion. If brought on to *The Aerie* his motivations will be:

- ☛ To free himself and gain access to the Diving Belle for his own personal explorations.
- ☛ To recover hard evidence of the existence of atmospheric beasts (including samples of "pwdre ser").
- ☛ To trick Quisquis into constructing a light diffusion ray (claiming it as a weapon) that would populate the air with high-energy photon packets, forcing the appearance of any "invisible" atmospheric beasts.
- ☛ To avoid abuse and euthanization by Dr. Gull and others who might take his position.

Giant Falcon (3-5) (The "Roc")

Fiction Rating: Incredible

Demeanor: Neutral/Hostile

Socialization: Solitary or Paired

Native to: Any High Altitude

Size: O (30' wingspan)



Base Flight: 1000'

Attributes

P: D8/d8 +0	R: D10/d4 +5	H: D6/d6 55
W: D6/d8 -2	K: D4/d20 -8	L: D6/d8 30(15)
D: D6/d8 -2	F: D8/d6 +2	S: D8/d6 15

Innate Abilities

Beak: This beast deals DF x 3 with its beak.
Talons: The clutches of this bird have a BF x 3 to all rolls associated with grabbing a prey and maintaining the grab. They deal DF x 2 damage.

Terrific Eyesight: The superb depth perception and acute (almost telescopic) vision of a falcon help it to distinguish prey from thousands of feet overhead. All visual tasks can be rolled with a bonus D12.

Aerial Lift: While in flight the "Roc" uses Value Column D for measuring its lifting capacity.

Sonic Screech: All within an adjacent space to the bird when it emits a squawk (once per encounter) must roll Lucidity verses SR=4 or lose their next action/sub-action.

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Innate Weaknesses

Plumage: 18 points of damage to the bird's wings (a well-placed hit) will cause it to tumble from the sky.

Enraged: As the Herakleophobia II formula runs its course, these falcons become ravenous. In this stage (months into its life cycle) the bird's Lucidity drops to 15 and it is driven to attack all moving objects. It must make a Devotion Roll at SR = 6 or attack any moving thing it comes across.

Disquisition- As birds, falcons are fast, durable, and easily bred for training. Under the careful regiment of Quisquis's scientists, these birds are given the Herakleophobia II formula during their youth, and made to grow as large as horses. Quisquis's inner legion then train on the birds, using them as aerial mounts -an effective strike force that are nearly impossible to maneuver against. The down side to this process is that the formula eventually self-synthesizes at a rate beyond what the bird's metabolism can handle. After 18 months or more, the birds become rapacious and have to be put down. In its ferocious state, the hawk's eyes grow milky and its beak fills with yellow phlegmatic fluid. It constantly squawks out "threats" to all around it.

Diving Belle (Quisquis's Airship)

Fiction Rating: *Fantastic*

Attributes

Crew: 2-20

Size: O (38' long by 12 wide)

Base Flight: 900'

Mechanical Prowess: D20/d8

Material Rating: D10/d4

SR: +10

Pool: 200

Systems

Cavorite Elevators: *These strange metallic orbs are forged of a mix of cavorite and*

platinum designed in such a way as to create differing lifts as they cut off the force of Earth's gravity. By making extreme changes in their position the craft can make ascents and descents at 3 times its normal speed.

Propeller-Driven: *A hefty propeller sits on the keel of the vessel, pushing the craft along at the speeds listed above. The propeller is driven by a small tank of hydrogen refilled when back at The Aerie. Sails can be erected in an emergency moving the craft between 200' and 700' per turn.*

Harpoon Gun: *DF x 5, starting range = Discernible, maximum range = Indiscernible, Delay -12, reload = 2 actions, ammo = 3. Metal cording (400' in length, material rating D12/d4) is attached to each harpoon and fed through a winch system (with emergency release).*

Machine Gun: *Able to be set up on the ship's sidewall within a single turn, this fully-automatic weapon is a knock-up put together by Quisquis. It has the following stats: DF x 3, starting range = closable, maximum range = indiscernible, delay -6, reload = sub-action, ammo = ~100 mag. (x5).*

System Flaws

Cavorite Elevators: *If either of the armatures holding the cavorite orb are destroyed, the entire craft will be in peril. Targeting this apparatus requires a well-placed hit and 45 points of damage.*

Hydrogen Tank: *A silvery tank of hydrogen has been mounted on the back starboard side of this craft. If destroyed (pool = 15), it will explode dealing DF x 7 damage to the craft and everything within a closable distance.*

Disquisition- The Diving Bell is a necessary vessel, used to collect alternate food sources, building materials, and (most importantly) loot for Quisquis. It is rarely launched without a contingent of 1-4 giant falcons (with riders) to accompany it. Hytram acts as captain of this vessel, though many of the inner legion are capable of operating it efficiently. On

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board, the layout is much the same as a small fishing schooner, with an ample captain's cabin, a below-deck cargo hold, and a common room. Most ship hands use their own sidearms when attacking another vessel, while a few have been designated "gunners" and commit themselves to the harpoon and machine guns. While moored on *The Aerie*, the ship has its armatures folded up and padlocked in place. Only Hytram and Quisquis have the keys to these locks.

Hytram Sirru

Fiction Rating: *Realistic*

Demeanor: *Insightful/Obedient*

Size: *M (5'6")*

Base Run: *200'*

Attributes

P: <i>D6/d8</i> -3	R: <i>D8/d12</i> -4	H: <i>D6/d6</i> 24
W: <i>D10/d4</i> +2	K: <i>D10/d6</i> +4	L: <i>D8/d8</i> 32
D: <i>D10/d4</i> +5	F: <i>D10/d6</i> +4	S: <i>D8/d6</i> 20

Knacks

Use of Scimitar: *All attacks and special maneuvers implemented with this weapon grants him a D12 bonus die.*

Captain: *Having piloted the Diving Belle since its conception, Hytram is quite effective behind its helm. He gains a BF x 3 for all related piloting/maneuvering rolls.*

Language Mastery: *Hytram has language proficiency with Hindi, Arabic, Spanish, English, French, Chinese, Italian, and Russian.*

Practiced Exposure-Fire: *He gains BF x 2 to fight against burns and takes no damage from flames of campfire size or less.*

Providential: *Hytram is able to predict the way things might go down and account for these possibilities in his plans. An SR=8 Wit Roll means he has predicted the actions of a target and has already taken some precaution against it.*

Poor Vision: *Without his glasses he is DF x 4 to all sight-based actions*

Possessions

Tin Whistle: *Used to command and summon Quisquis's giant hawks.*

Luger 7.56 mm: *DF x 2, starting range = adjacent, maximum range = Indiscernible, Delay -3, reload = 1 action, ammo = 8/24, Auto.*

Scimitar: *DF x 1/2, starting range = touch, maximum range = touch, Delay -3.*

Wax Plugs: *Placed in the ears, these plugs afford protection against the screeching of the giant falcons.*

Other Items: *Hytram wears a set of custom made goggles with prescription lenses, they are highly durable.*

Disquisition- Hytram Sirru was Quisquis best friend growing up in his father's palace at Bundlekund. As then, Hytram remains with Quisquis, loyal until the end. He is fully trusted by the Sultan, and handles many of his most delicate affairs. His prophetic foresight and intricate planning have been a large part of *The Aerie's* success. Despite his own inventive genius and great contributions to the Sultan's reign, Hytram continues to play second fiddle to Quisquis. He receives little credit for what he has done—a slight wound that may be exploitable. His motives are the simplest of all *The Aerie's* inhabitants:

- ☛ *To guard and defend the Sultan and his plans.*
- ☛ *To keep abreast of what is going on on the island -especially within the palace walls.*
- ☛ *To inspire the Sultan's Court to achieve great things in Quisquis's name.*
- ☛ *To remain Quisquis's top aide and guard against others who might jockey for this position.*

Limitations

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Quisquis's Inner Legion (20)

Fiction Rating: *Incredible*

Demeanor: *Gruff/Dedicated/Boastful*

Size: *M (~6')* **Base Run:** *200'*

Attributes

P: <i>D6/d6</i> +0	R: <i>D10/d6</i> +4	H: <i>D6/d8</i> 30
W: <i>D10/d6</i> +4	K: <i>D8/d6</i> +2	L: <i>D6/d8</i> 25
D: <i>D8/d4</i> +4	F: <i>D6/d6</i> +0	S: <i>D8/d6</i> 20

