

Islands of the Sea of Akka

There are many islands in the Sea of Akka. Few are known well to the inhabitants of the mainland of Tigmar. Many sailors trade with the small civilizations on these islands, but the mainland has yet to take a real interest in them. The City of Sampson is the most knowledgeable about the islands of Akka in the west.

Some islands house strange and mostly forgotten races. Others house entire civilizations composed of Mogs, or Kudites, or even Istain's Children.

A few western islands of major import to the mainland are described below. The Oots have the most contact with these areas.

Kant and Little Kant

These two islands are inhabited by the Oot nobility. They represent the sole conquests of the Oot kingdom in the last two hundred fifty years. They build ships with the indigenous timber. There is also some mineral wealth which they exploit. Kant and Little Kant produce some of the best iron goods to be found. The native people of Kant and Little Kant used to be a canoe-using sea-worthy group which knew the ins and outs of the granite channels. They are now peasants and shipwrights. The rest of their people live to the east on the granite isles and now know how to build ships, which they do, which they use to pirate other ships.

Granite Gate

This area is overrun by trolls and Kudites. They are in a continual conflict in which there is no real winner. The Oots attempted to take over the Gate, but failed and withdrew when their champion was smashed into the ground by a troll.

Trolls are huge lumbering creatures which usually stand eleven to thirteen feet high. They are made, apparently, of stone. Many theorize that they are the offspring of an incredibly successful creation made by a wizard. For this reason Trolls are usually referred to as Istain's Children.

Ships stay away from the Gate as the Gate has another breed of troll, called Istain's Bane, who are much larger than the average troll. These giants are around twenty feet tall and amuse themselves throwing rocks at passing ships.

Kings Isle

This island houses an aristocracy beyond belief and a university. The people of King's Isle lay claim to being the ancestors of the nobility of Lorac al Tur, claiming the refugee ship first settled on Kings and then proceeded to the continent.

In general Kings Isle people are tall and effeminate, and they claim they can live forever, if not outright killed. No one knows if this is true.

The University is of some renown, specializing in poetry and ballads. Most people claim, and claim accurately, that they also have a university for wizardry within the larger university.

Isle of Tras

Tras is an island ruled by a Matriarchy. They are mainly merchants, but they are warlike and have not been above piracy upon occasion.

The men of the island are often eunuchs or take an herb which renders them sterile. Men can be soldiers, servants, farmers, etc. and are in much the same place as woman are in the more enlightened regions of Tigmar like Orcheron.

The island is highly religious, and the people of the island believe they can only have sex for the purposes of child-rearing twice a year when the planets are in a proper configuration. They also believe that sex for the purposes of child-rearing should not happen between any two people who have any relationship from friendship to love.

Because of this they travel to Sampson City twice a year to find and have sex with the resident citizens. A strange aspect of this is the nobility of Tras have a deal with the Senatorial Class of Sampson City where if the result of a copulation is female, the Tras nobility gets it, and otherwise the Senatorial Class gets it. This has allowed for an almost all male line of rulers in Sampson City and an all female line of rulers in Tras. Now pretty much all men in the Senatorial Class have no mothers they know of.

Northern Coast

The Aranists have a legend about the north coast which goes something like this:

Long ago a great people lived on the northern shores of the sea of Akka. These people loved and honored the gods and so were honored and loved by them in return. The people were just and equitable and knew not injustice and crime. They had peace and plenty and feared not death.

Dark looked upon them and he hated as he hates all that is bright and good and pure. So Dark took form among the people as a wise man and a prophet, and he taught that the gods were an illusion and a convention of superstitious fools. He taught there was no world other than this and that when we meet death we become dust and nothing more. "Therefore," he cried, "seek not wisdom from the vanity of religion, from the hollow temples and the lies of mendacious priests; seek it rather in the stars and the sea and the sky for there is no more than this. And, seek not pleasure in the world beyond, for you will never find what you desire. Hearken to my words and power, wisdom, and happiness will be yours; cover your ears and you will eternally rot in the darkness that shrouds you now."

Such was the persuasiveness of the shadow, for his forked tongue is ever convincing to the unwary and his words are honey to the ignorant, that the people did listen and they left the temples and the bosom of the gods, seeking pleasure and wisdom in the sensual world. And the shadow showed them the movements of the stars and cycle of the tides. He gave them books of knowledge of animals and plants, of sorcery and magic. The people fed avidly upon them and then did as he commanded and sought more, experimenting with the power of sorcery and seeking out how the world was made. They denied that the gods made anything, saying instead that the world was made from water, or air, or infinity, or the interactions of strife and love, or from the interactions of atoms in a void.

