

The Voracious Pack

In the central regions of the Shadya-kav mountains, a hunting party of friends, escorting a young ward of their aryah on his first hunt, race for their lives to escape from a vicious pack of mountain kellédu. If they can fight their way to shelter, perhaps there is a chance to save the noble boy from his terrible injuries. It will take a powerful ritual of healing, and perhaps a journey into the Dream to insure they all survive the night.

The Characters:

Héshrim (House Guard and Assassin, male 32 year old rattlesnake, House of Sámtra on loan to the House of Ayrram)- A calm, watchful snake with an air of casual, unsettling menace and strength, Héshrim proved his merits by helping to bring an end to a spying ring being run out of Magár on behalf of the Sustrümi Aminar. He saved the life of Sámtra during this affair. He currently acts as a warrior and assassin for the House of Ayrram.

Valnérah (Seer Sir'hibas, male 40 year old condor, House of Sámtra, on loan to the House of Ayrram)- A mature, wiry-looking bird in silk robes, known for his intense stare, Valnérah was trained under the Great Seer Arddjuma of Amnol before becoming one of the Line of Inuvkah. He is currently acting as Seer of the House of Ayrram.

Dastánah (Assistant Weapons Master, female 27 year old mockingbird, House of Ayrram)- A sharp eyed, quick-moving little bird with a lot of weapons, Dastánah was trained with the Weapons-masters of eastern Tishínia and the Valah Masters of the lord Rajtármi before being gifted to the Line of Sisyáh by Rajtármi himself.

Arhazbür (Honor Guard, male 28 year old elephant, House of Ayrram)- A seasoned fighter with a serious disposition and intimidating stature, Arhazbü pledged his life to the Line of Sisyáh after having been rescued from slavery in Sustrüm as a child. He currently serves as an Honor Guard for the House of Ayrram.

Gramír (Assistant Suthra Master, male 25 year old wolf, House of Ayrram)- A savage looking jánah with a commanding presence and bold speech, Gramír hails originally from Ishpuria, where he studied for two years in the Academy of Sakrsa in Dar-Purám before coming to Tishínia to serve as a chinti and kellédu trainer in the House of Ayrram.

Umratáli (Mángai Healer, male 35 year old sea turtle, House of Ayrram)- A monkish-looking priest with a friendly smile and a wise disposition, Umratáli was trained in herbalism and medicine at the Academy of Nilám, this Mángai also studied the arts of mystic healing before returning to serve Ayrram's House.

Establishing Intro Scene (The Setup)

Brave, young Hakmüt, a tall male lion, and ward of Aryah Sámtra, was always a bold child, and had become one of the favored in the House since he was

bought and freed from the fighting pits by Sámtra herself on one of her occasional trips to Magár. Originally from Sustrüm, Hakmüt was captured and sold by Scourge slavers after his sunborn family, and the merchants they had been traveling with, had been attacked and slain during a desert raid south of Hal-hammár. Sámtra herself had heard of a young lion slave thrown to the pits while visiting the capital city of Matra, and had weathered her own distaste of slave fighting to see if the tales of his youthful beauty were true. Sámtra had been even more impressed by his bravery. Soon his crystal shackles were removed, and Hakmüt was whisked away by skyship to the safety and freedom of Tishínia.

Those of you actually from Sámtra's house, know the boy well, and were only too delighted to hear that a celebration was being planned in Telátah honoring his Rite of Caste, and passage into adulthood. You and your friends from the House of Ayrram were given leave to visit the House of Sámtra for the grand feast, and with pride you watched as young Hakmüt received his first caste braid, draped by Sámtra herself across his shoulder upon the curling beginnings of his youthful tawny mane.

A hunt had been planned in the days that followed, amid the emerald peaks of the mountains of Shadya-kav, merely a quarter day's flight to the west. Dropped there by sky-skiff, and supplied with several day's of provisions, your small hunting party, and a proud new adult sunborn, began the trek up the tree-studded slopes toward an old hunting lodge kept by your Line in a remote and wild valley.

