



THE PIRATE KING

BLOODBOAR  
THE  
BURIED DOOM

*With special thanks to J N Richards  
To Toby Saunders*



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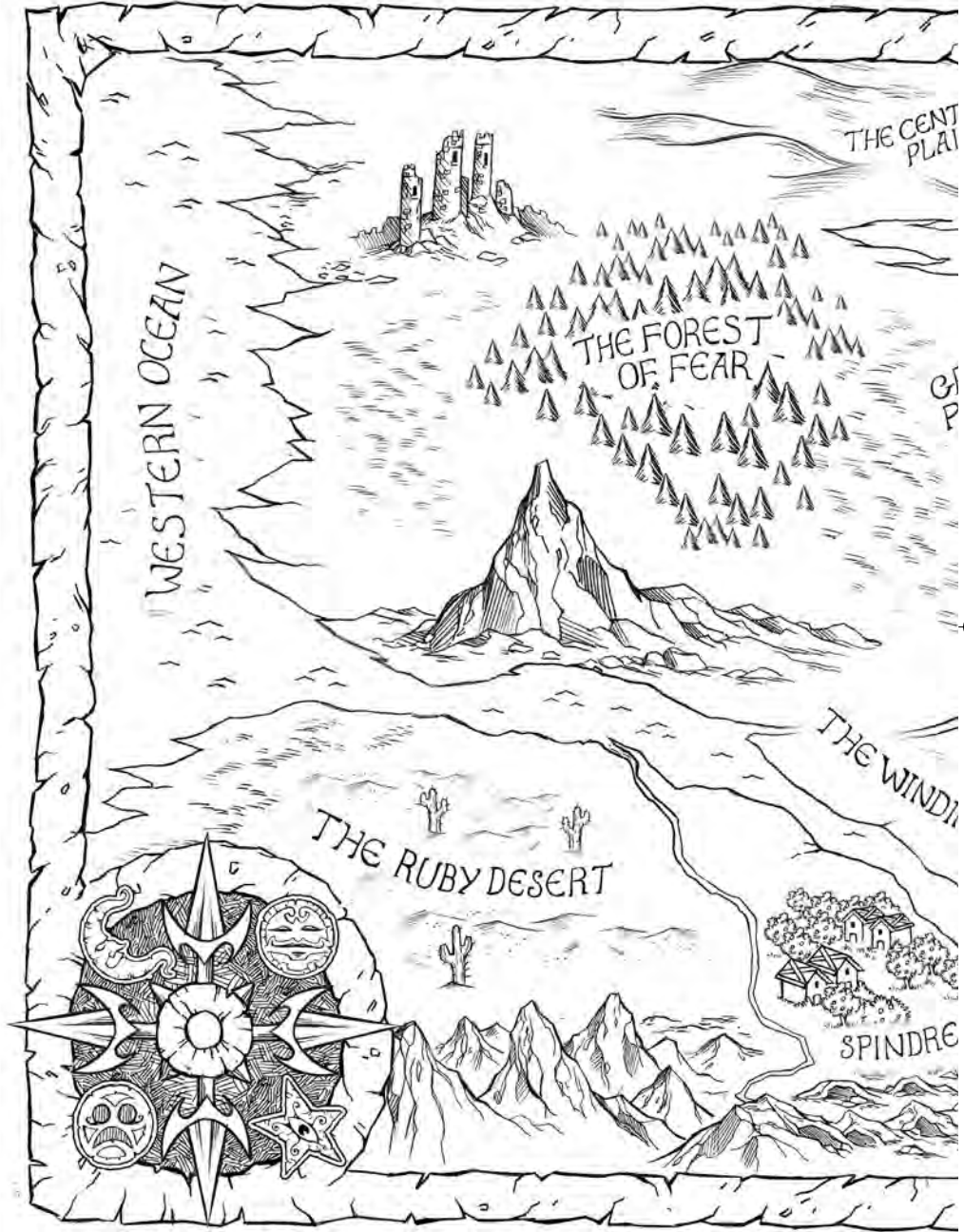
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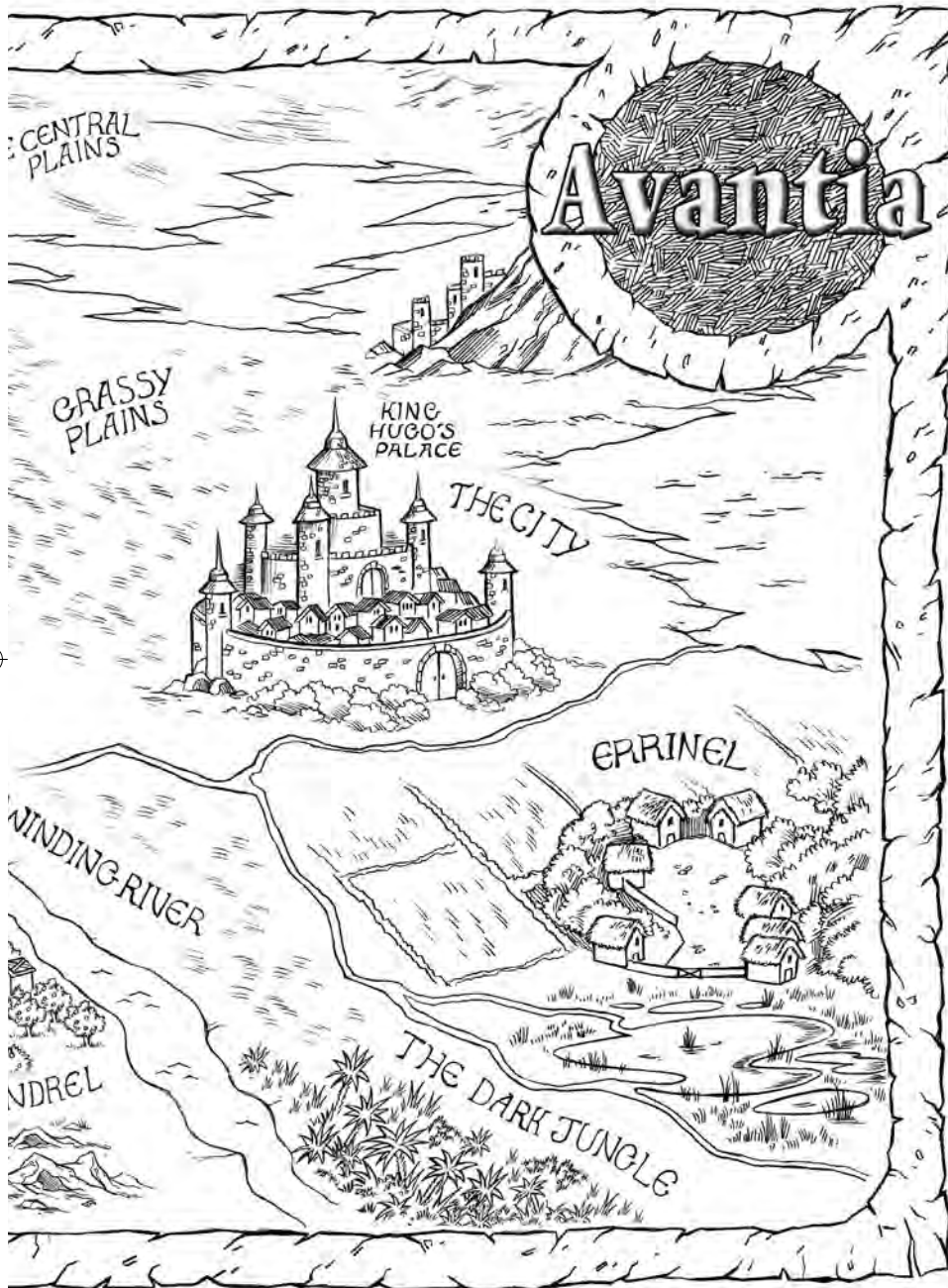
# BLOODBOAR THE BURIED DOOM



