

RANDOM SWORD & SORCERY ADVENTURE GENERATOR
For use with HYPERBOREA® and other Sword & Sorcery RPGs

by Ben Ball

Sometimes you need an adventure fast, but you don't have much time to prepare, or you just need some inspiration to get the creative juices flowing. Roll or choose one item from each table to create an adventure outline, then use your imagination to fill in the details. Results should always be tailored to suit a particular campaign.

Table I.: Title (Part 1)

d20	
Result	Title (Part 1)
1	Acolyte
2	Beast
3	Blood
4	Children
5	Gods
6	Hand
7	Jewels
8	Master
9	Paths
10	Plague
11	Prophecy
12	Queen
13	Servant
14	Shadow
15	Sign
16	Song
17	Sword
18	Vengeance
19	Wind
20	Whisper

Table II.: Title (Part 2)

d20	
Result	Title (Part 2)
1	of Chaos
2	of Darkness
3	of Death
4	of Doom
5	of Eternity
6	of Midnight
7	of the Night
8	of Silence
9	of Sorcery
10	of Sorrow
11	of the Boreas
12	of the Deeps
13	of the Ice
14	of the Lost
15	of the Moon
16	of the Mountain
17	of the Necropolis
18	of the Stars
19	of the Tomb
20	of the Wastes

Table III.: Mission

d20	
Result	Mission
1	Attack (<i>roll place to be attacked</i>)
2	Decipher (<i>roll thing to be deciphered</i>)
3	Destroy (<i>roll thing to be destroyed</i>)
4	Elude (<i>roll person to be eluded</i>)
5	Escape (<i>roll place to be escaped</i>)
6	Escort (<i>roll person to be escorted</i>)
7	Explore (<i>roll place to be explored</i>)
8	Find (<i>roll thing to be found</i>)
9	Guard (<i>roll thing to be guarded</i>)
10	Kidnap (<i>roll person to be kidnapped</i>)
11	Kill (<i>roll person to be killed</i>)
12	Locate (<i>roll person to be located</i>)
13	Protect (<i>roll person to be protected</i>)
14	Question (<i>roll person to be questioned</i>)
15	Recover (<i>roll thing to be recovered</i>)
16	Rescue (<i>roll person to be rescued</i>)
17	Seek (<i>roll place to be sought</i>)
18	Steal (<i>roll thing to be stolen</i>)
19	Transport (<i>roll thing to be transported</i>)
20	Watch (<i>roll place to be watched</i>)

Table IV.: Person / Place / Thing

d20	
Result	Person / Place / Thing
1	Artist / Abyss / Bottle
2	Assassin / Bazaar / Chest
3	Beggar / Brothel / Cloak
4	Craftsman / Catacombs / Crown
5	Dancer / Cavern / Crystal
6	Eunuch / Fortress / Dagger
7	Foreigner / Garden / Helm
8	Harlot / Island / Idol
9	Merchant / Mansion / Jewel
10	Noble / Mountain / Lens
11	Peasant / Oasis / Mask
12	Pirate / Palace / Meteorite
13	Poet / Pool / Ring
14	Priest / Prison / Sarcophagus
15	Scholar / Sanctuary / Scroll
16	Servant / Shrine / Seal
17	Slave / Storehouse / Skull
18	Sorcerer / Tomb / Sword
19	Thief / Tower / Tablet
20	Warrior / Valley / Tome

Table V.: Hook

d20 Result	Hook
1	Ambushed and left for dead
2	Arrested and pressed into service
3	Asked as a favor
4	Blackmailed
5	Cursed by a god
6	Dared or had courage questioned
7	Found old map
8	<i>Geased</i> by a sorcerer
9	Had a dream or vision
10	Heard a prophecy
11	Heard a song or poem
12	Hired
13	Lost or shipwrecked
14	Made a wager
15	Ordered by superior
16	Overheard conversation
17	Read ancient scroll or tablet
18	Repaying a debt
19	Stumbled into situation
20	Wronged and seeking revenge

Table VI.: Antagonist

d20 Result	Antagonist
1	Angry ghost
2	Bandit chieftain
3	Brutal warlord
4	Corrupt official
5	Cult leader
6	Cunning madman
7	Debauched noble
8	Demonized wretch
9	Depraved monk
10	Deranged alchemist
11	Evil sorcerer
12	Fanatical priest
13	Greedy merchant
14	King of thieves
15	Obsessed scholar
16	Pirate captain
17	Ruthless slaver
18	Sadistic torturer
19	Sardonic harlequin
20	Sinister revenant

