A DragonQuest Capsule Adventure

The Camp of Alla-Akabar

I. Introduction

The Camp of Alla-Akabar is a *DragonQuest* adventure to be played in about eight hours by one or two players with one character each. It is designed to be presented as a single adventure, although it can easily be incorporated into an existing campaign.

Before play begins, the GM should read and familiarize himself with the character descriptions and possible situations. *The Camp of Alla-Akabar* relies primarily on the players discerning clues presented to them by the GM during encounters. Further explanation starts in Chapter IV.

II. How to Read the Maps

Two maps are provided with the adventure, one for the overland journey and one for the layout of the camp. Both maps are on hex grids; the scale for the overland map is 1 hex/2 miles, and the scale for the camp is 1 hex/5 feet. **Note:** If the GM wishes to place the adventure on the *Frontiers of Alusia* map, he should use Jungbar (hex 30-098) as the town and Korvin's Wells (hex 43-099) as the oasis. He should adjust all descriptions to fit if he does make this change.

III. Briefing for the Players

After many weeks of travel, the characters arrive in a large coastal town with their resources dangerously low. The characters find an inn and have dinner. After their meal, the bartender starts a conversation with the characters, as they are new faces in town. Explaining their plight and need for employment, they are told of the public notices posted in the town square.

The characters adjourn to the square, where they indeed find notices of openings. Only one draws their interest:

ENTERTAINERS WANTED

Seeking skilled male and/or female entertainers for engagement in small settlement beyond the mountains. Must be willing to travel through rugged terrain; Prima Donnas need not apply. See Rory at the Inn of the Daring Damsel between sundown and closing.

A few simple questions around town inform the characters that beyond the mountains lies the desert, where there are reports of marauding tribes of bandits. Few people from the town have any reason to go into the desert, as they rely upon trade arriving in town to supply all their needs.

At the Inn of the Daring Damsel, the characters are led to a back room, where they meet a halfling who introduces himself as Rory. He will ask them their specialties as entertainers as well as request a brief demonstration of their best work.

If sufficiently impressed with the audition, Rory will explain that he is acting as an agent for a travelling band in the desert who is seeking some diversion after completing a long and exhausting trek. He will ask questions about the characters' abilities to handle themselves in tight situations, as there is a chance the audience may become rowdy and downright unruly.

If the characters fill the bill, Rory will take their names, saying they have a good chance. He will answer any questions the characters have about where and for whom they may be employed.

Rory explains, in answer to any questions, that he is the personal manservant for Alla-Akabar, a leader of a tribe of bedouins who have spent the better part of the last year to the north. They rest near these mountains every year around this time; the tribe leaves the town alone, so no one bothers the tribe. Rory is in town to pick up supplies for the camp and find suitable entertainment for the men. Transportation will be provided to and from the camp, and the engagement should be no longer than a week. For these shows, the characters will be paid by Alla 500 Silver Pennies, plus whatever gratuities are thrown from the crowd.

Later that evening, the characters are approached by a man wearing a cape whose face is shadowed by a large hood. He asks if he may sit with them and introduces himself as Xarak. Wondering if they are contemplating taking the employment in the camp of Alla-Akabar, he informs them that — if they are — he has an offer which may be of interest to them.

He is seeking information concerning two women, named Kerona and Shyrila, who were taken by the tribe almost a year ago. He wishes to know where they may be and what, if anything, has happened to them. He says he does not care how this information is obtained, so long as it is the truth.

He further informs them that he is offering a bonus. He will pay them 300 Gold Shillings each to get the information, and he will add on 200 Gold Shillings more if, in addition to getting the information, they can eliminate Alla-Akabar and bring back some proof that he is dead.

If the characters accept the offer, Xarak will stress that time is of the essence, and the information retrieval and the killing should be accomplished as quickly as possible. Xarak will stay to answer any questions he can (see Chapter IV), and then he will bid the characters good night and good luck.

Later that night, Rory appears and tells the characters they have been hired on as entertainers and will meet them late in the morning by the stables with horses and mules packed for the journey to the camp.

When they meet Rory, they will immediately leave and set out toward the mountains. At the end of that day, they follow a ravine and arrive at the edge of the desert. There the halfling starts transferring the supplies to a number of camels which he tethered there on his way into town. The next morning, after making sure that everyone is clothed properly to guard against the dangers of crossing the desert (see Chapter V), the party sets out across the sands.

After two days of travel, the party enters the camp of Alla-Akabar.

IV. Briefing for the Gamesmaster

The Camp of Alla-Akabar is designed such that at least one character should be able to skillfully entertain the camp. They should not be allowed to fake it without failure. Thus, Troubador or Courtesan skills are needed, and creative use of Talent Magic would come in handy. An Assassin skill might help in the attempt to kill Alla.

Rory and Xarak were telling the truth as far as they went; in fact, they are working together. Xarak has been waiting for Alla's tribe to make their annual encampment near this town. He waited for word of Rory's arrival in town and approached him about the possibility of an alliance. Rory was open to such an offer, as he is becoming more and more disgusted with the treatment he receives in camp. He was leery of becoming too involved, as Alla has shown qualities of omniscience. Xarak explained how he could keep Rory separate from the scheme by approaching the entertainers after Rory informed him who the most likely candidates were. **Note:** If the GM incorporates this adventure into his campaign, he may have to go through several characters before finding suitable ones.