Knacks

Stealthy: *When performing any act of hiding or stealth they gain a BF x 2.*

Use of Scimitar: *All attacks and special maneuvers implemented with these weapons gain a D12 bonus die.*

Acrobatics: *All feats of climbing or acrobatics are performed at a BF x 2.*

Hand-to-Hand Combatants: *The legions gain a pool of 10 points to use at the start of each encounter for making unarmed attacks, blocking them, or doing extra damage.*

Air-Rider: *The legions are trained to ride atop the enlarged Falcons Quisquis keeps in the castle's hold. They gain BF x 3 for all aerial maneuvers on back of these creatures.*

Special Knack: *Each has one additional Knack they use in the service of Quisquis. The Knack is commonly performed at a BF x 2.*

Possessions

Tin Whistle: *These devices are used to signal commands to the giant falcons that the legionaries ride.*

Mosin-Nagant Rifle: *DF x 2, starting range = closable, maximum range = amazing, Delay -5, reload = 1 action, ammo = 5/15.*

Scimitar: *DF x ½, starting range = touch, maximum range = touch, Delay -3.*

Wax Plugs: *Placed in their ears, these plugs afford them protection against the screeching of the giant falcons.*

Disquisition- Though Sultan Quisquis has many loyal subjects on *The Aerie*, his inner legion of guards is well-trained to carry out his bidding. They are completely loyal, as most were his friends from his days in India. Others show loyalty in return for what he has done for their families –some having been freed from execution or oppression by him. Other than this, their motivations run toward personal gain:

☛ *The inner legion is well aware of Quisquis's generosity towards those who serve him well. Exemplary service often gains the men "shore leave" (often in remote island nations) and riches (which they may mail off to family members or spend during "shore leave").*

Congolese Refugees (19)

Fiction Rating: *Realistic*

Demeanor: *Superstitious/Curious*

Size: *M (5'+)* **Base Run:** *200'*

Attributes

P: <i>D10/d10</i> +0	R: <i>D8/d6</i> +4	H: <i>D6/d10</i> 18
W: <i>D8/d6</i> +2	K: <i>D6/d20</i> -4	L: <i>D8/d8</i> 18
D: <i>D8/d6</i> +2	F: <i>D8/d6</i> +2	S: <i>D6/d8</i> 24

Knacks

Survival: *These natives gain a BF x 3 to all rolls associated with survival within jungles and plains.*

Stealth: *Able to sneak up on wild animals in a hunt, a native gains a BF x 2 to all rolls for hiding, sneaking, or otherwise remaining unnoticed.*

Limitations

A-technical: *Most natives have no exposure to modern contrivances such as cameras, electricity, or even firearms. They suffer DF x 2 to operating such items and suffer DF x 1 Spirit Deduction when exposed to anything that would be considered*

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“unbelievable” to their uneducated minds.

Common Possessions

Babanga: A bush knife, somewhat fan-like in shape, DF +2, starting range = inescapable, maximum range = touch, delay -2.

“Jungle” Attire: Most of these refugees are wearing leopard skins about their loins and breasts, or works of beads and dried grasses

War Shields: A few of the men carry traditional cow-hide war shields, worth a D6 for protection.

Other Items: Gourd pouch (a simple capped gourd hangs from cords of sinew around the waste of these natives. They are used to carry goods such as glass bobbles, fishing hooks, and bits of string).

Disquisition- During a diamond heist, Quisquis freed these natives from a provincial prison camp on the outskirts of the Belgium Congo. These dark-skinned natives are a bit confused about their presence on a floating island and the trip they made on a flying boat. They believe Quisquis and his men are some sort of gods, and therefore, align themselves to them in gratitude and nervous awe. Since their abandonment on the deserts of *The Aerie*, they have made a home and taken to hunting the game that exists (mostly foxes and rabbits). Quisquis often sends table scraps and barrels of fresh water to the Congolese as a gesture of kindness. He also replenishes the game with animals his men trap on hunting expeditions. His ulterior motive in having the natives around is to provide specimens for Dr. Gull’s experiments and have scapegoats for any dirty deed that might need done against an inhabitant of the island. One of these natives is a tribal shaman by the name Zimkalla. Though young and beautiful, the tribe claims she is over 70 years old. She possesses the Knack, Greater Mystic Power in addition to the ones mentioned above. Her Devotion rating is D8/d4 and she gains 32 Plot Points each encounter with which

she can create mystical effects. The Congolese have a few basic motives:

- ☛ They wish to fully understand their surroundings and are on the cusp of realizing their host is merely a man.
- ☛ They are becoming distrustful of Dr. Gull and his medicine -as he always seems to bring death to their people.
- ☛ They seek tribal honor by hunting bigger game, and committing feats of daring and bravery.

Quisquis’s Guards (34)

Fiction Rating: Incredible

Demeanor: Driven by Reward/Leisure

Size: M (5’+)

Base Run: 200’

Attributes

P: D6/d6 +0	R: D6/d6 +0	H: D6/d8 20
W: D6/d6 +0	K: D6/d6 +0	L: D6/d6 20
D: D6/d4 +2	F: D6/d6 +0	S: D8/d8 20

Knacks

Melee Trained: The training Quisquis has invested in these guards grants them a D4 bonus die in armed combat.

Firearm Trained: Through proficiency tests, each guard is able to fire a ranged weapon with a D4 bonus die.

Limitations

Self-Directed: The main guards are a little less committed to Quisquis, outside of his indulgences. These guards face a d6 difficulty die when being persuaded with bribes or self ingratiating promises.

Possessions

Nagant Pistol: DF x 2, starting range = adjacent, maximum range = distant, Delay -5/-2, reload = 1 action, ammo = 7/14, SA and DA.

Spear: DF x 1, starting range = adjacent, maximum range = closable/discernible, Delay -4.

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Disquisition- The palace guards are an assorted bunch coming from every nation of the world and every background one can imagine. They perform their duties for fear of seeing the Sultan's dungeon or worse. Besides, life on *The Aerie* is comparatively luxurious and they are afforded much leisure and wealth for their service. The minor guards have very little motivation within the plot:

☛ *These men seek to indulge themselves in whatever they can, whenever they can -but fear Quisquis's wrath enough to know not to cross him outright.*

Naggee

Fiction Rating: *Realistic*

Demeanor: *Intimidating/Man of Action*

Size: *M (6'2")*

Base Run: *200'*

Attributes

P: <i>D12/d4</i> +6	R: <i>D10/d6</i> +4	H: <i>D8/d8</i> 40
W: <i>D8/d8</i> +0	K: <i>D6/d10</i> -4	L: <i>D6/d4</i> 24
D: <i>D10/d6</i> +4	F: <i>D6/d4</i> +2	S: <i>D6/d10</i> 18

Knacks

Advanced Stamina: *BF x 2 for all stamina rolls.*

Fighting Style- Wrestling: *BF x 2 to associated Prowess Rolls.*

Weapon Favored- Elephant Ax: *Naggee gains a BF x 2 to all uses of this weapon.*

"Body Block": *For every missed melee attack, Naggee can use his sub-action to make an additional unarmed attack that same turn.*

Second Wind: *When down to less than 1 Deduction of Health he may take an action to make a BF x 4 Recovery Roll.*

Limitations

Mute: *Naggee's tongue was taken as a souvenir by a warring party while he was a child.*

Common Possessions

Elephant Ax: *DF x 2 starting range = adjacent, maximum range = adjacent, Delay -7.*

15' of Leather Cord: *Naggee uses this cord for many purposes like securing captives, tying up loads to carry, and even climbing.*

Disquisition- Naggee was brought into the Sultan's court many years ago after he had led his Zulu tribe in a successful raid of a rival village. Quisquis witnessed Naggee's battle-prowess and stole him away before a platoon of French soldiers retaliated for this attack. Naggee now pledges all loyalties to Quisquis, willing to lay down his life to save him. Naggee communicates to the Sultan with a series of grunts and nods.