Such was the foolishness they spoke and the gods left the people, weeping for humanity's stupidity. So lost were the people that they did not feel the gods depart but sought ever more from the vanities and falsehoods they called knowledge. Death they now feared with great terror and with the might of their sorcery, philosophy, and science against mortality labored. They turned their souls to dust and ash to fight, but all they gained was a brief extension of life or a half life that was hardly worth living. For this they forsook up eternal bliss!

As the gods had departed so too departed justice, equity and love. In their place were left only hate and malice, envy and fear. With this in their hearts they built great cities with towers that scraped the sky and they gave themselves many comforts. But for all their searching,

for all their knowledge, they could not find happiness and they could not defeat death for human wisdom ever fails while divine wisdom flow always. And they knew despair and they turned to one another with malice and envy in their hearts, for the people thought that others were hiding wisdom from the sight of all.

So, every kingdom demanded the secrets that the other kingdoms hid. No one gave anything; instead, they hoarded their knowledge out of suspicion and greed. So, the people chose to take from each other what they would not give and they turned their dark knowledge to making weapons more terrible than were ever made before or since. And these they turned against each other.

Seeing this the shadow knew his task was finished and he left laughing to the dark between the stars. The people unleashed their power and brought fire and earth and air water to bear on their enemies, and they poisoned the earth and the air and the sea and hurled fire at their towers and broke them into dust and ash.

In the confusion some good men who had not forsaken the gods still lived. Seeing that war was destroying the people, the good asked a man, Seekalon, to gather all of the good and to sail across the sea. This he did and all that were good left that place and sailed to our lands. But the God's plans were not wholly made good, for the shadow discovering the salvation of humanity cloaked for an instant the eyes of Seekalon and a few evil ones carrying books of their dark knowledge crept aboard his ships. These books still tempt the ignorant and the dark minded. Behind Seekalon left a ruin.

The gods came down against those evil-doers who remained and smote them with earthquakes, and tidal waves, and volcanoes, and showed them that the power of the gods made their vaunted weapons look like toys. All those who Seekalon left behind perished in agony and fear. Thus did the gods demonstrate the necessity of divine wisdom and the vanity of all mere human knowledge.

This is a prophecy by Zakaj the Wise, as told to the high priest of the temple in Lorac al tur:

You teach that all in the north was destroyed by the wrath of the gods. In this you are sadly mistaken. For a king still lived in the north when the gods descended to destroy. And to his mind was revealed the false life that he had lived. But this king was proud and instead of repenting he cursed the gods and took all his books of lore and wisdom and all his weapons and he buried them in a deep fortress saying "There will come a time when a people mightier than we will rise up to use all that I have preserved they will make war with these gods and so great will be their power and their wisdom that they will overthrow these capricious and unjust gods and through their valor free the world."

So saying he died. But his infernal spirit was so

strong that it lived on to fulfill his curse. There will come a day when those books will be found and a new people will arise like the old. The shadow will take form among them and the will grow mightier than ever they were before. They will cover the land with their fortresses and all the earth with their arsenals. They will wage war with all the peoples of the earth and they will strive to overthrow goodness. So great will be their strength that for a moment they will seem to succeed.

But, for those who do not loose faith, and they will not be many, the Gods will come down again and they turn all of their divine strength against the shadow's kingdom. And all of the foul people's strength will avail them not, and all their fortresses will be rent asunder, and all their weapons turned to smoke. And the shadow will not be able to abide the light of the gods and will be driven headlong into the deepest abyss. Those who kept the faith will emerge from this war and will live forever in peace and joy among the gods.

A Sample of Knowledge of Carcemesh

What follows is a piece of information one might find regarding Carcemesh on the Tigmar continent. As can be seen, it lacks a certain fullness. But here it is:

Seprone Kadalis Priest of Sun of the Order of St. Anselm, Legate of the office of the Holy Inquisition, Seeker of Truth.