There are some things, other than his complicity, which Xarak will not discuss with the party. If questioned, he will give a description of the two women (see Chapter VI for details), but he will not reveal that they are really his wife and daughter, who were taken during a raid. He will not tell the party

that his daughter wears an amulet similar to his, as he believes she is not in the camp. The GM should refer to Xarak's description in this Chapter for full details concerning the amulet and Xarak's appearance.

Rory will give the physical details of the camp as he knows them, and he will speak of the people in the camp during the overland trip. Full descriptions of the camp and its inhabitants are covered in Chapters VI and VII.

There are things neither Xarak nor Rory can know which present major obstacles to the party in completing the mission. It is up to the players to piece together the clues obtained through encounters with NPC's. Among these facts are the following:

1. The daughter has become Alla-Akabar's mistress.

2. The daughter is being kept drugged.

3. Alla's bodyguard, Garn, is a hobgoblin who is much more than he appears to be.

There is also a time factor to be considered. Xarak has told the party the deed must be done quickly. While he was discussing the deal with Rory, a bedouin from the camp who had come into town on his own had overheard their plottings. Xarak and Rory managed to capture him and are keeping him alive, trying to get information out of him, but he will not talk. They have decided to proceed with their scheme. At the end of three days, or at the GM's discretion, this captive will have managed to escape and made his way to the camp, arriving early on the morning of the fourth day to reveal Rory's treachery. Xarak will not mention the captive to the party, as he fears this would cause them to think again about his proposal and turn it down.

Xarak is in his mid-forties. He is very mysterious, because he wishes to maintain a low profile for fear of repercussions from his revenge. He is not trained as a fighter, although he has gotten some instruction in the use of a dagger, so he will under no circumstances accompany the party. He is obsessed with gaining what he feels is his rightful revenge, but he places finding his wife and daughter even higher. Xarak's physical characteristics are:

PS: 12	**MD:** 13	**AG:** 11	**MA:** 6
PB: 10	**EN:** 14	**FT:** 18	**WP:** 22
PC: 13	**APA:** 9		

Xarak has no magical abilities, and he is Vernal-stars aspected. He is a Rank 10 Merchant and a Rank 5 Mechanician. He speaks Common and Elvish at Rank 8, and reads and writes Common at Rank 8. He carries a dagger concealed in his cloak and can use it at Rank 5.

Xarak's hair and beard are grey with white at the temples. His left cheek is scarred and shows no sign of ever receiving the care of a Healer. His face has become a permanent mask of grimness and resolution. His eyes are always watchful and slightly glazed with obsession.

Xarak's description should only be given by the GM if the players are inquisitive and ask for it. If they do, the GM should include that Xarak is wearing an amulet with a stylized design of a bird in flight. It is an inch and a half in diameter and shows a high quality of workmanship.

Xarak spent many years building up a profitable system of trade routes and amassing a sizeable fortune. He met Korena during one of his journeys and they were soon wed. Shyrila, their daughter, was the pride of Xarak, and he loves her dearly. He had taken her and Korena on one of his trading journeys when she turned 16 as he believed she should begin learning about the world. It was during that trip that his caravan was attacked by Alla's men and his wife and daughter abducted.

Xarak survived the attack, just barely, and was left for dead until found by some peaceful nomads. Since then, he has travelled in hope of uncovering news of his family's fate, until it became obvious there was only one place to find out...in the camp of Alla-Akabar. Realizing he lacked the proper training to execute such a mission, he began to formulate plans.

Xarak will stay in town until the party returns or he receives word that Alla is dead or is searching for the man behind the plot to assassinate him.

If Xarak's daughter is returned to him in good health, he will lavish a reward of an additional 500 Gold Shillings on the party.

V. The Desert

It is important to retain the flavor of the desert nomadic life throughout the adventure. This should begin when the party transfers their supplies to the camels in the mountain camp. If one of the characters is a Ranger specializing in Waste, the GM must decide how aware of survival techniques in the desert he is.

Travel in the desert with a horse is impossible, as the beasts will become exhausted and die trying to make it through the soft sand. By the same token, characters will find walking through the desert with the aid of a specialized Ranger will fall into the Medium Exercise range on the Fatigue and Encumbrance Table. Without the specialized Ranger, walking falls into the Heavy Exercise range. This fatigue loss applies only if the characters have taken some precautions against dehydration and exposure (wrapping themselves in burnooses or some sort of flowing robe-like garments). If the characters must make a hasty exit without such precautions, they will lose one Endurance Point for every day exposed, in addition to the fatigue loss. The GM should give some indication of these consequences during the adventure, as the party's escape should be planned or else they may die on their way back.

There is a further loss of ½ Endurance Point per 4-hour period if the party fails to take water into the desert. Also, wearing any armor other than Cloth will result in another loss of ½ Endurance Point per day, multiplied by the armor's weight factor.

The GM should consult the Encounter Chart (see Chapter VIII) for the possibility of sandstorms and their effect upon the party if they are caught in one.