Hakmüt himself had chosen the venue based on stories he had heard among his friends of a dangerous beast said to live near that valley, and rumors that hunters had supposedly vanished in those mountains, never to return. His excitement had grown from the moment the skiff set sail and launched into the amber skies. To him, this was his chance to prove his merit to his beloved benefactor and matron, and to fulfill the rite of Pratháma-Jaya, the moment of "First Victory" as a fully-fledged adult. What honor it would bring him to actually hunt down and slay the mysterious "Beast of the Emerald Cliffs".

All had not gone well...

Take this time, if you haven't already, to familiarize the players with their character sheets, specifically those parts that relate to combat, since, unlike the typical format of most adventure scenarios, the players will soon be ushered directly into an intense confrontation immediately during the next scene. Let them prepare for this by having their Player Combat Tracking Sheets ready, and by making sure that you (the GM) have your NPC combat Tracking Sheet close at hand with basic information written up concerning 6 to 10 wild mountain kellédu (which will be attacking the players on the run immediately), as well as one hideous demon beast (which will confront them in a later scene).

Scene 1; A Terrifying Flight

Arhazbür, crimson streams of precious blood run down your broad, gray, and heaving chest as you and your companions run for your very lives along a forested trail that leads, if the merciful devah are kind, to the blessed safety of the hunting lodge. The blood is not your own. In one of your mighty arms is cradled

the limp and unconscious form of young Hakmüt, and along his thigh a terrible gaping wound bleeds profusely from a now useless leg. The dying light of the suns cuts starkly through the bluish-green canopy of squat, twisted gandagi trees, whose grayish, pockmarked trunks reflexively contract as if inhaling sharply at your sudden and shocking passage. Amidst the spiny burnt-orange undergrowth perhaps dozens of swift and deadly shadows streak wildly, each seeking an opening through which to strike.

The attack had come from out of nowhere during a brief pause to consult a map of the remote region, and to insure your hunting party was on the right trail to reach the small lodge before nightfall. Without warning or provocation, a huge kelléndu had hurled itself from the underbrush and thrown young Hakmüt savagely to the ground. One swift slash with a scythe-like pincer and suddenly blood was everywhere; and a shrill keening from many places in the surrounding wilderness had blended horribly with the anguished cries of the young lion, alerting you all to the presence of many more such suthra predators.

With a trumpeting bellow Arhazbür had charged to defend the aryah's beloved ward, using his great ivory tusks to send the beast flying off into the forest's edge. With little time to waist, and being the only one capable of carrying the young lion while still being able to fight, the elephant had gathered the bleeding Hakmüt into his arm, and you all had fled swiftly along the overgrown trail, hoping beyond hope that the map was correct, and that you were mere minutes from the site of the old hunting lodge.

Though there is certainly no true safety in numbers when it comes to an attack of this kind (so many against so few), the players will need to keep running as a collected group to avoid being individually attacked by more than one kelléndu at a time. Any characters making a successful **Knowledge Skill roll** pertaining to **suthra lore**, or any **Profession Skills** dealing with suthra, will realize this, and will be able to warn the other not to fall behind OR to attempt to speed ahead, since doing so will attract the specific attention of the pack, and will cause them to attack that isolated target in greater numbers (2-4 at once). Since there appears to be dozens of kelléndu running them down for prey, their only hope is to make it to the lodge before they are picked off one-by-one. Kelléndu attacks generally cause an equal mix of Subdue/Fatal damage, but can effect more lethal strikes (referencing the Maneuver Location table) at an additional -2. The purely Fatal damage done to Hakmüt is an example of such a maneuver made as the result of a surprise. These kelléndu make their special attacks using 6 Action Dice due to their size and ferocity.

The idea of this particular encounter is to have the characters attempt to fend off one to three of the kelléndu each round for three rounds of combat, before having the party finally arrive at the safety of the old hunting lodge, an angular building made of stacked slate and thick timbers built into a stony niche at the base of a craggy green crystal cliff. By the middle of the second round, the players should see, above the treetops just ahead, the light of the setting suns gleaming brightly through the twin spires of emerald that mark its location on the map. No matter how many they kill they will not “run out” of these creatures to fight, and they will be forced to retreat into the safety of the lodge.

