

So there I am, standing in front of everyone, holding the satchel in plain sight. A shocked gasp goes through the room like a wave. There's nothing for me to do. They all think I'm the thief.

I chuck the bag over their heads, to my crewmate by the door. And then I plow into the crowd, ducking my head and weaving back and forth. Later, I realize I'm actually saying, "Sorry, sorry, excuse me, sorry."

But by this time, both the caravanserai guards and the Segu mujahideen are wading into the crowd after us. I have half a hope that they'll fight each other, but they spare a single glance to each other, exchange grudging nods, and come after me.

I make it out into the courtyard, and that's when things get complicated...

WELCOME TO TIMBUKTU

You'll find in the following pages a detailed description of As-Souk al Wardi, the notorious Pink Market, where the world's collectors, antiquarians, and, ahem, artifact retrieval experts, gather. This is where Atlantean artifacts are bought and sold, where ancient knowledge is available on tap, and orichalcum serves as pocket change.

It includes six NPCs knotted together in a web of plots and agendas ready to snare the picaros and drag them into adventure.

As Souk al-Wardi is a small scale port-of-call that nevertheless touches on the ethics of scientific inquiry, not-especially-legal sale of Atlantean artifacts, and sovereignty and religion in a globalizing world.

DEAREST ALICE-

What am I to do with the fortune that has fallen into my lap if not spend it, and what am I to spend it on if not the artifacts of the world's prior civilizations and great ages, the better to understand the tides of history in which we find ourselves constantly awashed? And so I am off to Timbuktu, and Sooquarty, the world-renowned "Pink Market" that can be found there?

Timbuktu is in Africa, dear. It sits smack-dab in the center of that continent's northern landmass, on the south edge of the vast Sahara Desert. I can already see you waving your hands to dismiss such detail away, but I tell you this so you can avoid, this time, speaking of the "jungles" that I am visiting when in fact it will look much like the Spanish Riviera.

I shall be gone some six weeks, most of that consumed by travel: first by train to London, then by airship: London to Paris, Paris to Algiers, and Algiers to Timbuktu. Such speedy travel will quite eclipse the doldrums of steamers and clippers I last endured while touring the world in Her Majesty's service.

I regret the necessity of informing you of my trip by post, but I must leave immediately. I hope Misty Towers agrees with you as my presence never did.

I have spoken with you regarding the disposition of my collections once I have passed. I worry that the specifics of my wishes escaped your mind in the flood of relief that my "dusty knick-knacks" would not be your concern. But I have spoken with Oxford and they are eager to accept the thousands of historical pieces that you so disdain. The university will do right and well by the trove of history that I have amassed in my years. If I do not return, contact Mr. Henry Lidell to schedule delivery.

But it is with this purpose in mind that I go to Sooquarty, to acquire artifacts from Atlantis to increase my collection briefly and to benefit posterity after I am gone. I do not expect you to understand this passion but pray you forward its course if I meet my end.

-Augustus Pitt Rivers

MY FRIEND ALUEL—

I hope my message finds you in good health and well-deserved prosperity. I wish I had enjoyed the leisure to visit you in Kanem-Bornu, but the caravanserai has devoured my attention of late. And so it is without having visited you even once since you last appraised at the Pink Market that I ask you to do it once more.

I well know that the journey is not insignificant for you; there is airship service now but not without stops in both Sokoto and Segu caliphates. If you travel by air-it is quicker-I pray that the customs officials choose humility and lenience—or failing that, sloth. I could not bear to think you were troubled by fanatics on your way here.

I should be happy to arrange passage in a caravan bound for Timbuktu, if you are more amenable to traveling behind a screen. But I somehow doubt your stance has changed there–nor should it.

You have told me not to apologize for the jihadis but they are my fellow muslims and I am ashamed of their behavior. That so many gladly follow their horns always astounds me. For centuries muslim and animist lived side-by-side in peace. Why must we all profess Islam? Why must those of you who practice the old ways of the Sahel be forced to call Allah God and Mohammed his Prophet? It is a recipe for apostasy, if you ask me.

But now I remember you telling me that it is a recipe for apostasy and intentionally so. How else will they fuel their fanatical fires without manufacturing enemies to the faith?

This letter has drifted from its original intent.