If members of the party have lost half their original Endurance, there is a 50% chance per day that hallucinations will set in, or they may start to wander aimlessly.

VI. Description of Non-Player Characters

1. ALLA-AKABAR

Somewhere in his thirties, the charismatic and handsome (Omar Sharif is a good role model) Alla-Akabar leads his band of 45 bedouins in a life of prosperous pillaging and looting. He is always charming, and his men are fiercely loyal to him, ready to eliminate any who pose a threat to him. Alla is Sun aspected, and his physical characteristics are:

PS: 17	**MD:** 18	**AG:** 14	**MA:** 6
PB: 21	**EN:** 14	**FT:** 22	**WP:** 19
PC: 15	**APA:** 10		

Alla is a Rank 10 Military Scientist, a Rank 6 Ranger (specializing in Waste), a Rank 5 Healer, Rank 2 Thief, Rank 3 Courtesan, and a Rank 10 Beastmaster specializing in Great Land Mammals, Humanoids, and Lizards. He uses a Scimitar and a Bolo at Rank 7. In camp, he rarely goes about armed, relying on his men's loyalty and the protection of Garn. He can speak, read, and write Common and Bedouin at Rank 8, and speak Hobgoblin at Rank 5.

Alla has become almost a demi-god to his men. He treats them fairly when it comes to dividing treasure and captive women. His men have prospered under his command. The bedouins have stayed with him for a long time, and some have come back on a regular basis, as they respect and revere him as a leader.

Alla continuously amazes his men by anticipating their wishes. If a man expresses fear, Alla is soon there to comfort him without anyone reporting the circumstances. Other examples of past behavior include...

...A man who received word that his family was being thrown out of their home for nonpayment of rent was presented with a fine gem from Alla's own coffers and aided in returning to his home. The man and the camp were awestruck by this unrequested generosity.

...Several times overly greedy bedouins plotted to steal from the general fund. Before any of their plans came to light, Alla had them whipped, claiming their evil intent was known to him, and he knew they had to be punished.

...The few times plots have been hatched to assassinate Alla, he always seemed to know about them even as the ideas formed. He has dealt with these types most firmly.

Alla, while a brilliant tactician and awesome warrior, does tend to flamboyance. He enjoys the adoration of his men and cultivates it. He views each man as a part of his own family, to be treated with kindness and tolerance. Outsiders are another matter. Alla, while he may only punish members of the tribe, will swiftly execute visitors who break rules or try to bring ill to his men.

He does have one weakness, though: Alla is quite a ladies' man. Female visitors to the camp will find themselves the object of his attentions if they are fairly pretty. Alla has always had first choice of female captives and his men acknowledge this right. This situation does not please Alla's wife, but it never seems to bother his mistress.

There is a very definite reason for Alla's omniscient, mystical powers: Garn.

2. GARN

Visitors to the camp, when introduced to Alla, will not help but notice the rather large individual who usually accompanies Alla: his bodyguard, Garn.

Garn is a hobgoblin who usually dresses in little more than pants. He is often seen wandering aimlessly about the camp carrying his war club or whip. The bedouins do not socialize with Garn for several reasons. One is that Garn is physically intimidating, being slightly more than seven feet tall and rather imposingly muscled, covered with coarse dark hair. Also, Garn doles out punishment when Alla calls for it. He may flog, burn him, or flay the offender and do all this before hanging him out to dry in the sun. The third reason they do not communicate is that Garn does not speak and seems to understand only Hobgoblin.

Alla speaks fluent Hobgoblin, so he can issue orders to Garn, and in public Garn "speaks" only to Alla through use of a sign language. Because of Garn's apparent ignorance, the bedouins have no fear about vocally taunting him or speaking freely while he is around. But they never stop Garn when he sticks his head through the opening to their tents or helps himself to a piece of fruit or food anywhere he finds it. Garn's physical characteristics are:

PS: 21 **MD:** 16 **AG:** 15 **MA:** 20
PB: 6 **EN:** 16 **FT:** 23 **WP:** 12
PC: 14 **APA:** 10
NA: Hide absorbs 2 Damage Points.

Garn is Death aspected, uses his War Club at Rank 4, his Scimitar at Rank 5, his Whip at Rank 10, and both his Garrotte and Spear at Rank 3. He is also a Rank 5 Assassin, Rank 7 Ranger (specializing in Waste), and has Rank 5 with Stealth.

In truth, Garn is neither mute nor stupid. He is in fact a very practiced Adept of the College of Necromantic Conjurations and has the following spells and ranks (Spell Code/Rank Achieved): T-1/6; G-1/6; G-3/5; G-6/3; G-7/10; G-9/3; G-10/10; Q-1/1; S-1/4. He also speaks, reads, and writes Hobgoblin, Common, and Bedouin at Rank 9.

Garn's potential was recognized early by a powerful mage of the College of Necromantic Conjurations who took in the young hobgoblin as a protege. Garn learned quickly and decided to seek his fortune in the civilized world. Although Garn entered town well dressed and obviously cultured, the townspeople reacted to him as to a monster and fell upon him. After resoundingly beating Garn, they dragged him down to the river and threw him unceremoniously in.