If the players begin to lose to these creatures too quickly, feel free to scale down the number of them, or the amount of dice you roll for them, or feel free to cut the chase short for the sake of time. The maddening keening of the kellédu will continue, as will their attacks, even if many of their dead litter the trail behind them.



Kellédu (kehl-EN-doo) - Considered the guard and pet creature of choice on Dárdünah, the kellédu has many breeds ranging from tiny, scrappy creatures you can hold in your hands to large beasts that can grasp a small Zoic's torso in its pincers. Highly intelligent, generally personable, and easily trained, they have been the constant companions of the jánah for hundreds of years. Though most species of kellédu have been domesticated, their wild cousins who live in the deep forests, rolling plains, and crystal mountains of the world can be quite fearsome. These wild kellédu often hunt in vicious, hungry packs.

STAMINA: 3-12 levels

ARMOR: 2 points

NORMAL ACTION DICE:

Standard Movement, Running, Bite, Standard Sensory Rolls, etc.: 4

SPECIAL ACTIONS:

Keen Hearing, Tracking Scent, Sprint: 5

Piercing attack from the scythe-like forearms: 3 to 8 (depending on size of breed)

Once three rounds are over (or less if the players are having a hard time of it), allow surviving members of the party to make it to the doorway of the lodge, escaping into it just as the closest kelléndu chasing them snap at their heels and crash into the door with great ferocity.

Scene 2; Sanctuary of the Lodge

The slate-gray walls, and dim, shadowy interior of the lodge would seem dull and drab to the artful eyes of a Crystal Master, but they are like a beautiful, blessed sanctuary now that the solid wooden door has been shut tight and barred from within. Arhazbür was forced to hunker down as he entered the door, since the ceiling here is barely over ten feet tall, but apparently this is merely the floor of an upper loft, since the rest of the room opens up to its full twenty foot height several paces in from the front door. The scrabbling and weird chittering growls of the kelléndu pacing outside are a constant reminder of the danger awaiting you should that door be opened again.

There is nothing extravagant about the hunting lodge, and its simple, one-room lower floor contains basic furnishings, a table, and two doors at the back wall on either side of a crude window through which you can see more of the dead-end cleft into which the lodge was built. To the left are several small cots tucked against the natural rock wall of the cliff, and on the right wall, solid rock-crystal as well, an opening, perhaps a pantry, has been carved out, and is covered by a shabby curtain. Near this opening, a natural crack in the rock face has been bricked up and crafted into a simple hearth where food could be cooked and in which an amber cooking pot hangs empty.

A sudden, weak moan reminds you all of the terrible condition the boy is in, and the smell of so much of his blood leaves a distinct tang in your nostrils. You will need good light to tend to Hakmüt's wound. With the exception of the single dusty rear window emitting a feeble glow between the back doors, there are no other windows on this floor, the only strong light source seems to come from a larger window on the upper floor, set in the loft's wall at the front of the lodge facing the clearing through which you all fled.

The back door on the right leads to a small, enclosed grotto that narrows to a natural corner full of loose shale and crystal fragments from the sheer cliffs above. In this enclosed yard can be seen thorny shrubs and grasses, piles of firewood, and some kind of vibrantly-colored but edible fungus clinging to the vertical faces of rock. There is no egress, except by wing, from this dead-end backyard. The left backdoor leads down into a root cellar that contains more edible fungus (some of them luminescent), sealed food in waxen-sealed ceramic and glass containers, and a deep, dark well with fresh water at the bottom (this room could be portrayed in an incredibly creepy fashion, if you desire, with strange scuttling down in the dark well, odd dripping noises, etc.). The carved opening on the right is indeed a curtained pantry and supply closet, with spare blankets, camping supplies, and other bedding, and some old stale dry goods wrapped in waxed parchment. **Perception or**

Observation Rolls may be used to search for useful materials or supplies not listed here. Use your judgment with what you allow them to find.

