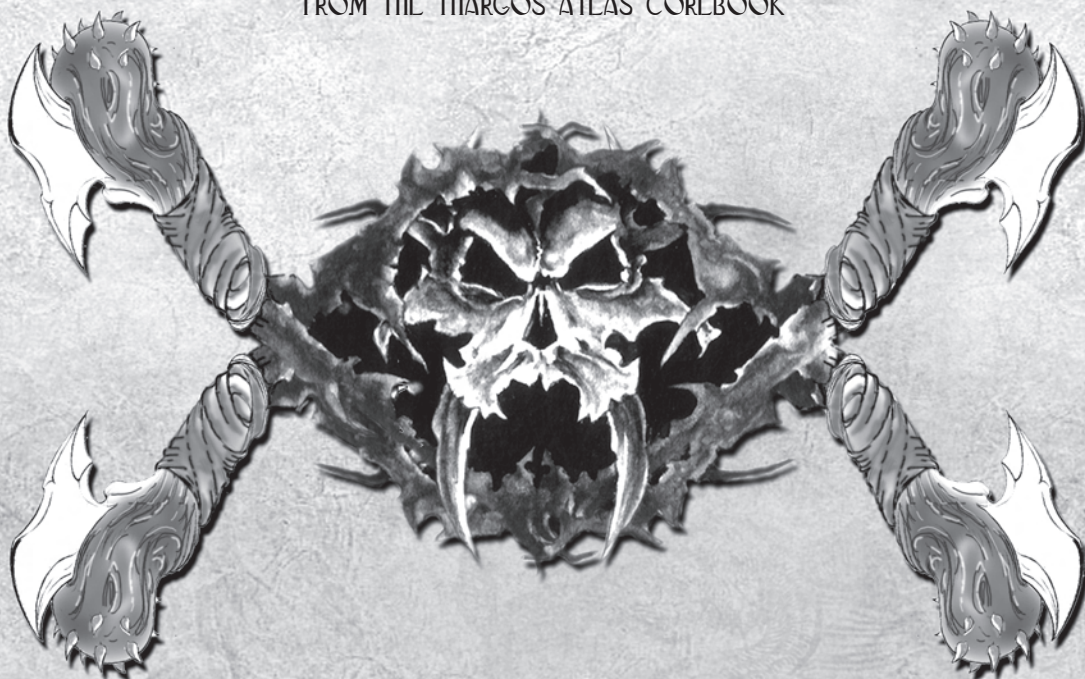


# The Approaching Tide Demonstration Scenario For Cursed Empire

By BRYAN STEELE AND CHRIS LOIZOU

PREQUEL TO THE BLOOD TIDE OF ELIOS SCENARIO

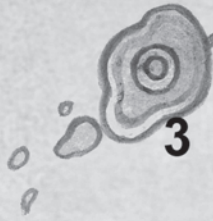
FROM THE THARGOS ATLAS COREBOOK



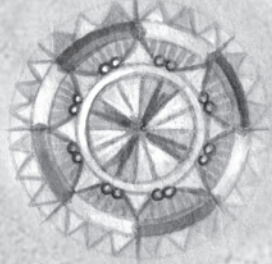
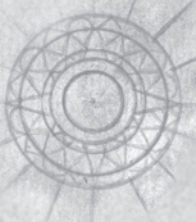