This entire episode was witnessed by a much younger Alla-Akabar, who was at the time a third-rate cutpurse. He did not share the people's revulsion to Garn and, after they dispersed, dove in to rescue the hobgoblin. Garn listened to Alla's proposal: separately they were ineffectual, but if they worked together they could become a potent force. Garn considered the words carefully and finally decided to throw in his lot with Alla, who soon formed his band.

Garn's meanderings through the camp are responsible for Alla's omniscience. Since the men speak freely when he is about, he is in a perfect position to eavesdrop. He reports everything to Alla, who acts upon the information he thus obtains.

Garn is often frustrated having to play the hulking brute, as he gets no intelligent conversation from anyone but Alla. He spends his nights in the tent next to Alla's practicing his spells and rituals after making sure no one is about. He accepts Alla's penchants for lavish loving and winsome women, but warns Alla they will prove his undoing.

If the party decides to test Garn and manages to surprise him, there is a chance he will utter some simple words if he fails to roll under 4× his Perception.

3. ALLA'S MISTRESS

Alla is rarely seen about the camp without the company of his young mistress. She is a lovely young thing with tanned skin and light blonde hair, who spends most of her day lounging about the tent or just outside or hanging onto Alla's arms. She is always displaying her devotion to Alla and her love for him is obvious. She wears houri garb of silks and some bracelets, rings, and other jewelery. If the party checks out the jewelery, they will find it to be first class work, especially her amulet — one and a half inches in diameter, featuring a stylized design of a bird in flight. She is never referred to by name, just as "Alla's Woman," or by Alla as his "Little Flower," or "Star of the Desert." The Mistress' physical characteristics are:

PS: 12 **MD:** 18 **AG:** 20 **MA:** 8
PB: 21 **EN:** 10 **FT:** 14 **WP:** 11
PC: 6 **APA:** 11

Sun aspected, she can read, write, and speak Common at Rank 8 and speaks Bedouin at Rank 4. She is also a Rank 2 Merchant and Rank 6 Courtesan. She can use a Dagger at Rank 3.

The mistress is Shyrila, Xarak's daughter, who is being kept drugged by tranquilizers and love potions. If spoken with, she will appear to be an air-head with brief moments of lucidity. While under the influence of the potions, she is devoted to Alla and will fight rather than leave his side. Twenty-four hours after the last dosage she will regain her common sense and identity. She will become shocked at the state of her clothes and the amount of make-up she is wearing and may blame whoever is around unless calmed down and acquainted with the facts. She will be very eager to rejoin her father, whom she thought dead. It would be inadvisable at this point to remind Shyrila that, for the past year, she has been the sexual plaything of a man with a lot of imagination.

The party will not immediately recognize her from Xarak's description. If asked to describe the women he is looking for, Xarak will describe the younger woman as a fresh-faced young girl with medium-brown hair, inquisitive eyes, and a ready smile. She now has her hair bleached and, at Alla's command, overdoes her make-up and underdoes her clothing.

Korena, when last seen, had dark brown hair, with a good figure and a Physical Beauty of 19. She was in her late thirties when abducted; it is up to the GM to decide what has become of her.

4. DELIAN

The presence of Shyrila is a major source of annoyance to Alla's wife, Delian. She is still quite beautiful but, in Alla's estimation, getting on in years (she just passed 25). Desperately in love with her husband, she is biding her time until he tires of his current fling, as he always does. But this affair has gone on longer than the previous ones, and she is growing increasingly perturbed. Delian's physical characteristics are:

PS: 13 **MD:** 15 **AG:** 18 **MA:** 5
PB: 20 **EN:** 12 **FT:** 20 **WP:** 14
PC: 10 **APA:** 11

Sun aspected, she speaks Common and Bedouin at Rank 8 and is a Rank 7 Courtesan. She is also Rank 4 with a dagger (which she is not at all hesitant to use), kept in her section of Alla's tent under her pillow.

Delian knows about when the mistress arrived, but she does not know her real name. Delian does remember how the girl looked at first and the fact her hair has been bleached. She also remembers at first the girl would put up a fight, but "Alla must have won her over."

Her dislike of the girl is pronounced, and she will be amenable to a plot to kidnap the girl, but will immediately report to Alla any inkling she has as to a plot to hurt him. By doing this, she feels she will prove her worth to Alla. Occasionally out of sheer loneliness, Delian takes a lover. If Alla hears of anyone mistreating Delian, he will kill the person responsible.

Delian believes what everyone believes about Garn, so the players will gain no new insights here.

5. RORY

There are seven halfling servants working in the camp at any one time. These halflings have average characteristics and may be created as the GM needs them. The one exception is Rory.

Rory is Alla's personal servant and acts as major domo for the rest of the servants. He has served Alla for a number of years, hoping by providing excellent service that Alla may one day set him free. He lays out Alla's clothes after he has cleaned them, cooks all of Alla's personal meals, and keeps Alla's headquarters neat. Rory's physical characteristics are:

PS: 9 **MD:** 17 **AG:** 14 **MA:** 5
PB: 15 **EN:** 15 **FT:** 19 **WP:** 20
PC: 16 **APA:** 10

Rory has no special skills or talents, nor does he have Rank with any weapons, as he was taken during a raid on a settlement of halflings and pressed into service. He does speak Common at Rank 8 and Bedouin at Rank 5, and is Moon aspected.