To: The Most High Illuminated Sentries Galatian, Light of the World, Dispeller of Darkness, Equal to the First, Binder, High Priest of the Temple of the Sun in Lorac-Al-Tur

Greetings,

I am writing to your holiness to give a full report of my activities since leaving the center of the world, Lorac-Al-Tur. Under your illustrious predecessor, gods' grace upon him and upon you his most worthy replacement, I was sent to the lands north of the Sea of Akka which lie shrouded in the darkness of ignorance and unbelief. It was your predecessor's plan to allow a the rays of inimitable sun to break through their unholy darkness. I was sent to learn so that a plan of attack could be designed.

I had sent several reports to your holiness' illustrious predecessor, but having heard that he died tragically in a fire that swept across the west wing of the temple, I have decided to write a recap all I have learned. To plead your patience a moment longer before beginning, I would like to dispell any rumors that may have arisen regarding my opinion of your inestimable holiness. Certain malicious enemies whose hearts cannot rise above petty politics have no doubt informed your Holiness that I said before leaving that your Holiness was (forgive my language, but I feel I must use the language they have pulled from the

gutter) nothing more than "a worthless political hack with all the religious knowledge of street harlot" and that "a donkey could speak from the altar with more eloquence and conviction than your Holiness." I have never said such things and have always felt great respect for your Holiness, and the language used above is nothing more than the complaints of those enemies who are trying to foist their errors on me.

To begin my story, I was placed aboard the ship Heiron's Luck, whose captain had agreed to carry me to the city of Carcemesh, the greatest city on the northern coast. The ship was a small disreputable vessel, so as not to cast any aspirations on the cheapness of the procurement board so brilliantly run by your Holiness, it was the best available, whose crew stank of bad wine and whose captain stank of Haj. I attempted to engage the captain in conversation about the nature of Carcemesh and the North but he was not helpful and soon drifted into a Haj-induced slumber. The crew were happy to talk about sea monsters and disreputable women, but little else. I admonished them to seek the light of heaven, not the sewers of the earth, after which they talked to me not at all. The remainder of the journey was quiet.

After 13 days we docked at a small island named Cacack. Here we took on water and food. It was here that the nature of trade that our ship performed became apparent. Our captain purchased from a Kantian trader a dozen dark skinned natives that were thrust into our hold. Why one would purchase human rather than Mog slaves was at this point obscure, and the captain was in no mood to answer my questions. In addition to food, water, and slaves, Cacack sports a small town about as disreputable as the ship upon which I travelled. The crew of our ship spilled into this town and behaved themselves in such a fashion as to place their souls in peril, if they were not yet damned. Loud music, cries, and the occasional scream emminated from the town throughout the night. The town was of type quite familiar to us, so I while waste no more words on this pit. The next day we left that place and continued towards Carcemesh.

After _?_ days of rough sailing we approached the port of Carcemesh. My first impressions of the city were quite confused and it was only after spending some time there did I begin to learn something. I will spare you most of the story of my search and tell you only what I found. The City of Carcemesh is divided into an upper and a lower city. The upper city is seperated from the lower by a wall which exists more for traffic control than defense (that is provided by the two massive rings that are the outer wall). The upper city is dominated by two Ziggurats. I tell you truly...

The rest of the manuscript is lost, or perhaps censored. Little is known about the Northern Shore, except there is a lot to write about.

Some suspect that it is ruled by the Mog, or perhaps even the Gen-ral. Many have heard tales of humans being sacrificed by the hundreds, their livers flung up to be caught by huge white birds which get stained scarlet with blood in monthly rituals worshipping Dark. No one knows for sure, or so most believe. Sailors say, but who can trust a sailor?

Granite Flats

One denizen of the granite flats are the bird people named the Twitil. They are small humanoids with large angle-like wings. They live in huge aeries scattered throughout the flats. The flats have huge pillars of stone thrusting high up into the air, and Twitil live in the sides and top of such structures. In some areas many of these pillars are close together. This is as close as it comes to cities for the bird people. The bird people live in the these high places for protection, as they are hunted by many races for their feathers and eggs. The bird people hunt like hawks for the large Rock Lizards.

Humans hunt and trade with these bird folk. Twitil beads as well as their coveted fabric demand high prices in places such as Lorac al Tur. Their bodies and eggs demand high prices in such places as Trading Post.

The other denizen of the Granite Flats are Istain's Children which somehow got to the flats from the Granite Key. People say perhaps it was one of Istain's attempts to conquer something. Now the Children spend their time wandering from place to place, eating any food they can find. They are immune to the effects of arsenic as well as all other poisons, and so have no shortage of water.