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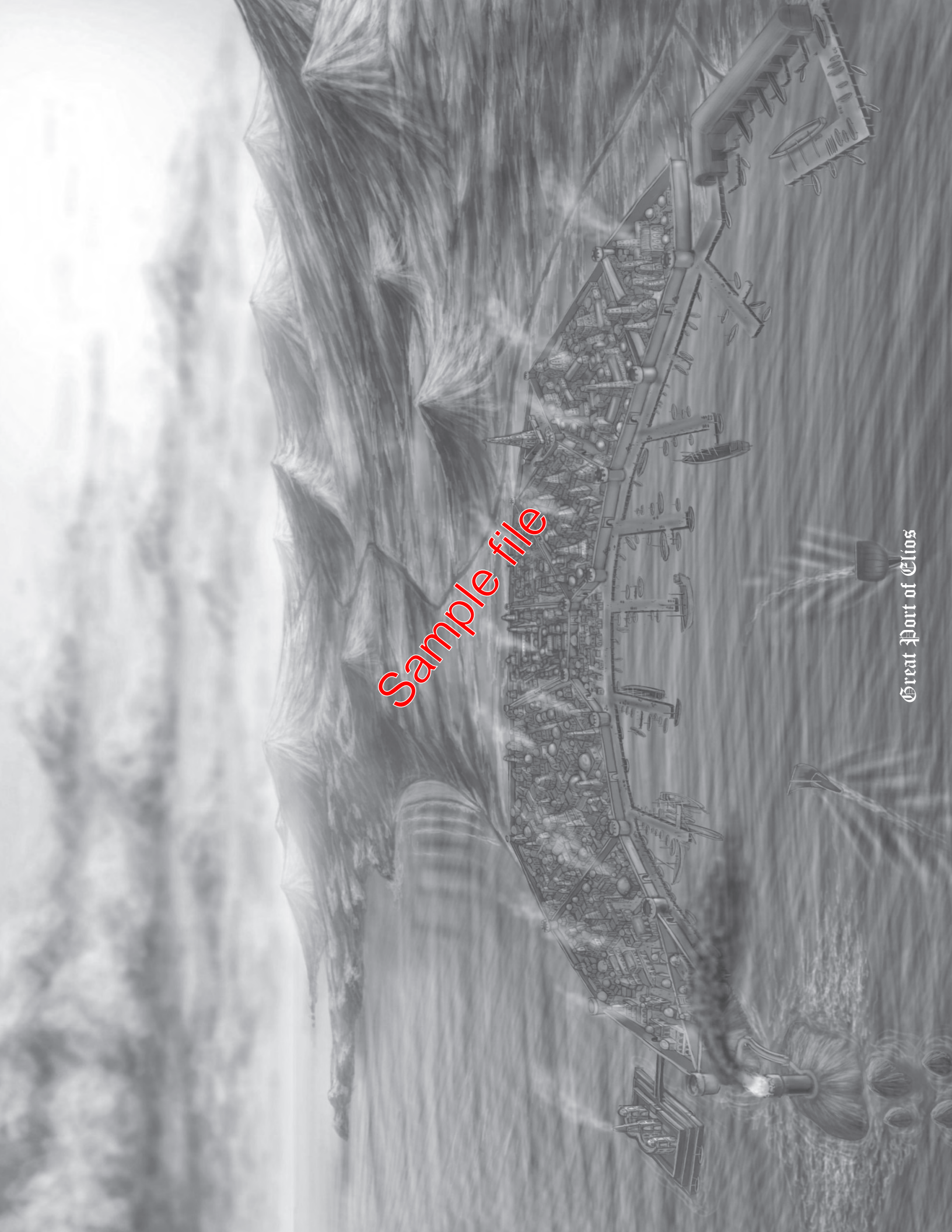
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## Elios (Great Port of)

- 1 - Sea Mist Hall, imperial residence of Sea Lord Markoss, Head of Elios, Head of the White Order and Son of Kelross the Explorer. This is the nerve centre of the whole region of Elios, and Markoss has managed to surround himself with excellent counsellors and advisors.
- 2 - Water Shrine and Temple of Elios, largest water temple on the Continent, where many pilgrims come at least once a year to pray, carry-out their rituals and purify themselves in the sea.
- 3 - Elios Lighthouse: a colossal brazier burns here night and day.
- 4 - Halls of the Astronomy Elders of Elios, here reside and teach the greatest astronomers of the Empire.
- 5 - Navigator Guild Halls of Residence, the influential Navigators Guild usually has representatives at all decision-making levels, as they are widely respected for their objectivity, logic and knowledge.
- 6 - Halls of the Weather Watchers, here reside the greatest imperial experts on weather predictions and studies. They are always consulted before any imperial campaign on land and sea.
- 7 - Warehouses: the most extensive choice of equipment for adventures on land or at sea, in the Empire.
- 8 - Fishermen's Guild, here is where the powerful Fishermen's Guild is based. This construction also houses representatives from all the Elios region ports and harbours. This lobby has great power in the region, and even has 3 regiments of Imperial Harpoon Guards at its disposal, of 500 troops each. The latter are used to enforce the regions fishing policies as well as protect fishing fleets from Ettika Corsair raids etc.
- 9 - Imperial Armourers, apart from the standard weapons and armour that can be found elsewhere, one can also find the famous Elios Scale Armour, the Imperial Two-Handed Trident, and the Imperial Harpoon.
- 10 - Elios Stables, the renowned Sea Bauld Horses can be found here, sought after all over the Empire for their ability to swim, their speed and majestic beauty.
- 11 - Main Port, most of the city's taverns including the *Salty Sprite*, inns and entertainment can be found here, as well as the fish and trade markets.
- 12 - Sea Halls of Justice, here is where the Sea Lord and the Justice Council of Elders sits in order to discuss laws and Elios policy matters, as well as resolve cases and legal issues.
- 13 - Residence of the Noble Warriors of the White Order of Elios, this is the quarter reserved to the prestigious White Order Warriors and Knights of the city.
- 14 - Houses of Purification, Cleansing and Health.
- 15 - Merchant Guild Headquarters, this is where the regional trade merchants operate from. They are a powerful entity, with veto powers in certain areas of law, armed guards, significant lobbying influence, and influence all over the Empire.
- 16 - Shipbuilding Docks, here is where the magnificent Elios War Galleys are constructed and launched, as well as a host of other types of embarkations.
- 17 - Alchemist Storehouse.