BY ADAM BLADE











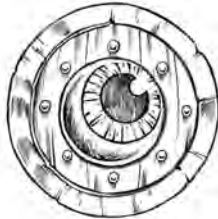
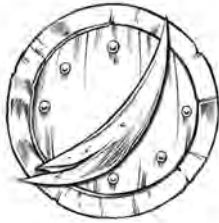
*Tremble, warriors of Avantia, for a new enemy stalks your land!*

*I am Sanpao, the Pirate King of Makai!  
My ship brings me to your shores to claim an ancient magic more powerful than any you've encountered. Nothing will stand in my way, especially not that pathetic boy Tom, or his friends. Even Aduro cannot help you this time. My pirate band will pillage and burn without mercy, and my Beasts will be more than a match for any hero in Avantia.*

*Pirates! Batten down the hatches and raise the sails. We come to conquer and destroy!*

*Sanpao the Pirate King*





## PROLOGUE



“Do you think he will he ever wake up?”

King Hugo looked down at Aduro who lay as still as a corpse in one of the infirmary’s sick beds. His skin was yellow and creased like parchment.

“I hope so, sire,” Taladon replied. “But he’s been in this deep slumber for many days now – it took all his magic to throw off Sanpao’s spell.” Taladon’s face was shaded with a mixture of pride and sorrow.



“Any other wizard would have died.”

King Hugo sighed. “Without Aduro’s magic, we must gather men to protect our kingdom. Tom has sent a messenger from the Icy Plains with Storm and Blizzard. Sanpao and his pirates will be on their way. We must get ready for battle—”

The long, low wail of a war-horn interrupted the king.

“We’re under attack!” Taladon cried.

King Hugo swept out of the palace infirmary, with Taladon following close behind. They hurried to the top of the city walls where several archers stood on the ramparts, staring at the southern horizon.

In the distance, King Hugo could see a Beast with a huge body charging towards Avantia’s city walls. The Beast’s legs were thick with



muscle and they kicked up dust clouds, his massive hooves leaving deep grooves in the land. "Sanpao has sent a Beast to test us," King Hugo growled.

The Beast came to a thundering stop as he reached a small settlement of huts just outside the gates of the city. Sunlight glinted from two wickedly sharp tusks that curved out from the Beast's warty face. Froth poured from his massive jaws. Rows of spikes jutted out of his body. He tossed his head from side to side, and small, mean eyes raked his surroundings.

King Hugo felt a stab of fear. "He's going to attack the village. We have to stop this!" He turned to his archers. "Release your arrows."

"Wait, sire. It won't work," Taladon

said. "I know this Beast: it's Bloodboar, the Buried Doom." He pointed. "Look at his back and head, there's no way an arrow will be able to pierce that armour."

A bone casing covered the Beast's thick bristly body, almost as if the creature's skeleton had grown on the outside.

The Beast gave a roar, dipped his head and charged one of the wooden



huts in the village, ripping it up with his tusks. Men, women and children ran screaming from the Beast as it crashed into another wooden house, skewering the door on his tusks, before throwing the shack over his head.

The villagers ran towards Avantia's city walls.

The king turned to his men. "Those villagers need refuge. Get them within the city walls and raise the





drawbridge.” Some archers sped off.

King Hugo could hear the Beast grunting with joy each time he destroyed a hut, his tusks ripping at wood. He hoped Bloodboar would be distracted long enough for the villagers to get to safety.

In minutes, the village was a pile of rubble. Bloodboar turned to face the towering walls of Avantia and gave a bellow of rage as the last of the villagers ran inside the city. The drawbridge slammed shut.

Taladon called to the Avantian soldiers. “Grab your weapons!”

King Hugo looked back at the Beast. Bloodboar was pawing at the ground and surveying the walls, as if he was trying to work out if he could force his way inside.

“He’s going to try and ram his way



in," said an archer, fearfully.

King Hugo smiled as he felt confidence surge through him.

"Let him try. The walls are solid."

"Sire," Taladon said, with a frown. "Bloodboar is one of the cleverest Beasts to have lived. Who knows what his next move will be?"

Bloodboar gave a deep, throaty roar and then stabbed his huge tusks into the ground just in front of the city walls. He began to burrow, shovelling dirt away from the base.

"He's going to dig his way in!" Taladon cried.

From behind them, came an ear-splitting *crack*. Taladon and King Hugo whipped round. At the centre of the city's courtyard, stone pavings were falling away into a chasm that had appeared in the ground. Out of

the hole burst forth an enormous tree. Its golden branches reached up eagerly to the sky, and emerald green leaves unfurled swiftly.

*The Tree of Being.*

“At our hour of deepest peril, the Tree has chosen to come to the heart of Avantia,” King Hugo murmured. “It must be protected, for the sake of everyone in the kingdom.”

The scrape and crash of Bloodboar’s ferocious digging echoed around them.