Table VII.: Potential Ally

d20 Result	Potential Ally
1	Aged warrior seeking one last battle
2	Charismatic leader of a slave revolt
3	Demon seeking the soul of antagonist
4	Disgruntled servant of antagonist
5	Escaped prisoner
6	Friendly witch
7	Honorable captain of the guard
8	Local ruler whose throne was usurped
9	Naïve and virtuous young warrior
10	Priest who speaks for the gods
11	Rival of antagonist
12	Rogue adventurer seeking the same goal
13	Strangely intelligent animal
14	Streetwise urchin
15	Sybil with an important prophecy
16	Unworldly scholar with vital information
17	Vengeful spirit
18	Victim of antagonist seeking revenge
19	Villain who wants to be redeemed
20	Wise sage with useful lore

Table VIII.: Complication

d20 Result	Complication
1	Aspiring student or apprentice pesters a PC
2	Astronomical alignment favors black magic
3	Disguised sorcerer curses PC
4	Eclipse or comet provokes outburst of superstitious fear
5	Escaped slave boy or wench begs refuge
6	Forgotten crime comes back to haunt a PC
7	Important NPC under a spell
8	Invasion or occupation by foreigners
9	Local festival creates atmosphere of riot and license
10	Local laws are bizarre and restrictive
11	Locale suffering from recent earthquake or flood
12	Money lender comes to collect from a PC
13	Old rival of a PC becomes involved
14	PC falsely accused of a capital crime
15	PC mistaken for someone else
16	Phobia or taboo of a PC is violated
17	Plague is spreading in the vicinity
18	Rebels are plotting to overthrow the government
19	Spurned lover of a PC looks for revenge
20	Unwanted suitor falls in love with a PC

Table IX.: Obstacle

d20 Result	Obstacle
1	Armed guards
2	Assassins
3	Bandits or pirates
4	Concealment, deception, or secrecy
5	Curse (real or imaginary)
6	Deadly environment
7	Dishonesty and greed of populace
8	Great distance
9	Inscription that needs translated
10	Lack of supplies
11	Limited time
12	Looming natural or unnatural disaster
13	Magical wards or guards
14	Monster
15	Native cannibals or headhunters
16	Physical barrier
17	Riddle that must be solved
18	Roaming savage beasts
19	Thieves
20	Wrong or misleading information

Table X.: Twist

d20 Result	Twist
1	Adventure locale is a Potemkin village and supposed mission is a sinister experiment
2	Antagonist is a PC from another time or reality
3	Antagonist is an ally or friend in disguise
4	Antagonist is pursuing a worthy goal
5	Antagonist is the puppet of another (<i>roll on Antagonist table to determine actual Antagonist</i>)
6	Apparently mundane is supernatural
7	Apparently supernatural is mundane
8	Betrayal by supposed ally or friend
9	Distortion of time or space in adventure locale
10	Entire adventure is a delusion or dream
11	Entire adventure is the jest of a mad god
12	Forced to ally with enemy or rival
13	Goals and motivations of important NPCs have been misrepresented
14	Important NPC has a twin brother or sister, leading to mass confusion
15	Original mission is a red herring (<i>roll on Mission table to determine actual mission</i>)
16	Original mission is a trap and actual mission is to survive and escape
17	Original mission is a wild goose chase, and new mission is revenge on perpetrator
18	Portion of adventure is a wild goose chase
19	Portion of adventure is a delusion or dream
20	Success in mission leads to unexpected and dire consequences

Table XI.: Reward

d20 Result	Reward
1	Clue to another adventure
2	Desirable lover
3	Exotic spices or lotuses
4	Favor of a cult or deity
5	Favor of powerful NPC
6	Gold
7	Loyal henchman
8	Magical armour, shield, or weapon
9	Pardon for crimes
10	Potion or alchemical preparation
11	Precious jewels
12	Rare and wondrous steed
13	Rare furs or silks
14	Scroll of spells, magic ring, magic wand, or other magic item
15	Wench or manservant
16	Roll twice on this table (<i>reroll any result over 15</i>)
17	Roll three times on this table (<i>reroll any result over 15</i>)
18	Roll four times on this table (<i>reroll any result over 15</i>)
19	Roll five times on this table (<i>reroll any result over 15</i>)
20	Nothing but their miserable hides

