

21- In Search of a King

A Hole In Shadow

When they reached Texicanna, the city (in fact the whole Shadow world) was in turmoil. The Abyssal Horror had wrecked most of the city and hordes of Skaven had invaded.



The Horror (initially a 2-mile diameter cloud of dark tendrils) had changed shape, extruding itself into a 200-ft diameter snake and tried to force its way down the alleyway where Random had begun his Shadowwalk with Benedict's troops. The thing had demolished several city blocks and then ripped A HOLE IN SPACE!

The HOLE remained, like a window into the next Shadow. Beyond this 200ft radius semi-circular "hole" could be seen an arid and rocky desert with a light-orange sky.



With the Horror gone, local Technology began to function again and with modern weapons, any remaining Skaven were soon slaughtered. The Shadow's military were now in a huge cordon around the HOLE. There were also lots of large mobile laboratories and our heroes paid for a room in one of the buildings still standing so they could watch what happened.

It took a couple of days for them to formulate a plan to get through the Cordon and follow Random's Shadow Trail.

Firstly, Cassie attempted to Shadow Walk to a place similar to the rocky desert, but found that the target Shadow appeared to have a restricted point of entrance and she couldn't reach the actual Shadow, only "similar" places. If they wanted to follow the trail, they would have to go through the HOLE.

Aleyn suggested hiring a glider and flying overhead, but Cassie wanted to avoid that as there were a LOT of machine guns and bazookas and even tanks guarding the place.

Eventually Aleyn suggested drawing a Trump Sketch of the area beyond and using that to Trump past the military. To do that he would need something from the other side to merge with the paint [GM: This is a restriction I added to the way Trumps are constructed in Amber Accelerated to add a bit more challenge for the players]

They had watched the Texicanans send a flying drone through the hole and follow it with a team of Elite soldiers and a scientist. A couple of the Soldiers and the Scientist returned after an hour or so, pursued by a large cybernetic scorpion! The massed security forces managed to blast it into pieces. There was almost no information shared with the Press, so they never got the full story.

Cassie managed to sneak through the outer cordon to reach one of the Science Wagons (labelled "Geology") and escaped with samples of dirt from the other side.

The Post-Apocalyptic Desert

Aleyn's Trump Sketch got them into the desert as close to the edge of what could be seen as possible and they ran over the horizon before the massed military machine decided whether to fire at them or not!



As they went fairly close to the smashed Scorpion, they could see it had a sort of aerial and a blinking red light (most likely a distress beacon). A much larger Scorpion passed them, on its way to the hole, but they kept out of sight behind rocks.

It was obvious from recently-crushed rocks and other signs, that the Horror had crawled (or floated?) through here and the track led to a long-devastated city. The ruins looked fairly high-tech (Blade Runner?) but with no apparent power. A few injured Skaven were scampering about in the ruins, but Cassie and Aleyn managed to sneak by unnoticed, following the trail a dozen miles across the rocky wastes towards another Hole, where lightning flashes could be seen on the other side.

On the way they passed recently tumbled rocks that had uncovered some kind of ancient underground bunker. As the horror had clearly followed something into another Shadow, they decided to ignore the bunker and press on.

Under the Mountains of the Storm

The vista on the other side was of endless mountain peaks wreathed in dramatic clouds and a constant lightning storm. The lightning flashes were striking giant metal pylons at the peaks and then shooting between the Pylons in apparently random ways.



A track led down the mountain side about a half mile to a mine entrance and the way was strewn with dead bodies – Skaven and something that looked like a cross between Klingons and Orcs! Large, tough humanoids in thick leather armour, armed with swords, pikes, mauls and bows. There were hundreds of corpses and the grisly trail of death led inside the mines too. There were a few dead humans too – some of Benedict's troops.



Our heroes were ambushed by a half-dozen Orcs (all showing signs of recent wounds, freshly healed) but before fighting back, they managed to parley, assuring the Orcs that they were subjects of King Random and enemies of the Skaven. Fortunately the Orcs spoke good Thari and believed them.

"We are the Warriors of Rando. We dwell here until we receive the Call to Glory. Then our greatest warriors are chosen to follow Rando on the Path to Glory (a tunnel that leads nowhere unless Rando leads us). None have ever returned, but we know it takes us to War, Glory and Stovokar!"

Most of our battalion fell in the battle against the Skaven. The Horror could not enter the Mines, it was too large, and it became a huge dark cloud and tried to fly over the top but was struck by the Spears of Rando (the lightning) and eventually fled east out of sight. Rando was in a hurry this time and took as many of us as were ready to travel (about 100 plus 50 or so of his human troops) . We few were too badly injured, but we have healed now and are ready to follow but the Path to Glory is closed again. We have hunted and slain the few Skaven that remained behind. No Skaven lived to follow Rando."

When Cassie said she could open the "Path to Glory", the Orcs were delighted to join them.