I beg you to attend the Pink Market and serve as our appraiser. There are none better or more suited by temperment to deal with the queries that we receive. I shall pay you handsomely, of course, and host you in the finest rooms we have. And I shall look forward to sharing tea with you each morning, as well.

Please come. - Ma'alı al-Inadan

IN THE DEAD DROP:

I have your cargo. Your information was accurate but incomplete. The map of Jami'ah Muqfui took me directly to the sultan's artifact sanctum. However, you neglected to mention that, in addition to the human guards, the caliph's trove is guarded by two orichalcum automatons armed with tekrar guns and an utter lack of humor.

And so the sanctum itself, once I gained entry, was in something of an uproar. The caliph's scholars and antiquarians scrambled to stow their work behind lock and key. I managed to insinuate myself into the chaos as a 'yan-taru student, helping to secure the many artifacts under study there. Thus I was able to locate and identify your cargo.

The capsule is in good condition. While the caliph's scholars have marked and dyed the artifact in their studies, it has not been breached. It continues to take heat and thus I assume it is still functional. I hid myself under the learned experts were filed away and then trussed a series of force cones around its exterior. Under cover of night, I rode the now-floating capsule out of the university's tall windows, angling another force cone for thrust. By the time the sun rose and my supply of oil ran out, Segu was far behind me.

I tell you all this to assure you that, while I kept the force cones hot, the capsule was also fed heat. It has kept its contents preserved the entire time. I realize, in retrospect, you never told me the capsule was empty, just allowed me to assume it was. But I know the difference between an empty stasis capsule and a loaded one.

I have not opened the capsule. I don't want to know who I smuggled out of the caliph's palace. I have kept the capsule heated, however, so its occupant has slumbered peacefully and safely.

My fee has doubled, and you will bed that entire amount at the Pink Market as we had originally planned. If you do not, I will retract the auction and open the capsule. I am sure the caliph will pay dearly for my passengers.

No More Games,

_Nalanda

GREETINGS FROM HAIDA GWAII.

I am the chief of the Masset Haida. I speak with you through this device which comes from a people long ago, the people who died on the islands called Atlantis. In case you are not familiar with this technology, understand that I can not hear you nor answer your questions. Direct your queries to the man holding the device; his name is Dii Gwey, he is my son-in-law, and he is trusted by me.

Haida Gwaii, the home of my people, is far from Atlantis. We understand the technologies we have traded for and some we have seized from our enemies, such as this recording and translation device. Otherwise we are a people of hunters, fishermen, aeronauts, and craftsmen. We do not have any among us who know the great secrets of Atlantis. We have not needed to!

This last summer, however, we discovered in a culvert on our island a great rose door. We can not open it, but we know what it is: the entrance to an Atlantean vault. We know that such things may be as dangerous as they are lucrative. So we seek someone who can open the vault and guide us past its traps and snares to the treasures it holds deep inside.

We offer you the friendship of the Haida and a war chief's portion of the spoils if you will do this for us. Do not believe the words of the Crow, the British, or the Russians who say we are savages and not to be trusted. We are a fair people and will not sully our name by betraying you.

It is my hope that my son will show my image and words to many others at this As Souk al-Wardi. He is my eyes there, on the other side of this world. He will choose who to bring back to Haida Gwaii.

Perhaps I will meet you when he returns.

REPORT FROM GENERAL MAKKI, DEFENDER OF SEGU Your Royal Highness Caliph Tidiani Tall—

Our intelligence is accurate. The thief Dalanda has smuggled your imperial property out of Segu's territory and transported them to Timbuktu. We have confirmed that she plans to sell the product of her thievery to the highest bidder at As Souk al-Wardi, an infamous confluence of apostates, heretics, and infidels.

The auction is due to take place in four days, until which time the thief will hide her contraband somewhere in the city. Obviously my men and I will not be able to seize and search the city-though I trust in Allah, praise be his name, that such a day will come. However, the Pink Market is held outside the city walls at a caravanserai. We will strike when the items are at the auction.

The caravanserai in question, Inadan Fondouk, is an elaborate affair capable of hosting six caravans at once. The main courtyard, in fact, has been superceded by three satellite yards for caravan wagons and animals. Each is made secure from banditry by a dozen low towers which afford caravanserai guards unobstructed view of the yards. These will fall quickly and quietly to my best men.