There are stairs immediately to the right of the entrance that lead up to the second floor, which is supported by thick wooden columns that retain the shape of the original tree-trunks from which they were cut. Any of the players can navigate these stairs easily except the elephant Arhazbür, who will cause the stairs to collapse if he attempts to ascend. The only warning he will have is an ominous creaking and cracking sound. If the elephant's player successfully makes an **Agility Roll**, then he succeeds in deftly getting off the stairs before they collapse into broken timbers. The loft above is a room half the length of the lodge, and in this 40-foot square area the players will find four large beds veiled in crude silk netting to keep insects out. One of these beds is near enough to the large window to be bathed in the dusky light from the outside, a perfect place to lay the injured lion. From the window the players can see the clearing in front of the hunting lodge below, and the steadily pacing forms of the kelléndu at the forest's edge, which keep a constant and somewhat desperate gaze on the front door.

A successful **Knowledge Skill roll** pertaining to **suthra lore**, or any **Profession Skills** dealing with suthra, will inform the player that something is wrong with the behavior of the kelléndu. This type of persistence is out of character for the breed, even the larger, wild mountain variety. They pace around the clearing as if "driven" in some way by desperation. With plenty of prey having been seen throughout the day in the nearby area, there should be no reason for this type of behavior.

Poor Hakmüt fell unconscious from the immediate severity of his wound plus the blood loss. If they haven't realized it already, those with any **Profession or Knowledge Skills** dealing with **doctoring** or **medicines** will recognize that, because his injury is considered entirely "Fatal Damage", wounded Hakmüt must be treated quickly (within mere minutes) before he bleeds out! A character can reach -10 Stamina from Fatal type damage before being dead. Here are his current statistics compared to what they normally are.

Hakmüt - (male lion, muscular and tall, late teens) Beloved ward of Sámtra, and newly turned adult. Deeply desires to impress his benefactor with acts of courage.

Action Dice: 5 (currently at 3 due to -2 damage penalty)

Stamina Levels: 20 (currently -1, and losing a point per minute)

Other characters have very likely sustained damage from the kelléndu attacks as well. It is important to see to these kinds of wounds soon to avoid infection or further bleeding. Successfully rolling a **Profession Skill of doctor** will allow any character to stop the bleeding for now, and will inform the character that it would be unwise to attempt use of the **Surgery Skill** under these conditions and time constraints. Successfully rolling a **Dress Wound Skill (usable only once per wound)** will also stop the bleeding, and will actually return as many levels of Fatal damage to the patient as successes rolled, though this Skill is usually used to cure Subdue damage first (at a rate of 4 Stamina levels per success), and Fatal damage only after any Subdue damage is dealt with.

Once the **Dress Wound Skill** has been used on the lion, he may regain consciousness, but will no doubt still be very seriously hurt, and will be in no condition to be moved easily. To get him on his feet again, and out of danger of potential infection, it will be necessary for Umratáli to perform a magical **Ritual of Healing**. Otherwise, the seer Valnérah may find it wise to perform a **Ritual of Dreamwalking** in order to attempt to contact someone in the House of Sámtra to request that they send a sky-skiff immediately to help them. If no player thinks of these possibilities on their own, have those two players make **Wit Rolls** to have their characters come up with those ideas. Considering the ill luck of this expedition, and the danger waiting outside, they may decide to do both.

