



# The Mask of the Seven Keys Man

~ The Children of Malkuth ~

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*This adventure is a part of the campaign The Children of Malkuth.*

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## The Mask of the Seven Keys Man

*The children have survived, but I can't protect them any longer. Its time to open the closed eye of their souls, or become sacrifices on the altar of the false reality we all live in. I know that Mama Africa will contact them in some way, I only hope that they will survive the meeting.*

Peter Saint-Denys, Diary, January 2005.

### Background

This is the fourth and last adventure involving the Médecins Sans Frontières, and their personel in Ethiopia. In this adventure the characters will leave their life as it has been, or they will be a sacrifice on the altar of the Illusion.

After two weeks of medical care at the hospital the characters may leave, if they haven't been looked away at the asylum.

The Clinic has been crushed by Inferno, Doctor Badjibe is gone, their friend Peter Saint-Denys has left Ethiopia and Sarah Wimby is dead. Their employers will dismiss or at least suspend them.

They may feel emptiness and lack of guidance in their life. It's now Mama Africa will contact them. She is an incarnation of the Archon Malkuth and its time for the characters to understand that its they who are "the children".

But Mama Africa isn't the only one that is interested in the characters. The head of HEA, Asfa Ahemed, will contact them and ask for help.

Otherwise it is up to the characters to do what they want, they have clues to follow up about Doctor Badjibe and one of the children from the first adventure.

During the following weeks they will get information about a magic mask that is made of human skin. The Rastafarians is looking after it because there is a rumour that it has been found in Ethiopia.

This is a "*Gather information and meet the occult*" adventure and takes place in **January or February 2005**.

### Non-Player Characters

Her is information about the most important persons that the characters may meet in the adventure.

#### Asfa Ahemed

When he get the information that the characters has been suspend he will take his chance and visit them. Asfa offer them to lead a small group of trucks from Addis Ababa to the southern parts of Ethiopia. It's a dangerous job, but if they survive he will try to recruit some of them.

#### Buba Badjibe

The evil doctor fled from the Clinic, and took samples of his mutated virus with him. He will meet doctor Larsen and then disappear, maybe to be seen in some adventure in the future.

#### Jens Larsen

Doctor Larsen works not far from the Rastafari settlement in Shashamane. He isn't evil, but he is so greedy that he can do almost anything for gold

#### Mama Africa

The incarnation of Malkuth will visit the characters as an old black woman. She will try to push them further away from neutral mental balance. But she knows that this makes them vulnerable.

### **Emily Jones**

She works with planning at headquarter in Addis Ababa. If the characters visit her or meet her she will tell everything that she knows.

### **Peter Saint-Denys**

He has returned to the US and doesn't work for Médecins Sans Frontières any longer. But Peter will call and will give them his home phone number.

### **Marcus Woolrich**

He is a freelance journalist that during his work on a series of articles came across information about "The Mask of the Seven Keys Man".

## **Introduction**

This adventure has no given beginning; it's up to the Game Master to choose one that fits the characters. The main idea is that they leave the hospital and start to explore Ethiopia themselves.

The read thread in this adventure is a battle between Mama Africa and Asfa Ahemed. They both want to get control over the characters. The events in this adventure is both random and controlled by the combatants, but it's in the end when the characters "chose" an ending the adventure gets a meaning.

### **Favour for Peter**

Peter will call them again just before its time to leave the hospital. He will ask the characters to help him once more; they must go to his old office in Addis Ababa and destroy documents he left hidden beneath the floor.

The purpose to send the characters is that they should read them and become more tied to Peter and Malkuth.

Motivation: Loyalty to Peter.

### **Mama Africa**

One night an old woman enters the room where the characters sleep. She will talk to the character with the most extreme mental balance, talk about how important it is to have goals in life and finish what has begun.

The woman will advice them to "hunt down the evil doctor Badjibe and find the children". She tells the character that the world is mad and that they have to open their mind for experiences beyond what is normal. Search and you will find.

The woman will leave an artefact before she leaves.

Motivation: Search for knowledge.

### **Helping Asfa Ahemed**

The head of HEA will come to the hospital or meet them by random in e.g. Adis Zemen or Addis Ababa. He will ask them to lead a small group of trucks with blankets and tents to the south.

He can motivate it in different ways. The characters can do it as revenge against Médecins Sans Frontières, and continue with the work in Ethiopia for someone else. Or Asfa can ask the characters to take this supplies to a small group of orphaned children, he will tell them that the UN and MSF doesn't work fast enough to get the help there in time.

The characters has lost their money, credit cards and mobile phones so a promise to help them financial may also help Asfa in his persuading.

Motivation: Revenge or Prevent death.

## The Mask

A nomad tribe that lives around the volcano Erta Ale created the Mask 1912 in an attempt to come in closer contact with their master and prisoner – Astaroth. But it failed, the Mask they created by putting together several layers of human skin taken from young members of their own tribe become an evil artefact and not the key to freedom.

Astaroth saved the ancestors of this tribe many hundred years ago, when their leaders prayed for their survival during famine. But it was an expensive deal, they promised that the souls of all future members in the tribe belonged to the dark lord. Now they guard the permanent portal to Inferno and their only wish is to break the unholy oath.

Some years ago a Lictor in Shashamane found out about the Mask. He sent some policemen in civilian cloths, they killed many and stole the Mask. Since then has the Lictors hidden the mask in the basement of the town hall.

In an attempt to reduce the power of the Rastafarians in Shashamane they spread a rumour about the Mask that it belonged to “The Seven Keys Man”. But the Rastafarians wasn’t easy to fool, they waited for someone else to search and find the Mask.

The German journalist Marcus is a child of Malkuth and his mission is to search after the Mask. During this adventure he will succeed, but he will fail to activate it – it’s up to the Game Master to choose from several different alternatives.

Marcus won’t call Peter to discuss the Mask after ha has stolen it, and Mama Africa has decided not to help him.

If the characters become owners of the Mask the Game Master can use this as a side plot for many adventures. It’s a hard task to identify the powers of the Mask and to activate it the user must have great occult knowledge.

### Identifying

When it is examined it seems that the Mask is made of several layers of some kind of dark thin wrinkled leather. There are also some rivets made of metal. On the inside there are burned markings. To identify the markings make a skill check in The Lore of Death, Occultism or the occult science Voodoo.

|                  |
|------------------|
| Lore of Death ±0 |
| Voodoo +5        |
| Occultism +10    |

|                 |
|-----------------|
| Ahmaric (0) +10 |
| Ahmaric (5) +5  |
| Ahmaric (10) -5 |

If failure the character must increase the skill with one step before trying again.

Effect: 1-5

*The Mask gives the wearer powers to “See the truth and free the mind”. It must be a great Rastafarian artefact.*

Effect 6-15

*This artefact connects the soul beyond the understanding of humans in many ways; it probably has several powers.*

Effect 16-20 or perfect

*This Mask has several powers. One of them is connected to the Dark Lord him self, so include the sign of the Nine-pointed star inside the sign of the Pentagram for protection when you activating the Mask.*

### Activate

To activate the Mask the character must first have a score of at least 10 in The Lore of Death, Occultism or the occult science Voodoo.

Then the character must carry out the ritual that is described inside the Mask. It includes a huge flat stone (or floor) where a Pentagram and the sign of air are painted. A fire, the sound of drums, blood and invoking the names of old Gods is also needed.

After thirty minutes<sup>1</sup> of lubrication of the Mask with blood and walking around the fire shouting names of old Gods make a skill check and put the Mask on the face.

|                  |
|------------------|
| Animal blood +10 |
| Human blood +0   |
| Virgin blood -5  |

The type of blood used in the ritual makes a huge difference on the outcome, and the markings will tell the character that blood from virgins is to prefer.

### The effect

If failure the character must break of the activation and rest for thirty minutes. The effect of the skill check will rule the effect the Mask has on the character. A low effect means that Astaroth represses the expected power.

Effect: Dramatic failure

*Connection with Inferno, the Dead Sun burns your face. Make an EGO-check<sup>2</sup> with +15 or die. If you survived the mental attack, take two serious wounds and the face is badly burned<sup>3</sup> by the Dead Sun.*

<sup>1</sup> Loss of endurance: 20 points.

<sup>2</sup> If the Nine-pointed star is included in the ritual, use +5 in modification.

<sup>3</sup> Disadvantage: Maimed, BtV 40.