Rory has been biding his time hoping to be released, but has become disillusioned. Because Rory knows if the party's purpose is discovered he will be punished, he agreed to Xarak's deal only after Xarak planned to approach the party separately. To make sure no suspicion falls on him, Rory will not allow the party to use his food to poison Alla and, while he will talk to the party, he will not help them in the execution of their assignment.

Rory is more nervous since returning from town, as he wonders if Xarak can hold the captured bedouin until the deed is done. Upon arriving back in camp, Rory will be surreptitiously preparing to escape when the party has killed Alla or under the cover of any disturbance. He will try to make sure of what happens so he can report to Xarak.

Rory knows when Shyrila arrived, but does not know her name or how she is being kept. He did not associate the painted hussy with the virginal girl Xarak described. He knows of Delian's growing hatred for the girl and the general happenings around camp. He does not know about Garn.

6. TALAN

When Alla realized he would need a constant supply of potions to keep Shyrila interested, he decided he needed a skilled alchemist. Until then, he needed potions only to eliminate enemies and quiet his slaves. He found Talan in a city to the northwest, glutted with alchemists. Talan was open to the proposal despite Alla's reputation, simply because he was and is too busy working on his magic and mixtures to care much about what goes on around him. If engaged in conversation, he will talk shop, but will become bored and cut short any conversation on other subjects. Once he begins talking about alchemy, he may (60% chance) talk about the potions he supplies for Alla's mistress. Talan's physical characteristics are:

PS: 9	**MD:** 12	**AG:** 13	**MA:** 23
PB: 12	**EN:** 12	**FT:** 16	**WP:** 21
PC: 12	**APA:** 10		

Talan is also an Adept of the College of the Sorceries of the Mind and has achieved the following Ranks (Spell Code/Rank Achieved): T-1/3; T-2/5; T-3/4; G-1/2; G-2/2; G-5/8; G-7/9; Q-1/4. He can read, write, and speak Common at Rank 9 and speaks Bedouin at Rank 4. He is a Rank 8 Alchemist (specializing in potions and medicines), Rank 3 Healer, and Rank 2 Astrologer. If Alla is uncertain before a raid, he will go to Talan to get a feeling of how the skirmish will go. He also possesses Rank 2 with a Dagger, but is certainly no fighter and would more than likely be oblivious to a major invasion. He is Sun aspected.

Talan provides a combination of potions: Control Person, Binding Will, and love philtres of various descriptions. All these are provided for Alla's use. A more complete listing of the ingredients can be found in the description of his tent in Chapter VII.

If asked about Alla's omniscience, he will relate how he has ofttimes gone to Alla suggesting they make a potion using this talent, but Alla has always refused.

7. THE BEDOUINS

There are 45 to 50 men in the camp. They are pleased with their latest haul, but are waiting for Alla to arrange to have a fantastic piece of jewelery sold so the proceeds may be divided. They are loyal to Alla and will follow him blindly. Average characteristics for the bedouins are:

PS: 21	**MD:** 18	**AG:** 15	**MA:** 7
PB: 12	**EN:** 16	**FT:** 24	**WP:** 15
PC: 10	**APA:** 11		

All bedouins will have Rank 1 to 3 with Scimitar, Spear, and/or Bolo. They speak Bedouin at Rank 8 in addition to their 20% chance for speaking Common at Ranks 1 to 5. Among them, they will have some Beastmaster skills (Ranks 1 to 5), Ranger skills (Ranks 1 to 4), Thief and/or Spy skills (Ranks 1 to 5). The lieutenants will have slightly higher characteristics and Ranks than the rest of the men have.

The bedouins will wear no armor in camp except when on guard duty over the treasure or slaves or when going into battle. Even then they wear only leather armor lest they start roasting in the desert heat. Suggested encounters for the bedouins can be found in Chapter VII describing the camp.

If asked about the two women, there will be a 12% chance the bedouin asked will remember Alla pulling a girl out of the slave pen, but will not be sure at all what happened to her. If the bedouins are asked what happens to captured women in general, they will state most are sold at slave auctions. There is a 23% chance they will tell the characters Alla keeps a record of slave transactions in with his maps and plans in his quarters. Given a detailed description of Shyrila and Korena, there is an 18% chance they will be remembered as the girl who is now Alla's mistress and an older woman who may have been a close friend or relation.

8. THE SLAVES

The bandits have taken prisoners on their raids and are preparing to sell them at the marketplace.

If the party decides to try to gain information or assistance from the slaves, it should be noted while they have skills, their depleted condition and lack of upkeep in these skills will make their effectiveness very low. They know nothing about Korena and Shyrila. If called upon to help with the entertainment, they will be too weak, thin, and ineffectual to make a difference.

If the party tries to enlist the slaves' help in a revolt, they will find no allies in the pen. If freed, the slaves will just break into a mad rush to get away from the camp (this will provide a diversion, if that is what the characters want).

VII. The Camp

9. BACKGROUND

At the end of each year's raids, the bedouins look forward to returning to the oasis which they have made their safe haven. While at the oasis, they relax and celebrate. The highlight of this respite is always the entertainment Alla provides for his men.