☛ *Little motivates Naggee, except for his desire to prove his great strength and brutality.*

Giant Monitor Lizard (Korgo)

Fiction Rating: *Incredible*

Demeanor: *Hostile*

Socialization: *Solitary*

Native to: *Quisquis's Aerie*

Size: *O (25' long w/tail)* **Base Run:** *350'*

Attributes

P: <i>D10/d6</i> +4	R: <i>D6/d4</i> +2	H: <i>D12/d6</i> 70
W: <i>D8/d8</i> +0	K: <i>D4/d20</i> -8	L: <i>D6/d8</i> 25(15)
D: <i>D6/d10</i> -4	F: <i>D8/d6</i> +2	S: <i>D8/d8</i> 20

Innate Abilities

Claws: *The front claws of this real-life dragon deal DF x 2.*

Bite: *Thanks to a colony of nasty bacterium, the bite of this lizard is particularly horrendous. It deals DF x 2, with a poison similar to Anthax (see page 180 of the rule book).*

Swallow Whole: *On a successful strike, a Korgo will automatically swallow man-sized objects. In the belly of*

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this beast all physical action suffers DF x 3 and living creatures face the effects of its stomach acid (rating D10/d4).

Tail Swipe: Twice per encounter Korgo can make a free action swiping with its tail. This counts as a D12/d6 attack verses the target's SV -success sends the target to the ground and deals the amount the roll succeeded by as damage.

Terrific Climb: Korgo's hook-like toenails allow it to climb even inverted surfaces -sometimes adding to its ability to hide within a cavern.

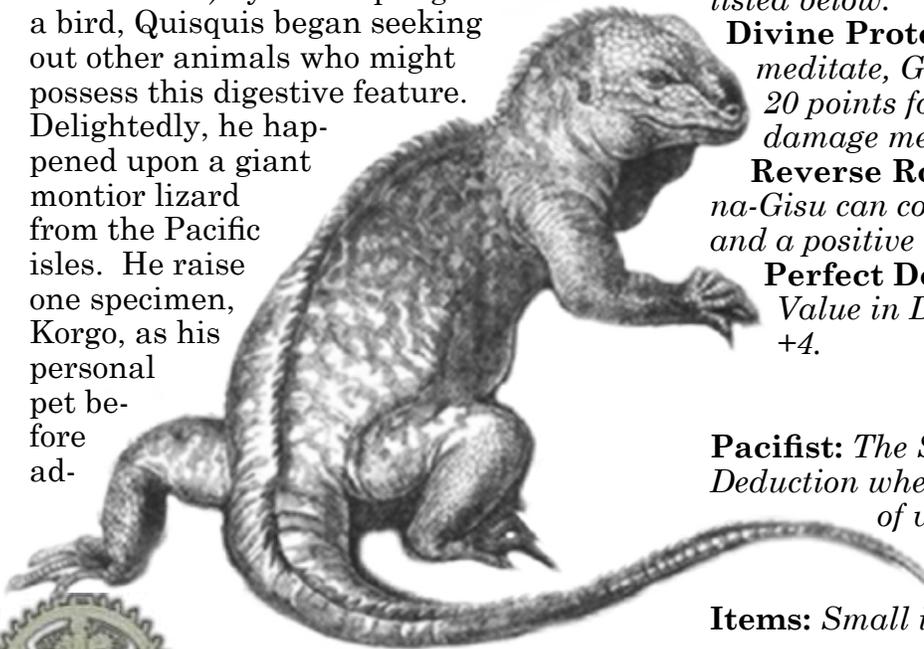
Camouflage: Within a 2 turn period Korgo can alter its color (varying from browns to greens to dark grays) to match its surroundings. This grants it a D6 bonus die for hiding.

Scaley: The scales of this lizard serve as a D12 armor die.

Innate Weaknesses

Enraged: As the Herakleophorbia II formula runs its course, Korgo will become ravenous. In this stage its Lucidity drops to 15 and it is driven to attack all living objects.

Disquisition- After it was discovered that the Herakleophorbia formula could be stabilized (albeit only for a matter of a time) by the crop organ of a bird, Quisquis began seeking out other animals who might possess this digestive feature. Delightedly, he happened upon a giant montior lizard from the Pacific isles. He raise one specimen, Korgo, as his personal pet before ad-



ministering the growth drug. Now, the Sultan uses Korgo as his own personal garbage disposal, gleefully sending unfit subjects to their doom within its cage. Korgo is extremely aggressive, and able to devour prey twice the size of his own jaw in one gulp. few live to tell of their encounter with this giant monster!

Swami Gishna-Gisu

Fiction Rating: *Fantastic*

Demeanor: *Meditative/Altruistic*

Size: *M (5'9")*

Base Run: *200'*

Attributes

P: D4/d8 -4	R: D10/d8 +2	H: D6/d8 12
W: D6/d8 -3	K: D6/d6 +0	L: D8/d6 32
D: D12/d4 +6	F: D8/d4 +4	S: D10/d4 50

Knacks

Mystic Power: Each encounter, this mystic receives a pool based on his Set Value in Devotion times his Spirit Pool Multiplier (=30) plus any amount he would like to sacrifice from his Spirit Pool to create mystic effects. Some of Gishna's most favored spells are listed below.

Divine Protection: Taking an action to meditate, Gishna-Gisu gains a pool of 20 points for defensive adjustments and damage mediation each encounter.

Reverse Roll: Once per adventure Gishna-Gisu can consider a negative roll positive and a positive roll negative.

Perfect Devotion: Gishna-Gisu's Set Value in Devotion can never fall below a +4.

Limitations

Pacifist: The Swami receives a DF x 1 Spirit Deduction whenever he participates in an act of violence.

Common Possessions

Items: *Small ivory lotus sculpture, pouch of*

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sand (commonly used in his prayercraft).

Disquisition- The Swami Gishna-Gisu has been in attendance in the court of the Dalai Lama. He has spent a year secluded in the wild ice peaks of the Himalayas. He has offered his spiritual guidance to Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, the Duchess of Prussia, and even the wife of Henry Ford. A total pacifist searching for balance, Gishna-Gisu found himself in the middle of Quisquis's raid on Ford's research facility. He willingly went with the Sultan on the contention that the Sultan would leave Ford's wife alone –not taking her to be part of *The Aerie's* harem.

- ☛ *The Swami is motivated to create peace and inner enlightenment among the populace of The Aerie, to this end he often offers himself up as a mediator or sacrificial lamb in intense situations.*
- ☛ *He is very concerned about the plight of the women in the harem, but does not see deception or forcible escape as legitimate ways to deal with the problem.*
- ☛ *The Swami will "stand" against the use of the natives for medical experimentation -should he learn of this plot.*
- ☛ *Gishna will not abandon Quisquis's court with out being dismissed by the Sultan -desiring to maintain the pledge he made that saved the young Mrs. Clara Ford.*

Barrier of the Will

Total Cost: 63	
Base Stats: D10/d4 defensive force	Cost: 22
Area: Touch	Cost: 10
# of Charges: 1	Cost: 0
Duration: Lasting (10 Turns)	Cost: 25
	Impact: 6

Description: This spell is capable of bending the will of attackers. Inside the spell's barrier (within *touch of Gishna*), any target that is attempting to do him harm must first make a successful Devotion Roll against a D10/d4. This mystic force even affects animals and other creatures.

Dust Devil

Total Cost: 36	
Base Stats: DF x 2 to sight-based actions	Cost: 10
Area: Closable	Cost: 12
# of Charges: 1	Cost: 0
Duration: Instantaneous	Cost: 0
	Impact: 14

Description: This mystic spell stirs the ground around Gishna, placing a DF x 2 to sight-based actions for characters within a *closable* radius from him. Even indoors, the great Swami can muster this feat. Summoning this power requires him to disperse a handful of sand.

Healing Hands

Total Cost: 26	
Base Stats: D6 Recovery	Cost: 24
Range: Inescapable	Cost: 0
# of Charges: 1	Cost: 0
Duration: Instantaneous	Cost: 0
	Impact: 2

Description: After the performance of a short ritual upon his hands, Gishna-Gisu can touch one injured/effected person and restore D6 points to their resource pool.

Minor Summoning

Total Cost: 34	
Base Stats: Calls forth a minor item	Cost: 5
Range: Inescapable	Cost: 0
# of Charges: 1	Cost: 0
Duration: Lasting (until use)	Cost: 25
Other Effects: Costs DF x 1	Cost: -10
	Impact: 14

Description: When used, this rite brings forth any common object -in a manner so as to be perceivably coincidental. The object will be "lost" after its intended use -disappearing until called again.

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Plant Growth

Total Cost: 43

Base Stats: Doubles the size of a plant Cost: 10

Range: Inescapable Cost: 0

of Charges: 1 Cost: 0

Duration: Lasting (1 Week) Cost: 25

Impact: 8

Description: With a few radiant touches, common plants will become visibly larger, even doubling in size within the space of a few moments. When used upon wilted or dying plants, his touches seem to revitalize these specimens. The effects of this charm diminish over a week's time.

