



## The Questorian

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# Book of Nine Tales

Tales of Immortals, Demons, and Gods



by Daelynn Coombs

The Book of Nine Tales is the most daunting D&D game undertaken by our very own “Big Daddy” Zack. When starting this campaign last July players knew there were two groups he was juggling. Further down the timeline and suddenly “How many groups are there?!”  
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THIS QUARTER'S  
TOP STORIES



## Runelords: International House of Bacon

By: Corbin Ebert

When: 100 years in the future

Where: Sandpoint

Around the corner of Salmon street where the road rises up to escape the bustle of Sandpoint, the bones of the Rusty Dragon are still, though barely, discernible. A new facade plastered over the old front has updated the lines and a large, brightly painted sign proclaims this to be the International House of Bacon. A garish painting of a fine specimen of Tickwood Boar serving up a platter of bacon greets incoming visitors at the waiting area, an area necessitated by the popularity of the establishment. Tickwood boars, so abundant and delicious, have made this one-off a Bacon-Based Bonanza. The first of many, with eyes on similar houses of international bacon adoration planned in Magnimar and the resurgent Shoanti settlement of Mistbridge.

The Rusty Dragon is no more. The intimate nooks and crannies that once gave it its charm have been cleared out for efficacy of serving. The only remnants of privacy can be found in the upper rooms, which have been transformed into yet more dining areas, another testament to their popularity. Everyone in Sandpoint knows of IHOB. In one of the upper dining rooms, four teenage youths populate a large round table. They are eating an “end of

candle” meal, their matching uniforms proclaiming to no one in particular that they are students from the infamous Ahmose Academy, in the same font the former Turandarok Academy had proclaimed itself decades before. The sweet smell of candied bacon wafts through the room.

“That was the toughest test yet!” Exclaims Iman, a young man with dark hair, sitting in front of a serving of venison pot roast covered in a bacon lattice blanket. “I expected a test about the Heroes of Sandpoint to be far easier. I mean, we all grew up on the stories! Every child knows each of the heroes by name. But that test had the hardest multiple choice ever and the essay questions were brutal!”

Suriah, an elf girl with long mousey hair and small, half-moon spectacles nods in agreement as she eats a fork full of Otik’s spiced potatoes sprinkled with chopped bits of bacon. Across from her, Emma, a girl with [general description of some sort!] is eating a dish called fried Roc eggs (cooked in bacon grease), and Deacon, a halfling who would much rather be playing sports than attending an academic academy, is chomping on a pot pie, with a side of candied bacon.

Deacon pipes in between bites with an air of nonchalance. "Yeah..... like, how did everyone answer the essay question, 'What type of connection can account for the special abilities and supernatural tasks performed by Garok's ferret - Mr. Sneak?'"

Suriah almost forgets to push her spectacles up her nose as she answers with excitement, “OH! That was a total trick question you shriekerhead!! Obviously, Garok didn’t have a ferret, he had a monkey and the monkey’s name was Mr. Wink. The magical connection they had is still a topic of fierce academic debate,” She glances at Deacon and changes tact, “If you put down anything that sounds mystic and fix the trick parts of the question - I’m sure the professor will probably give you full marks.”

Deacon sighs dejectedly at the remnants of his pot pie and turns his attention to the candied bacon. "Well, at least I got the easiest question on the test -- 'What catastrophic mistake did The Heroes make when at Xin-Shalast, about to confront Runelord Karzoug?' I wrote three whole paragraphs explaining how bad everything got. So that’s got to count for something. I started with their misguided assumption that..."

"Everyone in Sandpoint knows how bad things got!" Iman interrupts at the very moment Suriah exclaims: “You were right, that was the easiest question in Golarion!” From across the table, Emma gives a nod and an exasperated facial expression affirming that it \*really is\* common knowledge in Sandpoint and even most of Varisia.

"The Multiple Choice question... " Says Iman, after seeing that any of the test questions are fair game, "The one where it asked about Zhitsu, in the ambush by the goblins on Sandpoint? The first emergence of The Heroes of legend. So the question asked, 'What weapon type did Zhitsu trip on in battling the goblin commando?'" He looks a little sheepish, " I answered that he tripped over his rake."