Effect: 0

*The power of Astaroth tear your soul and the metal rivets expand into your face. If you have a MB lower<sup>4</sup> than -25 make an EGO-check<sup>5</sup> with +15 or the Mask has become a part of your face; you can't take it off as long your MB is beneath -25. You are now a puppet<sup>6</sup> of the Dark Lord.*

Effect: 1-5

*The Mask becomes hot and your eyes are filled with blood, the Mask acts as the spell 'Gate to the Underworld'<sup>7</sup>.*

Effect: 6-15

*The Mask becomes hot and your eyes are filled with blood, the Mask acts as the spell 'Hades Walk'<sup>8</sup>.*

Effect 16-20 or perfect

*The Mask melts into your face and become a part of you. The illusion shows your normal face, but beyond Elysium the Mask is visible. You now have some defence, gain +5 at EGO checks against possession, commanding voice, mental control etc. The Game Master can add more effects.*

### The experience

To experience the effect of the Mask can be very painful and shocking, an EGO check for the terrifying experience is needed. See page 96 BtV.

A dramatic failure and effect '0' at the activation may result in the Dark Secrets, Supernatural Experience and Possessed & Haunted.

<sup>4</sup> Otherwise take one serious wound.

<sup>5</sup> If the Nine-pointed star is included in the ritual, use +5 in modification.

<sup>6</sup> Limitation: Controlled by external force, 20 points, BtV 90.

<sup>7</sup> Duration 20 minutes, BtV 170.

<sup>8</sup> Duration 6 days, BtV 173.

## The plot and events

*We live our lives and always expect that all will work as ordinary. But if you have done something that threatens persons with great power, suddenly it will be problems. Someone calls from work and says that you aren't welcome back, the bank has blocked your accounts and no one can tell you why or when you can get access to your money and there are rumors that the police want to talk to you.*

### Adis Zemen

The adventure starts in Adis Zemen<sup>9</sup> where the characters have been on the hospital for at least two weeks, after the experience when The Clinic was consumed by Inferno.

Peter Saint-Denys has left his job as the special Envoy of Médecins Sans Frontières in Ethiopia. The new chief is a french administrator, he isn't under the influence of Malkuth so she has lost that important position.

After he got information from the police that the characters could be prosecuted with embezzling money, he immediately suspend the characters from their work. If some of the characters doesn't work for MSF their organisations and companies got the same information.

It is Asfa Ahemed who has used his connection to the minister of the interior. They are now under investigation, but the characters aren't formally wanted. Asfa also blocked their accounts, so their VISA or MasterCard's can't be used.

Asfa has done this due to two reasons; he suspects that the characters is under influence of Peter Saint-Denys and he wants the characters to accept the mission to lead a small caravan of trucks from Addis Ababa.

This adventure contains modules and it's up to the Game Master to decide witch to use or not.

### Mama Africa - The artefact

Mama Africa is the Incarnation of Malkuth in Ethiopia; often she is an old woman or sometimes a nurse. She will always be discreet and firstly contact the characters with the most extreme mental balance.

*"Listen to me. I know that you can feel it in your heart, you have to find the children and save them. Only then can you find peace in your mind. Here, take this amulet. It will help you."*

The amulet is made of wood and has a leather strap. There is a carved picture of a roaring lion and besides it there are strange markings<sup>10</sup>. A Rastafari made it some decades ago, it's contain a spell so the wearer can a re-roll one skill check **once**. The actual effect is that there is a short change in time. Endurance: 40

You don't have to be a conjurer to use the amulets magical powers, but the wearer must have a mental balance of at least  $\pm 25$ . If the user of the amulet doesn't have Magical Intuition, this can be a very terrifying experience.

|                        |
|------------------------|
| Physical effect: +0    |
| Unexpected event: +5   |
| Disturbs reference: +5 |
| Other: + point value.  |

<sup>9</sup> The city has 24.000 inhabitants.

<sup>10</sup> Skill check Occultism; marks of change in time.

### **The call from Peter**

Peter will call the characters from his home before they leave the hospital. First he want to talk about the Clinic and what has happened there. He will also ask questions about Sarah Wimby, he only heard that police find her at the office after her suicide.

If the character tell Peter the truth or at least parts of it, he will tell them this.

*“Doctor Badjibe is an evil scientist who use old African magic and modern medicine to create diseases. He must be stopped before he spreads his work amongst people. If you can find him you must call me again.”*

If the characters had a mobile telephone during the last adventure, it will be gone by now. Lost or stolen. The characters have to use public phones; they won't have the money to buy a new.

Then Peter will ask his friends to help him; they must find and destroy a secret document that was left at his office.

*“I had to leave my office in Addis Ababa in a hurry, so I forgot to destroy some secret documents. If someone will find them the police may arrest many aid workers. I can't tell you more about the documents right now but they are hidden beneath the floor in my old office. Can you help me a last time?”*

### **The visit from Asfa Ahemed**

Asfa will visit the characters at the hospital or apparently meet them by random. He will be worried and ask them if they are all right.

*“I have heard that you wear lost without a trace in the mountains. There was lots of rumours, some said that you had fled with stolen money. Other that you have killed a child in a traffic accident.”*

Probably the characters will lie to Asfa about the Clinic and doctor Badjibe. But if they are stupid and tell him the truth or at least parts of it, he will tell them this.

*“So you knows this secrets. Here in Ethiopia the old gods still lives among the people. Some worship evil gods and doctor Badjibe is one of them. I trust you and I will help you to find him, I want you to work for me.”*

The doctor is long gone and has left Ethiopia. But Asfa does never tries to find him; he won't get in trouble with a herald of death.

If the characters don't tell him the truth, he won't reveal any information about the doctor.

*“Your employers are idiots and the police is corrupt. I know that you are innocent and that you want to work to help people. So I offer you a job, I want you to lead a small caravan of trucks from Addis Ababa down to the southern regions. You will transport tents and blankets that come from Iran. The UN and MFS won't accept them without lots of paperwork. But the people needs them now, please help me. I will pay you and help you with money to tickets home after you have worked for me.”*

If the characters accept they can borrow a car and take it to Addis Ababa, where they will talk to a man at Café Lion. His name is Buru and he will wait maximum three days for the characters to arrive. It is about 400 kilometres to Addis Ababa; it will take 6 to 10 hours by car including breaks for food and rest.

Asfa gives them instructions how to find Café Lion, food and water. They will get instructions, money and equipment when they talk to Buru.

## The Asylum

There is a small asylum outside Adis Zemen, lodge in a house complex built by the Italian forces during World War II. Their final stand was in November 1941, where English and Ethiopian troops broke the last regular fascist units.

The main building has two floors and a basement with secrets rooms and tunnels. There are two smaller houses and a three-meter high wall connects them, to the north there are an Iron Gate. In the middle there is a cobblestone yard.

One small building contain five rooms with space for four patients in each, toilets and a shower. The second small house contains storage and a guardroom. The main building has rooms for medical examination, quarters for the guards and staff with kitchen, showers, bedrooms etc. There is also an isolation ward with two small rooms in the basement.

To day there are 22 patients, four guards and a medical staff of five at he asylum. None of the personnel actually care anything about the patients and violence is common, most of the guards are old veterans from the Ethiopian army. The medical staff is more interested to study the effect of isolation and abuse on the patients so the treatment isn't good. This is a bad asylum; patient's mental balance may drop by one level each month<sup>11</sup> to a maximum of -50.

There are several possible reasons why the characters could come to this place. They could search after the journalist Marcus Woolrich<sup>12</sup>, been forced here by doctor Mnbese at the hospital in Adis Zemen or the police and military.

Most patients have mental balances that are -40 to -50. But some inmates are political prisoners, so their mental status can be different. But after a year in isolation and studying by she staff, their sanity won't be that good.

None in the staff have any contacts with powers beyond the Illusion, but they have all experienced some strange events during their work. So they goes on to abuse the patients, in the search of "restrained inner human energy".

All persons that are placed in the isolation get a cocktail of psychotropic drugs and cocaine<sup>13</sup>. If the patient gets hallucinations the atmosphere will make them terrifying. Failed EGO checks and there are a possibility that the Illusion breaks. A brick wall in the isolation will fall apart and tunnels will be visible.

There is a possibility that the tunnels will lead a confused patient so far away that it's impossible to find the way back. There are no actual connections to any realm; you only walk around in a state of madness. If the person regain control over his hallucinations he will be able to enter Elysium again. There was probably a jump in time, a week to several months depending on the grade of failure.

There is an Amentoraz lurking beyond the Illusion; it could try to get energy from patients in the isolation ward. If it takes a visible body it takes the shape of a man in Italian World War II uniform.

If any of the characters had met the mad man in Addis Ababa and got bitten, the wound may cause a riot amongst the patients. More information read about "The Mad Man".

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<sup>11</sup> BtV page 266.

<sup>12</sup> Page 16.

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<sup>13</sup> BtV page 109.

## Addis Ababa

The capitol of Ethiopia is a natural place to visit during this adventure, with its 2,8 million inhabitants there can be many causes to visit.

