

BRIGHT & TERRIBLE

ROSE BAILEY



BRIGHT &

A GAME OF SWORDS & TRAGEDY

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TERRIBLE

INSPIRATIONS

The Silmarillion	JRR Tolkien
The Saga of Elric of Melniboné	Michael Moorcock
Tales From the Flat Earth	Tanith Lee
Trollbabe	Ron Edwards
Lasers and Feelings	John Harper
3:16	Gregor Hutton

HOW TO PLAY

Gather a Group: You can play with or without a Game Master. The game works best with one to three exiles.

Pace Adventures Vigorously: Aim for one roll per scene. More or less is fine, but most scenes should reach a crisis point that requires the exiles to act.

Be Decisive: Atlanteans are quick to feel, judge, and act. Your exile is no fool, but they should throw themselves wholeheartedly into the business of life and danger.

Pronounce Doom: Invent consequences your exile has not considered, or bring back threats from their past. Doom the things that matter to them, but leave room to reinterpret the doom when it comes into play.

Love Your Exile: Take action and pronounce doom that stirs your own heartstrings.

BRIGHT & TERRIBLE

INTRODUCTION

For ten thousand years, Atlantis ruled the Earth. From the winged children of Black Aerie to the ophidian witches of Graven Reach to the merchant princes of Bazzan, every human bent knee to the Empire of Air and Darkness.

But now, Atlantis has fallen. Rumors spread of the Sea of Sorrows boiling and rising to drink the shining towers, or of Mount Bleak exploding in a rain of hellfire, or of an impossible tempest surrounding the isle. Only one thing is certain: for a decade, the indigo triremes of the Atlantean fleet have not stopped to call in the kingdoms of humanity, nor has any vessel sent to trade or treat with them returned.

BEGINNING YOUR EXILE

2

Choose your Tell. What trait marks you out as an alien in the lands of humanity? Do you wear bizarre and extravagant clothing? Does your skin shine like glass? Are you followed at every step by the sibilant whispers of your ancestors?

Choose your Fell Weapon. What have you brought with you from the shadow vaults? A sword that sings for blood? A jewel which can command any action, save to speak or be silent? A crow through whose eyes you can see, at the cost of your own?

Choose your Number. Your Number is between 2 and 5. The higher it is, the easier it is to be Bright. The lower it is, the easier it is to be Terrible.

3

TIME OF CRISIS

When a crisis erupts and you take decisive action, it's time to take up dice. You start with a *black exile die* ■ and one or two *red risk dice* ■ (one for any action, two if facing a foretold doom). If you have help (a companion, an army, a demon) add one *blue aid die* ■. If you are using your Fell Weapon, add a second black exile die.

Pick your action's aspect: either Bright (inspiring, leading, building) or Terrible (intimidating, killing, destroying).

Roll the dice and count *hits*. If your action is Bright, dice at or below your Number are hits. If your action is Terrible, dice at or above your Number are hits.

If a die equals your Number, you are both Bright and Terrible, and may choose to shift your Number by 1 up or down. (You may only do this once per session.)

COUNTING HITS

4

- 0 hits** ➔ You fall short of your goal, and must foretell a doom that will fall upon you.
- 1 hit** ➔ You achieve your goal, but must foretell a doom.
- 2+ hits** ➔ You achieve your goal.

BY ROSE BAILEY

1

With the Atlantean boot no longer on their backs, the human kingdoms rejoice and throw off their regents and satraps, entering an age of giddy prosperity and bloody war.

It is this world in which you wash up upon the shore of the Sea of Sorrows. You are a noble of Atlantis, perhaps even the Indigo Empress herself. You carry with you a fell weapon from the shadow vaults, before which all must cower, flee, or simply die.

You must make your way in this brave new world, as humans both great and petty beg for your aid or seek to make you pay for the sins of your lost people.

Will you aid them, or will you shun them? Will you render the justice of a bright queen, or the terror of an alien tyrant?

FACING CONSEQUENCES

5

Look for matches between your dice. Only count one match between each pair of colors.

■ One of the threats against you is fulfilled, either now or in the near future.