Suriah takes off her spectacles and cleans them on the hem of her blouse, "I didn't really know that one, so I guessed Long sword. Most heroes have a long sword."

Deacon brandishes a pointy piece of bacon and says, "I think it was a ranseur."

"Well I've always been a fan of Dremel and his heroics.", Iman endorses as he slides his empty plate toward the middle of the table. "So, when there was that question about how he rained down all that lightning on the Ogre camp at Fort Rannick... I totally remember the bards singing that tale and how badass it was!" He smiles appreciatively at the memory, then frowns and continues, "But, I had to guess, and I bet I guessed wrong, at who the quasit witch was in the Catacombs of Wrath. I mean our Professor is impossible. Who memorizes the names of tiny villains that are easily defeated? I bet Garok never thought about her twice as he swatted her small horned head thirty feet away with his huge hammer. I bet none of the heroes even remembered her name! Out of the group, only Ahmose was meticulous about those things and he joined the group much later, when the ghouls started slaughtering people in the city." Iman sighs with exasperation and leans his chair back.

A waitress in a stiff white blouse and faux boar-hunting-style skirt enters the room and walks over to the table, a smile plastered over her face. "Anything else to eat, my young members of academia?" Emma raises an internal brow and vows never to work here. "I believe we're good, thanks." she says out loud. "Oh there is something," Says Iman, remembering a point of contention from his last visit. "I ordered buffalo wings last time, and you brought me chicken wings in hot sauce. What's up with that? Did you run out of real buffalo wings?"

The waitress takes a few seconds to formulate an answer, shifting her balance from her left foot to her right foot and back. "Kids" She thinks to herself. She tries to keep her plastered smile as she answers Iman. "Erm... Buffalo don't have wings? Maybe chimera buffalo have wings, but we sure as heck don't have that good of hunters to put chimera buffalo wings on the menu. What you get at IHOB are chicken wings in hot sauce and we call them buffalo wings. "

The teens look at each other, and in unison burst into laughter. Emma even has a snort to the way she laughs. Iman, in his secret-est of thoughts, always loves hearing that laugh from Emma. He continues to laugh with the rest but relishes this moment he's having with Emma.

The waitress just shakes her head and moves towards the kitchens with a sigh, keenly aware that teens never tip well anyway.

The kids chuckle for a few more minutes until their heads return to the buzz of questions around the Heroes of Sandpoint. Deacon summons an air of self-confidence. "Yeah, I'm pretty sure my insights on the finer points of the member's characters will get me a pass."

Suriah raises an eyebrow and fights the urge to show Deacon just how much smarter she is than him. "Oh yes...." She begins, "I'm sure you had a brilliant insight regarding how Jing-Ji cemented his place in the group." She pauses, rearranging her glasses, and continues gleefully when Deacon's shoulders sag and he does not respond. "See, I was going to write about how pivotal his relationship with Ameiko was to Sandpoint, and how integral his friendship with Fireball Fia was in keeping the heroes together." She flushes, remembering her father insisting she stick to the actual facts, "But, I chickened out and instead wrote about how important he was to the infiltration of Fort Rannick and the catacombs. I embellished with a mention of how he used his small frame to tumble underneath the ogres and get into a perfect fighting position that broke their lines."

Deacon perks up at the mention of Fireball Fia, one of his favorites, and certainly the most colorful of the heroic group.

"Speaking of Fia, what was up with the test question about her? 'Name the three instances where Fia performed one of her legendary dances, and then soon fireballed the place.' There was the time in Foxglove Manor and then there was Riddleport. But I am still at a loss for the third time. I'll have to re-read through the tome 'Flames and Vampiric Touch- How to both give and take away. A Magus Guide.'"

Iman rocks his chair back into its proper position and speaks animatedly, "Yes, Yes. There was a whole book dedicated to Fiametta, but what about Ahmose?! I mean they NAMED THE ACADEMY AFTER HIM. He wasn't even from Sandpoint, he was just passing through as a scholar of old Thassalonian history. Bang! He gets dropped into all these problems and he did sooooo much. Ahmose figured out the whole Scribbler Riddle right below Sandpoint. He also unmasked Aldern Foxglove as the Sihedron Murderer. And he was the one that saved Jing Ji from being sacrificed by the Norberger Cult in Magnimar."