If police or military forces in the city stop the characters there can be trouble, a call to the police command centre can reveal that they are under investigation for embezzling money. It's now up to the commanding officer if he should confiscate the passports, this is a good opportunity for the Game Master to put extra stress on the characters.

A character may try to bribe the officer, but with a low in cash it can be hard.

### Doctor Badjibes flat

The evil doctor has had a flat at Sudan Street in the central of Addis Ababa the last ten years. It's rather small and is the only flat on the top floor, so normally no one even comes close to his haven. The stairs is dark and silent, there are no noises from the other doors. Only lonely people with bad health live in this part of the house.

The lock is modern and is hard to pick.<sup>14</sup> But the influence by the evil doctor can work against him, if the characters chose to break up the door it will be some noise but no one will react and call the police.

It's a sparsely furnished apartment with not much of comfort. There are only a small hall, a bathroom and a study room with the flats only window. Black curtains block almost all light from outside and there is only one lamp at a desk and one in the bathroom.

There are nothing hidden, everything can be found if you look at the desk, in the only cupboard and in a suitcase beneath the bed. The small refrigerator is almost empty, apart from an open bottle of milk.

Doctor Badjibe came here after that he had fled the Clinic, he took the important items with him and went abroad.

In one of the drawers in the desk there is a small box made of silver, inside is five 'doses' of cocaine.

At the desk there is a new post card from Doctor Jensen.

*" I have found more information about the strange boy. He lives here in the Rastafarian settlement. I haven't had the possibility to examine him, but I have information that he is becoming more and more ill. I don't think he will survive much longer.*

*~ Doctor J. Larsen ~ "*

In the suitcase there are a folder with lots of information about Peter Saint-Denys and his work. It will be clear that the informant is Sarah Wimby, and here can the characters read how she manipulated his ability to get full information about the Amhara region.

In the cupboard there are two 9mm pistols and several clips of ammunition, an overcoat and a pair of boots.

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<sup>14</sup> Skill check Burglary, +10 on the roll.

### The Mad Man

The madness isn't far away in Addis Ababa and the characters will come close to it. Madness feed madness, so when it's appropriate the Game Master can let a mad man<sup>15</sup> attack the characters.

An attack can come in the dark stairs after they investigated Doctor Badjibes flat or in the narrow alleys around the shady Café Lion.

The man is Ethiopian and around thirty years old, he's almost naked and the body is marked with rough tattoos. His skin is dark but pink flesh can be seen where the skin has fallen off. He looks ill; the eyes are wide open, there is sweat on his skin and he has almost lost all his teeth. He has a huge rusty knife.

If the mad man bites a character there is a possibility that the madness "infect" the body. The wound from the bite won't heal and it becomes a scar on the body and in the soul.

Roll 2d6 against the EGO.

EGO = 0 (\*)

Madness has infected the characters body and soul. The only way to get rid of it is therapy or meditation etc. The wound won't heal; the character gets the limitation "Hunting instinct"<sup>16</sup>.

EGO = 1/3 (\*)

The wound won't heal properly until after one week of professional care at a hospital. The Mental Balance drops by 5.

EGO = 1/2

Gets ill for some days.

EGO = 2/3

It heals as normal.

A bitten character that has at least -25 in Mental balance can get the two worst (\*) results on the table. If he or she comes to the asylum in Adis Zemen with a wound that doesn't heal several of the patients will recognise it as a mark of madness.

If they believe that they all are targets for a crazy murderer they will try to kill the character or start a riot to flee. There is also a possibility that the patients will start to see the character as a leader.

### Meeting Buru at Café Lion

In a violent part of the capitol where gang members and truck driver's rules the streets, there is the shady Café Lion. The smoke is thick and from the speakers comes reggae and African hip-hop, all the guests are Africans.

On the round tables there are lots of empty bottles and rather often important members of the community leaves their guns in the open, to send a message. The owner doesn't like the use of drugs, but if someone only smoke marijuana there are no problems.

To come here as a non-African is to beg for trouble. Almost immediately three young<sup>17</sup> men from a local gang will walk up to the characters. They are high on drugs and alcohol, there only goal is to proof their manhood by fight any man or have sex with any woman in the group.

If anyone of the characters is a woman the men will demand that she must have sex with at least one them. And the harassment won't stop there; any man in the group must "proof" that he isn't gay.

This can be solved by social skills, let one of the characters roll *Streetwise* or *Man of the World*.

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<sup>15</sup> BtV page 268.

<sup>16</sup> BtV page 90.

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<sup>17</sup> They are 18, 21 and 22 years old.

The language is extremely important, if the characters can speak Amharic it will solve many problems. If the character that makes the roll have the advantages *Cultural flexibility* or *Empathy* it will help in this situation.

|                          |
|--------------------------|
| Ahmaric (0) +8           |
| Ahmaric (5) -3           |
| Amharic (10) -8          |
| Cultural Flexibility: -5 |
| Empathy: -5              |

If the skill check was “normal” the young men will allow the characters to pass them. But still they will accuse the men to be homosexuals.

If the skill check was a failure the men will draw knives and threaten them, there are three ways to solve this.

***Fight***

A fight will go on during five combat rounds, then an older gang member will fire his gun to stop it. The characters will be allowed to stay if they say that they are searching after Buru.

***Sex - female***

If a female character accept to have sex with the young men in a back room it will become a violent experience.

|                       |
|-----------------------|
| Being raped: +10      |
| Being beaten: +5      |
| Other: + point value. |

***Sex - male***

If a male character accept to proof that he isn't gay by raping a drunken girl, the gang members will allow them to stay.

|                       |
|-----------------------|
| Committing rape: +5   |
| Other: + point value. |

When the characters find Buru they will be safe, the Game Master can allow them to find him before the gang members becomes too violent.

Buru is an old boxer that has become 42 years old but he is still the meanest fighter on this street. Now he is making money by selling stolen cargo to the gangsters, but to day he will try to give a good impression.

*“I’m sorry about the young gangsters and that you had to experienced that. This place is no place for non-Africans.*

*I know that you are here to help the people of the southern parts of Ethiopia. My friend Asfa Ahemed has told me that you will lead a small caravan of trucks with supplies from Iran. Supplies that the UN and MSF won't accept because of political disagreement with Iran.*

*Here is all the information you need to success with the mission, in this folder you will find money, keys and maps. The trucks are parked in the alley behind the cafe. I have some truck drivers waiting outside, you can keep as many as you want – you are here to lead the caravan not to drive if you don't want to.”*

If the characters start to ask questions Buru will give short answers, he will tell them that he's only a middleman.

It's up to the Game Master to decide how many trucks there are, adapt it to the characters skills in driving. In each truck there can be two or three persons.

More information: “The Caravan”.

### The secret document

When Peter Saint-Denys left his office at Médecins Sans Frontières headquarter in Addis Abeba he forgot a folder hidden beneath the floor. He could send someone else to fetch the document, but Peter wants to tie the characters to Malkuth.

The new chief doesn't like the characters or Peter, so he won't be at any help at all. If the characters try to talk their way in to the office he will call their own security personnel and the police.

But if they talk to Emelie Jones, she may help them inside the building during night. All depending on what happened during their time together at the Clinic and what they tell her.

The documents aren't that hard to find. Roll *Search* with the modification -5 to find the document.

First there are two pages with names on aid workers in Ethiopia. These have notes as 'neutral', 'informants', 'foes' and 'friends'. Some of the characters' names may be on that list; it's up to the Game Master to decide. Asfa Ahemed and Doctor Badjibe have the comments 'foe' and 'dangerous'.

The next five pages are information about the city Addis Ababa. Here you can find names on drug dealers, witch cops to bribe, filthy hotels where you can hide for weeks etc. If someone studies this material for one week and makes an EGO check, increase the skill *City Secrets – Addis Ababa* with +2 to a maximum of 8.

The last page is a report to Peter from a man named Marcus Woolrich. He mentions that he has heard many rumours about several artefacts of historical and economic value.

The most important one is a mask that he thinks has a value for the Rastafarians. He's still not sure what the mask comes from, but he will continue to search for more information.

There is also information about Addis Ababa. Marcus writes that he thinks that the capitol has become much more dangerous the last year

*“Dear Peter.*

*I have found information about an artefact called ‘The Mask of the Seven Keys Man’. I’m not sure what it means but on the Internet I found information about the Seven Keys man, a man who came to Jamaica in the early 1900 from “foreign” and spoke to the people.*

*With readings from the bible and hymn singing he began to teach people about Africa. Soon he formed a religious sect known as the Seven keys, but the British arrested and deported him.*

*This is almost one hundred years ago and I can't find any information about any mask on the Internet. But I will continue my search and report back.*

*I'm also worried about the feeling of madness in Addis Ababa; the number of murder whiteout obvious reason has increased many times the last year. The political violence, corruption and poverty are like a cancer of madness. We must follow the development carefully in the future.*

*Your friend  
Marcus Woolrich”*

## The Caravan

The folder is made in brown leather and seams to be rather old, on the front there is a marking<sup>18</sup> burnt into the leather. Inside there are several objects.