King Hugo and Taladon stared into each other’s faces.

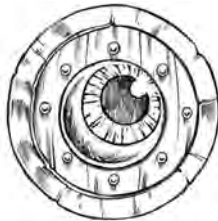
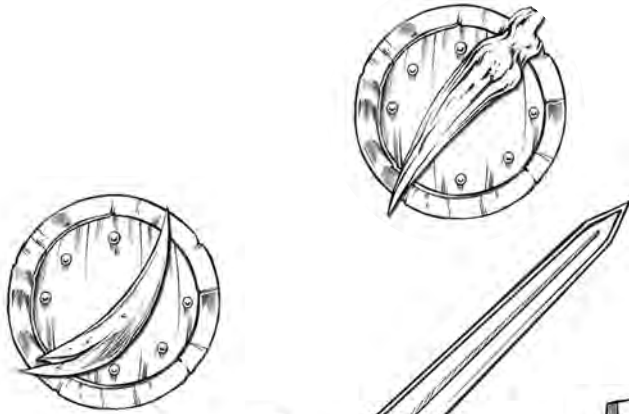
“Sanpao and his pirates will be here soon,” King Hugo said. “And Bloodboar needs to be stopped. How will we do both?”

“Tom and Elenna must get back to the city, or all hope will be lost.” Taladon said. Tom had already sent



a message ahead with a blind boy called Abel, telling the king and his father to get ready.

King Hugo stared round at his kingdom. "Avantia is in grave danger." A lump formed in his throat. By day's end, the fate of everyone in the city would be decided. *We need you, Tom,* he thought. *Like never before.*



## CHAPTER ONE

WARRIORS IN  
DISGUISE

Tom risked a glance over the side of the flying pirate ship, a *whoosh* of cold air stinging his cheeks. Below, he could see the Avantian landscape sliding by – mountains, valleys, lakes and forests all blurring into each other. Tom had seen so many different lands on his Quests. The beautiful landscapes of Gwildor and

Tavania, and the strange, dark world of Gorgonia. But Avantia was the only place he'd ever call home, and he'd risk anything to save it.

*I'm disguised as a pirate and stowed away on a boat filled with my enemies,* he thought. *This is about as dangerous as it gets.*

The mountains where Tom had fought his previous Quest were a long way from King Hugo's palace. Sneaking aboard was the only way to reach the city at the same time as Sanpao.

Tom looked over at Elenna, who was sitting behind the ship's storehouse. She met his glance and nodded over to a group of pirates who were a few sword lengths away from them. They were busy sharpening their weapons and practising their sword strokes. They

thrust their blades into straw bales,  
in time to a pirate song:

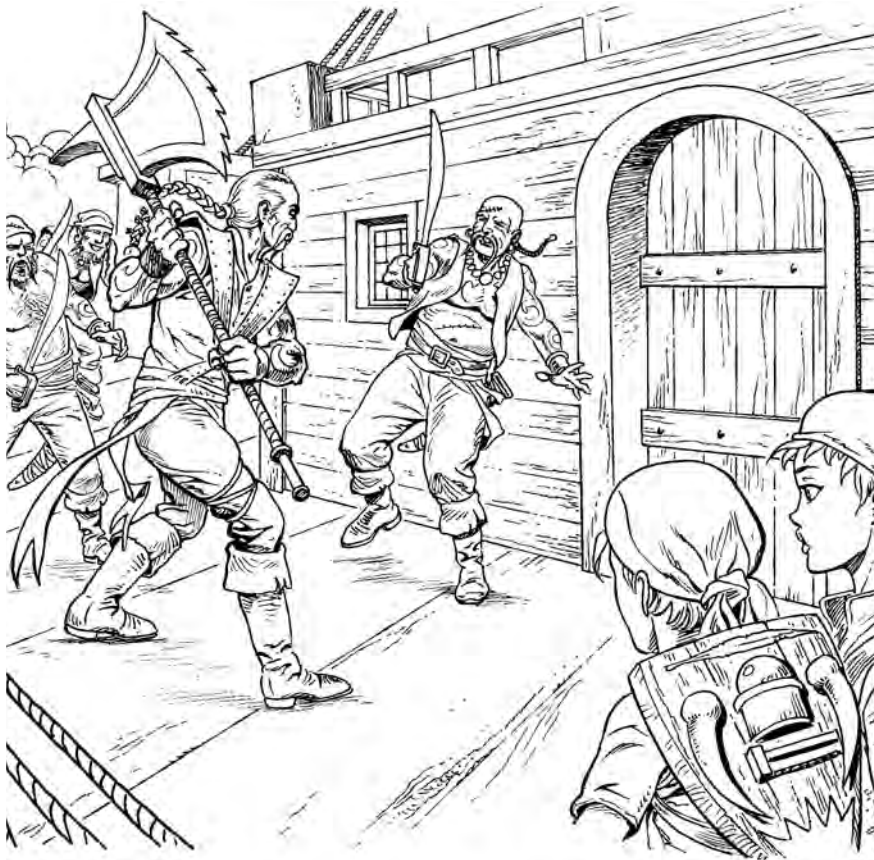
*“Parry, duck, thrust and slice,  
Hack them down, don’t think twice.”*