The waitress comes back in with the bill-scroll on a small tray. She leaves it next to Emma and begins clearing plates from the table. Emma looks over it, throws a few coins onto the tray, and slides it over to Iman, who does the same until it returns to rest next to Emma. The conversation turns from the test to who their favorite heroes are, round robin style, to

all the legends of the great heroes, from the first raid on Sandpoint by goblins to the confrontation at Xin-Shalast.

When the waitress returns for the tray, Deacon and Iman stand up and excuse themselves to prepare for a Swallowtail Festival Tug of War contest. the following morning and say their goodbyes. As Suriah and Emma begin gathering up their things Suriah looks half long at Emma. “You didn’t say much tonight. Are you feeling well?” She gasps and looks in horror at her friend “Oh no, you do think you passed didn’t you?” Catching herself, Suriah laughs and slaps her knee. “Oh goodness, look at me getting carried away. Ha! Must have been all the bacon. Of course, you must have found the whole test exceedingly easy.”

Emma raises a brow, tucks a lock of dirty blond hair behind her ear, and then smiles good-naturedly. “Caught me! But don’t tell the professor. If he knows who I am related to, he’ll never stop asking questions..... And then it will be you who the next class blames for an even more challenging test.”

She laughs again, but her eyes flash with seriousness and Suriah has no intention of tattling on her friend.

Credits:

[Haleanna Fulcher](#) for editing and enhancing.

[GM Tyranius](#) for originally mentioning IHOB in a PBP years ago, and I’ve always found it funny and memorable. I’m borrowing his original thought as the location of my story.

# The Great Torikki Haiyu

by Xander Smith

The Armies of Hachiman were set with the rain of the great Kami.

“The Power of Hachiman blesses you,” so they became mighty giants.

“A clan with no faith, therefore we will leave none behind.” A dragon with the mark of the Anointed, burnt by another’s flame.

5 In the circle of weakness, the stones in our flesh dissolved.

But our blows could not be smothered.

Though the box of flames ensnares us, it cannot hold us.

We dispatch our enemies and resurrect our fallen.

So into the lair of the beast we march, scorching the earth before us.

10 But we knew a great entity lay in wait.

The dark angel with stolen sun rays entered, armed with the power of disembodiment.

But the righteous fire is stronger than her darkness.

And inside her stronghold, much flame and steel stood in wait.

But in final, by the hand of the Great Kami, the foe fell.

15 And the sun shines on the East, in the Glory of the Kami.



# The Skar

DM Joseph Coombs

The year is 665 PF (Post Fracture). The many realms within the Skar have long since been organized into a collective of conglomerates, and city-states throughout the planes. Folk of all different races and types work, wander, and struggle to survive in the worlds that remain so long after the great Fracturing. And above all others in this kaleidoscopic miasma of worlds, sits The Academy of Azure Flame. Rising up in the aftermath of the Fracturing, the founders of the Academy found remnants of research from the magically rich world that broke apart so long ago. They used the scraps they managed to pull from the original wreckage of the Primary Plane, to develop the core of all of society today; Pyro-Tech. Gunpowder, steam power, and magical charges for explosives and combustion engines fuel the world of today throughout the core realms. If magic held the original world together, Technomancy, the combination of magic and technology holds together the realms that remain now. Grand railways bridge many gaps between realms, making use of the many rifts in space opened by the Fracturing, and for the wealthy, there are even Airships and Portals. Unfortunately, the fractured Realms that remain are not so magically rich as the Primary Plane once was. Because of this, the gift of magic is rare and prized indeed, as it slowly dwindles away over time. The Academy actively sends out recruiters, and advertises the glamorous life that awaits those who can prove they have what it takes to enter their grand halls and enhance this "Gift." The value of magically talented individuals today cannot be overstated, to the point that in some cases it may lead to more harm than good for those unfortunate to be found by the wrong people. While those who live on the Azure Plane, under the watchful authority of the Academy, enjoy luxury and safety, those born or forced by circumstance into the outer Realms often must rely on the dubious authority and protection of their leading conglomerates and local authorities. These outer Realms are unstable, not anchored in reality so strongly as those near the central and most powerful Realms of the Skar. Because of this, while there is certainly a danger, there are also unusual opportunities and encounters of many kinds. Some of these encounters have led to the spreading of rumors, and fantastical tales. Most are brushed off as legend, or drunken bragging, but some who are down on their luck, or looking to change their fortunes wonder if there might not be some truth to be found in some of these fantastical stories. Foremost among the lesser people are legends of a key, a way to reforge the Skar anew from the greatest wells of power, and thus restore the fortunes of all.