Performing the **Ritual of Healing** will allow the healer to go into a light trance and, if successful, will cause the golden light of his prána (healing energies) to flow from his hands over the wound, sealing it up before their very eyes, and healing 2 levels of Fatal damage per success (or 8 levels of Subdue damage per success). Even the blood will seem to be burned away painlessly by this manifestation of holy fire. The seer Valnérah may be allowed to assist by Collaboration if he chooses to do so. And Umratáli may attempt to add to his successes by using his **Knowledge of ritual lore** as a Complimentary Skill. It requires the use of one roll per wound to heal such damage, and at least 2 Unique Disciplines to perform (one to enter the Ritual by calling forth the glowing energies, and one to actually attempt to repair this terrible damage). Because this wound was so severe (doing more than 2/3rds the lion's Stamina in one strike) this is a Very Difficult Discipline to perform and requires the application of a -3 difficulty modifier. However, feel free to allow that to be offset by bonuses for good role-playing during the ritual. Further disciplines can be used to heal injuries for other players as well, though a third or even fourth Unique Discipline will need to be used in the attempt to heal different types of damage (such as merely large wounds at -2 or lesser wounds at -1).

Performing the **Ritual of Dreamwalking** will allow the seer to initially pass the veils of Dream to enter into the Dream Realm (using 1 Unique Discipline), after which he will need to attempt to contact someone (perhaps an assistant or an apprentice in the House of Sámtra) who can help them. Succeeding at such a thing will be Difficult (assign a modifier of -2 to the roll) since most at the House will still be awake, and no doubt preparing to attend the prayers of dusk (which will use a second Unique Discipline).

Doing either of these rituals (successfully or not) will attract the attention of something very dire that dwells nearby, and which is currently causing the strange behavior of the kelléndu outside. At any point during either ritual the GM should feel free to ask both sir'hibasi to make an **Essence Roll** to see if they spiritually "sense" the sudden attention and approach of something terrible and supernatural. If either of them succeeds, not only will they feel the sudden proximity and approach of a hellish being from Narákah (a demon or evil spirit entity), but they will also understand that this thing has a strange connect to the kelléndu outside, as if it has some sort of control over them.

Scene 3; Awakening Beast of the Emerald Cliffs

As the magic ritual continues, and just as the last light of the greater sun sets below the rim of the valley, casting it into twilight shadow, a terrible spectral wail, like the guttural cry of some tortured thing, can be heard to echo unnaturally across the mountainsides. You see both sir'hibasi stiffen as if a chill hand had suddenly touched their very spines. Those of you not deep in meditation hear this cry, and also hear the keening noise that comes from the kellédu below as if in answer to that weird cry. Through the window the emerald cliffs that surround the valley gleam brightly in the decaying light of the suns beyond them, momentarily sending shimmering radiance dancing into a sky stained purple with the coming night. It would be beautiful if not for the malevolent call that still seems to echo across the valley, and the dark, sinister shadows that sweep across the forest from the base of the nearby cliffs. All of you feel it clearly. Something is coming...

Those actually submerged in Ritual or within the Dream will now clearly understand that a demonic presence is actually coming toward them seeking confrontation, bringing with it a growing sensation of raw supernaturally bestial rage. Though they may be attempted to emerge from their rituals as soon as possible, ask them each to make a **Knowledge Skill roll of ritual lore**. Success indicates their characters' understanding that the best chance they may have to deal with this thing would be to confront it (and hopefully drive it away or destroy it) while remaining in the spiritual Dream Realm. Success here could stall it from physically reaching their companions in the waking world, or at least distract it to some extent, giving their companions a fighting chance.

In truth, the being exists in both realms, and with its dual existence can effectively confront the players both physically as well as spiritually, though the sir'hibasi are correct in thinking they have a better chance of defeating it if they attack on both fronts simultaneously. It races toward them even now at the very head of the advancing shadow as it stretches across the valley, intent on feeding from this new apparent source of power that it felt from its terrible lair deeper in the mountains.

Any players not submerged in the ritual should now make either a roll for either the Animal Abilities of **Night Vision** or **Far Sight**, or they should make a simple **Perception Roll** at -2. Those succeeding will happen to notice, through the large window, unnatural movement that precedes the very tip of the shadow cast by the tallest of the emerald peaks from the nearby rim of the valley, like a writhing darkness flecked with sparks of hideous green flame. They will see this for merely a moment before the shadow passes over the nearest patch of woods, and the twisted form seems to flow beneath the canopy of trees as it speeds their way.