The auction itself will take place in the central courtyard, over which looms the three-story hostelry. Once we control the towers, we will seize the bunkhouse and quickly surround the festivities in the courtyard. Thus secured, it will be a simple thing to search the guests until your property is found.

There is one contingency which may complicate the operation. I am led to understand that the caravanserai is accustomed to parking the airships of its guests in the surrounding fields. These can be bypassed. However, if the fields surrounding the caravanserai are filled by excess attendees, the caravanserai has been known to allow smaller airships to use the observation towers as mooring derricks. If this comes to pass, a moored airship will create a significant gap in our tightening noose. We may have to seize the ship or bribe their cooperation.

Yours in Fatih, General Muhammad Makki

COMING TO AS SOUK AL-WARDI

Picaros are hardly a strange sight in the Pink Market, but if our picaresque heroes are showing up, they've got a reason. Whose trail are they on? What item are they trying to find... or get rid of? Given the people who frequent As Souk al-Wardi, there is eldritch knowledge on tap, possibly a more enticing lure than any petty artifact could present.

Below is a list of possibilities that you can seed in prior scenarios to tempt your players to Timbuktu:

- the picaros have some hot artifacts they want to get rid of
- · an artifact they need is going on auction at the Pink Market
- the Bihar Mechanism, one of the first atlantean artifacts discovered by modern antiquarians, has been drawing heat to some unknown purpose for nearly fifteen years; to deactivate it, the picaros need the man who turned it on—Augustus Pitt-Rivers
- Aluel is one of the few scholars in the world who can read Atlantean Script
- the picaros need to move a good deal of heavy cargo-too much for an airship-into or out of the African interior; the caravanserai is an ideal place to arrange overland transport
- the picaros need to get into Vancouver, and not peaceably; Dii Gwey has breached the defenses of that beseiged town more than once
- the head researcher at Jami'ah Muqfui, who the picaros understood to be a prisoner of the caliph, sent a message saying she will meet the picaros at the Pink Market
- Alice Pitt-Rivers wants her husband back in England where he can receive proper treatment for his health condition



PERSONS OF NOTE

DALANDA, EXTRALEGAL RETRIEVAL EXPERT

Draped in many layers of obfuscation, it is difficult to get a good idea of what Dalanda looks like. Prone to wearing form-concealing robes and headdresses, she further obscures herself with adopted postures and falsified physical habits. One moment she limps and gestures elaborately with her hands; encountered later, she may stand tall, graceful, and serene. A few acting tricks even allow her to smooth, wrinkle, elongate, or pinch her face until she is unrecognizable. The only feature she can't hide are her piercing eyes, always watching and calculating.

Dalanda is a highly-sought professional thief, specializing in infiltration and extraction, and has practiced her trade across Africa, Europe, and the Ottoman Empire. This was not her first choice as a profession; as a young girl, her family insisted that they would rise from their refugee status and return to the comfortable lives they had lost to the Sokoto jihadists. As that dream receded from likelihood, Dalanda knew she had to forge her own path. Her disappearance in the night set a precedent for the rest of her life.

Said path most recently took her to Jami'ah Muqfui, the Forbidden University, where the caliph of Segu keeps his massive collection of Atlantean artifacts along with the scholars who study them. She was hired to steal a stasis capsule and bring it to the Pink Market, but her employer neglected to mention it was already full. Knowing she may now be involved in something far more dangerous than she planned on, Dalanda is looking to offload the capsule, get paid, and get out as quickly as possible.

Exemplars

- pump-action brass flamethrower
- · voluminous holdout robes
- sharp-eyed black woman

Classes

- Mightnighter (Master of Disguise)
- Mondaine (Capacious Closet)

Approaches

- · with Misdirection
- with Reason

Languages

- Fluent Arabic
- Fluent Pular
- Fluent Tawallammat Tamajaq
- Broken French
- Broken Swahili

- to offload the capsule
- help smuggling the capsule's occupant to safety
- an inside man for an upcoming job
- to identify her mysterious employer
- an alibi

MA'AB "AL-INADAN" BINT TAZAM AL-TIMBUKTU, CARAVANSERAI PROPRIETRESS

It is not easy to overlook the diminutive Ma'ab bint Tazam–because she make it very hard to do so. She dresses smartly and conservatively, the expensive precision of her clothing distinguishing her as much as her proud bearing. She also draws eyes with a flash of copper and brass as she calculates fees, fares, bids, and all other matters on her wrist-mounted calculator.