Sample file



# THE APPROACHING TIDE

A SCENARIO WRITTEN BY BRYAN STEELE AND CHRIS LOIZOU

## A Quick Introduction

The following paragraphs briefly outline some of the key rules used within the Cursed Empire Fantasy Roleplaying Game. The Core Rulebook provides over five-hundred pages of material and mechanics as well as two scenarios to get players started. The Game Range is growing on a regular basis and players are highly recommended to join the Fourms on the website in order to keep up to date on releases and discuss the game.

[www.cursedempire.com](http://www.cursedempire.com)

## Combat

Cursed Empire offers a unique combat system, which provides the MT with an excellent tool to vividly describe an encounter. Players who try the game have often described combat in Cursed Empire as being "cinematic

and "gritty".

Real-time actions are modelled and the pace is maintained using this game mechanic, often with simultaneous actions. Every action (attacking, moving etc) takes a certain amount of time, The MT has free reign to control the flow of actions in a fluid and logical manner.

After having completed the creation of your character or in this case had a look at the starter characters, it is a good idea to familiarise yourself with the game rules relation to combat and movement, in order to permit your character to survive in the hostile world of Thargos. Combat is one of the main phases of the game. Indeed, it is one of the more exciting parts of the adventure, where action and nerves come into play.

If at the first glance these rules appear relatively complicated, they will very quickly

## USING THIS SCENARIO

The following module will allow the MT to run an exciting introductory scenario for a group of players set in the city of Elios. It is designed to run in the short weeks preceding the events detailed in The Blood Tide of Elios (see the Thargos Atlas for more details). Full Character Generation is detailed on the [www.cursedempire.com](http://www.cursedempire.com) site and in Chapter 2 of the Core Rulebook. This demonstration module has 4 pregenerated characters with basic attributes. Please note that the complete characters from the roleplaying game are far more detailed than the ones offered here. A brief outline of Combat and Aptitudes will assist in running a demo of Cursed Empire.

The scenario itself is intentionally flexible and the MT should feel free to edit, expand and improvise within the confines of the basic story line.

### ABOUT ETTIKA CORSAIRS AND KARNARCOS.

The island kingdom of Ettika has had problematic dealings with Imperial naval fleets for decades after the fall of Mit-Sulek. Ettikan warships filled with well-trained corsairs have lurked outside of Elios's trade and shipping lines, occasionally ploughing forward to inflict massive casualties upon the navy and merchant fleets without giving even the possibility of surrender. Ettikan corsairs are lethally efficient on sea and land, and the citizens of Elios have learned to fear them more than the other monsters of the sea - seeing them as little more than such.



become easy to use and extremely realistic. They are the result of 7 years of play testing and offer some really challenging moments in the game.

Please note that any form of combat in the world of Thargos can potentially seal the fate of any character however strong they are, and fighting should never be taken lightly.

Please note that a Combat Turn lasts 10 seconds. During this lapse of time, a character can perform a certain number of actions but will only have a limited number of chances of success.

Example - An Elf Imperial Archer fires numerous arrows in 10 seconds, but will only have 3 realistic chances of hitting and wounding his or her targets if using a short bow.

### Combat Phases

1. Choice of Target.
2. Initiative throws (for all parties).
3. Attack throws (with the possibility to select a specific body section).
4. Parry/Dodge throws.
5. Armour throws (if the previous throw fails).
6. Damage throws (deducted from armour etc.).
7. Pain Endurance throws.
8. Return to Phase 3: Change of sides.

A great deal of extra detail is provided in Chapter 3 of the Core Rulebook.

Example combat

1. Vardek of Karg is a Darkun from the Pure subfaction of the Fire Cult. He is armed with a buckler and a Bardack (evil scimitar with swivelling spiked chain hanging from the bottom of the pommel) and wears no armour.

Dreiss, Imperial Warrior-Priest from the Earth Cult is armed with a Two-Handed Warhammer, and has a Heavy Chainmail shirt covering his arms and torso.

2. Initiative throw: 1d10: +6 for Vardeck (Reflex adjustment based on 16, none for the Bardack), +3 for Dreiss (Reflex adjustment based on 14, +1 for the Warhammer and -2 for the Heavy Chainmail).

Vardek obtains an 8+6: 14, he automatically has the initiative.

The MT can of course decide if one of the characters was surprised, they automatically lose the initiative.

3. Vardek has 63% (31%, 21%) in the Mastered Weapon aptitude for the Bardack. The player decides to make a random shot, and obtains a 47.

4. Dreiss has a Parry/Dodge aptitude at 52% and misses with a 56. 1d20 is used to locate the blow, and a 7 is obtained: Left Leg.

5+6. There is no armour here so the blow goes through: 2d4 +5 (15 in Strength): 8 is obtained.

7. The Left Leg only had 6 EP (Energy Points), so drops to -2: on 1d20 an Endurance throw



is required in order to check Driess's pain threshold: a score of 6 means that he does not falter. If the damage inflicted goes beyond the opposite EP's i.e. -7 and onwards then a critical situation has occurred: an Endurance throw on 1d100 is required. Please note that a critical situation to the head results in death and can also result to this in other locations (the Critical Damage Table has to be used).

