

# THE BONE WASTES

Codex of Vodem

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## Introduction

The Kingdom of Azeem was once a bustling academic hotspot for apothecaries and alchemists. Scholars would make a pilgrimage to the Crescent Desert to study the flora found in the desert. Most notably the sun-sage flower. The flower is coveted by the top alchemists of Azeem who would use the flower as a reagent in their tonics which had remarkable results in curing a plethora of ailments save anything terminal. However, those who seek to capitalize on their profits would end up changing the Crescent Desert forever.

## Greed Begets Chaos

On an ordinary night like any other, the king of Azeem had just concluded a meeting with his advisors when he was suddenly betrayed by his Grand Vizier after a dispute regarding the monetization of the healing tonic. The Grand Vizier rallied those loyal to him to flee the kingdom, setting it ablaze in his wake. The city burned, and the newly appointed king, being only fourteen years old at the time ordered his remaining soldiers to chase after the vizier. The two forces clashed between two mountain ranges and chaos ensued.

## Chaos Ushers Regret

Fueled by hatred and blinded by anger, the battle began. Guards who were once comrades in arms viciously attempted to maim and kill each other. Civilians attempting to flee with the vizier and civilians seeking to avenge their king ended up in this conflict as well. Neighbors, associates, and friends all attempted to end one another. Cold and without mercy there was no foreseeable end in sight as both sides devolved to a primal state of mind. Bloodlust was now the only thing they had in common. Hours passed and the battle raged on until a third party entered the fray. Soldiers and civilians on both sides were now being attacked by creatures that lurked in the shadows.

## Regret Brings Change

Not one person could coherently describe the creatures that weaved between the shadows. Amalgamations of fear, death, and anger drawn to the world of Vodem by the amount of malice and bloodshed radiating from the battle. Tentacles, claws, and fangs lashed out at anything they could. Neither side could match the abominations and the outcome looked grim; the creatures could easily overwhelm the entire world let alone the Crescent Desert. However, a miracle occurred and from the sky descended the Sun Spirit, The guardian of the Crescent Desert. With its mighty weapon, Empyrean, the sun spirit fought the vile abominations. With newfound resolve the people fought alongside their deity until dawn when the creatures started to subside. With its last modicum of strength, the Sun Spirit stabbed Empyrean into the ground and consecrated the land around it before it dissolved into oblivion. With their deity vanquished, both parties went their separate ways. In their aftermath, all that remained was a barren scar home to the corpses of fallen soldiers, civilians, and monsters. A grim reminder to everyone who resides in the Crescent Desert. A holy energy still emanates from the scar left behind by Empyrean. It's warm, almost welcoming glow contrasts the barren and forlorn landscape around it that's littered with bones.

## Change Establishes Normalcy

With their deity slain, the balance of power has shifted in the crescent desert. The Grand Vizier established the Kingdom of Amberfall which is flourishing in resources compared to Azeem. The new king of Azeem faces the judgement of his subjects about his decision to chase the vizier into battle rather than help save his kingdom from burning anymore than it had to. The mysterious creatures pop up from time to time, but a direct cause has yet to be found. An order of guards established themselves to slay these creatures and to combat a faction known as *The Iconoclasts* that now seek to slay gods themselves.