■ Fell power twists your destiny. In your next crisis, replace your Number with the number of this match.

■ The companion, army, or demon shifts toward the aspect you're rolling. On a Bright roll, their Number increases by 1. On a Terrible roll, their Number decreases by 1.

■ If you had a companion, they are slain, wounded, or doomed. If you had an army, they are scattered, demoralized, or mutinous. If you had a demon or god, they will now demand a favor before they will aid you again.

6

RECEIVING AID

Other characters and groups have their own Numbers, from 1 to 6, reflecting how well they respond to each aspect. When a companion, army, or demon aids you, the blue die only counts as a hit if it rolls at or lower than their Number (for a Bright roll), or at or higher than their Number (for a Terrible roll).

Since you never roll more than one blue die, you can use the most advantageous Number when you have multiple sources of aid.

Another player's exile can aid you as a companion, which can shift their Number.

7

FLASHBACKS

In each session, you may narrate up to two flashbacks. One is a Glory, a moment in which Atlantis was heroic, just, or beautiful. The other is a Tragedy, a moment when Atlantis was destructive, tyrannical, or macabre. These may be great historical events, or moments from your own life.

Narrating a flashback allows you to change the aspect of your roll after the fact. A Glory makes a Terrible deed Bright, while a Tragedy makes a Bright deed Terrible.

FACTIONS

Roll twice to determine the factions involved.



An Atlantean puppet ruler



A cult, recently risen and hungry or ancient and suppressed by Atlantis



An ancient people, newly risen again



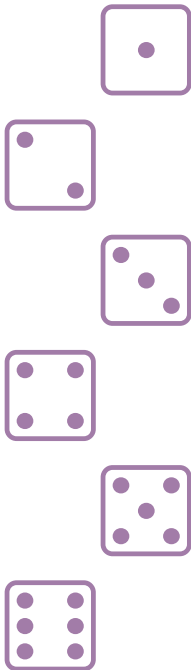
Mercenary raiders



Revolutionaries



Additional faction, roll twice more



1 PUPPET RULERS

- 1 A satrap who has proclaimed themselves royal and divine
- 2 A barbarian general set up as regional governor
- 3 An elderly half-Atlantean sorcerer given rulership as a sinecure
- 4 A council of elders who fear the loss of Atlantean might to back up their rule
- 5 Another Atlantean exile, from years before the fall
- 6 The child of another puppet, looking to make a name for themselves

2 MERCENARY RAIDERS

- 1 Half-Atlantean outcasts, selling their cursed swords to the highest bidder
- 2 The bandits of the black shawl, who mourn every soul they put to the sword
- 3 A barbarian legion, still serving the shade of their dead commander
- 4 The criminals of a dozen lands, gathered together in desolate places
- 5 Pirates from the far reaches of the world, who paid homage to Atlantis only in words
- 6 The holy guard of a deposed princess, outwardly cynical yet still loyal

CULTS

- 1 The followers of the all-consuming flame, wishing to purify all the world through fire
- 2 The royal cult of a long-dead Atlantean empress, decrying this decadent age
- 3 A warrior-religion who revere death in battle above all things
- 4 The acolytes of a forgotten sorcerer, seeking to raise him
- 5 The last worshippers of an outlaw god, who love freedom above law
- 6 Devotees of a martyr, who want revenge on those who saw him stoned

ANCIENT PEOPLES

- 1 The ophidian witches, from whom legend says the Atlanteans were bastard descendants
- 2 The riders of the red mare, for whom the greatest sin is to sleep in the same place twice
- 3 The winged children, who were forced by Atlantis to live upon the ground
- 4 The wraiths of a vanquished army, who vastly outnumber the living
- 5 The leopardfolk, forsaking their solitary lives for the first time in millennia
- 6 The chaos giants, whose all-consuming hunger has been roused