Serrana Grusov

Fiction Rating: Realistic

Demeanor: Confident/Hot-Tempered

Size: M (5'3")

Base Run: 200'

Attributes

P: D6/d8 -2	R: D10/d6 +4	H: D6/d6 18
W: D8/d6 +2	K: D8/d6 +2	L: D8/d10 24
D: D6/d4 +2	F: D6/d8 -3	S: D6/d10 18

Knacks

Actress at Heart: Serrana can affect the emotions of others, getting them to believe whatever she wants -for these kinds of bluffs she gains BF x 2.

Quiet and Careful: She gains a D6 bonus die for all acts of stealth.

Detect Motive: After spending a sub-action looking in a character's eyes, Serrana can make a BF x 3 Wit Roll to determine their true intentions.

Pickpocket: Serrana gains a DF x 3 to "lifting" items off of anyone she touches.

Limitations

Bad Luck: Whenever she rolls a -6 on a Reflex Roll Serrana invites some small calamity to occur.

Common Possessions

Makeshift Knife: She has taken a mirror shard and wrapped it with a cloth handle -DF x 1/2, starting range = inescapable, maximum range = touch, Delay -3.

Disquisition- Having Russia's most infamous cat burglar (Pavel Grusov) for a father never dampened Serrana's sense of pride. Yet, when her father was sentenced to 25 years in a Siberian prison for stealing over \$9,000 in jewelry from the Alexandria Ballet Academy (on the night of a royal performance no less) -she was left with nowhere to turn. Even her father's old partners wanted nothing to do with her -for fear she was being tailed by the Tzar's men. She was young and beautiful -but destitute all the same.

Then, one stormy night, a man approached her while she was "working" a crowd at a local tavern. His accent was strange, his eyes wild, but the promises he made filled her with hope. Writing to her father, Serrana arranged a deal, where he would be broken out of his cell, but must then retrieve a chemistry manifest, written by Mendeleev and kept under lock and key at the Saint Petersburg Technological Institute.

Quisquis held his end of the offer, freeing her father. -And Pavel, in his typical fashion, geniusly executed the theft of the book. However, once he recognized the highly-speculative nature of the book and assessed its true value, he decided this "Sultan" could afford to pay him. After leaving Quisquis with a blank manifest -containing only his demands, Pavel waited in foolish confidence. Angered by this ploy, Quisquis paid him the ransom he required, but ordered the kidnapping of his daughter at the same instant he was making the exchange for the book. Now she is being kept as part of his private harem.

Serrana is extremely strong minded, and quite skilled along the lines of her father. Unlike her father, she presents herself with an air of nobility on every front -a perfect disguise.

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- ☛ She wants nothing more than to free herself from the Sultan's clutches and find a way off the floating island.
- ☛ Of course, having seen Quisquis's riches, she wouldn't mind being weighed down with a little loot during her escape.

Simon Carne (Detective Klímo)

Fiction Rating: Incredible

Demeanor: Confident/Deceitful

Archetype: Rapsallion

Rank: Master (10)

Background: Affluent

Size: M (5'11")

Base Run: 200'

Attributes

P: D6/d4 +2	R: D12/d4 +6	H: D8/d6 48
W: D10/d6 +4	K: D6/d6 +0	L: D6/d4 42
D: D6/d8 -3	F: D6/d4 +2	S: D6/d8 30

Knacks

Equestrian: In youth, Carne trained to ride with the utmost of style, he gains BF x 2 while performing horseback maneuvers or making horse-associated Knowledge Rolls.

Stoic: Simon is granted a D12 armor die against stress, mental illness, despair, or courage-based deductions and is granted a D12 bonus die against jostle maneuvers directed at him.

Acrobatics: Simon gains a BF x 2 to such rolls, and can fall 15' without taking any damage.

Observant: Simon maintains a pool from which he can draw each day to add to rolls influenced by his acute perception. Typically this pool contains 32 points.

Tight Squeeze: Simon can disjunct his body such to move through spaces that seem near-impossible for a man of his stature. When transgressing these restrictive passages he receives a BF x 2.

Use of Off-Hand: Carne may use his left hand for an action as a multitask costing

him only 1 point of Lucidity.

Master of Locks: When picking locks or breaking into safes Simon gains a BF x 3.

Fee Jostle: Due to his vile undercurrent, Carne can make jostle maneuvers without having to pay the standard DF x 1 Deduction.

Fingering Valuables: Simon has an uncanny sense of what valuables a residence might contain, and where they would be located.

Using this Knack requires a meager success on a Merged Wit and Knowledge Roll.

Favor: Once per adventure he can call in a favor from a previously undisclosed, yet conveniently placed associate to get him out of a pinch.

Master of Disguise: With even meager resources, Simon can radically alter his appearance, he gains BF x 3 to such attempts.

Charismatic: BF x 2 to public interaction, 1 hour of conversation allows listeners a Lucidity Recovery Roll, or a reset of their mental Set Values.

Gambler: BF x 2 to all games of chance, or detecting a "cheat."

Limitations

Prim: Simon detests "physical" combat. Other than the use of fencing blades, he suffers a Lucidity Deduction when entering into this type of combat.

Disgraced: As "Simon Carne," he has been dubbed a thief and charlatan by Sherlock Holmes -ruining everything Carne had built for himself in Britain. Each time this humiliation is pointed out, Carne suffers a DF x 1 Spirit Deduction (limit 1 per day).

Common Possessions

Lock Picks

Pepperbox Pistol: DF x 2, starting range = touch, maximum range = closable, Delay -5, reload = 4 actions, ammo = 6.

Other Items: Simon always carries a small leather bound notebook and pen.

Disquisition- Simon Carne was well known within criminal circles for his mastery of lock springing. Af-

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ter a series of burglaries that made him a little too hot in Western Europe, Simon took some R&R in India. It was here he first met and made partnerships with Quisquis. Going back to Britain for a spell, he used his skill in disguising to pose as a private detective. Going by the name Klimo while in London, Simon once again got into a tight spot, angering a crime boss and attracting the attention of Sherlock Holmes. Holmes got close enough to Carne to oust his public playboy image as being no more than a well-pedigreed cat burglar. Carne chose to take long term refuge with Quisquis—and was the mastermind behind the theft of the Herakleophobia II formula.

- ☛ *Carne wants most to quickly establish a great source of wealth and reenter London society under an assumed identity.*
- ☛ *Carne plans to make off with the Sultan's treasures once he can learn the exact location of the Lincoln Island sea cave.*
- ☛ *Carne uses his expert ability to uncover information about people to set up blackmails. Currently, he has Gull in his pocket (knowing that he is Jack the Ripper) and several of the inner legion guards (who have dipped their hands into the Sultan's treasury).*
- ☛ *Carne will allow (or possibly even aide the MCs) in small plots against the Sultan, only to pick up proof of the MCs' betrayal and use it for blackmail or as a bargaining chip to gain help in his own exploits.*

Dr. William Gull (Jack the Ripper?)

Fiction Rating: *Realistic*
Personality Type: *Controlling/Smug*
Archetype: *Scholar/Rapscallion*
Rank: *Distinguished (5)/Second Rate (4)*
Background: *Affluent*
Size: *M (5'10")* **Base Run:** *200'*

Attributes

P: *D8/d8* **R:** *D6/d6* **H:**

D6/d6

+0	+0	24
W: <i>D10/d6</i>	K: <i>D12/d4</i>	L: <i>D10/d6</i>
+4	+6	60
D: <i>D6/d8</i>	F: <i>D6/d4</i>	S: <i>D6/d8</i>
-3	+2	24

Knacks

Medical Knowledge: Basic: *Gull can administer basic treatment of an injury by making a Knowledge Roll (with SR set by the narrator) to provide an instant Recovery Roll.*

Medical Knowledge: Advanced: *Knowledge Roll (BF x 2) against the treatment of a condition. For every SR level the roll was made by, the patient's Recovery Rolls gain a BF (starting at BF x 2).*

Medical Knowledge: Surgical: *Knowledge Roll (BF x 2) against the condition being operated on. If successful, the patient gains a BF x 3 Recovery Roll, if failed they suffer a DF x 1 Deduction.*

Scalpel Use: *As a weapon, a scalpel becomes a tremendous threat in his hands. Gull receives a bonus D8 to attacks and damage with this weapon.*

Cutting Edge Medicine: *The Doctor (through totally illicit means) has perfected some cutting edge procedures such as transplants and grafts. These means can be applied to a character that would otherwise be considered maimed or possibly even dead (if applied on the spot). Use of these procedures takes 3 hours+, but grant an instant BF x 2 Recovery.*

Field of Interest: *Once each story line, William may choose a subject to direct his interests/studies towards. He receives a BF x 2 to rolls related to this field.*

Secondary Archetype: *Rapscallion*

Back into the Shadows: *The Ripper can spend an action taking note of his surroundings (making a solid success on a Merged Wit/Knowledge Roll), and receive a BF x 3 to hiding in those surroundings or escaping from them unseen.*

Artist: *Jack enjoys a sort of off-center talent for macabre art. When engaging in the cre-*

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ation of a painting or sketch for 1 hour or more he receives a *Lucidity Recovery*. His work has been noticed by many prominent London artists, whom he has come to know on a first name basis.