8. Driess's player is aware that his character is in danger and decides to go for a headshot (i.e. Mastered Weapon aptitude/3 rounded down): with a score of 56% for the 2-Handed Warhammer, this would be: 18%. He obtains a 16 and Vardek misses the Parry/Dodge with an 87. As there is no form of protection worn on the head, the warhammer hits the target: 1d8+2 +4(14 in Strength): 11, the Darkun is killed on the spot as per the Critical Damage Table (23 on 1d100: "cracked skull, shattered bone penetrates the brain, you die within seconds").

As you can see from this example, combat is realistic and deadly and should not be taken lightly. It allows however, for real suspense and action, as well as tactical decision making. Players will respect the deadly nature of the system which has a dual purpose: promote role-playing and negotiation skills to avoid rushing into battle, and feeling the thrill and visualising the action when diplomacy breaks down for example. The above is an example of melee combat in Cursed Empire. Additional combat rules are made available to allow players a great deal of flexibility and options in developing their own hallmark fighting styles.

The combat system also contains rules modeling initiative, lightening-draws, armour-degradation, stun-attacks, critical failures, perfect actions, unarmed combat (including all manner of unarmed techniques from head-butts to multiple punch-kick combinations), mounted combat, underwater combat, bleeding, broken/fractured bones, killing blows, exotic/southern weapon styles and numerous other melee and missile features. Certain weapons are even banned within the Empire and carry the death penalty!

Combat is designed to be tied-in with the roleplaying sequence, not to limit this in any way. Let's take one of the Player Characters provided with this demonstration to explain combat. Trachius Pracce (4th Level Condorian Adventurer)

Intelligence	13	+3	Essence	10	0
Charisma	14	+4	Beauty	11	+1
<b>Reflexes</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>+4</b>	<b>Endurance</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>+5</b>
Mental Resistance	13	+3	<b>Strength</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>+5</b>
<b>Agility</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>+4</b>	Perception	13	+3

The characteristics in **bold italics** above are used in combat.

Reflexes will be used to determine initiative as per example above. For simplicity we will not be taking into account armour and weapons used, just a straight d10 roll with +4 modifier, highest starts first, then second etc.

Agility has been used to determine Weapon skills and Parry/Dodge below.

Endurance is used when determining Energy Points (EP's) below and for rolling against pain on 1d20 or 1d100 (see phase 7 from the example above and example below).

Strength is used as a weapon damage modifier so in this case +5 damage to melee weapons, and +2 (5/2 rounded down) for thrown weapons. There are no strength modifiers for projectile



weapons except for special weapons not detailed here.

Weapon Hunting Bow (Short Bow): 65%/32%/21% 1d4+1 damage: The Tracker can fire 3 short bow arrows per turn. The three columns relate to a random shot, a called shot to the torso and limbs and a headshot. The MT may wish to apply a damage modifier based upon range, for simplicity's sake, say +1, +2 and +3 for long, medium and short ranges respectively.

Weapon Sword: 60%/28%/18% 1d8+1 damage (+3 additional for strength as explained above).

Parry/Dodge: 68% (this is calculated using the base minus the armour worn plus any potential shield used - detailed in Chapter 3 of the Core Rulebook).

Armour: Light Chain Mail: 70%/33%/35%  
1D6+4/1D6+2/1D6+3  
(H-to-H, H/S, I/C)

The three columns above relate to the armour rolls if a Parry/Dodge fails against the following forms of attack (see phase 4 in example above): Hand to Hand, Hacking/Slashing/Piercing and Crushing/Bludgeoning.

The distribution below indicates the EP count for each body location, if for example the left arm suffers over 17 damage, a roll below Endurance on 1d20 will be required or if the arm is damaged by more than 34 (-18), then a d100 will be required to stay conscious.

Maximum energy points: 128

Head:	14	Torso:	40
Left Arm:	17	Right Arm:	17
Left Leg:	20	Right Leg:	20

### Aptitude Rolls

Cursed Empire handles Character's non-combat actions using a flexible and easy to use Aptitude system.

The Aptitudes express the strengths and weaknesses of the character and give a clear idea on where these skills can be applied within a group of Adventurers.

### Perfect Action Rule

Every character has at least a 1% chance to succeed at any action. A score of 1/10 or less of the aptitude is considered a perfect action. This enables the player to enter a cross (x) in the 4 cross grid on the character sheet, or two crosses (x) if this is the first time that this skill has been used for this caste level (section 2.7).

Example: A Condorian Warrior has 67% using a Short Sword, if the player obtains a dice throw of 06% or less this is a perfect action.

### Critical Failure (CF) Rule

In some cases of an action being taken, a character can fail miserably, which will have varying



levels of consequence on the outcome. The following rule has to be applied: 91% is a CF for 01-19%, 92% for 20-29%, 93% for 30-39%, 94% for 40-49% etc. up to 99% for 90-98% and 100% for 99-100%.