First of all, there is a letter from Asfa Ahemed to the characters. Beside it there are several maps over Ethiopia and the area between Addis Ababa and Gode in the Southeast. The last paper seems to be some kind of official document, written in Amharic.

There are also a 9mm pistol with one clip of ammunition. Besides it lies 1200 birr<sup>19</sup> in a wallet.

All the drivers who are waiting outside Café Lion are older men; they speak calm and won't be any trouble for the characters.

*"I'm sorry that you haven't got much information until now, but I have to keep this operation a secret. As I told you the UN hasn't accepted the transport, so it must be done without drawing any attention to it.*

*There is an official document amongst your papers. It says that this transport is from a private hospital in Greece. If police stops you, be careful what you say. You can never say that the trucks belong to HEA, we are making a secret aid transport to orphaned children.*

*Your goal is a small refugee camp in the mountain not far from the main road outside the city of Gode in Southeast Ethiopia."*

*"In this small camp have HEA protected many children from an ethnic group that is persecuted by the Ethiopian military and US forces, that helps them in the southern parts of the country.*

*After you reached the camp the drivers will take care of the trucks, you should go to the city of Gode. At the Café on the main bus station you will meet me and we can discuss what we shall do next.*

*It's important that you take the trucks as quickly as possible to the camp. The nights are cold and the children ill.*

*Your friend A.A."*

If the characters look at the maps there is a circle on one of them, and a note that says *"Home for orphaned children"*. The camp is 1 kilometre off the main road.

The trucks are loaded with crates, the documents certify that tents and blankets are packed in airtight plastic bags inside.

Before the supplies were loaded in the plastic bags they were sprayed with cyanide gas<sup>20</sup>, so the users will probably be poisoned and die. If someone breaks the plastic bags and handles the supplies shortly in good ventilation the poison effect is 2d4, after using the tents and blankets one night you roll with a poison effect on 2d10 against CON.

There is a faint smell of almonds in the fabric; to detect it a character must make a PER check with +5 on the roll.

There is no common knowledge that cyanide smells of almonds, people probably think that the fabric is impregnated. To identify the smell as cyanide make a skill check, *Poison and drugs* with +8 on the roll.

<sup>18</sup> It's an old Ethiopian mark that proclaims "servants are rewarded." If a character has any skill that may be used there is a +5 on the skill check.

<sup>19</sup> This is equal to 150 US dollars.

<sup>20</sup> BtV page 107.

## Going to Shashamane

The characters have several reasons for going to the southern parts of Ethiopia, e.g. leading a truck caravan to Gode, visit Shashamane to find out more about the strange child or the Mask of the Seven Keys Man. If you are going from Addis Ababa to Gode there is a possibility to take a road that passes Shashamane.

It is about 300 kilometres from Addis Ababa to Shashamane; it will take 5 to 7 hours by car including taking breaks for food and rest. From Shashamane to Goda there are another 600 kilometres.

The main roads in Ethiopia are rather good, but to drive faster than 60 km/hour can be dangerous, you never know when the road is full of holes or there is a mule in front of the car. And remember this is Africa, anything can happen and it's not unusual that things take lots of time.

Here are some events that the characters may experience when they are going on the road between Shashamane and Addis Ababa.

### A broken school bus

A class with young girls from a Christian school Addis Ababa has been on a trip to the south and is now on their way home. But their bus engine has broken, and neither the teacher Mrs. Zenawi nor their driver Mr. Wolde can repair it.

The problem is easy to find, but rather hard to fix. To help the school class with their bus requires a skill check in *Motor Mechanics* and lots of time.

Skill Check: +10

The right tools: -5

Two-hour work: -5

Three-hour work: -10

Remember that in the evening and at night it can become rather cold in Ethiopia. The class isn't prepared to the cold winds at night, so the teacher will ask the characters for some blankets.

If the characters stay more than two hours to help them, the Game Master should consider to see it as a simple act of heroism. Every character that has an active roll may get an extra hero point at the end of this adventure.

When the bus is repaired the teacher asks the characters to stay a bit longer, they want to thank them properly. Their last food is served and together they will pray to the lord that the characters came to their rescue. Then the girls will sing several songs to honour God and their rescuers. It takes at least one hour.

The Game Master could consider raising some of the characters Mental Balance up to five steps, or give an advantage as *Chivalry* or *Code of Honour*.<sup>21</sup>

### A traveller

The characters see a man walking along the road to the south, he waves and stands in front of the trucks. His name is Sam Brown. Sam was born in the UK and is visiting the country where his father was born. He will ask the characters to give him a lift, he will be very thankful and offer his new friends cigarettes, gin and tinned ham.

During the journey he will take some pictures on the character with the highest mental balance. Sam is a puppet of the Death Angel Gamichicth, so those pictures can be very dangerous.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>21</sup> Remember that all advantages or raise in Mental Balance must be paid for, BtV page 277.

<sup>22</sup> See page 20.

## The city Shashamane

Shashamane has a population around 90.000 inhabitants. For more than 50 years there has been a small Rastafarian settlement, mainly with immigrants from Jamaica. To day there are about 200 individuals in the outskirts of the town.

There is no influence of madness in the city, many are poor but the atmosphere is peaceful and the tempo is low. The way of Rastafari has influences the city.

Rastafari is a Christian religion that arose in Jamaica around 1930, but has its roots in Afro-Caribbean shamanism. One of the corner stones in Rastafari is repatriation, i.e. the return to the origin. As a gesture of kindness the Emperor Haile Selassie donated a piece of land outside the town Shashamane.

### Doctor Jens Larsen

As senior physician at the town's main hospital doctor Jensen have a great net of connections, and he is willing to sell the information. He is greedy beyond any limits, and he could sell anything to anyone for the right price.

For many years has this Danish doctor been a puppet in the hands of doctor Badjibe. Frequency he sends reports about infectious diseases, strange items, news from the Rastafarian settlement and anything that his curious friend could be interested in. He was paid in gold, a small price for the information he sent.

If the characters contact him he will first deny everything, but he is a real coward and will do anything to prevent violence. But he will always try to sell his information, before he gives it away free of charge.

If the characters solve this in a nice way, the doctor can become a great source of information.

### The Child

Many weeks ago a Rastafarian came with a bus from Addis Ababa, with him he had a young boy. The boy behaved strange and an informant at the bus station past the information to the doctor.

*"I know that there are an young boy from Addis Ababa in the Rastafarian settlement. There is a rumour that he behaves very strange and that some think that he is possessed by and evil African spirit. I will give you the address to the local meeting place."*

### The Mask of the Seven Keys Man

When searching after information about the strange child he also came over information about a mask. If someone asks about the mask or the journalist Marcus Woolrich he will tell them this.

*"I have found out that Marcus Woolrich, a German journalist, is searching after a Rastafarian artefact. It's a mask that I think has belonged to a man that preached in Jamaica around 100 years ago. There is no information what the Rastafarians in Shashamane is thinking about this, no one is saying anything."*

*"One thing is clear; the journalist is a close friend to the former chief of MSF in Ethiopia. I have heard that Peter Saint-Denys left his job because he was planning to murder Asfa Ahemed, the head of HEA. But the operation didn't goes as he expected. The foreigners he should hire were lost the mountains on another mission. That's all I know. "*

The information about the murder is a rumour that Asfas servants have spread to undermine Peter's reputation.

### **Mama Africa**

The Incarnation of Malkuth thinks that it's time to give the characters another trail, on the path to open their minds.

Once again she will appear as an old woman and takes contact<sup>23</sup>.

#### **Alternative 1**

If the characters come here without the HEA trucks, she will feel safe and tries to influence them once again. Remember that they have to take the consequences of their actions. To visit a prostitute, pick up a stranger at a bar, have sex with another character or even rape someone can give diseases and mental problems.

*"My friend, you have travelled far from home but in your heart you are still locked in the chains of your mind. The children are the future and they must be saved from evil until they have become strong in heart and mind.*

*But before you do anything else in Shashamane, go to the hotel Rudo and make love all night. Don't be afraid for pain, pleasure or constraint – it's only your feelings that holds you back."*

Read more about hotel Rudo at page 16.

#### **Alternative 2**

If they lead the caravan Mama Africa will be shocked. She didn't know that the Razide Asfa Ahemed tries to influence the characters. She can't risk that the characters have become puppets to the Death Angel Gamichioth, so she must be rough against them.

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<sup>23</sup> She will always try to talk to those with most extreme mental balance.