Deadly Anatomy: *The doctor's knowledge of the human vitals allows him to deal an extra DF x 2 to damage at the cost of a Spirit Pool Deduction.*

Limitations

Homicidal: *Gull revels in torture and dismemberment. If he doesn't satiate his desire for murder once per week, he suffers a DF x 3 Lucidity Deduction.*

Disdain for Women: *The Ripper hates women, and suffers a DF x 3 when dealing with them socially.*

Arrogance: *Jack the Ripper believes himself to be untouchable. He feels elevated above the "common cattle" that is man. He views the police and media as jokes. He receives a DF x 2 when relating to others, and suffers a DF x 1 Deduction from Lucidity when failing to meet a challenge to his ability.*

Stroke: *Recently Gull has been afflicted by a stroke, his speech can get somewhat bungled, and his writing is not so coherent. When in a stressful situation he rolls a D4 on a 4, these effects come into play and all mental attribute rolls suffer DF x 2.*

Common Possessions

Scalpel: *The silver plated scalpel of this serial killer has a certain deadly precision-DF +1, starting range = inescapable, maximum range = touch, delay 0)*

Doctor's Bag: *Gull often carries the standard medical bag featuring all the necessities of his occupation*

Waterproof Sack: *Often wadded up inside his doctor's kit, The Ripper keeps a small oil-sealed canvas bag in which he places his "trophies".*

Disquisition- Once a lead physician to the Queen, Dr. William Gull's connection to the death of a chambermaid put him

on the outs with the Royal family. He was soon reduced to a common medical practice and life on the vulgar East End. William is known to be condescending and violent – especially toward women of low birth. He is a secret suspect in the Whitechapel murders. Believed to be Jack the Ripper by several of Scotland Yard's investigators, some of his royal connections have kept him off the public list of suspects...for now.

Jack the Ripper is a real world serial killer whose crimes involve anywhere from 5 to 24 murders from 1888 to as late as (possibly) 1898. The murders were all directed at women (usually of poor reputation) and involved throat-slitting, mutilation, and dissection (parts were actually taken from many of the victims). His reign of terror has deeply impacted the streets of London, and frustrated even the greatest of detectives. He is best known for taunting the Metropolitan Police with condescending letters and threats, as well as, possibly placing the torso of one of his victims in the construction site of their new station.

Gull was to be formally taken in for a charge of performing illicit and unlicensed surgeries when he was visited by Hytram. Accepting the position of Quisquis personal doctor, and challenged to resolve the Sultan's kidney problems, the Doctor fled to *The Aerie* avoiding the police warrant (which was surely to be used as a means to pin the Whitechapel murders on him). Gull, though hardly a master mind, thinks he can manipulate his current position so as to get whatever he may want -a power he will put to the test when it suits him to do so. His motives are:

- ☛ *Fulfill his blood lust with the warm, graceful flesh of the Sultan's harem or possibly a trophy or two from some female MC.*
- ☛ *Find a blood match (Type O negative) to the Sultan so that he may attempt the experimental kidney transplant.*
- ☛ *Perfect some of his more grotesque medical procedures (limb*

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grafts, brain transplants, implementation of artificial organs, etc.).

- ☛ Turn the inhabitants of The Aerie (and Quisquis in particular) against the MCs.
- ☛ Find a way to “do in” Simon Carne (for Carne knows too much about Gull’s current troubles and is blackmailing him with this knowledge).



Sultan Quisquis (Prince Mulhaf Dakkar)

Fiction Rating: *Fantastic*
Personality Type: *Self-Absorbed / Righteous*
Archetype: *Jack / Engineer*
Rank: *First Rate (6) / Distinguished (5)*
Background: *Educated*
Size: *M (5’10”)* **Base Run:** *200’*

Attributes

P: <i>D6/d6</i> +0	R: <i>D8/d8</i> +0	H: <i>D8/d6</i> 32
W: <i>D8/d6</i> +2	K: <i>D10/d4</i> +5	L: <i>D8/d6</i> 56
D: <i>D6/d8</i> -2	F: <i>D8/d6</i> +2	S: <i>D8/d4</i> 32

Knacks

Subject Knowledge- Electricity: *The Sultan has a BF x 2 for all*

rolls affected by his knowledge of electricity.

Leadership: *Quisquis gains a BF x 2 for all attempts to organize and unite a group of willing followers. Further, after 5 turns of speaking (+1 per listener) each listener gains a BF x 2 to one of the actions he’s directed them to do.*

Iron Resolve: *Dakkar gets a BF x 3 to Faith, courage, and endurance rolls.*

Secondary Archetype: Engineer

Medical Knowledge Apothecary: *Quisquis gains +25 Plot Points for the construction of potions, pills, or elixirs and BF x 2 to understanding the effects of medicine.*

Mechanical Sabotage: *The Sultan gains an additional DF x 1 damage to all mechanical devices.*

Steep Learning Curve: *After examining a new piece of technology for a few turns, Quisquis can operate it / understand it with a BF x 3 to any needed rolls.*

Occult Gnosis: *Quisquis gains a BF x 2 to rolls associated with mystic and forbidden knowledge.*

Subject Knowledge- Aeronautics: *He gains a BF x 2 for all rolls (including piloting) affected by this knowledge.*

Limitations

Rectification: *Quisquis must be able to justify his roguish exploits as “justifiable” retribution or he suffers a DF x 2 Spirit Pool Deduction.*

Kidney Disease: *Quisquis has been afflicted with a rare and potentially deadly kidney disease. Over time the symptoms have gotten worse. Each day Quisquis must make a Health Roll. On a solid failure he succumbs to incredible back pains and fevers and must spend the day in bed. With Doctor Gull’s attendance, Quisquis receives BF x 2 on these rolls -but the prognosis remains that he will eventually slip into a coma and die.*

Self Indulgent: *Quisquis suffers a DF x 2 to resist temptations to add to his wealth, splendor, or power.*

Common Possessions

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Electric Pocket Watch: *Once possessed by his father, Quisquis was given it by one of Nemo's surviving crew members. It is a wind-less pocket watch, driven by a one of a kind miniaturized electric cell*

"Shock" Pistol: *Quisquis has made some improvements upon a device he "recovered" from Edison's Labs. He has sculpted it into a small scoping prod that can be produced from his sleeve; this prod is connected to a high charge capacitor that can emit 3 paralyzing discharges. This "Shock" Pistol causes damage to Health and Lucidity simultaneously. It has a damage of DF x 2/DF x 6, starting range = inescapable, maximum range = touch, Delay -5, reload = 10 actions, ammo = 3.*

Disquisition- The Psychology of Nemo's Son... Self-proclaimed "Sultan Quisquis" was the eldest son of Captain Nemo, back when Nemo was an Maharajah fighting a revolution against the British East India Company at the onset of their imperial warpath. During a siege against Nemo's palace, his wife and 2 sons were taken, tortured and killed. –At least he thought they were. A German doctor found the older son, Mulhaf (Quisquis) was still alive (though barely). He saw to his recovery, and then in the absence of his father, Quisquis was placed in the role of Maharajah by the conquering British East India Company. He served as a "puppet ruler" tolerated by the locals because he was a "rightful heir" to the throne.

Meanwhile, Nemo had fled to a secret island with most of his crown treasury – from there he began constructing his *Nautilus*, believing his family dead. Nemo had many exploits onboard his *Nautilus* until its destruction in 1866 during the events detailed in the book, Mysterious Island. However, thanks to the Wells Singularity, Nemo and his *Nautilus* have found new life (allowing for the events mentioned in the book, 20,000 Leagues Under the Sea). Unfortunately, Quisquis has yet to learn of his

father's second life (Quisquis harbors intense feelings of abandonment against his father, and the reunion may help to settle the Sultan's temperament).