REVOLUTIONARIES

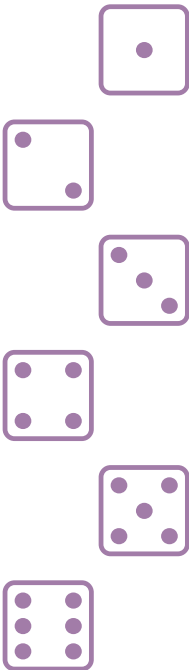
- 1 Devotees of a rebel scholar, who want to break all crowns
- 2 The clan of a humiliated general, who will never forget their ties of blood
- 3 Merchant lords, who believe anyone who can't be bought can never be relied upon
- 4 Royal weaponsmiths, who can no longer stomach the use of their dread engines
- 5 The guild of beggars, who have come to outnumber all other citizens
- 6 The household of the ruler's second child, whose rival court is more splendid than their sibling's

FACCTIONS

OBJECT OF CONFLICT

Roll once to determine what the factions are struggling over.

-  Possession of a priceless treasure
-  Control of the government
-  Someone's hand in marriage
-  Peace or war between two nations
-  A hostage
-  Multiple objects, roll twice more



PRICELESS TREASURES

- 1 A satrap who has proclaimed themselves royal and divine
- 2 A barbarian general set up as regional governor
- 3 An elderly half-Atlantean sorcerer given rulership as a sinecure
- 4 A council of elders who fear the loss of Atlantean might to back up their rule
- 5 Another Atlantean exile, from years before the fall
- 6 The child of another puppet, looking to make a name for themselves

PEACE OR WAR

- 1 The ownership of a sacred isle
- 2 A betrayal for which each side blames the other
- 3 Two siblings who will not divide the lands their parents conquered
- 4 A blood feud whose origin has become myth
- 5 Taxation of the spice trade
- 6 Travel upon the river which crosses the continent

CONTROL OF GOVERNMENT

- 1 The secret identity of a hidden heir
- 2 The reformation of an Atlantean legion whom all folk fear
- 3 A fortune that could bankroll a kingdom
- 4 A groundswell of popular support
- 5 A secret crime committed by the rulers
- 6 The endorsement of the Great God

HAND IN MARRIAGE

- 1 The dead ruler's child
- 2 The richest merchant in the land
- 3 The truest of true loves
- 4 An invincible sorceress
- 5 The high priest
- 6 The dragon queen

HOSTAGES

- 1 The ruler's child
- 2 The storyteller whose tales warp time
- 3 The heir's wet-nurse
- 4 A courier with a vital message
- 5 A sorceress's consort
- 6 A member of the Atlantean court

OBJECT OF CONFLICT

COMPLICATION

Roll once to add a twist.

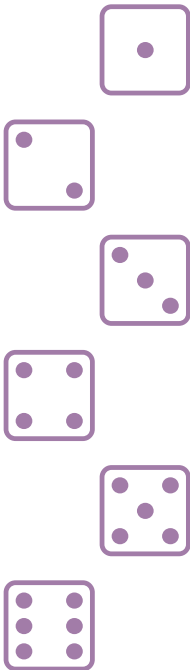
	A wrathful god
	A recent murder
	Another Atlantean exile
	An impending natural disaster
	A foretold doom
	Multiple complications, roll twice more

WRATHFUL GODS

- 1 The ruler's divine, but spurned, consort
- 2 An Atlantean divinity, whose cult is now banned
- 3 The devourer of worlds, to whom all life is an affront
- 4 The Great God, who requires equally great sacrifice
- 5 The mistress of all devils, to whom someone owes a debt
- 6 A divine outcast, who demands revenge against all others

NATURAL DISASTERS

- 1 13 nights of salt-water rain
- 2 A wildfire with a mind of its own
- 3 Winds which carry the spores of death
- 4 The locustfolk will rise from slumber
- 5 Ashes from Mount Bleak will blot out the sun
- 6 The earth will split wherever blood is spilled



RECENT MURDERS

- 1 A beloved poet
- 2 One believed immortal
- 3 The ruler in disguise
- 4 The child whose suffering sustained prosperity
- 5 A prophet who foretold the hour of their own death
- 6 A rebel leader whose spouse has taken their place