Twitil Civilization

Twitil civilization is fairly limited. They make art and jewelry out of small feathers, and beads they make from certain pebbles found in the streams throughout the granite flats. They do not make metal objects, but they do know how to build some wood objects and they weave amazingly light fabric called Rock Worm Silk.

Rock Worm Silk

Rock Worms are small worms which live in rock holes and weave a silk blocking to ward off the wind and catch small mites common to the granite flats. This silk like thread is what is woven into the fine silk cloth called Rock Worm Silk.

Flats Pirates & The Village

Pirates and the Oots

The granite flat pirates are the ones allegedly responsible for the Oots loosing contact with their empire, as they sank the ships often enough the Oots gave up trying to send supplies to their colony.

Some human beings, mostly pirates, live in the river canyons close to the sea. These people, if they farm at all, only grow enough food to feed themselves through the winter months when sailing is impossible. There are many such dwellings here and there throughout the coastline.

The most renown of the Pirates, Bloodhook, allegedly sent his first mate to the granite flats to create a retirement home around fifteen years ago. The result was the Village. Tucked away in a highly defensible place in the Granite Flats, the Village is set on a river island which originally was a flat stretch of bare granite. The pirates and their assorted slaves built a low wall around the mesa and then filled much of the mesa with dirt which was first tested for

poisonous content. The result was an area of fertile land which is almost half a square mile in size. On the other half of the mesa the pirates built a huge citadel of granite which borders a very deep and calm harbor called the Deep with facilities for shipbuilding and repair. The lack of wind in the area forces most ships to be rowed or pulled to the village, but pirates find that making their slaves go through this agonizing effort is well worth it. The Village provides oxen which can be employed to perform this task as well.

The Village has started a tree farm, hoping the roots of their lodge pole pines will shatter the granite under the thin layer of soil so as to produce usable timber for shipbuilding. Currently some trees reach a full thirty feet in height, and are showing some signs of being stunted but not as much as was expected.

The Village itself is surrounded by high, defensible granite walls. It is crammed with houses and tents of all sorts and is perhaps the most interesting and useful marketplace in existence. Rumors, goods, and people all are traded with equal ferocity. The Village has a guard, of sorts, which spends its time primarily engaged in making sure the citadel is not invaded. The Village charges an entrance fee of a crescent, plus an extra shiver per ten pounds of goods brought or removed from the place. The citadel also runs many merchants itself, primarily in lumber and shipping goods.

The law of the place is fairly limited. The citadel reserves the right to commandeer any goods, people, or ships in the defense of the island. The citadel can supply these people with arms from its own armory, but does not have to. People are not allowed to terrorize or abuse other people by employing large groups of armed soldiers. Large conflicts, ones which involve more than fifty combatants, are strictly forbidden. The Citadel guard will be sent out to quell such uprisings as they are deemed dangerous for the community. Murder, robbery, and theft are all also illegal, but the active enforcement of these laws is limited; the Citadel will investigate any murder or theft brought before it, but it will not actively seek out such crimes. Trespassing onto the surrounding farm lands is a crime punishable by death; this law is perhaps the most strictly enforced of them all.

During winter, there are around five hundred people who live in the Village who are the year round denizens. Around three hundred of these people live in the citadel itself, fifty of these people farm the land and live on it, and the remainder have built large homes in the Village. One hundred of the three hundred living in the citadel are trained soldiers who have made the Village their home as well as place of employment. They, in return for service, are either promised a place to live and food until their death or are paid annually. Another hundred are craftsmen who continual to build and finish the Village,

the Citadel, and the surrounding walls.

During the summer, or when weather allows access to the Village, the population climbs rapidly to perhaps five thousand strong, increasing every year. During these times the citadel hires another hundred seasonal guards.

In addition to mercantilism, the populace of the Village in the summer are very much into entertainment. The Village houses theater, gladiator sports, poetry reading contests, circuses, and anything else anyone cares to dream up. Most such entertainment is now brought by traveling bands of performers, but some major festivities are financed by the citadel or Bloodhook himself.

The largest festivity, which is celebrated in the week following the first full Gaar's eye following the first time the waters are deemed passable, and which is begun by Bloodhook ceremoniously drinking a goblet of blood in the name of debauchery, is a basic street fair where all alcohol is freely supplied by the citadel. This event draws the crowds to the Village even earlier than they might have come otherwise as during the festivities Bloodhook chooses new crew members, and gives away three fully outfitted ships and five chests of gold.