Enthroned in his father's absence, Quisquis soaked up the good-life while it was offered, but prepared for the day when he would fall out of favor with the British. When this occurred, he had already plotted the heist of a steamer that regularly transported large sums of gold collected by the B.E.I.C. He and his accomplices lived well off the plunder, and began plotting further burglaries. As time passed, Quisquis revised his methods, finding targets that would give him access to advanced technologies. Along the way he committed many ignoble deeds –all in the pursuit of a utopian kingdom he could rule without threat of outside invasion. The idea of a floating fortress soon dawned on him and he went to work thieving the machinery that could make it a reality.

Quisquis does not carry any delusions of world conquest or political enterprise – though he stumbles around the notion of righteousness. He is rather self-centered, having spent his childhood a hostage to his father's revolutionary pursuits, Quisquis now seeks to use his personal innovations and collection of pirated technologies to better his standard of living. In order to rectify his self image with the plundering he does, he tries to select targets of oppression. Thus, he makes off with riches after freeing people or undermining some great evil –all and all he compares himself to an Industrial Age Robin Hood. He often visits his father's tomb on Lincoln island to meditate on this family tradition (and to deposit his personal treasures).

Quisquis lives an incredibly indulgent lifestyle. He denies himself nothing. He is a generous host so long as his guests speak well of him. Should they show him disdain; he will lose concern for their wellbeing, leave them to help themselves amid the minor servants who operate his floating palace, or sentence them to walk the *Steps of Rudra*.

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Lately, word of Robur's heavier-than-air armada has made Quisquis anxious. His men have already had one run in with Robur's ships and found them to be quite devastating. Therefore, Quisquis has decided to seek out Robur's island and destroy his fleet before they amount any serious threat to his *Aerie*. His motives in this adventure are as follows:

- ☛ To accumulate riches, women for his harem, and any technology he doesn't already possess.
- ☛ To prove his superiority against all men, especially Robur "The Conqueror."
- ☛ To be seen as a great and generous master to his men aboard The *Aerie*.
- ☛ To remain a "shadow lurking above" to the rest of civilized society - remaining secretive and unseen.
- ☛ To find a permanent cure for his kidney ailments.
- ☛ To make his father proud of his accomplishments against the wealthy nations of the Earth.

Giant Chickens (Herakleophorbian Birds)

Fiction Rating: *Incredible*
Demeanor: *Neutral*
Socialization: *Group (3-10)*
Native to: *Quisquis's Aerie*
Size: *O (20' wing span)* **Base Move:** *300'*

Attributes

P: D8/d6 -2	R: D10/d8 +2	H: D6/d6 30
W: D6/d8 -2	K: D4/d20 -8	L: D6/d8 18
D: D6/d8 -2	F: D6/d6 +0	S: D8/d4 12

Innate Abilities

Beak: *Chickens may peck for DF x 1.*
Scratching Talons: *The talons of a chicken deal BF x 1 damage.*

Motion Sensitive: *Chickens are drawn to motion and receive a*

bonus D6 for spotting movement.

Momentary Flight: *Once per encounter a giant chicken can move a discernible distance or less as a sub-action or sub-reaction.*

Innate Weaknesses

Enraged: *As the Herakleophobia II formula runs its course, the chickens become ravenous. The bird's Lucidity drops to 15 and it must make a Devotion Roll at SR = 6 or attack any moving thing it comes across.*

Disquisition- Sultan Quisquis has developed a roost for these giant avians. He uses them for food, collecting their oversized eggs and even butchering the hens when past their prime. As with the other animals enhanced by the Herakleophobia II, the formula eventually drives the chickens into a rabid state. In this condition, the birds will attack any moving target with deadly force.

Impalas

Fiction Rating: *Realistic*
Demeanor: *Peaceful*
Socialization: *herd (10-100)*
Native to: *Any Savannah*
Size: *M (4'+)* **Base Run:** *900'*

Attributes

P: D4/d4 +0	R: D10/d6 +4	H: D8/d6 15
W: D8/d8 +0	K: D4/d20 -8	L: D8/d6 22 (15)
D: D6/d8 -2	F: D6/d10 -4	S: D6/d4 12

Innate Abilities

Gore: *The front horns of an impala deal DF x 1 damage -DF x 2 if the impala used it's last turn to move a distance of closable or more.*

Stampede: *Larger herds of impalas have a crushing force of D8/d6.*

Elusive: *Impala receive an extra DF x 2 (for a total of DF x 7) when taking evasive action.*

Innate Weaknesses

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Frighten: *Impalas are extremely timid and receive a DF x 2 to all fear checks*

Disquisition- These spotted deer-like creatures are a main staple of meat for cultures and predators on the African plains. They are tough to hit with their spry movement and lightning reactions.

Lions

Fiction Rating: *Realistic*

Demeanor: *Hostile*

Socialization: *Solitary/Group (1-6)*

Native to: *Africa*

Size: *M (3' at shoulder) Base Run: 450'*

Attributes

P: *D12/d6 +5* **R:** *D8/d4 +4* **H:** *D8/d6 40*

W: *D8/d6 +2* **K:** *D4/d20 -8* **L:** *D8/d6 30*

D: *D10/d10 +0* **F:** *D10/d4 +5* **S:** *D6/d4 20*

Innate Abilities

Bite: *The lion's bite deals DF x 2 damage. Further any bite landed may be turned into a grab by sacrificing subsequent actions.*

Claw: *The razored claws of these felines deal DF x 2 damage.*

Fear-inspiring Roar: *The roar of a lion can be heard over a mile away. Listeners suffer a DF x 1 Lucidity Deduction if they can't make a meager success on a Faith Roll (once per encounter).*

Maiming Bite: *With a DF x 3 penalty the lion can attempt an attack that automatically maims their target in such a way that they cannot make a retreat (tearing up their leg muscle, etc.)*

Tackle: *Lion's gain a D10 bonus die when attempting to tackle and pin down their targets.*

Hide and wait: *A lion can hide in the foliage with a BF x 3 for its roll to remain unseen.*

Innate Weaknesses

Exhaustion: *After 10 turns of constant attacks/physical actions the lion suffers DF x 2 to all physical actions until rested.*

Disquisition- The king of the jungle, lions are ferocious hunters who lie in wait for their prey along migration routes or near food resources. When they spring forth, they attempt to drop the prey with calculated bites to the legs and jugulars.

Atmospheric Beasts

Fiction Rating: *Fantastic*

Demeanor: *Terrorizing*

Socialization: *Group (2-10)*

Native to: *Other Dimension/Upper Stratosphere*

Size: *M-O (3'-18') Base Flight: 70'-300'*

Attributes

P: *D4/d4 +0* **R:** *D4/d8 -4* **H:** *D8/d6 8-35*

W: *D8/d8 +0* **K:** *D4/d20 -8* **L:** *D8/d6 20*

D: *D8/d8 +0* **F:** *D10/d6 +4* **S:** *D20/d4 60*

Innate Abilities

Lamprey-like Proboscis: *These appendages cause between DF +1 to DF x 3 each turn. Once latched on, the target needs a solid success on a Prowess Roll to pull it off.*

Beak: *The avian-like beak of some beasts cause DF x 1 damage.*

Mandibles: *The fierce mandibles of some of these creatures deal DF x 2 damage and maintain a grab on the target at BF x 4.*

Alternate Senses: *Atmospheric beasts use alter-dimensional sensory organs to observe their surroundings. They are never hampered by conditions that affect normal senses and gain a BF x 2 to all related sensory rolls.*

Invisibility: *In the lower atmospheres the beasts can become entirely translucent adding DF x 3 to all sight-based attacks/actions against them. In the upper atmosphere they are commonly visible, but may turn invisible for up to 4 turns each en-*

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counter (taking a sub-action/sub-reaction).

Pseudopods: Some atmospheric beasts have amorphous pseudopods that can extend out from their underbellies. These appendages have a strength of D8/d6.

Eye of Terror: Commonly these beasts will have a multi-pupilled red eye. When looked upon, the viewer is affected telepathically. They must make a Faith Roll opposing the greatest fear that have faced –Lucidity Deductions apply to this roll if failed.

Venom Horn: Beasts may be equipped with a large stinger protruding from a horn upon their heads or tails –if struck with these barbs (a melee attack) the victim takes DF +3 damage and is injected with a venom (type and lethality is up to the narrator).