The men will be eager and friendly with the entertainers, as they are hoping for an exciting evening. If a female is included in the party, word will rapidly spread through camp, bringing every bedouin to see how pretty she is. But male entertainers will also be welcomed, as the bedouins enjoy acrobats and jugglers.

The tribe's reaction to the entertainment will depend heavily on the type being presented. If the entertainers depend upon the spoken word (ballad singing, anecdotes, etc.), most of the tribe will not understand Common and will not be amused. Non-verbal forms (talent magic, acrobatics, mime, dancing, etc.) must be judged separately by the GM based on his estimation of the act's effectiveness. If the entertainers are not sufficient, Alla will pay them off after the first night and see that they get back to town.

All entertainment, punishment, and proclamations are presented to the men in the open area in the center of the tents. At night, two large bonfires are maintained in this area as indicated.

10. ALLA'S TENT

The camp consists of 15 circular tents, each approximately 15 feet in diameter. Upon their arrival, the party will be escorted to the largest of these tents (Tent 1), where they will be greeted by Alla (accompanied by his mistress), his lieutenants, Delian, and Garn. This meeting will be held in section C of the tent, where Alla conducts all his professional business. Section A is where Alla's mistress sleeps, and he spends most of his nights there. Delian sleeps in section B, dreaming of the day when Alla tires of the young girl.

Alla's tent is strewn with large pillows and cushions, which are used as chairs. Two short tables are in evidence, set with bowls of fruits or other delicacies in the manner of a buffet. Hanging lamps illuminate the entire area. In section A, there is a medium chest containing Alla's maps of the desert, plans for future raids, and records of the tribe's transactions.

11. GARN'S TENT

Next to Alla's tent are Garn's quarters (Tent 2), which he occupies alone. The two tents appear to be separate, but there are concealed slits in both tents allowing access to one from the other. Garn and Alla often meet late at night to discuss strategy and the state of the camp. Alla makes sure the mistress is asleep by using potions.

Garn's tent is rather spartan compared with the rest of the camp. Garn owns a war club, whip, gilded scimitar, and bolo. Garn is very alert to strange sounds coming from Alla's tent, and the slightest suspicion will bring him padding silently through the slits to investigate after grabbing his whip and scimitar.

If Garn happens upon intruders in Alla's quarters, he will first attack with the whip, then with the scimitar. If there is more than one intruder, Garn will use his spells to confuse them and then attack.

12. THE TREASURE TENT

In a tent (Tent 3) near Alla's will be the tribe's treasure, consisting of four small chests containing 513 Truesilver Guineas and Alla's personal treasure chest with 279 Truesilver Guineas. This tent is guarded around the clock, and the two guards outside the tent have a clear view of the front of Alla's tent, so they may also watch for any late night visitors. Inside the tent is another guard. He is an added precaution to watch a piece of jewelery the tribe has acquired, a medallion with a diamond set in it worth about 200 Gold Shillings. All guards on duty will wear leather armor under their robes.

Any attempt to overpower these guards will result in shouts which will rouse the rest of the camp and bring the unchecked wrath of 45 bedouins down on the heads of the party. If captured, the party will at best be thrown naked into the desert without food or water after having been blindfolded. At worst, they will be publicly flogged and hung out to dry in the desert sun. Females may be thrown to the men and then tortured.

13. THE BEDOUINS' TENTS

The remaining tents are similar in design. Each is decorated in cushions and blankets with very little hard furniture. They are supported by a single pole in the center which is embedded in the sand (the sand around the oasis is firmer than in the surrounding desert). It would take a combined Physical Strength of 30 or more to knock the post over and bring down the tent. In addition, these poles will take 25 Damage Points before splitting. Each tent has its own hanging lamp and a few botas filled with water. Other botas are hung at various points about the camp.

The bedouins share these tents. Any males in the party will be placed in tents where there is room. Females will be placed in the smaller tent (Tent 4), unless they are invited to stay in the quarters of Alla.

Since the adventure does not require the specific placing of characters other than the major NPC's, the GM should use his discretion in determining the results of any investigation of the tribe's tents by the party. Some suggestions are...

...The occupants of the tent are of a particularly lusty frame of mind and a trifle impatient for the women Alla will be sending for.

...These bedouins are more avaricious than the others, and have managed to hoard a small cache of gems (worth 500 Silver Pennies) which they have hidden in one of their pillows.

...These men are being kept under guard, as they have stolen from the private stores of Alla. They are scheduled to die at a combination flogging and beheading.

...These bedouins are very occupied in dicing for Silver Pennies. One of them speaks Common well enough to invite the characters to join.

...This tent is the quarters for Alla's lieutenants. They all speak Common to one degree or another and will tell of past raids and great treasure and of their allegiance to Alla. They are very respectful when speaking to Delian, and one of them may be carrying a torch for her or, indeed, may be her current lover.

...These men are initiating an intramural wrestling match in the camp. All male characters will be invited to join in and test their mettle. The GM should make one of the bedouins a very strong fellow who challenges all who enter the camp.

...One of the occupants of this tent spends most of his time keeping a fine edge on his scimitar and bolo skills. He is probably very manic and will challenge any and all to test their skill against him.