*"I'm disappointed. I offer you a future to follow your hearts and save the children, and what are you doing? Leading some trucks from HEA! Your friend Peter wouldn't like this, and I don't like it either.*

*We can solve this in two ways, you do something that proofs your respect and manifests your trust in me or you don't and then you will never be able to save the children.*

*To prove your selves, do one of these assignments without hesitating.*

*In room 7 at the hotel Rudo lives a young Ethiopian woman that recently lost her mum and dad in an accident. She is 19 years old and is waiting on her brother that is coming to get her. You have five days to make her pregnant, and I don't care how you solve this. If she will have sexual intercourse before her brother comes here she will become pregnant. This means that you all must stay here, you can't go on with the caravan.*

*The other assignment is maybe easier; you just burn the trucks and all material that's within. The tents and blankets will never reach their goal, and you prove worthy to save the children."*

The old woman won't stay to answer any question from the characters.

If they burn the trucks, some maybe must roll an EGO check. Remember that this action can go against an advantage.

|  |
|--|
| Burning trucks: -10<br>Other: + point value. |
|--|

The young woman can become pregnant in several ways; rape by the characters or someone else, she falls in love and have sex or someone pays her for it etc.

## The Rastafarians

There are around 200 individuals in the Rastafarians settlement in the outskirts of Shashamane. They live a pleasant life and work their fields outside town. Their leaders want to create a good society, where the voice of God is respected and all men live in peace.

As long as the characters are pleasant they are welcome at the local meeting place. Along the narrow street there is a low building with a shop and a small bank, but also a gate in to back yard.

The yard is rather big and under the five trees stand several tables and chairs. On the left side there is a house with a café and restaurant and to the right is a garage where they repair cars. In the far end of the yard is a two-floor building where the leaders of the community and guests live. In the evenings many Rastafarians leaves their homes and comes to the yard to eat, talk, pray and smoke marijuana.

This is the only place where there is any real information, if they are talking with anyone on the street the answers always vague.

The Rastafarians are true servants of God, i.e. the Demiurge. No other greater force has dared to hurt them, so any visitor is always safe in the settlement.

### *Jamie – The spokes person*

If the characters come to the shop or café at the meeting place to ask questions, they will be advised to return the next evening and ask for Jamie – he is the spokes person for the community.

When the characters meet with Jamie he sits beneath a tree eating an orange, they are invited to sit on the ground with him. Jamie asks them to talk and sits silent, and then he asks if there is anything else they want to tell him.

If the characters ask about the exotic child he will verify that one member of their community brought a child to them some time ago. Jamie will tell them that the child has died, but he refuse to say how or what he was suffering from.

If the characters ask about the Mask of the Sevens Keys Man Jamie will become confused, he will claim that there are no such artefact.

If the characters ask about any NPC in this campaign he will deny that he knows who they are. If they want more information, they must meet the council and it's not sure that they are accepted.

### *The ritual*

To be accepted for a meeting with the council there are several demands. The character must be a male, he must have positive mental balance and he must accept to undergo a Rastafarian ritual that takes him closer to God. That ritual includes marijuana and takes two days. All non-Rastafarians must undergo this ritual before they meet the council.

### *Day 1*

Jamie will preach in twelve hours about God, his incarnation Haile Selassie I and the history of the Rastafarians in Jamaica and Ethiopia.

To pass the character must roll an EGO check with modifications.

|  |
|--|
| Modification: +0<br>Cultural flexibility: -5<br>Good knowledge: -5 |
|--|

If a character have the right advantage or good knowledge in history, religion etc. it will help in this situation. Fail means that he may try again the next day, with -5 on the roll.

### Day 2

To day Jamie will begin the ritual in the evening. The characters must clean their hands and feet's, and then they sit on the floor indoors in a small room. During all night Jamie will talk about spirits, the evil in Babylon and the freedom of Zion that will emerge in Ethiopia. Three times during the night the characters have to smoke marijuana<sup>24</sup>. When the sun goes up the character have to answer three questions that has no obvious answer.

To pass the character must roll an EGO check with modifications.

|  |
|--|
| Modification: +0<br>Intoxicated: +5 (i.e. -5 to EGO)<br>Magical intuition: -10<br>Good knowledge: -5 |
|--|

If a character have the right advantage or good knowledge in some lore, magical school etc. it will help in this situation. Fail means that he must begin at day one again, all EGO checks in this ritual have -5 in the future.

### ***The Rastafarians council***

The only way to meet the council is to go through the ritual with Jamie. When that is done the three oldest member in the community will accept the characters that have passed; their meeting will start after nightfall. During the meeting only characters that are taking part of it is welcome into the yard.

First they all sit down in a room in the main house. The doors are open to the yard so the sound from outside comes into the room but colourful curtains makes it hard to see what's happening on the other side.

Before they start to talk Jamie lighten a pipe with marijuana and then pass it to the characters, the council have their own pipes. The men will speak very slow and mainly answer in riddles and quotes from the Bible.

This experience may give the character a small change in mental balance or a possibility to buy a skill that coincides with the experience.

### ***The Child***

The strange child from Addis Ababa was very close to become one with Gaia, but his time in the settlement transformed him back to more human again. He regained his speech and could tell a story about the beautiful but dangerous place beyond our senses. The Rastafarians was impressed by the information the child gave them, they think that it could be the lost garden of earth or maybe Heaven.

The child left them after some weeks and is gone forever, but he told them where to search for gates to the hidden world. The council will tell the characters that the child is gone forever, but it's up to the Game Master if they should tell them where to search after the secret gates.

*"About 100 kilometres from here in the highlands of Oromo there is a deserted village by the name of Dir Fakar. Mother Nature has taken back this place from man; it's wild and beautiful.*

*A second place to search the Heaven of nature is amongst old ruins somewhere on the riverbanks to a drought river not far from the boarder to Somalia. Unfortunately we don't know the exact location.*

*This is what we know after spoken to the child and done some own research, use the information carefully."*

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<sup>24</sup> BtV page 108. Remember to make notes about how many time's characters have smoked.

### *The Mask of the Seven Keys Man*

None of the Rastafarians in the council have ever heard of a mask by that name in their youth, but a rumour has reached them during the last year. The old men are suspicious about this mask, but they won't tell the characters about it.

*“The whole truth about the Mask is so far hidden for us, but if we understand it right the man who wears it will become free from slavery.”*

*We have information that the journalist Mr Woolrich knows about the mask and that he is searching after it. He was last seen at the hotel Rudo, in the slum area to the south. That is all we know about the mask.”*

The Rastafarians on the yard will play drums and smoke lots of marijuana during the characters meeting with the council. This is a magical experience and time will be changed.

What seems to take one night for the participants takes several days in Elysium, it's up to the Game Master to decide what is proper.

If other characters come to the local meeting place, the gate to the yard is closed and guarded by two strong men. From the outside everything seems silent and empty. The small bank is closed but the store is open, though it has almost no customers.

### **Marcus Woolrich and hotel Rudo**

The journalist has recently stolen the mask from the town hall, where it has been stored by Lictors. After the theft he hides at hotel Rudo in the slum area, a hotel often used by prostitutes and criminals. The manager can arrange a shabby prostitute for 50birr/hour.

The police know that Marcus has been searching after the mask and Marcus is their main suspect. The political leaders in Shashamane are Lictors and it is they who spread the myth about the Mask of the Sevens Keys Man. There is a mask<sup>25</sup>, but it comes from a village not far from the volcano Erta Ale which inhabitants is slaves of Astaroth. The Lictors plan was to use the mask against the Rastafarians, to break their power and influence.

The Game Master has three possibilities here; the characters may find Marcus dead in his hotel room, the police have got there before them and sent him away or the characters can arrive exact when Marcus dies. If he is dead the mask lies on the floor besides him, if the police arrested him the mask was no where to find. Marcus would have been totally insane so the leaders sent him to an asylum in Adis Zemen.

Hotel Rudo has two floors; all windows are covered with dark curtains and in front of the building sit men of all ages play cards. There are no visible guns or open threats against foreigners.

The first floor has a hotel foyer and a bar, the kitchen and restaurant is closed because they where destroyed in a fire two years ago.

The second floor is almost dark, there are no windows in the corridor and only two light bulbs in the roof spread a pale yellow light. From some of the rooms there are noises, the noise of prostitutes that satisfy their customers. The walls is painted concrete, on the floor lies worn mats, dirt and stains of different kinds can be seen everywhere. The heat is overwhelming.

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<sup>25</sup> Read more about the mask on page 3.

Room 20 in the end of the corridor is the room Marcus hires. That information is easy to find out, a 200 birr bribe and some kind of skill check makes an employee to talk.

The door is closed and locked. There is an easy look, use *Locksmithing* (-10) or *Burglary* (-5).

#### ***Alternative - Dead***

Marcus is dead. He failed to control the powers in the mask and the pain become to great, so he committed suicide by cutting his throat. That happened some days ago but screams are common at this hotel so no bothered to investigate it.