Scene 4; Besieged by a Child of Narákah

Again the rattling, unearthly cry is heard, but this time the sound of it can be felt in your bowels, and seems to vibrate the windowpanes of the lodge before it fades to echoing whispers of itself. Those of you who can see out of the window of

the loft notice the pacing kellédu freeze in their tracks, tense and shaking, then one-by-one withdraw to the far edges of the clearing as if waiting expectantly.

The long shadows of the valley have reached the little clearing in front of the lodge, and the darkness of the surrounding forest becomes oddly impenetrable to the eye. As if alive, tendrils of that very darkness seem to writhe around the waiting kellédu for a moment before uncurling from the forest's edge into the clearing like an otherworldly black mist. From this mist creeps a monstrous, chitinous nightmare.

As tall as Arhazbür's shoulders, and perhaps twice as long, the jet-black glistening horror appears to be a twisted mockery of a kellédu's natural form. This, however, is where any similarity with a creature of the natural world ends. Its inky, chitinous plates are separated by glowing green flesh, and its very eyes seem to burn from within like a cold, multifaceted emerald fire. From its gnashing maw fall gobbets of drool that sizzle and hiss as they splash upon the ground. Those of you who have hackles feel them rise at the mere presence of it, and the sensation continues to grow as it leaves the dark wood's edge and clambers purposefully toward the lodge door.

Regardless of what may be happening, either in or out of Ritual, when this supernatural creature arrives its actions will demand the immediate attention of the players. It is a Demon Beast, and regardless of how it may have originally been brought to this world, it has since chosen to dwell in the deep mountains, seeking prey and gaining dominance and control over local bestial predators that come to serve it. Though there is a general description below, these are the particular statistics for this unique and hellish being.

Beast of the Emerald Cliffs - (Demon from Narákah) A terrible, supernatural creature that haunts the western mountains of Tishínia. It feeds upon lone hunters and any beings that tap into the spiritual realm (though it will certainly consume any living thing it can find). It can spit a stream of hideous acid that can melt flesh from bone and even scar crystal and stone.

Action Dice: 7

Stamina Levels: 45

Special Attack (Spit Stream of Acid): 8

Armor: 4

Demon Beasts - In the ancient days of the Thousand Years of Darkness, the demonic devah, Amasúrah, Mother of Nightmares, released her hideous children upon the face of Dárdūnah to aid in her battles against the other Devah. In the end, though she was consigned to the Swirling Hells of Narákah, the demonic abominations she spawned fled into the dark recesses of the world, wrapping around themselves the physical stuff of Dárdūnah, creating for themselves forms of chitin, mist, malleable flesh, and vile ichors. Many of these beasts, or their progeny, still wander the forgotten places deep in the mountains, among ancient ruins, or hidden in the fastnesses of the uncharted wilderness. They clothe themselves in a thousand different forms and sizes, usually resembling suthra-like (or even jánah-like) abominations, wield a variety of different methods of vicious (perhaps supernatural) attacks, and they all house some terrible hunger that must be appeased. Wounds made by demons must often be healed with special rituals, and resist normal healing.

STAMINA: 10-100 levels

ARMOR: 2-10 points

NORMAL ACTION DICE:

Various Movement Types, Generic Attacks, Standard Sensory Rolls, etc. : 4 to 7

SPECIAL ACTIONS:

“Unique” Attack : 6 to 12



The Demon Beast will be able to “sense” where the sir’hibasi are by rolling its regular **Action Dice**, and it will immediately seek to do so as it enters the clearing. If it succeeds, it won’t bother barging through the door, it will simply begin climbing up the front wall to come bursting through the upstairs window! The players can easily open the framed windowpanes and begin firing at the creature as it approaches, however for the elephant character to attack the front door will need to be opened to give him access, since he can’t ascend the stairs without causing them to collapse.