Despite her small stature, al-Inadin walks around like she owns the placenot only because she does, but because she has been raised to take up ownership of the family's caravanserai since she was a child. Born to a Imuhagh father and an Arab mother, Ma'ab was also "temporarily adopted" by an endless litany of caravan bosses and family friends travelling through the caravanserai. Consequently, she is as cosmopolitain as her city of Timbuktu. The caravanserai mistress sees no need to distinguish people based on skin color, religion, or social class. This noble sentiment is as dangerous as it is liberating. Her habit of throwing open her doors to all has earned her a reputation and made her far more enemies than she's aware of.

For ten years, al-Inadin has hosted the Pink Market to help facilitate the trade of Atlantean artifacts and similar items which are of considerable value to a very small group of people. At the start, Timbuktu's sovereignty sheltered her operation from larger state interests, especially neighboring Segu. The caliphate has nationalized all artifacts within its borders, claiming them for the caliph and the glory of Segu. This has made smuggling artifacts out of Segu a lucrative trade, often ending in a Pink Market auction. al-Inadin turns a blind eye to these transactions, but the caliph has not.

Exemplars

- · tailored samite robes
- clockwork counting machine
- · diminutive brassy-skinned lady
- respectful, professional guards

Amenities of al-Inadan Caravanserai

- · steam-locked vault
- guard towers
- courtyard
- office

Classes

- Ringleader (In Charge)
- Tycoon (Amenities)

Approaches

- with Honesty
- with Reason

Languages

- fluent Arabic
- fluent Tawallammat Tamajaq
- fluent French
- fluent Swahili
- broken Pular
- broken English

- help defending the caravanserai
- smuggle Aluel out to safety
- an appraiser to replace Aluel
- assistance ejecting those dirty Haida
- Makki assassinated

ALUEL ACHOR DENG, AUCTION APPRAISER

The spare, tall form of this woman puts her head and shoulders above most crowds, and the colorful patterns of her wrap contrast sharply with the deep onyx of her shoulders. Especially with the glittering addition of a complex set of goggles, a forest of colored lenses and magnifying glasses on a profusion of thin brass arms, Aluel cuts a striking figure. She throws the wrap over her head and then pulls it back down to her shoulders often, perhaps the only thing betraying how anxious her surroundings make her.

Born and raised in the outskirts of Ouaddai, Aluel married, raised children, and saw them married as well before she even touched an Atlantean artifact. The first pieces to come out of Atlantean vaults scattered across Africa were traded, at first, as curiosities, and Aluel was a collector. Something about the smooth, rosy surfaces seemed to cry out for her attention. She cleaned them up, took apart what could be disassembled, and even began to puzzle out how to reconstruct disparate pieces. By the time it became clear just how powerful these artifacts were, Aluel was already an accomplished expert. Quite to her surprise, strangers began to call on her for consultations.

Aluel escaped official notice of the ruling Kolak, Ali, by dint of being one of the numerous ethnic Jieng, whose seminomadic lifestyle made them only quasi-subjects of the Ouaddi sultanate. Aluel, along with many of her fellow worshippers of Nhialic, pay lip service to the muslim kolaks and in exchange are the subjects of the government's benign neglect. This is in stark contrast to the state of affairs in the jihadi states of the west, and Aluel is always aware that her friend's caravanserai is next door to very hostile territory. Still, putting her now extensive knowledge to use puts her in contact with new Atlantean pieces to study if even for a short while. The danger is probably worth it.

Exemplars

- cowry-studded leather amulet
- · many-lensed appraiser's goggles
- · tall jet-colored crone

Classes

- Antiquarian (Restoration)
- Herald (Gift of Tongues)

Approaches

- with Reason
- with Force

Languages

- fluent Thuoŋjäŋ
- fluent Arabic
- fluent Swahili
- fluent Atlantean Script

- a Jieng relic that Pitt-Rivers has but won't sell
- Makki punished
- a picaro's collusion in under- or over-appraising an item
- Dalanda's information on the Forbidden University
- coordinates of the Haida vault

LT GENERAL AUGUSTUS PITT-RIVERS, ANTIQUITIES COLLECTOR A man of solid construction, Pitt-Rivers resembles a brick more than anything else. The elaborate coiffure and sideburns that frame his blocky face only add to this impression. He wears a light but rugged suit in the European style: jacket, vest, and slacks. The material and cut are very fine; finer, indeed, than Pitt-Rivers himself. As much as he is dressed as a gentleman dilettante, however, he holds himself with the rigid stance of a career military man.