When the characters open the door there is a huge smell of rotten flesh in the dark room. On the floor lies a man on his stomach, wearing only his underpants. His skin is full of bruises and cuts, and beneath his long hair glimpses a face full of terrible wounds. The mask has eaten his face, when he failed to control it.

Anyone searching the room will find a passport belonging to Marcus, a wallet with 1600 birr and a mobile phone on a small table. The phone is totally empty but one number that goes to the US; it's Peter Saint-Denys number. It is up to the Game Master to decide if Marcus has called Peter after he has stolen the Mask.

On the floor there are also some strange items: the mask, a short wooden staff, some kind of cup made of aluminium, a beheaded chicken, one candle and a knife. This objects was used in the ritual that is required before you try to wear the mask.

In a small cupboard are some of Marcus own stuff, a backpack, clothes, a camera and a pair of boots.

#### ***Alternative - Asylum***

Marcus is alive, but utterly mad. The ritual was almost a success but the mask melded with his face, a pain that few has ever felt and survived. This made him crazy and after a while the police came and found him screaming and scratch him self in the face.

The police take everything that is worth any money and then sends Marcus to the asylum in Adis Zemen. Maybe the Lictors understand that the mask has become a part of him, but they don't dare to investigate it. They think that a person who wears the mask may see through and manipulate the Illusion.

#### ***Alternative – Last minutes in life***

Marcus carries out the ritual when the characters enter the hotel, in the search after Marcus or because Mama Africa has told them to come here.

When he fails to take control over the mask, it begins to suck the flesh from his face. Screams of terror will come out from the room. When he manage to rip the mask of his face maybe Marcus will try to flee the pain through running out in the hall. The mask will lie on the floor, in a huge pool of blood.

The characters have less than a minute to stop the massive loss of blood, and that might not be enough. The pain can cause death by trauma.

## Going to Gode

The characters have probably only one obvious reason for going to Gode, and that is if they lead the caravan to the small HEA camp for orphaned children. From Shashamane to Gode the characters will pass the cities Goba and Imi, there is a journey on 600 kilometres.

The disturbances will be more present when the characters leave Shashamane; military checkpoints, violent criminals, refugees, hunger riots and in the shadows US special forces that work with the authorities in the war against terrorism.

The empty village Dir Fakar, where Gaia has manifested in Elysium, can be found about 75 kilometres north of Goba. The Game Master can stop the caravan and force the characters to an escape into the mountains. The caravan mission isn't that important in this campaign, but it's up to the Game Master to decide if it's proper that the characters will enter the realm of Gaia. The characters can also by themselves start searching after the village Dir Fakar.

### A man in need of help

Somewhere on the road to Gode a lonely man sits on a rock beneath the road. He is dressed in a blue jacket with the HEA insignia and has a small bag over his shoulder.

This man waves to the characters and asks them to stop their vehicle. His name is Lucas Mbepe and he works for HEA, his car broke down and he left it in a village several kilometres ago. Now he wants to get a lift to the next town.

Lucas is an evil man, he has raped and kidnapped several children, but now the police are closing up and he flees for his life. The characters are his last hope.

### Stopped by the police

When the Game Master finds it proper the characters reach a small village where ten policemen stop all cars and trucks. This can be trouble; the characters are under investigation by the police and to be found here can raise suspicions, the trucks have false papers and Lucas will tell the characters that he can't be found by the police.

When the characters discover the police cars in the village Lucas will tell them that he mustn't be found.

*"I'm belonging to a small ethnical group and the police terrorise me. I can't be found here – you must hide me. Please promise me that you won't tell the police about me."*

The police stop the characters and ask several questions. It's up to the Game Master if it should take some minutes or if the characters will be held for as much as two days.

*"Hello there."*

*"We are looking for an Ethiopian man in a blue jacket. His name is Lucas and he has committed kidnapping and rape on children. Have you seen or have any information about this man?"*

If the characters don't tell the police about Lucas and he is found in their car or truck, they are in big trouble. They will probably be held for several days in the small village, before it's decided if they should be arrested or not.

If the characters tell the police where to find Lucas they will be friendly and let them pass with no further questions.

If the characters help Lucas to pass the police he will be awfully happy and thankful. He will deny any accusation and critic from the characters, and say that he belongs to a persecuted ethnic group and that he is a shaman. As a shaman I'm a threat to the government and they want to imprison me.

There is a possibility that Lucas promise a character the possibility to learn more about shamanism if they help him all the way to Gode. But this character must have the same ideas about life as he, i.e. a negative mental balance beyond -15.

One character of choice can stay six months for free in a desert camp outside Gode with Lucas as teacher. Each month the character has to decide which of two skills that should be practised, *Ecstasy*<sup>26</sup> or *Occultism*. Each month in the camp also lower the mental balance by one to a maximum of -40.

### Hunger riots

Ethnic violence, the lack of rain and greed makes southern Ethiopia to a place where riots aren't far away.

On their way to Gode they pass a small village that was promised help by the government, but nothing reached the people. All cars and trucks are stopped and anyone that aren't Ethiopian risks to get killed. The characters can solve this in three ways: they leave the vehicles to the angry mob, they talk to the leaders and can continue or they can use force.

If the characters take the path of violence the mob will flee in panic if they shot at least two persons. Otherwise the anger will overcome fear and the mob will attack the cars with stones and use machetes on the passengers.

A skill check in *Diplomacy* or *Man of the world* is required to convince the mob not to plunder and burn the vehicles, as usual knowledge in Amharic is important.

|                          |
|--------------------------|
| Diplomacy: +5            |
| Man of the World: +10    |
| Cultural flexibility: -5 |
| Empathy: -5              |
| Ahmaric 0 +8             |
| Ahmaric 5 -3             |
| Amharic 10 -8            |

### Military check point

The Ethiopian army has checkpoints along the road. Often they just look at the papers, but sometimes they really investigate the vehicles and its cargo. If the military realise that the documents are false, the characters may considered to be terrorists.

Sometimes US Special Forces have a group of soldiers in the background, if any of the characters are American citizens they will be interrogated by a Captain. He won't say anything about him self or his mission, but he really wants the character to talk.

If the captain really believes that there is a possibility for terrorism he will use torture. If he can't get any answers in three days he will leave his prisoners, the team has to move out in a hurry.

Game Master also has the opportunity that the Captain sends the characters away with some local forces, they may end at the asylum in Adis Zemen.

<sup>26</sup> BtV page 131.

## Gode and the small HEA camp

Gode has a population around 80.000 inhabitants, but in times of famine and drought refugees in thousands comes from the countryside. Outside town there are a huge military base and the airforce has their own area at the city's airfield.

There is some influence of madness in the city, but the manifestation of death is much stronger. The military forces have a visible presence on the streets and anyone that is suspected can get into real troubles.

### HEA camp

The HEA camp for orphaned children isn't more than five small tents about one kilometre north of the main road. There are several children almost without clothes and their bellies are swollen, as a cause of malnutrition.

At the small camp there are at least thirty children, many of them are apathetic and only looks into the air impossible to contact. There are also three women at the camp who wears the blue jackets of HEA, they comes running against the trucks when they arrives.

*“God bless you all, we have waited and prayed for you. But the time is running out, we must unload the crates at once.*

*We have several other aid workers in the bush, they are hiding and won't come back before you and the trucks have left. If the military find you here we all will be in a great danger. Please hurry.”*

There is no other aid workers, the three women lies. Yesterday the got another “shipment” of children from the south. Right now there are 37 children in the ages three to six years old.

When unloading and unpacking the crates one of the women asks one of the characters if she can take a picture – so she can have a memory of their blessed journey from Adis Ababa.

Suddenly one of the women says that is time for the characters to leave its not safe to stay any longer. All characters have to climb up into one of the trucks and the woman will drive them to Gode, where they should meet Asfa Ahemed at the Café on the main bus station. As a safety measure the characters have to walk the last 200 meters, she doesn't want to park the truck at the bus station.

At the camp the tents are raised and the blankets are spread amongst the children but it's all an illusion of happiness. The cyanide gas that was sprayed over the equipment is now spreading in to the air; all children will be dead in 24 hours. All the drivers will be shoot to death not far from the small camp.

The military will get a tip-off and when they comes to the camp the next day there will be no signs of the woman or any HEA activity.

But the military may find; a picture on the characters taken by the woman, an empty truck with documents that says that it belongs to MSF and a passport belonging to the character with the highest mental balance. The picture in the passport is one of the photos taken by Sam Brown<sup>27</sup>.

It will only take hours before the military and police will start to search after the characters.

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<sup>27</sup> Page 11.