# Book of Nine Tales Cont.

DM: "Big Daddy" Zack

Zack kept us on our toes and the edge of our seats to the end. In a grand Wrap Up Party he shared with us the ending we came to.

We have played witness to the machinations of epic Celestial forces. We've taken part in a struggle that spanned lifetimes. The Children of Yin and the Warriors of Yang have played their parts for better or for worse. Their actions on behalf of their respective patrons have had impacts far greater than anyone could have dreamed. We've acted on behalf of the coldest dark and the most glorious light - truly giving life to the Taiji that is Yin and Yang.

What started on Death's Door has come full circle. From a small Chinese Fishing Village and a Japanese battle ground, to the Sky Kingdom and the Pillars of Heaven itself. The Gods themselves watched our play unfold and have been changed through the experience. They've come to learn the value in consequences - in endings - in the inherent bitter-sweet nobility of death and sorrow and loss. Never before have the Gods understood this purely Mortal trait. As endless beings, how could they?

Now though, through Chang'e & HouYi experience - they have grown a new understanding about mortals... and a new respect... and they are grateful. Reaching into the Mortal Realm, the Gods take up The Children of Chang'e and the Warriors of HouYi. They are brought before the Jade Emperor and his Pantheon. These spirits - some born of sorrow, others born of hate - have themselves grown and changed - and the Gods take note.

"You have grown beyond your original selves" says Xi-Wang-Mu, the Queen Mother of the West. Her voice full of softly spoken admiration.

"You have thrown off the yokes of your creators" says SiMing, the Goddess of Fate and Freedom. Her voice strong with the fire of Will.

"You have brought about a long delayed conclusion" says Lord Yama, the God of Death. His voice little more than a whisper, filled with biting cold.

"Your story will be remembered by Gods and Mortal Men" says Wen Chang, the God of Culture, Literature, and Learning. His voice carrying the weight of wisdom through the ages.

"And for all you have done, you have earned your great reward" says Huang Shangdi, the Jade Emperor himself. His voice echoing with ultimate authority.

Now, in the final hour, the Children of Yin and the Warriors of Yang, in acknowledgment of their earned freewill, are given a choice: Remain here, in Heaven, and partake of life with the Gods or, return to the Mortal World to live a life free from Godly interventions.

He wrote each of our characters an ending fitting of the choice that was given them and made us cry, laugh, and shake our heads in disbelief. But like all good things even this story came to an end. It was written perfectly in the document that he shared with us, and I'll share it with you.