Example: A Female Condorian Warrior has 76% in the Moving Silently Aptitude. She obtains a score of ninety-seven on 1D100: the result is that she trips up and crashes to the ground very noisily.

Note: score of more than 100 can be obtained if there are extra penalties for the action.

### Aptitude Descriptions

This section briefly describes aptitudes and gives players and M.T alike an idea of the situations where these skills can be used. Any other aptitudes can be generated at the MT's discretion if their implementation enriches gameplay.

There are two main types of Aptitude in the Cursed Empire game: Primary (P) and secondary (S). Primary Aptitudes are automatically available to a newly created character, whereas secondary ones can be developed later on in the existence of the character or a proportion of development points can be allocated during character creation. Each Aptitude belongs to a category.

The Master of Tales (MT) should use the table below to determine success modifiers based on action difficulty levels.

Level of Difficulty	+/-
Unmissable	+60%
Extremely Easy	+40%
Very Easy	+30%
Easy	+25%
Relatively Easy	+20%
Not too Easy	+15%
Feasible	+10%
Average	0
Slightly Difficult	-10%
Not too Difficult	-15%
Relatively Difficult	-20%
Difficult	-25%
Very Difficult	-30%
Extremely Difficult	-40%
Almost Impossible	-60%





For simplicity's sake each Player Character will have twenty starter Aptitudes that relate to their Class. Fully expanded characters can have up to one-hundred and forty or more Aptitudes.

Now back to the scenario...

### **Elios – Where and Why**

The city of Elios is a coastal city that perilously makes its living off the shoreline through rare and dangerous naval piers and commerce. It is a bastion of law and order, ruled by the powerful Sealord Markoss and his fierce White Order of Knights. It is a sectioned city of wonders that most of Thargos never gets to see. There are great bazaars, unique shops, goods not found anywhere else...

...and treachery abound.

There is something wicked washing ashore in the next tides of Elios, and there is little time before it rises beyond the coast and swallows the city whole.

See the Thargos Atlas for additional information on Elios.

### **The Player's Introduction**

Each of the player characters receives an invitation (in their own way) to have a drink with a local dockworker named Rystero (Player Character number 4). Rystero has a particular plan that requires the skills of the three others invited.

He needs to break into the Alchemist's Storehouse and kill the owner.

Rystero has reason to believe (more detail under Rystero) that Burkhe, the Alchemist, is a supporter of a dastardly alliance between the Ettikan corsairs said to plague the seas around Elios. As far as he knows it will be a simple plan, and an even simpler execution. It is well-known that Burkhe is a skilled mage, but with Rystero's plan of action...nothing could possibly go wrong, could it?

### **Player Characters**

#### **Trachius Pracce (4th Level Condorian Adventurer)**

Trachius is a wanderer that came into Elios almost a week ago, winning a huge bet at one of the Yipp betting tables in the dock district. He has been living well ever since...but the coin is running out quickly. A master of both shortsword and hunting bow, he started putting the word out to try and hire his services as a guide back through the forests – which is why he was discovered by Rystero.

Trachius is a powerful man that could have been a knight, if it were not for his utter contempt for Imperial law and most of their enforcers. He has a wickedly jagged scar that runs along his jawline on the right side, from his singularly worst run-in with an Enforcer Knight for poaching in



the 'Noble's Game Lands', which Trachius was not made aware of until long after the hip full of hares was long but killed and butchered. He is wary of lawmen, untrustworthy of nobles, and eager to make a healthy sum of coin.

Intelligence	13 +3	Essence	10	0
Charisma	14 +4	Beauty	11	+1
Reflexes	14 +4	Endurance	15	+5
Mental R.	13 +3	Strength	15	+5
Agility	14 +4	Perception	13	+3

### Animal Based Skills

Animal Training P – 27%  
 Equestrian Skills P – 43%  
 Athletics  
 Acrobatics S – 21%  
 Climbing P – 34%  
 Holding Ones Breath P - 150 seconds  
 Jumping P – 35%  
 Running S – 33%  
 Swimming P – 21%  
 Throwing S – 36%

### Nature

Camouflage S – 23%  
 Geography S – 19%  
 Hunting/Fishing S – 29%

Knowledge of Nature P – 34%  
 Meteorology P – 19%  
 Navigation S – 12%  
 Orientation S – 37%  
 Survival P – 36%  
 Swamp Movement S – 11%  
 Tracking P – 46%  
 Traps – 24%

Weapon Hunting Bow (Short Bow): 65%/32%/21% 1d4+1 damage  
 Weapon Short Sword: 60%/30%/20% 1d8+1 damage (+5 additional for strength).  
 Parry/Dodge: 68%  
 Armour: Light Chain Mail: 70%/33%/35%  
 1D6+4/1D6+2/1D6+3  
 (H-to-H, H/S, I/C)

Maximum energy points: 128  
 Head: 14 Torso: 40  
 Left Arm: 17 Right Arm: 17  
 Left Leg: 20 Right Leg: 20