These encounters are suggested to challenge the players's survival instincts and keep the discovery of Xarak's daughter from becoming too simple a task. These suggestions may be applied to groups or individuals as the GM sees fit.

14. TALAN'S TENT

The northernmost tent (Tent 5) is Talan's workshop and sleeping quarters. He spends most of his time there (a 90% chance he will be in) perfecting his serums and potions. Occasionally, when Talan makes a mistake in mixing, a flat explosion can be heard resounding throughout the camp. Usually Talan has managed to escape injury, so he brushes himself off, extinguishes any smoldering embers on his clothes, shrugs his shoulders, and returns to work.

A search of Talan's workshop will reveal a wide variety of ingredients for potions. The inventory would include bloodroot, cyclamen, ginseng, amaranth, belladonna, caper, coriander, earthnut, jimson weed, and valerian. Talan's stores were severely depleted during the past raiding season. He gave Rory a shopping list of herbs and equipment to get for him when Rory went into town. He is very anxious for his return, and there is a 75% chance that Talan will be the first person to greet the party when they arrive in camp. He can be seen every night, however, making a delivery sometime after dinner to Alla's tent.

15. THE SERVANTS' TENTS

The halfling servants bed down wherever there happens to be room. Rory, though, stays in the second small tent near Alla's, as he must be ready to answer his master's summons. Rory's tent (Tent 6) is very sparse; he has a bedroll and a few changes of clothing, but no personal possessions.

Since returning to camp, however, Rory has been sneaking food into his tent (containers of rice, dried meat, some fruit) as he is preparing to leave when and if the party kills Alla. If the party manages to sneak up to Rory's tent at night, there is a 20% chance they will find him preparing a small travelling bag. Rory is not overly brave, and he will tell all when threatened with pain or death.

16. OUTSIDE AREAS

On the far side of the oasis, probably downwind from the rest of the camp, are kept the goats, sheep, camels, and slaves.

Two guards watch over the slaves, but they are not worried about a possible escape, as the slaves are too weak and are chained together. The guard has the keys. The chains are anchored to posts which encircle the slave pen.

The animals are docile and not easily scared. The camels are recalcitrant, bad tempered beasts requiring much prodding to move. A character with a Beastmaster skill of Rank 2 specializing in Great Land Mammals will have little problem getting them moving; for all others, the proposition is a bit more difficult.

During the time the tribe is in the oasis, they will be eating comparatively well.

The main drink in the camp is water with goat's milk served as an occasional change. Usually the goat's milk is fermented down and turned into a liquor. The men know Alla has some good wines in his tent, but they are not allowed to touch them, as they are reserved for his special guests.

17. RANDOM ENCOUNTERS

The camp is a bustling place during the day, remains fairly busy through supper, and quiets down after the entertainment at night. It will be rare during daylight that wandering characters would not run into someone, and this is reflected in the Frequency and Chance Encounter given in the Camp Danger Table. Not every encounter will prove dangerous (a reaction roll should be made upon meeting every NPC and bedouin), but the possibility of running into someone (or something) is rather high.

Thus, while the characters are in camp, a roll must be made at the appropriate intervals and, if the percentage rolled is less than or equal to the Chance of Encounter listed, an additional roll must be made on the Camp Encounter Table to see who or what was encountered.

In addition, an Overland Encounter Table is provided. This is for use once the party has reached the desert, with the frequencies and time intervals explained. Until the party has arrived at the desert, the encounters (if the GM desires them) should be determined as per the *DragonQuest* rules. There are two encounters on the desert chart which are not covered in the rules as they stand: Sandstorms and the Sand Golem.

Sandstorms come up suddenly and last for D+5 hours, with winds reaching 30mph. Characters caught in such a storm should find shelter immediately. If they insist upon continuing, they will lose one point of Fatigue (Endurance when Fatigue is lost) for each hour in the storm. There is a 90% chance that a party walking through a sandstorm will head off in a random direction unless there is a Ranger specializing in Waste among them.

The most fearsome danger facing the party is the legendary Sand Golem.

Sand Golem

NATURAL HABITAT: Desert

FREQUENCY: Very Rare **NUMBER:** 1 (Unique)

DESCRIPTION: Sand Golems are humanoid in shape and composed entirely of sand, with eyes of gleaming obsidian. They stand 10 to 15 feet tall. A small amount of sand continuously falls from their body like water off a man emerging from the sea.

TALENTS, SKILLS, AND MAGIC: Sand Golems can swim through sand as humans move through water. When a Sand Golem is in this state, only the black eyes can be seen, but they are often mistaken for ordinary stones. Sand

Golems have no magical abilities or skills. They can be harmed by any weapons except Class C, which do no damage. Because the Golem is composed of shifting sands, its structure gives it an effective natural armor.

MOVEMENT RATES: Running: 300
Sandswimming: 200

PS: 23-30 **MD:** 0 **AG:** 10-14 **MA:** 0
PB: 6-10 **EN:** 13-17 **FT:** 21-24 **WP:** 10-12
PC: 6-10 **APA:** 10-11

NA: 4 DP due to composition

WEAPONS: Sand Golems use no weapons. They can attack with both fists without penalty at a Base Chance of 35%, doing D + 2 damage. When the Golem is standing on sand, it can extend its arm to attack into an area two hexes beyond its own.