“They fight well,” Elenna mouthed.

“So do we,” Tom replied, crouching  
low as he came to sit beside her.

Elenna gave a tense smile. “That’s  
true, but they outnumber us twenty  
to one. There’s no way we could win  
a fight against them.”

Tom shuddered, suddenly cold in  
his stolen pirate clothes. He watched  
Sanpao join the pirates’ training and  
show them a vicious move with his  
battleaxe. The pirate king’s tattooed  
body was roped with muscle, and a  
glistening, oiled plait hung down his  
back, with barbs of iron jutting out  
from it. If Sanpao discovered them  
on board...



“Don’t worry,” he said, as confidently as he could. “No one will see through our disguise, we’re—”

“Oi, you!” a pirate with a matted beard snarled, looming over them. “What do you think you’re doing here?”

Tom stiffened, his hand immediately dropping to the sword at his waist.

The pirate pointed at them with a meaty finger. “Get off your backsides and help fix the rigging on the mainsail.”

They jumped to their feet, Tom being careful to keep his face lowered. He couldn’t risk the pirate recognising him.

“We’ll get right to it,” Elenna barked in her best pirate voice.

The bandit nodded. “That’s the spirit, laddie.”

Tom had to swallow down a laugh.

They strode towards the mainsail, but Tom felt an odd vibration at his hip. He dug into his pocket and his fingers crept over the Eye of Kronus – the token that he’d won from the last Beast. Normally, he would have

kept the eye on the fur sash that magically appeared when his jewelled belt was stolen by Aduro. But Tom knew he couldn't risk wearing this latest token in full view of the pirates in case they recognised it. The eye felt cold and slimy and danced in his palm as it vibrated once again. Tom quickly scanned the area to make sure no one was watching before taking the token out. The eye was cloudy as he peered down at it. A dull red light flooded over its surface and then faded to reveal a vision of a familiar figure. Taladon!

Tom frowned. He could see his father shaking hands with Sanpao. *But my father would never shake Sanpao's hand! The Pirate King is our enemy.* He peered even more closely – only to see Sanpao plunge a knife

into Taladon's chest. Tom bit down on his lip to stop himself from crying out.

Elenna touched his arm. "What's wrong," she asked.

Tom was shaking but forced himself to tell her what he'd seen. "It can't be true," Tom finished. "My father can't die." He felt the eye vibrate in his



palm again and then it burst into a shower of transparent gel. Tom wiped his hand on his rough pirate clothes and took a deep, steadying breath. In the past, the tokens he had won from the defeated Beasts had always helped him. The Eye of Kronus had to be doing the same. “This must be a warning – a warning about something that might happen,” Tom said. “Well, I won’t let it!”

“Quit all that yammering, and get that knot out of the rigging,” the pirate with the beard yelled at them from the other side of the deck.

Tom and Elenna hastily moved to work at the knot.

“I don’t want to worry you,” Elenna whispered. “But what if you can’t stop that future from happening? Or what if it has happened already?”



Tom shook his head. “My father won’t die.” He thumped his chest with a fist. “Whilst there’s blood in my veins, I will not allow Sanpao to kill him.”

Elenna nodded. “Then we need to be ready. If Sanpao wants to kill Taladon, it’s down to us to stop him.”

Tom’s friend was right. He opened his mouth to respond but stopped as he saw something fast and sharp whizzing through the air towards them. An arrow!