EXAMPLE #1: The rolls are **I.18.** (*Vengeance*), **II.11.** (*of the Boreas*), **III.15** (*Recover*), **IV.1.** (*Bottle*), **V.9.** (*Had a dream or vision*), **VI.16.** (*Pirate captain*), **VII.11.** (*Rival of antagonist*), **VIII.10.** (*Local laws are bizarre and restrictive*), **IX.10.** (*Lack of supplies*), **X.8.** (*Betrayal by supposed ally or friend*), and **XI.6.** (*Gold*).

The adventure is entitled “Vengeance of the Boreas.” The players are approached by Menander, the elderly head of a monastic order known as the Silver Silence. Writing on a slate, the mute Menander explains that he was guided to the PCs by a vision; only they can help, so say the gods. He needs them to recover a bottle of sacred Boreas wine that was stolen from his monastery. For this deed they will be richly rewarded.

The stolen wine has fallen into the hands of a ruthless Viking pirate, Captain Erik the Red-Handed, who is planning to auction it to the highest bidder among the most corrupt and jaded folk of the city. Meantime, down at the docks is Amazon pirate queen, Black Elena, a bitter rival of Erik. She might be convinced to help steal the wine in order to spite him (after which she will of course betray the players and attempt to take the wine for herself).

Local law prohibits openly carrying weapons on the docks, so the players will either have to flout the law or rely on small arms that can be concealed. Getting to the site of the auction won’t be easy, since Erik’s ship is moored two miles offshore, and no small craft are currently available; the players will likely have to improvise a raft or steal a boat—unless they have an alliance with the treacherous Black Elena.

Once on board the pirate ship, the players must find some way to acquire the Boreas wine, whether through stealth, deception, or force—without breaking the fragile bottle, of course! If the players return the sacred bottle to the Monastery of the Silver Silence, Menander will load them with gold—a substance the monks have in plenty but value not at all.

EXAMPLE #2: The rolls are **I.3.** (*Blood*), **II.18.** (*of the Stars*), **III.19.** (*Transport*), **IV.19.** (*Tablet*), **V.10.** (*Heard a prophecy*), **VI.4.** (*Corrupt official*), **VII.14.** (*Streetwise urchin*), **VIII.19.** (*Spurned lover of a PC looks for revenge*), **IX.10.** (*Lack of supplies*), **X.18.** (*Portion of adventure is a wild goose chase*), and **XI.20.** (*Nothing but their miserable hides*).

The adventure is entitled “Blood of the Stars.” The PCs hear a wandering sybil prophesize that whosoever carries the Tablet of Ta-Bu to a wilderness shrine of Xathoqqua some miles away shall be most blessed. The subtly repellant and vaguely greasy Tablet, forged from metal fallen from the Black Gulf and scribed with unhallowed runes, is rumored to be in the possession of the corrupt scribe Laertes, who has no wish to surrender it. Thus, the PCs must take it from him by guile or force.

Help can be had from a beggar child named Connor who was crippled by a severe beating from Laertes; he knows a back way into the scribe’s house and urges the players to murder Laertes. Stealing the Tablet of Ta-Bu is made more difficult by the spurned former lover of one of the PCs, who will do anything he or she can to make things more difficult for the PCs—including warning Laertes about their plans.

Once the home of Laertes is ransacked, players will discover that he never had the Tablet of Ta-Bu; indeed, it was in the possession of the spurned former lover all along! He or she will surrender the Tablet in exchange for one final night with his or her ex-lover (or the PCs may resort to other means of persuasion, such as torture, or public humiliation).

Actually carrying the Tablet of Ta-Bu to the wilderness shrine of Xathoqqua will be a grim ordeal, since PCs will find that the mere presence of the sinister Tablet spoils their food, fouls their water, and magnetizes all manner of beast and monster. If the PCs overcome all obstacles to finally lay the Tablet of Ta-Bu on the ancient blood-stained altar, the sardonic voice of Xathoqqua will thank them for their pains and ask if they are proud of the deeds they committed in order to make this pilgrimage. However they answer, Xathoqqua will laugh mockingly and offer a sneering “blessing”. There will be no other reward for completing this adventure.

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