Originally Augustus Lane-Fox, he served a distinguished twenty-six-year career in the British Army, travelling widely. Wherever his service took him, he collected local artifacts and oddities; over time, he amassed quite a collection. With the rise of Atlantis, then-Colonel Lane-Fox fought with distinction in the Eumeles and Elasippus campaigns. Even then, Pitt-Rivers continued his habit of collecting artifacts, carefully tagging and indexing each new addition. Shortly after the fighting ended, his cousin, Horace Pitt-Rivers, a wealthy baron, died without heir. The will granted Augustus a sizable inheritance–if he adopted the Pitt-Rivers name.

Now Augustus Pitt-Rivers, with an honorary rank of Lieutenant General, has dedicated his unearned fortune to increasing his antiquities collection. Already numbering in the tens of thousands of individual pieces, it is meticulously organized to demonstrate the slow evolution of cultures across time, a theory which Pitt-Rivers strongly identifies. He is uncertain if the Atlanteans prove or destroy this theory. They either reached an evolutionary plateau from which the only escape was cataclysm or they were not as advanced as they appear to be. Pitt-Rivers intends to find evidence, one way or the other, in the artifacts on auction at the Pink Market.

Exemplars

- gentleman's traveling suit
- leatherbound collection book
- lantern-jawed & mutton-chopped englishman

Classes

- Antiquarian (Legend Has It)
- Soldier (Orders)

Approaches

- with Money
- with Reason

Languages

- fluent English
- fluent French
- fluent Punjab
- fluent Sanskrit
- broken Egyptian Hieroglyphs

- that intriguing capsule
- to get out safely
- an audience with the Segu caliph
- the amulet worn by Aluel
- a consequence-free fling with an exotic foreigner

MUHAMMAD MAKKI, SEGU GENERAL

Tall, dark, and handsome–Muhammad Makki possesses a natural nobility that complements his princely position in the Segu Caliphate. More than one opponent, upon seeing Makki spearheading a charge, has been struck as much by his beauty as his fearsome demeanor. Dressed for combat operations at the Pink Market, he wears a battle harness of rosy orichalcum plates, gears, and springs which augment his movement. Between the plates peeks folds of a simple black dashiki.

Makki has spent his life in martial service, first to his father Umar Tall, who led the jihad that established the Segu caliphate, and now to his cousin, Tidiani Tall, who succeeded him. Knowing full well that his skills suit the battlefield and his limitations keep him from the throne, Makki is well content to serve. He is a devout jihadi, certain that his family sits poised to establish proper muslim rule over a corrupt and debased world.

Now Makki camps within sight of Timbuktu, a city which confounded his father's attempt to conquer it fifteen years ago. He has strict orders from his caliph to pursue and retrieve a stolen stasis capsule, presently in the hands of the apostates and heretics who repulsed the righteous jihad. He is all too happy to do so; the only question will be how much collateral damage he chooses to wreak in the process.

Exemplars

- · wicked paired pistol-daggers
- orichalcum battle harness
- fine-featured dark nobleman
- elite mujahideen strike force

Classes

- Ringleader (In Charge)
- Brute (Unstoppable)

Approaches

- with Force
- with Misdirection

Languages

- fluent Pular
- fluent Arabic
- fluent Portuguese
- broken Tawallammat Tamajaq
- broken English

- the picaros to retrieve the capsule
- the picaros to smuggle his men into the mooring tower
- quietly identify and capture Dalanda
- slaughter everyone in the caravanserai
- the capsule, without ever seeing who is inside

DII GWEY, HAIDA CAPTAIN OF HLGAAHLGUU K'II

Built like a bulldog and with the demeanor to match, this man exudes a sense of purpose in his every action. His dress is simple, clean, and utilitarian: supple leather and cotton matching the rest of his crew. The broad, heavy cloak on his shoulders, though, distinguishes him as their captain. The brightly painted pattern across the back forms a stylized hawk in midstoop. He moves as if the heavy garment isn't even there–well accustomed to its weight, and that of the command that it symbolizes.