Innate Weaknesses

Susceptible to Heat and Sulfur: All fire-based attacks do an extra DF of damage to atmospheric beasts. Sulfur reacts almost like an acid to the creatures causing DF x 3 or more (depending on the volume of sulfur used) upon contact. This damage may be compounded with other damage if introduced as a coating or sabot-load.

Light-Wave Interference: High-energy photon arrays will cause an atmospheric beast to lose its ability to turn invisible within our dimension.

Disquisition- Atmospheric beasts are strange creatures (possibly) from an alternate dimension making a new home in earth's upper atmosphere. They come in an infinite variety of forms -often with tubular/rod-like bases and multiple flagella at their sides to propel them through their environment. Others take on more of a cephalopod shape, with such things as claws and pincers on their slime-riddled limbs. Some of these life forms are predatory in nature, while others only react in defense. All atmospheric beasts seem to feast on the emotional states of animals. These emotive feelings roll off of the animal in ectoplasmic waves that are eas-

ily picked up by the beasts. When killed, an atmospheric beast quickly dissolves, forming a jelly-like substance scientists have dubbed "star rot" (pwdre ser).

Robur

(The Conqueror of the World)

Fiction Rating: Fantastic

Demeanor: Garish/Prolific

Archetype: Engineer/Jack

Rank: Master (10)/Distinguished (5)

Background: Traveler

Size: M (5'10")

Base Run: 200'

Attributes

P: D10/d6 +4	R: D6/d6 +0	H: D6/d4 42
W: D10/d6 +4	K: D12/d4 +5	L: D10/d6 50
D: D8/d6 +2	F: D8/d4 +4	S: D6/d6 24

Knacks

Elusive: Robur's evasion is boosted to a DF x 4 with this Knack.

Fix on the Fly: Robur has a panache for dreaming up quick fixes or making temporary improvements on the spot. For such repairs he gains BF x 3 or a bonus of 10 Plot Points for the construction of an invention under these conditions.

Mechanical Aptitude: This Knack gives Robur a BF x 2 to working with machines. Further he gains an extra 25 points each day to invent items with.

Mechanical Sabotage: With this Robur gains an additional DF x 1 damage against all mechanical devices.

The Perfect Tool: Robur carries a Swiss-army knife-like device with bits and attachments suitable to perform most basic mechanical jobs. This tool grants him a bonus D4 to all applicable acts.

Stoic: Robur receives a D12 defensive die against Deductions from stress, mental fatigue, despair, or failed courage rolls.

Outmaneuver: After making a solid success on a Knowledge Roll, Robur can predict the design limits of any aeronautical vessel,

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and there forth receives a bonus D8 when attempting to outrun, evade, or otherwise outmaneuver it.

Great Wealth: Robur is thought to be the son of a French Aristocrat that fled to Argentina during the revolution. It is believed he bore with him a great deal of the country's treasury. Robur has had this immense wealth at his disposal.

Breakthrough: Robur may reset his Set Value in Wit whenever he likes, paying the standard Deduction for this benefit.

Secondary Archetype: Jack

Ingenuity: This Knack grants him 40 (75) Plot Points to work with each day when building an invention.

Peace of Mind: With less than a full Deduction left in his Lucidity Pool, Robur may take an action to make a BF x 4 Recovery Roll.

Subject Knowledge: Aeronautics: He gains a BF x 2 for all rolls (including piloting) affected by this knowledge.

Limitations

Arrogance: Robur esteems himself to be the greatest aeronaut and engineer of his day. It pains him when others underestimate his talents or the genius of his designs. He receives a DF x 2 when relating to others, and suffers a DF x 1 Deduction from Lucidity when failing to meet a challenge to his ability.

Debt: Though starting his life steeped in money, Robur burned through this fortune fast in the acquisition and outfitting of X Island. By the time he had constructed his precious Albatross, Robur owed nearly \$200,000 to varying banks and private creditors. Many of these individuals wish to seek out Robur for repayment of these loans. Therefore, Robur must be quite secretive. Within civilized society, there is a 1 in 6 chance his location will be picked up on by one of the creditors. Placing himself in these situations costs a Spirit Pool Deduction.

Common Possessions

Revolvers: Robur keeps a pair of small, 3-chambered revolvers designed to his specifications. They are capable of firing any .32 cartridge, but hold special bullets designed to have great accuracy even when fired in high winds or through water. Further, the shells are loaded with a powder mix that, in conjunction with the weapon's muzzle design, discharges a good volume of gray smoke around the shooter (covering an area of touch). After its use, the firer is protected by a veil of smoke (d6 to oncoming attacks) for 3 turns. The pistols are DF x 2, starting range = touch, maximum range = indiscernible, delay -4, reload = 1 action, ammo = 3.

The Grand Device: Within his jacket pocket Robur keeps a beautiful brass device appearing to be an oversized pocket watch. When opened, the instrument is inlaid with no less than 5 glass-covered dials performing a gamut of functions such as measuring time, air pressure, compass direction, and altitude, as well as having a functional stopwatch.

The Perfect Tool: As described in the listing of Knacks, Robur has tool shaped like a thin 4" handle out of which a barrage of machine tools can unfold for making emergency repairs or preparations.

Flag of the Conqueror: Robur often carries with him a miniature flag representing his "domain." The flag is black with small stars and a central sun -all of which are gold in color. He has been known to plant these flags on national monuments and other locations as a way of demonstrating his dominance.

Disquisition- The true name and origin of Robur the Conqueror remain among the aeronaut's most private treasures. Many claim to know his origin, but none have ever been able to substantiate their claim. What is known is that Robur is perhaps the greatest aeronautical engineer of the 19th century. His noble continence has been described, "... square shoulders; the back like a regular trapezoid, its longer side formed by that geometrical shoulder line;

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the robust neck; the enormous spheroidal head. The eyes at the least emotion, burned with fire, while above them were the heavy, permanently contracted brows, which signified such energy. The hair was short and crisp, with a glitter as of metal in its lights. The huge breast rose and fell like a blacksmith's forge; and the thighs, the arms and hands, were worthy of the mighty body. The narrow beard was the same also, with the smooth shaven cheeks which showed the powerful muscles of the jaw..."

The Conqueror maintains a small island nation he calls X Island. This isle is home to his highly equipped workshop as well as the fortress in which he keeps the goods he has "acquired" through the voyages of the *Albatross*. Citizens of this isle are referred to by Robur as Icarians and he sees himself as their governor.



Robur has an exulted opinion of himself and looks upon much of the world as a parent might look upon an ill-educated child. He is deriding, ill-humored, and single minded as a man might become. However, it may be unjust to count Robur as a villain for he often uses his supreme vehicle to save others and looks not for the subjugation of men, but simply desires to have them praise him for the genius that he is.

The Terror (Robur's Multi-Craft)

Fiction Rating: *Fantastic*

Attributes

Crew: 1-8
Size: O (30' long by 6' wide)
Base Move: See Below
Mechanical Prowess: D10/d4
Material Rating: D20/d6
SR: +12
Pool: 200

Systems

Machine Guns: As a precaution, Robur has installed rear and front facing machine guns into this craft. The devices can function in all modes other than the submarine. Their stats are DF x 3, starting range = closable, maximum range = discernible, delay -5, reload = action, ammo = 50/200, they are considered fully automatic.

Boat Articulation: Within 2 turns, The Terror can mechanically shift its outer form to become a powerful boat. In this form, it can move at a base of 800' per turn.

Submarine Articulation: Taking 2 turns, The Terror can mechanically alter its exterior shell into a formidable submarine. While under water, the craft moves at a base of 500' per turn.

Ornithopter Articulation: In a series of mechanized adjustments (taking 2 turns) The Terror can transform into an aircraft with beating wings used to manipulate the air like a giant bird. In this mode, the craft has a base speed of 2500' per turn.