The popularity of the Village soared soon after it opened five years previously. Bloodhook began the first year by passing the word through the pirate community that he was to give away his flagship to a random person in the Village that summer. That, along with many other promises of good times and money, brought many pirates. Bloodhook hired all the entertainment himself. The following year none of these expenditures were necessary as the ball was already rolling.

All government fears to tread in the Granite Flats, and so Bloodhook has basically succeeded in creating a new nation with a power which grows yearly. He now has maps to the Village publicly given out in major cities such as Lorac al Tur, Sampson, and even the City of Light. People have been pushing for Bloodhook to assume the title of King, though the more ignorant want him to be called a Viceroy, for they like the name and think it alludes to evil and excesses.

Bloodhook is a medium sized man who lost his hand awhile back and replaced it with a hook. His name came from his habit of, when talking to people, holding their hand and caressing it with his hook. If he wants to judge sincerity he will suddenly cut or possibly even pierce the hand of his victim with his hook. Afterwards he always licks his hook clean. People say he is getting old now, and his black hair is died, and would otherwise be shot through with gray. However his form is still firm and his clothing exceptional, as can be attested to by many an onlooker at the yearly festivities.

His first mate is now called the Mayor, and runs the city for Bloodhook when Bloodhook is away. The Mayor

is supposed to be truly inspiring in his fatness, and is carried by eight naked litter bearers wherever he goes. He has shaved all his hair from his body except for a long goatee which he usually has braided into a slender strand encrusted with beads.

The Bleeding Sow

This inn provides the highest quality room and board in the entirety of the Village. The inn also has a restaurant which serves excellent food. The entire place is heavily guarded, and they personally guarantee that any previously declared valuables, should they be stolen, will be paid for. The Bleeding Sow employs an appraiser for this purpose.

The Bleeding Sow is run by a woman who reminds most people of their grandmother. She is fairly plump, has a nice knot of gray hair stuck through with two pins, and wears a simple dress. She supervises both the cooking, the cleaning, and the bar. She also runs a brothel of both men and woman who many attest to as being of the highest quality. Some have mistaken her plump exterior and kindness with a kind of simpleminded stupidity, but her business genius has made her second only to the Mayor and Bloodhook in accumulated wealth.

Many down and out merchants go to her for loans, as she is good about sensing talent or other abilities in people, and is fairly free with her money. Few merchants have successfully robbed her, however. She is said to have had employed more than one assassin to find and kill those who sought to get away from their debts to her.

The Slave Market

This place is owned by the Pig. The Pig is a man who has lost one eye, and has a face which looks remarkably like a pig. His remaining eye is sunk behind a few rolls of fat, and his large nose has been turned up by too many fights so most talking to him can see straight up his nostrils.

The place itself is a large cobbled area with a central platform which is a simple granite slab. There is a basement area which has been mined out at the Pig's expense for the holding of slaves. The top area is covered by a large red canvas tent. There is another raised section close to the slave stage where the rich can sit in comparative comfort, but the remainder of the area is open for anyone who pleases to talk and mingle. The Pig sells slaves from the platform, and allows others to sell slaves on the floor. He requests a 1% tax on all floor transactions, however. He employs spies to enforce this rule. Any who are caught breaking it are killed, fined, or sold depending on the Pig's mood.

The Lighthouse

This lighthouse serves as both a beacon and a

watchtower for the village. Situated on the northern point, it surveys the river below and renders it impossible for a even the smallest or fastest of ships to slip by undetected.

The Pull Track

This intentionally rough granite road stretches from the north tip of the island to the beginnings of the Deep. It is used by oxen teams which are hitched to boats so they can be pulled up to the Deep. The Pull Track has many iron posts sunk deep into the soil to which boats can hitch to for rest or prevent themselves from being dragged off.

The Pull Track ends on the southern side on a built pier which juts out into the water. Normally the rope between the ship and the oxen is fairly long which means the ship will not be at the Deep when the oxen reach the end of the track, however though a marvelous feat of engineering, the pirates devised a solution to this. At the end of the pier is a large clear area with a wheel in the middle of it so the oxen can double back around the wheel and then continue pulling the ship up the river by traveling back down the road. This allows ships to reach the Deep where a tug can easily drag them to the anchor points or the docks.

The Anchor Lines

The Pirates sunk massive chain lines into the water and attached them to giant floats. The river bottom is a poor place to anchor as it is soft mud and slippery and so the pirates demand boats anchor to the provided lines to prevent runaways.