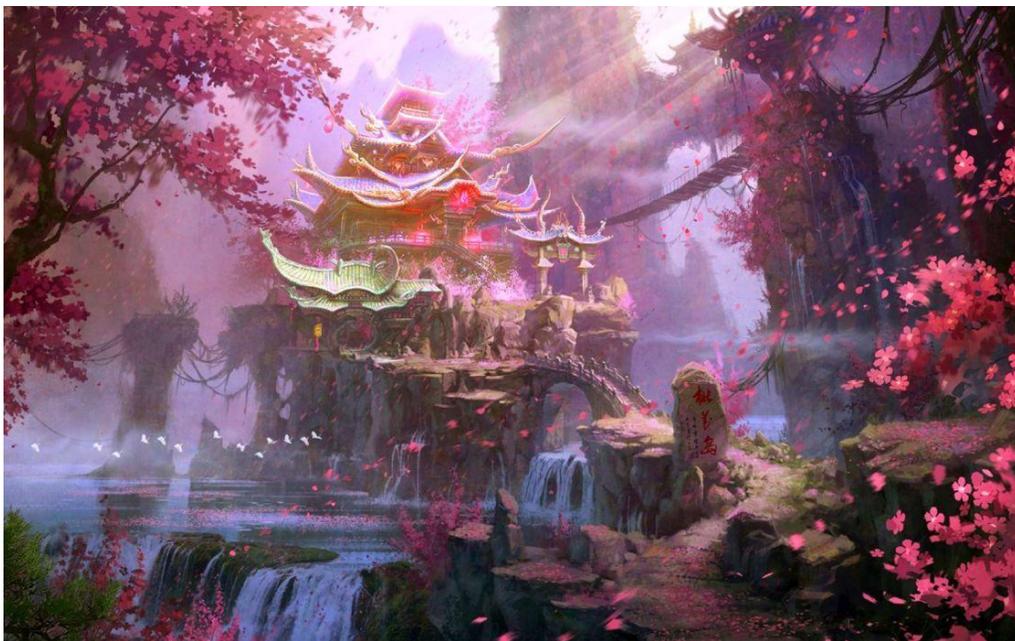
Rén wú qiān rì hǎo, huā wú bǎi rì hóng, tiānxià méiyǒu bú sǎn de yánxí

"People are not happy for a thousand days, flowers are not red for a hundred days, and there is no feast that lasts forever in the world"

A Chinese way of saying "All things must come to an end" And so we come to the end of The Book Of Nine Tales.

Our story of Chang'e and HouYi, their lost love, their struggles, and eventually - their redemption - has turned its last page. The Children of Yin and the Warriors of Yang have made their decisions.

They've moved on. For some, reincarnation into a whole new lifetime - for better or for worse. For others, Balance, Zen, and Peace. And for one or two... the seeds of a new cycle germinate in fetid souls. But that is another story, for another Book of Tales.



## Upcoming Games

Charlie's Campaign:

"Archipeliago Adventures" - Live - 6 players (maxed) - End likely March/April/May

Joe's Campaign:

"The Scar" - Live - 4 Players (1 guest seat open) - End likely Jan/Feb

Chris' Campaign:

"TBD" - live - D&D 5 - 5-6 players

## Special Events

**Oct:**

10/15 = "Saturday Night Slaughter! Viking Gothic Horror"; RPG scenario (House Rules); online; Roll20.net; 12:00-18:00; XANDER

10/21 = "Black Adam"; Movie Night; Live; Mason/Forest City; Time TBD; ZACK

10/22 = "The Scar"; RPG campaign (House Rules); live; Forest City; 12:00-22:00; JOE

10/28 = "Arkham Horror"; Boardgame; live; Forest City; Time TBD; JOE

10/29 = "TBD scenario"; RPG (D&D 5); online; D&Donline; Time TBD; CHRIS

??/?? = "Archipelago Adventures"; RPG campaign (House Rules); live, Forest City, Time TBD; CHARLIE

**Nov:**

11/04 = "Friday Night Fights!"; RPG, online, Roll20.net; 18:00-22:00; ZACK (Joe or other please?)

11/11 = "Black Panther"; Movie Night; Live; Mason/Forest City; Time TBD; ZACK

??/?? = "The Scar"; RPG; live; Forest City; 12:00-22:00; JOE

??/?? = "TBD Campaign"; RPG (D&D 5); live; D&D online; Time TBD; CHRIS

??/?? = "Archipelago Adventures"; RPG campaign (House Rules); live, Forest City, Time TBD;  
CHARLIE

**Dec:**

12/10 = "QC Holiday Party"; Event; live; Evening; ARLENE

12/13 = "Tuesday Night Terror!"; RPG, online, Roll20.net; 18:00-22:00; ZACK (Xander or other  
please?)

12/16 = "Avatar 2"; Movie Night; Live; Mason/Forest City; Time TBD; JOE

??/?? = "The Scar"; RPG; live; Forest City; 12:00-22:00; JOE

??/?? = "TBD Campaign"; RPG (D&D 5); live; D&D online; Time TBD; CHRIS

??/?? = "Archipelago Adventures"; RPG campaign (House Rules); live, Forest City, Time TBD;  
CHARLIE



Quest Club Gamers Association  
"Electrify Your Imagination!"