ATLANTEAN EXILES

- 1 The patron of a local client ruler
- 2 The architect who built the shadow vaults
- 3 The teacher who defined the ethics of empire
- 4 A warlord who betrayed the indigo empress
- 5 A wastrel royal, who nonetheless commands devils
- 6 Your own sibling, long thought executed for treason

FORETOLD DOOMS

- 1 There will be no peace until the river runs red with blood
- 2 The ruler must die by the hand of their dead predecessor
- 3 An Atlantean will restore the empire to glory
- 4 None shall sleep until they learn to dream
- 5 A god will be cast down for an unnameable crime
- 6 Atlantis' rivals will rise from the deep

COMPLICATION

PEOPLE

ROLE

1	Beggar
2	Commoner
3	Noble
4	Poet
5	Priest
6	Soldier

NATURE

1	Caregiver
2	Dreamer
3	Firebrand
4	Follower
5	Rebel
6	Thinker

NEED

1	Riches
2	Love
3	Respect
4	Redemption
5	Vengeance
6	Rest

REACTION

1	Adoration
2	Disgust
3	Envy
4	Fear
5	Loathing
6	Pity

DEMONS

FORM

- 1 A beast
- 2 Your shadow
- 3 An extra body part
- 4 A tattoo
- 5 A fever dream
- 6 An unnatural skill

DESIRE

- 1 Forgiveness
- 2 Human organs
- 3 Jewels
- 4 Revenge
- 5 Strange music
- 6 Tears

DOOMS

- 1 Word spreads to _____, who means you harm.
- 2 _____ slumbers no more.
- 3 This act will stir _____ to revenge.
- 4 _____ now loves you, and will take foolish risks to prove it.
- 5 You owe _____ for what they've done.
- 6 You've left an opening that _____ will exploit.

CHARACTERS

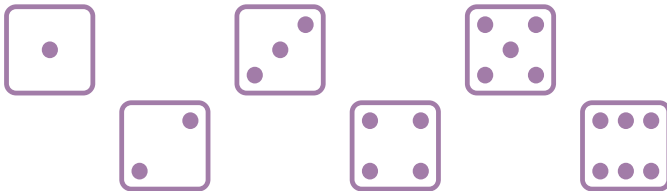
EXILES

TELLS

- 1 Wind stops in your presence
- 2 Your smile's too wide by half
- 3 Wine and milk sour as you walk by
- 4 Your skin ripples like water when you anger
- 5 Your breath turns to steam even in hot weather
- 6 Your scent evokes childhood loves and fears

FELL WEAPONS

- 1 A word that freezes hearts
- 2 A bell that makes the hearer fear light
- 3 A hammer that breaks not bones, but minds
- 4 A perfect spring day which, once experienced, can never be equalled
- 5 A poison which turns wrath to terror
- 6 A locket with a portrait of whom-ever the viewer misses most



ATLANTEAN NOBLE HOUSES

FAMILY MEMBER

1	Ancestor priest
2	Black Sheep
3	Favored heir
4	Matriarch
5	Servant
6	Seventh child

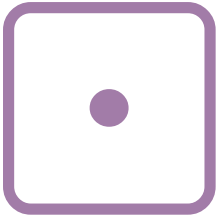
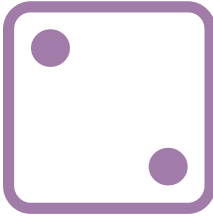
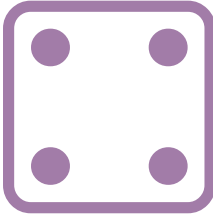
POWER SOURCE

1	Blackmail
2	Divine favor
3	Love
4	Sorcery
5	Violence
6	Wealth

DESIRE

1	Carve out a kingdom
2	Defeat a sibling
3	Gain a parent's affection
4	Make their own name
5	Slay a childhood friend
6	Wed the loveliest barbarian

ATLANTEANS



WELL-WISHERS

Ken Burnside, Elizabeth Greenberg, Chris Huth, Darren MacLennan, Satyros Phil Brucato, Carl Rigney, Jim Schuyler, Michelle Shepardson, Daniel Stelzer, Marc Tassin, Theo, Lynnette

MUNIFICENT PATRONS

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