### Equipment:

Light Chainmail  
 Hunting Bow (Short Bow) + Quiver with 25 arrows.  
 Sword  
 Walking Staff  
 Walking Boots  
 Large Backpack  
 Healing Flask (2 doses): +1d4 EP per body location.  
 Pale grey clothing  
 12 Gold Coins (GC)  
 23 Copper Coins (CC)



### Foxiweather Tosinna (5th Level Mandorian Tracker)

Known as 'Foxy Toss' to all of the locals, Foxiweather has been in Elios for quite a while – almost three years. She has never been much for fame or fortune, but instead lives for the hunt of the accursed Ettikans that took her brother and husband from her when they came here. She enjoys the fact that she wields one



of their own short blades – the sablade – that she took from the twitching fingers of her first kill. Since that time she has all but posted her efforts on tavern walls, always looking for a like mind looking to shed a little Ettikan blood.

When Rystero came to her with the forebears of putting a bloody wrench in the Ettikans' works, Foxy's attentions were piqued. She wanted to know more immediately, but was calmed when the invitation came to go to the Salty Sprite Tavern. She always liked their rum-heavy grog and their pastry-esque bread puddings. And hell, if this well-to-do man is paying for their food as well as for the blood she will shed...who is she to argue?

Intelligence	14 +4	Essence	10 0
Charisma	13 +3	Beauty	13 +3
Reflexes	15 +5	Endurance	14 +4
Mental R.	11 +1	Strength	13 +3
Agility	14 +4	Perception	15 +5

#### **Animal Based Skills**

Animal Training P – 30%  
Equestrian Skills P – 45%

#### **Athletics**

Acrobatics S – 29%  
Climbing P – 34%  
Holding Ones Breath P - 140 seconds  
Jumping P – 35%  
Running S – 39%  
Swimming P – 29%  
Throwing S – 31%

#### **Nature**

Camouflage S – 27%  
Geography S – 22%  
Hunting/Fishing S – 31%  
Knowledge of Nature P – 35%  
Meteorology P – 21%  
Navigation S – 12%  
Orientation S – 37%  
Survival P – 39%  
Swamp Movement S – 14%  
Tracking P – 49%  
Traps – 21%

Weapon Hunting Bow (Short Bow): 66%/33%/22%  
1d4+1 damage.

Weapon Sablade (Ettikan): 62%/31%/20% 1d6+2  
damage (+3 additional for strength).

Parry/Dodge: 69%

Armour: Studded Leather: 70%/33%/35%

1D6+4/1D6+2/1D6+3

(H-to-H, H/S, I/C)

Maximum energy points: 117

Head: 12      Torso: 35

Left Arm: 16      Right Arm: 16

Left Leg: 19      Right Leg: 19

#### **Equipment:**

Studded Leather

Short Bow + Quiver with 28 arrows.

Sword

Walking Staff

Riding Boots

Large Backpack

Dark green clothing

52 Gold Coins (GC)

33 Silver Coins (SC)

#### **Xast of Meldor (5th Level Noble Elven Thief)**

One of the only thieves in the entire city of Elios not to have joined a gang, guild or mob, Xast came to the city over five years ago from the northern city of Meldor. She left due to a string of bloody murders that the Freedom Fighters thought she was responsible for, even though only one actually occurred on the end of her gladius. Ever since she has avoided most travellers from the Meldor area, but enjoys the infamy that the bounty they have on her head grants her in certain circles.

It was this infamy that drew Rystero to Xast. Believing her to be a 'master thief and bloody handed killer', she sent the invitation. Xast read the invite carefully, knowing that she would no doubt be called upon to use her entry skills and maybe her shining blade in whatever scheme this strange and enigmatic man has cooked up for her. As far as she is concerned, it had been long since she had a purse full of coin that did not have at least some blood on it.



Intelligence	15 +5	Essence	8 -2
Charisma	11 +1	Beauty	9 -1
Reflexes	16 +6	Endurance	12 +2
Mental R.	9 -1	Strength	13 +3
Agility	15 +5	Perception	16 +6

### Theft & Espionage

Corruption P – 22%  
 Deciphering S – 21%  
 Detection of Hidden Mechanisms P – 33%  
 Disguise P – 31%  
 Falsification S – 15%  
 Hiding Object P – 39%  
 Hiding Oneself P – 44%  
 Intimidation P – 43%  
 Investigation S – 32%  
 Lip Reading P – 22%  
 Lock-Picking S – 45%  
 Pickpocket S – 47%  
 Poison Analysis S – 33%  
 Prestidigitation S – 29%  
 Searching Object P – 51%  
 Silent Movement P – 46%  
 Spying S – 33%  
 Street-Wisdom P – 44%  
 Subterfuge P – 41%  
 (Un)tying Knots P – 39%

Weapon Dagger: 71%/35%/23% 1d6 damage

Weapon Sword: 60%/30%/20% 1d8+1 damage (+3 additional for strength).