### **The Café at the bus station**

The characters can come to Gode with or without the woman from the small camp, this isn't important. If they accepted the mission when meeting Buru at Café Lion in Addis Ababa the characters will know that Asfa will wait for them at the Café at the bus station.

Now it's up to the Game Master to decide how much stress to put on the characters. They can meet Asfa at once or get the information that he will come and meet them the next day, or any day that the Game Master thinks is proper. This information can come from the woman who drives the truck or from a waitress at the café.

Asfa's main idea is to split the group; he isn't interested in any characters with a positive mental balance. So his plan is that the police or military will arrest some of the characters. If the group wants to go on in the search of the Mask or the village Dir Fakar, then Asfa won't try to stop them.

If the characters meet with Asfa they could be happy, terrified or even angry so here are several alternatives.

#### ***Alternative – Angry***

The characters realise that something is wrong and demands answers from Asfa. He understands that none of them are ready for the truth so he will lie and use his knowledge about the characters against them.

First of all he will try to split the group by promising characters with a mental balance below -25 some kind of rewards. These rewards is connected to their personality, disadvantages as *Wanted*, *Sexual neurosis*, *Oath of revenge*, *Phobia*, *Innocently blames*, *Greed* etc can be used against the characters to get their obedience or trust.

He will praise them for their courage and promise that he will protect them from anyone, even the police. Asfa will say that this operation was a way to test them, to see if they were puppets in the hands of the corrupt leaders of the MSF.

Now he will offer them well paid jobs in his organisation, and they will start with free education for several months. All this will obviously only be offered those with a proper mental balance.

If all the characters are angry and hostile, he will accuse them to be puppets of Peter Saint-Denys. And he promises them that they will be dead before the sun goes up the next day. Then he lives in anger.

#### ***Alternative – Happy***

The characters are happy that they have done their mission as they promised. Asfa will be very thankful and praise all of the characters, but he won't tell them anymore about HEA or the small camp outside town.

They who have positive mental balance is offered money<sup>28</sup> and plane tickets to anywhere in Ethiopia or to Europe. If there are characters with a mental balance below -25 they may get an offer to work for HEA. If someone is uncertain Asfa promise free education at the local HEA headquarter for several months, they can decide if they want the job later.

#### **Wanted**

There are two possibilities here. The characters can be wanted for the death of the children and the truck drivers. Or some "new evidence" that strengthen the accusations about stealing money has reached the police.

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<sup>28</sup> They get 2000 US dollars in cash.

If the characters know that they are wanted it creates a new interesting event, the information should be revealed the next day. Media reports about the characters or the reception clerk at their hotel will tell them that the police are searching after them. Even Asfa or Mama Africa tells them if they meet the characters.

This is a great possibility for the Game Master to put pressure on the characters. Let the hunt go on for some days, with one or two close encounters with the forces of the law. Then it can be a good time for the characters to “choose an ending” on this campaign.

If the characters are imprisoned, it can be one end of the campaign or just some days without food<sup>29</sup>.

### **Mama Africa**

The Incarnation of Malkuth thinks that it's time to give the characters a final chance to walk the path of truth. If they don't pass this quest or choose another way her Incarnation will leave them.

Once again she will appear as an old woman, but this time she take contact with all of the characters.

*“It's time to make a final effort. It becomes more and more dangerous to travel the roads and the time to save the children is almost gone.*

*Listen to me, I can help you. I will show you the place where you can find the children, now it's up to you to save them before its to late.”*

If the group wants to go on in the search of the Mask or the village Dir Fakar, then the Incarnation will accept it but she warn them that its very dangerous.

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<sup>29</sup> BtV page 105.

Asfa won't be happy if the characters choose to follow Mama Africa. Here is a great possibility to give the characters the disadvantage **Wanted** for 5 points.

It's the Razide Asfa Ahemed personally that wants to see the characters dead. This is an enemy that can show up sometime in a later adventure.

### **The Pain of Odji**

The rumours about the characters are spreading. True or false accusations about violence, the death of the children and truck drivers outside Gode, rumours about the death of the journalist Marcus and anything that the Game Master can make up.

The Egyptian man **Odji** is a conjurer<sup>30</sup>, he will try to contact the characters and offer them a safe haven in his basement for three days. But he demands that they accept that there will be no food, no other light than candles and that they must whip him 20 minutes every day at midnight. The emaciated man won't talk much, at least 10 hours a day Odji will sit alone in a corner talking to him self. He is memorising old Egyptian texts from The Book of The Dead<sup>31</sup>.

Odji is trying to learn “Memories Beyond Death” and the whipping is part of his attempt to get insight.

He is old, almost 50 year, and is terrified about what will happen when he dies. Odji will never be good enough to avoid death. He tells the characters as little as possible and will never give them any information about magic, they are here to do their task and then they should leave him forever.

Remember that whipping can give the characters some kind of trauma.

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<sup>30</sup> Lore of Death, skill 7.

<sup>31</sup> BtV page 129.

## Different endings

*The gates have opened and the dogs are loose, a hunt has begun and the target is the souls of the aid workers. The greater powers in Ethiopia have taken the struggle for influence to another level, every allied, servant and puppy will be important when humanity reaches the end of time. The question is what path will the blind humans choose this time?*

The end of this adventure, and the whole campaign, is depending on the decisions that the characters are making.

The thought is that the adventure should change time perspective, from tactical to strategic. The characters choose an ending and the Game Master will tell them what kind of decisions they are able to make. An ending can take several month of time, so this is a choice of path and alliance in life.

### Asfas puppets

Those characters that Asfa likes and have at least -25 in mental balance will get an offer. Asfa promise free education at the local HEA headquarters in Gode, and then employment.

During six month they will have the opportunities to create an education plan of at least two of the following skills.

Administration, Bureaucracy, Handguns, Drive, First Aid, City/Area knowledge or Language: Ahmaric.

Most of the time the characters will live in a small apartment in the southern parts of Gode. The area is violent and criminal gangs have shootouts know and then, the neighbours are exclusively Ethiopians and many of them are uses drugs.

To live here as non-Ethiopians is to beg for trouble. But Asfa says that this is the best place to hide from the police, they never come to this part of town.

To live in this apartment strain on the soul, the mental balance drops by one every two month to a maximum of -35.

After six month the characters will be employed by HEA, if the characters turn down the offer Asfa will be very upset.

### Lucas Promise

If there was characters who helped him to avoid the police and that they have a mental balance of at least -15, then he could have promised one of them education in mysticism for six month.

They will live in a desert camp south of Gode; the nomads in the camp will capture people and torture them as a gift to God. Each month in the camp lower the mental balance by one to a maximum of -40.

Each month the character has to decide witch of two skills that should be practised, *Ecstasy*<sup>32</sup> or *Occultism*.

After six month the characters have to leave the nomads.

### Imprisoned

If the characters are arrested in the end of this adventure, the Game Master can choose to let them be imprisoned. They could be put away in any prison, local police station or even the asylum in Adis Zemen.

After six month behind bars, suddenly the characters deported from Ethiopia.

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<sup>32</sup> BtV page 131.

## Mama Africa

It's time for the characters to understand that they are the children, so there will be a final task. Mama Africa will ask them to follow her into the desert in the search for the lost children.

If the characters want to search after The Mask at hotel Rudo in Shashamane, she may accept that but she will demand that they meet her as soon as possible at an square not far from the hotel. If they accept this, Mama Africa will have a truck ready and drive them into the dessert, she will drive all night and she requests them to sleep on the truck bed.

But if the characters want to go to the village Dir Fakir and search for the child who where with the Rastafarians, Mama Africa will warn them.

*“If you choose that path in life neither Peter nor I can ever help you, to visit Dir Fakir is very dangerous. Choose that path and everything can be lost, but it's your decision.”*

The characters that choose Dir Fakir will be allowed to leave, Mama Africa won't contact them again in this campaign.

### *The circles of truth*

Mama Africa takes the characters to the south, out in the Ethiopian desert. It takes at least on day and one night. If someone is waken during night and looks outside the covered truck they will only see the stars in the sky, or?

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| Modification: +5<br>Magical intuition: -5<br>Schizophrenia: -5 |
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Make one modified PER check, success means that the characters imagine that the stars in the sky moves. They feel unafraid and consider themselves more important.

Before dawn Mama Africa stops the truck and wakes they who are asleep. In front of the characters is a huge crater in the desert. Yellow sand, sharp crushed stones and some massive rocks coming up from underground, all in a mixture that makes the landscape both freighting wonderful.

The crater is almost a kilometre across and it seems to be at least fifty meters to the bottom. In the darkness they can hardly see the bottom, but it seems like a huge amount of mud huts.