COMMENTS: No one is sure where Sand Golems came from; perhaps they resulted from a failed experiment by an Adept of Shaping Magics. They are very aggressive and will attack a party of up to seven beings. A Sand Golem's life is known to depend upon its keeping contact with the sand, as that is how it replenishes itself. The Sand Golem must be in contact with a large area of sand to extend its arm in attack. Rarely does a Sand Golem travel out of the desert, as when it loses contact with sand it loses one Endurance point per pulse until it crumbles. Damage done to a Sand Golem when it is not in contact with sand is not absorbed by the creature's NA.

IX. Assassination

Should the party attempt to murder Alla in his sleep, it will be necessary for them to steal into his sleeping chamber. During playtesting, some inconsistencies presented themselves involving such actions. We suggest that, if the party fails their stealth roll, another roll be made based on 3 × Alla's Perception to awaken him.

Should a character manage to creep up on a sleeping Alla, then Alla should get a roll based on 4 × his Perception. In either case, the Tactical Stage begins when Alla has awakened. If he does not wake up, the party should have no difficulty in simply cutting his throat, so long as Alla is alone. If Alla is sleeping with someone, they should get similar Perception rolls. Even the slightest untoward noise, however, will bring Garn to investigate.

X. Final Notes

The Camp of Alla-Akabar is intended to be as complete as possible to save the GM unnecessary labor. Naturally, the GM will have to use discretion and imagination at certain points, as everything the players might wish to know could not have been covered. The NPC's have been given fairly complete backgrounds in order for the GM to incorporate them into his own campaign beyond the completion of the adventure.

It is also suggested that the GM make some minor alterations in the maps and encounter descriptions to prevent players who also have copies of the adventure from becoming too overconfident. This situation should be treated as a guide for the GM, not as a rigid and restrictive scenario.

In playtesting, Garn always managed to survive since most players were so surprised to find him a far more dangerous adversary than they expected that they would quickly flee after physically confronting him. This proved interesting later in the campaign for Garn sometimes would find his way to a city where those characters happened to reside. Upon meeting Garn, the characters expected to have to fight him, feeling sure he was there to exact revenge. On the contrary, he eloquently thanked them for killing off a man who had grown far too soft and weak to be useful. Alla's death had allowed Garn to take control of the band, and he and the bedouins were much the happier for it. Garn's leadership proved more efficient (since he wasn't spending all his time in bed with a mistress) and everyone's wealth rose dramatically.

It should be pointed out that the relationship between Alla and Garn should be well considered by the GM before the adventure begins, as any hesitation on Garn's part to come to the aid of Alla would swing the advantage clearly in the party's favor in terms of accomplishing the assassination. Most player reaction to the adventure indicated that this adventure, more than most, required accurate acting by the GM of the NPC's since most of the information the players will be able to obtain will come through conversation with those individuals.

Finally, the intent of the design was that the camp and the whole adventure should have an air of mystery associated with Arabian intrigue. The GM should strive to emphasize this feeling, and some have gone so far as to play the soundtrack to *Lawrence of Arabia* or Rimsky-Korsakov's *Scheherazade* during play, both of which helped set the right mood.

THE CAMP OF ALLA-AKABAR DESIGN CREDITS

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Camp Danger Table

TIME	FREQUENCY	CHANCE OF ENCOUNTER
Daytime	every ¼ hour	95%
Evening	every ¼ hour	75%
Night	every ½ hour	50%

Overland Encounter Table

Before the party reaches the desert, the GM should determine any random encounters using the Encounter Tables in *DragonQuest*. Once the desert is reached, use the following table. Check every 12 hours, with a 20% encounter chance.

01-10	**D + 3** Dingos
11-20	**D** Buzzards
21-35	**+ 6** Scorpions
36-50	**+ 2** Tarantulas
51-60	**D − 2** Camels
61-75	**D + 2** Humans (with camels)
76-95	Sandstorm
96-00	Sand Golem

CAMP ENCOUNTER TABLE

DICE	DAYTIME	EVENING	NIGHT
01-20	Garn	Garn	Garn and Alla
21-30	Rory	Rory	Rory
31-35	Talan	Rory and Alla	Talan
36-37	Shyrila	Shyrila	**D** Scorpians
38-40	Alla	Alla	**D + 2** Tarantulas
41-45	Delian	Delian	Garn
46-50	**D − 5** Servants	**D − 7** Servants	**D − 8** Servants
51-65	**D** Bedouins	**D + 2** Bedouins	**D − 5** Bedouins
66-75	**D − 3** Bedouins	**D** Bedouins	**D − 7** Bedouins
76-95	**D − 7** Bedouins	**D − 3** Bedouins	**D − 8** Bedouins
96	Scorpion	Talan	Shyrila
97	Asp	Alla	Delian
98	Tarantula	**D − 2** Scorpions	Alla
99	Black Widow Spider	**D − 5** Tarantulas	Asp
00	Escaped Slave	Asp	Escaped Slave

 # Being: A number of the given persons or beings appear equal to a roll on **D10** modified by the number given. Modified rolls of zero or less are treated as **1**.