Parry/Dodge: 73%

Armour: Leather: 70%/33%/35%

1D6+4/1D6+2/1D6+3

(H-to-H, H/S, I/C)

Maximum energy points: 110

Head: 12 Torso: 34

Left Arm: 14 Right Arm: 14

Left Leg: 18 Right Leg: 18

### Equipment:

Leather Armour

Dagger

Sword

Short Boots

Small Backpack

Lock-Picking Kit

Dark grey clothing  
 33 Gold Coins (GC)  
 2 Platinum Coins (PC)

### Rystero (4th Level Condorian Assassin)

Working by day as a dockworker and after dusk as a razor-for-hire, Rystero is a no-nonsense Condorian who has learned the real worth of life...whatever you can haggle them up to! Seven years of cutting throats and hiding bodies has made him a bit of a cynic, not believing in much else except for the number of coins in his pocket and the blood on his knife. When the esteemed city Councilman Hargrov Otz approached Rystero contract in hand, there was no question.

Not truly a patriot, Rystero could not care less that the target – the alchemist Burkhe – might be some kind of traitor. It was just another mark. It was going to be difficult due to circumstances, which is why Rystero told each of his accomplices exactly what they needed to hear to come along. Normally Rystero would work alone, but he could not take any chances. After all...he planned to kill them all afterwards anyway.

Intelligence	13 +3	Essence	10 0
Charisma	17 +7	Beauty	14 +4
Reflexes	14 +4	Endurance	17 +7
Mental R.	11 +1	Strength	15 +5
Agility	18 +8	Perception	15 +5

### Martial Skills

Assassination P – 39%

### Nature

Traps P – 24%

### Theft & Espionage

Corruption P – 22%  
 Deciphering S – 21%  
 Detection of Hidden Mechanisms P – 33%  
 Disguise P – 31%



Hiding Object P – 39%  
Hiding Oneself P – 44%  
Intimidation P – 43%  
Investigation S – 32%  
Lip Reading P – 22%  
Lock-Picking S – 45%  
Pickpocket S – 47%  
Poison Analysis S – 33%  
Searching Object P – 51%  
Silent Movement P – 46%  
Spying S – 33%  
Street-Wisdom P – 44%  
Subterfuge P – 41%  
(Un)tying Knots P – 39%

Weapon Short Bow: 72%/36%/24% 1d4+1 damage  
Weapon Dagger: 60%/30%/20% 1d6 (+5 additional for strength).  
Parry/Dodge: 70%  
Armour: Light Chain Mail: 70%/33%/35%  
1D6+4/1D6+2/1D6+3  
(H-to-H, H/S, I/C)

Maximum energy points: 135

Head:	15	Torso:	40
Left Arm:	18	Right Arm:	18
Left Leg:	22	Right Leg:	22

#### **Equipment:**

Light Chainmail  
Short Bow + Quiver with 25 arrows.  
Dagger  
Walking Boots  
Small Backpack  
Black and brown clothing  
82 Gold Coins (GC)  
53 Copper Coins (CC)

#### **The Set-Up**

The Salty Sprite Tavern is a hole in the wall dive of a drinking hall located just down Pallus Alley from the Merchant's Guild Headquarters. It is owned and operated by a battle-scarred

Condorian veteran of the White Order, who lost both an eye and an arm in fighting with the last major Darkun attack on Elios, named Gyrret Baile. Gyrret spends most of his time behind the bar, filling wooden ale mugs with frothy grog and soup bowl with chowder. He has long since left behind his life of fighting injustice, and mainly now turns his blind eye to anything short of gut-ripping murder in the Sprite.

That is why it is the perfect place for Rystero to hold his meeting of accomplices. Between the average pricing for above-average food (1-2 GP per seating for a night's worth of food, 2-3 GP per seating for drinks) and the hefty sum of coin he has been promised when the job is done, he knew it would be a good atmosphere to make the deal.

#### **Scene Opening**

The tavern is sparsely populated, as a cold drizzle has moved in from the sea to splatter anyone walking the streets. A few patrons huddle around tables and wall booths, mostly near the roaring peat and driftwood fire in the back of the tavern. Rystero has arranged for a table at the utter opposite end of the room, encased in shadows and has filled its surface with food and drink early on in order to keep the bar wenches away from the table – while they talked about the job.

One by one the other PChs will arrive at the bar. They may not recognize Rystero, but obviously Rystero will know who they are and why they have come. How he approaches the others is up to the player, but the course of the job will require it – else the assassination cannot take place, and Rystero will not get paid. Once all four characters get to the table, the negotiations will begin. There are



a handful of facts that each player should know before entering deeply in the negotiations:

- Rystero has been offered a sum of 10,000 GC, 500 of which was supplied up front, to go and kill Burkhe specifically on the eve of the next new moon – two days from today.
- Rystero knows that Councilman Hargrov Otz will not take responsibility for this should they get caught, he has far too much at stake in political circles.
- Trachius Pracce has indeed seen strange-looking individuals around the Alchemist's Storehouse.
- Foxiweather Tosinna was recently mistaken for an Ettikan because of the weapon on her hip, but the dockworker that did so merely asked if "she was in," showing her a strange tattoo on his wrist of a shark. After the confused look she came back with, the dockworker ran off.
- Xast of Meldor found a covered wagon filled with dead city watchmen just a few blocks from the Alchemist's Storehouse just last week. It looked like they may have been killed with Karnacosian weapons.