*“Here you will be able to follow your hearts and the find the lost children. Search among the forty-two mud huts. If you leave the village you may not go back and continue the search. Among the huts are several stone circles, when you have found a lost child (but only then) go to one of the circles and start to read the document that you will find in the bags I will give to each and one of you.*

*You are not allowed to bring any personal equipment, all you need in the search will be found in the small bag.”*

In the small bags there are a flashlight, a copy of 'Human Gnosis'<sup>33</sup>, a knife and a revolver with only one bullet.

Naturally, there are no lost children in the village and the characters may walk around there for eternity. In some of the huts they may find food and items. Items may move, disappear and be found in places that were empty earlier.

This crater is on the borderland to realms beyond Elysium. The only way to find a child is to find them selves.

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<sup>33</sup> A book of poems about a group of escaped slaves that wandering across the African continent. BtV page 129.

The Game Master should encourage the players to write down their character thoughts instead of saying them. This will create tension in the group. The feeling of competition should also encourage the characters to search by themselves among the 42 mud huts, instead of walking in a group.

There will be no food or water in the small bag given by Mama Africa, so after 24 hours in the dawn of the second day the hunger and thirst starts to be a serious threat<sup>34</sup>. There are rather hot in the crater and during they day some characters may consider to stay inside.

The search goes on as long as the characters want to. If someone leave the crater they will find the truck in the desert but Mama Africa is nowhere to find. When they turn around the crater is gone; there is no way to find it again.

It is up to the Game Master to decide what happens with characters that fail.

### ***Enlightened***

Characters that realise that the only lost children are them selves immediately understand that the only thing they can do is to sit down in one of the stone circles and read the poems in 'Human Gnosis'. When this revelation becomes a truth the other characters are no where to find, the enlightened has passed through the illusion and left the others searching in blindness in Elysium.

Characters who have left Elysium will learn a lot. Time has lost meaning and when they focus on the surrounding again a half-year has past. They are all waking up at a hotel in Gode, their personal equipment is packed in new suitcases and there is a big envelope on one table.

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<sup>34</sup> Hunger and thirst, BtV 105.

Inside are a letter, tickets for a flight from Godes airport to London later that day, there are also passports to everyone.

*"My children, you have chosen the right path in life and now I will help you to walk that path.*

*Your time in Africa is over for now, you have to leave for London as soon as possible.*

### ***Mama Africa***

During their time in meditation beyond Elysium the characters have gained lots of knowledge.

### ***Mental Balance***

The MB has changed 20 points away from neutral, to a maximum of  $\pm 40$ . Change the general MB, but the Game Master may include one advantage or disadvantage among these; Enhanced awareness, Magical intuition, Endure hunger/thirst, Paranoia, Schizophrenia or Phobia. Remember that all positive change must be paid by experience.

### ***Skills***

The players don't have to roll any checks to gain 15 points of experience. .

First choose one or none of these skills, The Art of Dreaming<sup>35</sup>, The Lore of Time and Space<sup>36</sup> or Cosmology and raise it to a score of 5.

Secondly raise one to three skills to a maximum score of 10 including Ecstasy, Hypnosis, Asceticism, Occultism and Tantric Meditation or one of the six occult sciences described at page 187 in BtV to a maximum score of 8. Points left may pay change in mental balance.

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<sup>35</sup> BtV page 248.

<sup>36</sup> No one becomes a conjurer on half-time, this change the characters life and demands Magical intuition. BtV page 116-119.

### Dir Fakar

The empty village of Dir Fakar is one of the most dangerous places in Ethiopia, the permanent gate to Gaia is a source to chaos. But the child from first adventure won't be found anywhere; he is long gone and lost in Gaia.

If the characters enter the village they will be lost in Gaia for up to six month. Regression will lower EDU and most skills with two points a month<sup>37</sup>; it's up to the Game Master to decide if the lost is temporary or permanent.

Mental Balance may also change in Gaia as advantages and disadvantages lose in importance.

### Outside the village

It can be rather hard to find the village. When military forces emptied Dir Fakar two years ago they also destroyed parts of the road, and nature has retaken areas that were cultivated by the villagers.

One kilometre outside the village there is a barbed wire fence, signs warns for poisonous water and inform that there is a military exercise field in the forest. But the quality is poor, with right equipment there is no problem to pass through the barbed wire.

On the other side of the fence there is a change in atmosphere, humans gets a growling feeling that nature is a threat. The normal trees seem to suffer from draught, their leaves are brown and their branches are deformed. But huge bushes grove everywhere, they have up to five centimetre huge thorns that makes it difficult to advance further. The ground is more and more covered by sand; the forest is becoming a desert.

Characters with the disadvantage Animal enmity will get in big trouble, a huge swarm of flying insects or grasshoppers will emerge and attack<sup>38</sup>.

### The village

The village that once was Dir Fakar is today almost covered by sand and bushes, there are only ten visible ruins that raises one-meter above ground. Almost all signs of civilisation are gone.

If the characters leave the area at once there will be a chance to get back to the barbed wire and Elysium, but Gaia will try to hunt them down. A flock of wild dogs<sup>39</sup> comes running in high speed between the bushes.

Even this short experience of the boarder between Gaia and Elysium is a source to fear for most humans. So when the characters reach safety they have to make an EGO check.

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| Supernatural place: +5<br>Disturbs frame of reference: +5<br>Other: + point value. |
|--|

A failure may give the characters new disadvantages as Phobia (grasshoppers, dogs, insects, plants with thorns and sand etc) or Animal enmity.

### Gaia

If the characters enter the ruins the path back to Elysium is lost; they are now trapped in Gaia. When examining the ruins they may find some simpler objects as buckets, a tire or a plastic chair. But in contact with humans the decay<sup>40</sup> will make a final leap and the object can dissolve in the hands of the character.

<sup>37</sup> Legions of Darkness page 159

<sup>38</sup> Legions of Darkness page 172.

<sup>39</sup> Legions of Darkness page 158.

<sup>40</sup> Legions of Darkness page 160.

When the characters are searching among the ruins there is a change in weather. The wind is getting stronger and soon there will be lots of loose yellow sand in the air. Their presence has started a reaction; Gaia finally destroys the village.

When taking cover from the sandstorm amongst the ruins the Living Ground<sup>41</sup> awakens and slowly starts to draw down one or two characters. If they don't leave their cover among the ruins they will die.

When the storm is over, the landscape is altered. There are no trees anywhere; they have entered *The Empty Quarter*.<sup>42</sup> This part of Gaia is a world of sand, irregular rocks seemingly sculpted by the wind or cracked dry dirt often encrusted with white masses of salt. There are no signs of life; the feeling of endless nothingness is great.

The character should walk around for a week whiteout finding any substantial signs of life. This will be a true fight for survival; hunger, heat and thirst will be their greatest enemy.<sup>43</sup> The Game Master can allow the characters to find some water coming out from a crack.

After one-week time becomes more and more unimportant, the characters lose their apprehension and technology as watches and mobile phones may already have decayed.

The Game Master may now increase the confusion, the characters can't remember how many days they have been in this strange realm and there can go days without any comments at all from the Game Master. You don't have to tell them that there is dawn or night, they just walk across the landscape.

But this world isn't totally empty, huge Anthills or holes with huge scorpions may be dangerous areas. This can force the characters to fight or to take a risky climbing to get around, the Game Master demand skills checks in climbing etc.

The end of this journey will come when they meet 'The Cartographer'<sup>44</sup>, an insane man that has entered Gaia when his expedition was lost in the wilderness.

He has a huge map over Ethiopia and several notebooks in his backpack. But he doesn't really understand that he is in Gaia, he is convinced that he has found an unexplored part of Ethiopia. He won't give the map away but the characters may look at it and read the notes. A character with Enhanced Awareness or Schizophrenia may see a path that can lead to a gate back to Elysium.

To end this campaign by entering Gaia isn't the most favourable. The characters will lose score in EDU and skills, and also miss the possibility to gain the extra experience other endings may give.

The Game Master should give 10 extra points of experience because they have entered Gaia for the first time. These points must be used immediately after the campaign and can only be used to raise some skills.

Area Knowledge (The Empty Quarter), Lore (Gaia), Climbing, Search, Survival, Unarmed combat and Hide.

## The End

When six-month passes and the different strategic endings are over. The campaign is over and the next starts at a flight to Europe. It will probably be July 2005.

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<sup>41</sup> Legions of Darkness page 159.

<sup>42</sup> Gaia by Jason Thompson page 25.

<sup>43</sup> BtV page 105.

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<sup>44</sup> Gaia by Jason Thompson page 28.

The Children of Malkuth.

- The characters have made several moral choices, which have driven them to a path in life where they follow the aspect of Malkuth or Gamichicoth.
- The characters have gained lots of knowledge and understand that their life have changed.

- In Urban Angels the characters have to create their own choices, it's time to lead and not only to follow.

Urban Angels – The next campaign

- The characters as a group must choose to follow one aspect in life or they have to go different ways before someone gets killed.