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Motorized Carriage Articulation: *In just 2 turns, The Terror can shift into a 4-wheeled mechanized carriage capable of land speeds of 150 mph (base move of 1500' per turn).*

Regenerative Electric Pile: *The most wondrous aspect of The Terror is its power source, a single electric pile that is able to generate excess energy from the passing currents of ionized air and water. The methods of creating such a device are a secret held only by Robur himself. This everlasting power source has an electrical rating of D10/d4. It seemingly powers everything within the craft.*

Alloy Hull: *At high speeds, the friction of the water and air become forces to contend with. Meeting this problem, Robur has dreamt up a new form of metal alloy. It is light, durable, and extremely heat resistant. Robur has used this alloy on almost all external pieces of his ship. It offers the craft a D20 armor die applied to most form of damage and all forms of heat.*

Electron-Cloud Disruption Field: *When pushing The Terror's piles to full exertion, the capacitors of the craft give off an unexplained cloud of electrically charged particles that actually seem to deflect photonic emissions. Under this influence, the whole craft becomes a near-invisible blur. Attacks against the ship (while invisible) suffer a DF x 5, and the ship itself gains a BF x 5 to any attempt to hide/sneak.*

System Flaws

Articulation Jam: *If The Terror suffers more than 50 points of damage in any one configuration (Boat, Sub, Ornithopter, or Car), a mechanical rating roll must be made. Any negative result locks the ship into its current form until 50 Plot Points worth of repairs can be made.*

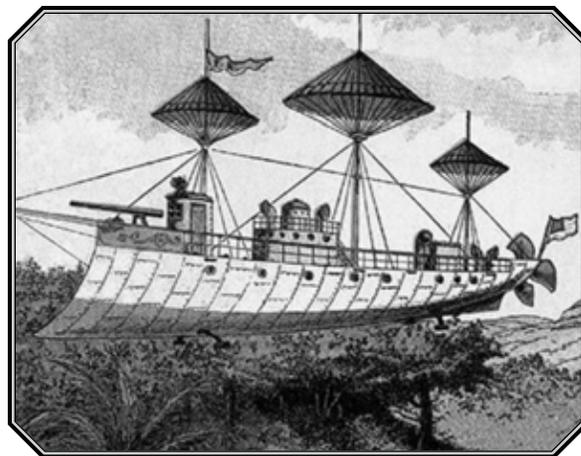
Disquisition- The latest and greatest invention from the mind of Robur "The Conqueror." This slim, ultra-fast craft has become the desire of every nation's military.

Its incredible speed and ability to perform apparent disappearances, makes it a tough target to handle. *The Terror* is a slender, spindle-shaped craft fitted like a U-boat with wheels and retractable wings (4 sets). The large portholes for piloting the craft give it a menacing look -something akin to a sea monster or giant moth.

The craft is stored in a hollowed crater amid the Appalachian Mountains called the Great Eyrie. Inside this space (nearly unreachable by climbers and other common contrivances) Robur has kept a workshop for the craft. Rumors abound that he is in fact constructing an armada of these, with other construction sites located in underwater caves, and mountain-top labs in northern Europe.

Though adept behind the controls, Robur often leaves *The Terror* in the capable hands of his second mate, John Turner (the brother to the pilot of *The Albatross*).

Quisquis has no knowledge of Robur's multi-craft, but rest assured he will seek to possess it once its existence is known to him.



The Albatross IV (Robur's Rotorcraft Aeronef)

Fiction Rating: *Fantastic*

Attributes

Crew: 3-20

Size: O (100' long by 12' wide)

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Base Flight: 600'
Mechanical Prowess: D12/d4
Material Rating: D12/d6
SR: +10
Pool: 250

Systems

Rotor Props: A system of 30 vertical propellers creates flight for The Albatross much the way a modern helicopter works. The blades lift with a Prowess of D12/d4.

Piles and Accumulators: At the heart of Robur's craft is a system of electric piles and accumulators of a highly advanced nature (the specifications for these are known by Robur alone). The piles each contain electricity at a rating of D20/d4 and can maintain a working charge for 2 weeks at a time. Robur often stockpiles the chemicals and reactants necessary to "recharge" the piles while in flight.

Dextrin-Pressed Paper Hull: Through a lengthy process of chemical imbedding and hydraulic press-forming, Robur has created a material out of paper and dextrin that is as tough as steel but light and electrically insulated. Furthermore, the hull isn't reactive to acids, is insoluble to gases or liquids and is nearly fireproof. As a result the outer hull of The Albatross has a D10 armor die.

3" Field Cannon: This pivot-mounted military gun fires a devastating shell: DF x 6, starting range = distant, maximum range = indiscernible, delay -9, reload = sub-action, ammo = 1/30.

Dynamite Cartridges: Used as bombs, a spring driven launcher can hurl these packeted explosives out or down at targets near the stern of the craft. DF x 8r, starting range = distant, maximum range = Discernible, delay -5, reload = action, ammo = 1/20, r=closable.

Ram: At the bow of the ship is fixed a nasty barbed ram rod, used to pierce balloons and damage other crafts. After moving a Distant distance or more, the pilot of the Albatross can make an Opposed maneuver roll against an enemy

craft with an SR equal to the original range -if successful the ram deals DF x 8 damage to the target.

Raft: An inflatable 8-man India-rubber boat is always tethered to the deck of the aeronef.

System Flaws

Electrical Dependence: Almost every system of this aeronef is ran by the electric force of its piles. Should these power cells be comprised, the entire craft would falter. When subjected to intense electrical fields or currents, The Albatross suffers a D8 difficulty die to the use and function of all her systems.

Delicate Rotors: Though Robur's design allows for the loss of multiple rotors without The Albatross immediately crashing, each rotor lost requires a Mechanical Prowess Roll -if the outcome is a solid failure the craft begins to lose altitude and makes all maneuvers with a d8 difficulty die. Damaging a rotor requires a well-placed hit dealing at least 8 points of damage.

Disquisition- Robur's aeronef, *The Albatross*, is now in its 4th incarnation. This newer machine is more rugged and designed for combat. Robur's ship hands often man the deck with a variety of personal firearms when pressing an attack, but *The Albatross's* greatest sting comes from the dynamite cartridges used to bomb targets. These Nobel explosives have decimated entire buildings -the headquarters of some great, world-threat no doubt. This ship is commonly commanded by Robur's first mate, Tom Turner. Under his orders are a selection of 8 men or more including engineers, gunners, a cook, and 2 general laborers. Robur, himself, rarely pilots this craft -having taken a fancy to his new construction, *The Terror*.

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Icarian Autogyros

Fiction Rating: *Fantastic*

Attributes

Crew: 1-2

Size: L (10' long by 3' wide)

Base Flight: 500'

Mechanical Prowess: D10/d6

Material Rating: D10/d6

SR: +7

Pool: 70

Systems

Mounted Rifle: A mounted rifle in the "jump seat" is fixed in a forward arc. Its stats are DF x 2, starting range = adjacent, maximum range = indiscernible, delay -5, reload = action, ammo = 15/60.

Gyro Rotor: A swinging wooden blade propels this vehicle into flight. Its simple design allows for near-vertical take offs and landings. This extreme maneuverability grants the pilot a D8 bonus to all movement rolls.

System Flaws

Rotor Dependence: Even a slight amount of damage dealt directly to the craft's rotor will send it to the ground. A well-placed hit that deals 10 points or more of damage will take one of these crafts out.

Disquisition- A simple but effective design, this aircraft was easily reproduced in the workshops of X Island. Now, Robur's men control a fleet of nearly 20 of them - a real threat to air barons like Quisquis. Though easily dispatched, a squad of even 5 autogyros can harass and even incapacitate a better craft.

Icarians

Fiction Rating: *Incredible*

Demeanor: *Driven*

Size: M (5'+)

Base Run: 200'

Attributes

P: D6/d6

+0

W: D6/d6

+0

D: D6/d4

+2

R: D8/d8

+0

K: D8/d6

+2

F: D6/d6

+0

H: D6/d8

20

L: D6/d6

20

S: D8/d8

20

Knacks

Aeronaut Training: Each Icarian has a D10/d6 skill in flying all forms of aerial vehicles.

Limitations

Devoted: The Icarians have pledged themselves to Robur and suffer a Lucidity and Spirit Deduction any time they fail their master.

Possessions

Icarian Pistol (DF x 2, starting range = touch, maximum range = indiscernible, delay -4, reload = 1 action, ammo = 6), Icarian badge (this is a small black patch sewn onto their shoulders depicting the golden sun flag of Robur The Conqueror), aeronaut goggles, and an assortment of random personal effects (electric lanterns, compasses, shaving kits, etc.).

Disquisition- The Icarians are the men and women who have dedicated themselves to a life on X Island under the care of Robur. They are largely engineering enthusiasts who delight in working on Robur's cutting edge designs. Most have bought into his "New World Order" wholeheartedly and believe that the resources of all nations should be laid before the hands of the men and women who are most inventive. Robur has seen to it that all adult citizen of X Island are capable within the cockpits of his flying machines and at the controls of more common place vessels (balloons, blimps, etc.).