### **After the Negotiations**

Once the negotiations are complete and the four are ready to begin their bloody mission, the area around the Alchemist's Storehouse should be described to them.

The Storehouse is a big stone building with dark shutters that are almost always closed and bolted shut from the inside. There is a palpable cold aura around the building that the superstitious blame on Water-sorcery, but is actually due to the peculiar and ingenious construction of ice-keeping recesses in the floor and cupboards, keeping the alchemical reagents inside cool and safe for those who might come to shop here.

The hours the building is open are only within one hour of either side of sunrise or sunset, when the temperature outside is the least extreme to affect the inner stability of the cooling system. Burkhe is always around at that time, normally with a trio of city watchmen on hand to protect the veritable fortune inside...but not for the last few days, as the watch has been pulled very thin as of late due to a string of unresolved disappearances along the docks. Burkhe has requested new guards several times from the Sealord – which cannot be taken away from their current patrols.

No matter how the characters prepare over the next two days, eventually on the night of the first new moon they will need to be in place, or Rystero will not get paid his fortune.

There are only three people inside the Alchemical Storehouse (See Annex C Map) when the characters arrive; Burkhe, his assistant Deidre, and a single new client named Ibu. Outside, in the alleyway are four Wrecker Darkun awaiting to clean up the scene (more details as to why later).

Burkhe will defend his business with spells and his small axe, and knows that he has been targeted for some time – meaning that he will not be terribly surprised when the attackers come for him. He would rather not kill anyone if he does not have to, if only to have an avenue of interrogation later, but it will not stop him from doing so.

Deidre is barely an apprentice when it comes to combatant magics, and would much rather escape the scene altogether – which will make her a target by both the PChs and the awaiting Darkun outside.



Ibu is actually an initiate of the Wrecker Darkun, spending the last few weeks placing very specific orders for parties unknown with the Alchemist. His orders will become much more apparent and important in later weeks (as seen in The Blood Tide of Elios), but he is primarily here right now to signal the awaiting Darkun when Burkhe is dead – or if he actually defeats all the PChs, to stall them long enough for the signal – which will be a shrill Orcish cry. Ibu knows there will be a slight delay after he gives the signal, but hopefully will be able to keep the PChs at bay until the Wreckers arrive in 2d3 rounds.

Should Ibu somehow die (accidentally, bloodthirsty PCh, or perhaps the moments after his Orcish signal shout), Rystero will likely turn on his fellows during the rounds between the call and the Darkuns' arrival. He is driven to take all of the pay from this, and it will be his undoing in one fashion or another. The Master of Tales should speed up or slow down the arrival of the Darkuns accordingly to the drama of the scene – or if it looks as though someone might escape.

### **The Assassination – Why?**

The Master Alchemist Burkhe stands in the way of a massive plot involving many factions that will all come together in a tumultuous conflagration that is described in great detail in the scenario The Blood Tide of Elios. Although it may not seem like it here, the death of the Master Alchemist and the appearance of hidden Darkun is the first event in a chain of world-altering events that take place in Elios.

### **The Wrecker Darkun – Why?**

For reasons of their own (covered in The Blood Tide of Elios) the Wrecker Darkun slayers that are awaiting Ibu's signal cry are wielding Ettikan weapons and wear Ettikan clothing. Other than the possibility of seeing a Wrecker tattoo on the fact that they do not speak Ettikan, the PChs will no doubt believe them to be deadly pirate corsairs.

There are four of them, all wielding Ettikan sablades, and they are here to make sure that the Alchemist Storehouse does not get harmed in the assassination...and most importantly, that there are NO witnesses to survive it. They are the clean up crew...and they will gladly sacrifice themselves to make sure no one gets out of the assassination knowing what happened.

### **Councilman Hargrov Otz – Why?**

Other than his seeming belief in Burkhe's dealings with the Ettikans – which cannot be disproven by the events seen here – this important political figure will disavow anything to do with the Alchemist's Storehouse. The fact that he hired Rystero to kill Burkhe will never be mentioned due to the assassins' deaths, but he will close the whole scene of the bloody attack for further investigation.

He has a much thicker role in The Blood Tide of Elios.

### **In Conclusion...**

The sounds of battle will arise many suspicions in the neighbourhood, word eventually reaching the Councilman Otz's pointed ear and he sends his personal retinue to board up and close down the Storehouse so he may personally look over the bloody scene he was secretly a part of – due to his secret dealings with Rystero. It will remain closed for business for several weeks...long into the happenings of another plot.