Hailing from the Masset clan on the northern end of Haida Gwaii, Dii Gwey grew up rowing the huge sea canoes that carried his people to their tributary vassals up and down the coast. Proud and powerful, they were hit hard when smallpox swept through their lands. Dii Gwey lost both his parents to the disease and might have starved if he were not adopted by the Masset chief. It was Dii Gwey's suggestion to his adopted father that the Haida raids on English clipper ships search for the vaccines bound for Vancouver.

When the disease was finally contained, he married and raised a family. As the United States' hold on the Pacific coast wavered, the Haida remained strong, replacing their sea canoes with dirigibles. Dii Gwey's family took to the skies, pushing back the borders of their knowledge and mapping the globe. When the vault was discovered on Haida Gwaii, it was no question who should serve as the Haida emissary to the far-off As Souk al-Wardi.

Exemplars

- · painted elkskin cape
- battered orichalcum translator
- · barrel-chested cedar-toned airman

Classes

- Aeronaut (Dashing)
- Theurgist (Counterspell)

Approaches

- with Grace
- with Force

Languages

- fluent Xaayda Kil
- fluent English
- broken Cree
- broken Salish
- broken Russian

- Aluel, kidnapped by force if necessary
- revenge on Makki, who shot down Dii Gwey's husband over Atlantis
- the gunsword on auctionwithout having to bid
- one of the picaros as a bride for his son
- the location of his daughter, who ran off with Dalanda years ago

NAMES HISTORICALLY LOCAL & TEMPORARILY PRESENT

IMUHAGH NAMES

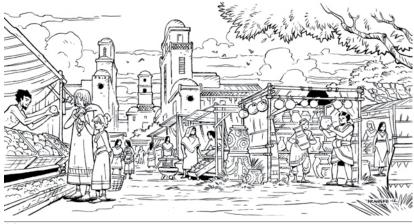
Known alternatively as Berbers, Tuareg, or Kel Tagelmust, this people survives and thrives in the Sahara. They are the present rulers of Timbuktu, defying the overtures of the Segu caliph to join his newly-minted empire.

Feminine

- Amina
- Bakka
- Dihya
- Silya
- Fariza
- Ghida
- · Jedira
- Kella
- Tafrara
- Lalla
- Laysa
- Tasa
- Melila
- Tigmi
- Myassa
- Talalit
- Riuza
- Tamilla
- Mernissa
- Tannina

Masculine

- Abayghur
- Alwas
- Mennac
- Atissi
- Berkan
- Seghada
- Firmus
- Ghanim
- Gildun
- Tiljad
- Gulussan
- Hotha
- Idir
- Meddur
- Kadidu
- Taqfarinas
- Madidu
- Yaghmurasen
- Masmud
- Zerwal



HAIDA NAMES

Names are property to the Haida, and are owned by individual clans. All honor and respect (and infamy and disgrace) accorded to an individual Haida is bound to their name. When the current bearer dies, the name and all its attendant reputation is bestowed on a young Haida child in the clan. The new bearer must then live up to their name and add to its value.

While outsiders may find this practice fascinating, it also means that the names listed here are not authentic Haida names. To use real Haida names would attach fictional exploits and transgressions to these names, fouling their reputation and value. Therefore the following names are simply colorful words and phrases from Xaayda Kil, the language of the Haida.

- Aawjuu
- Baay Gya
- Damxana
- Gabuu
- Gaayin Tl'aaw
- Gantl'aaw
- Gii Sk'aagad
- Haaksda
- Haala
- Hadchaayid
- Kaa Hla
- K'uljaad
- Sdaagwada
- Sgaaga
- Skaak'ihlda
- Tlaana Suu
- Tll Tl'aa
- Xidsgil
- Xuusdaya
- Yahkaa Gang



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SPECIAL THANKS

The art featured in this port-of-call comes from the *Spears of the Dawn* Roleplaying Game, which released its art assets to the public domain. That's a pretty classy move!

You can find more about Spears of the Dawn here:

http://www.sinenomine-pub.com/?p=358