The demon will continue to attack the party relentlessly until they are dead, or until they successfully destroy it or drive it away magically. It can be defeated on either of two different fronts simultaneously; physically by attacking it with weapons, and spiritually with magic in the Dream. But the safest way (for everyone) to confront it is in the Dream Realm, since any harm it can cause there to sir’hibasi will generally serve to merely hurl them out of Ritual, while defeating it there (depleting its Stamina) will sever its spiritual bond to the world of Dárdünah, and send it back to the Swirling Hells of Narákah where it came from, causing its body in the real world to collapse in upon itself in a pile of caustic goo, and releasing the wild kellédu from its command. A successful roll of the **Knowledge Skill of ritual lore** will give any

sir'hibas that understanding. In the Dream Realm the demon looks like a vast black mass of writing tentacles and burning green eyes. While being attacked in the Dream, the creature's real body will seem distracted, suffering a -2 penalty to all its rolls (the same does not apply to its Dream form), and it will be seen to jerk and react randomly to unseen forces (its opponents in Dream). Attacking the demon within the Dream is done using the seer sir'hibas' **Ritual Skill Roll** at a -2 penalty, while defending in the Dream is done at a -1 penalty, using the same dice. Though the priest healer can assist the seer in dealing with this menace through Collaboration, thus allowing him to add a Success for every two of his Successes rolled when making his Ritual of Healing Skill roll (by essentially giving the seer his own spiritual energy as a resource), he may also use that same Ritual to choose to attack separately from the edge of Dream at a -3 penalty, and may attempt a defense at a -2. For the purposes of this demon, assume that any successes that get through its own spiritual defense rolls (made at a penalty of -1 off its attack dice) cause it 1 level of Spiritual Stamina. Since it is a dual-natured creature (existing and acting simultaneously in the both the physical world and the Dream Realm), feel free to subtract both physical and spiritual damage it takes from its total Stamina.

Fighting the demon physically is quite dangerous, and puts the characters at risk of being sprayed by its hideous acid. As with most creatures encountered, its attacks do as much damage (when successful) as the number of dice they roll to make the attack, plus any successes that get through their opponent's defense roll. When the creature takes damage physically, always remember (as with any characters) to subtract its Armor value from the total damage taken from **each** successful strike against it.

If the Demon Beast's Stamina reaches 0 from damage taken in the real world OR in the Dream, the results are the same; it releases a terribly cry that echoes across the entire valley, its body rears up as if in some terrifying parody of a standing jánah, and then the glowing tissue that seems to connect its thick chitin plates begins to dissolve into a green, phosphorescent puddle of caustic fluid that seethes and smokes, partially consuming its rank corpse. If the party acts quickly enough, any of them may cut a piece off of it at this point to keep as a trophy of the battle, even part of its foul head. In the Dream, its wicked spirit will be seen to flare up with almost painful golden light at its "Dream Body" is rent asunder by powerful magical forces, leaving only a strange "ghost" of itself that will be drawn back away from the sir'hibasi fighting it, and will be seen to fall away into a swirling black vortex that forms for a brief instant and then vanishes. The Beast of the Emerald Cliffs is no more.

Conclusions

It can safely be said most of the party will agree that this little hunting trip is over. Assuming that either the seer was able to contact someone at the House of Sámtra (or some other potential help) or they soon will, inform the players that no doubt a sky-skiff will soon be on its way to retrieve them. In the mean time, further healing, a comforting meal, and certainly rest would be most welcome.

Hopefully the young lion Hakmüt will have recovered enough to interact, and will greatly desire to talk with the players about what has happened. He will be concerned that his weakness in light of all the players' brave deeds will not reflect well on what

should have been his chance to achieve Pratháma-Jaya (First Victory). Perhaps the players will reassure him that, in the end, facing and surviving the bestial thralls of a demon of Naráka is no small feat, especially with him being the first one attacked! After all, did he not hope that he would encounter the Beast of the Emerald Cliffs? Was it not his choice to have the hunt here? The devah would surely say that he had his part to play in ridding the world of such a terrible menace.

And certainly returning with a trophy from such a battle is a victory that few jánah can claim...