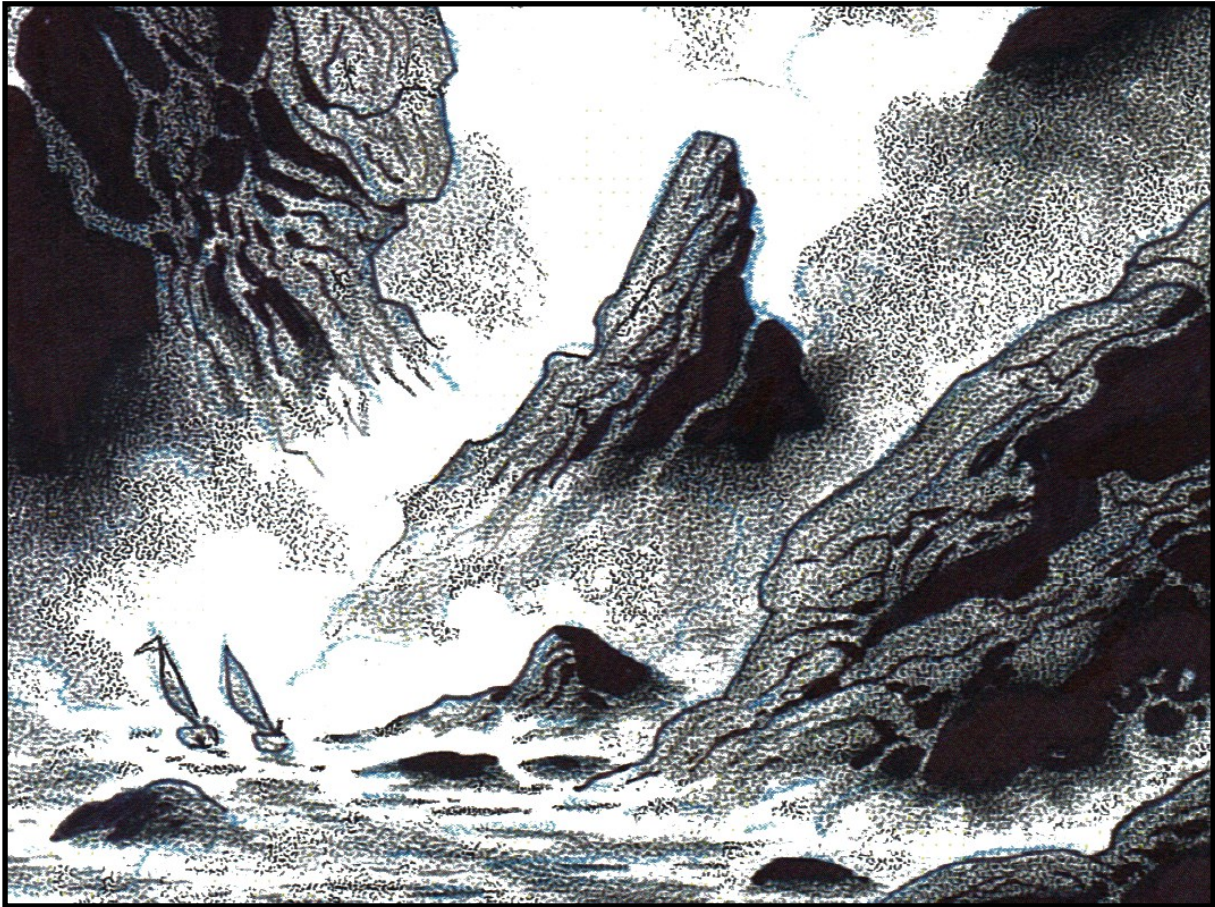


Land of the מזייה איראב ומוצא ייא

Silver Lotus

איראב אד ץז םאראפא ןאראפא-ץא ןאראפא-ץא


“Sail due east from Iraab, O traveller, to the verdant isles where pale blossoms sway in the moonlight to the throb of native drums. But beware the treacherous hidden reefs, which can shatter a ship and send you to a watery grave before you even set foot on dry land!

If you can make landfall and offer a satisfying bribe to Tiku, the decadent Pygmy King, there are great riches and marvelous sights awaiting you deep within the inland jungles. That is, if you dare to venture past the bleached bones of countless fools who have gone before you into the places that are taboo ...”

מזייה איראב ומוצא ייא

Xoth Publishing

<http://xoth.net/publishing> איראב אד ץז םאראפא-ץא

Introduction

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This adventure module details the Silver Lotus Isles, a group of small islands in the Eastern Ocean of the World of Xoth. The isles attract bold explorers, avaricious lotus-merchants and ruthless treasure-seekers. Inhabited by unpredictable tribes of fierce pygmies, and frequently visited by pirates from many nations, the isles are also home to monstrous beings and ancient secrets best left alone. But the mysterious and tantalizing Silver Lotus blooms here, and many men will risk death to reap it so they can purvey its narcotic ecstasies to weak-willed pleasure-seekers of Iraab and shaven-headed sorcerer-priests of Amenti. manifold are the ways of using and abusing the Silver Lotus.

Starting the Adventure

Since the adventure is self-contained and takes place on an island, it can easily be inserted almost anywhere in an existing campaign.

Here are some hooks to get the adventure started:

- ♦ **Shipwrecked after a storm:** The PCs are explorers, traders, mercenaries, or regular crew, on a vessel that is blown off course during a storm and shipwrecked somewhere on the Silver Lotus Isles.
- ♦ **Forced to seek shore:** The PCs are passengers or crew on a vessel that fights off a pirate attack, but is forced to seek shore for repairs.
- ♦ **Exploration:** The PCs are exploring and/or mapping the Silver Lotus Isles, either for their own benefits or hired by a merchant or a guild. The PCs could have heard some rumors (see rumor table) in a port city, or already be in a possession of a partial map, found during a previous adventure.
- ♦ **Escorting smugglers:** The PCs have been hired as bodyguards by a merchant-captain who ostensibly wants to trade wine and metal weapons for monkey pelts and exotic bird feathers from the pygmies of the Barana village. In reality, the merchant seeks to obtain the forbidden silver lotus and smuggle it back into Iraab, where he can sell it at great profit to lotus-dens and to students of the arcane.

Development

This module can be used as an open-ended “sandbox” where the player characters are free to explore the island, with no predetermined path for the PCs to follow to complete the adventure. Simply use the map, and the descriptions of each area and its inhabitants, to respond to the actions of the player characters.

If you prefer a more linear style of play, use the following outline as a suggestion. But remember that even if you start using this outline, play may develop differently based on the actions of the PCs, in which case you should adjust the outline as appropriate. Just because the chapters are presented in a certain order does not mean that the adventure needs to follow that sequence.

The default linear adventure outline is as follows:

1. The PCs arrive on the main island of the Silver Lotus Isles via any of the suggested methods of starting the adventure. If the PCs are shipwrecked, they must brave the dangers of the jungle before they reach the relative safety of the village of Barana. If the PCs are explorers or traders, they must brave the dangers of the high seas and the treacherous reefs of the coast before they arrive in Barana.
2. To gain the favor of Tiku, the Pygmy King, either to get home or to be allowed to explore the island, the PCs must agree to steal three colored stones from the sacred grotto of “the Swamp-Dwellers”, a rival tribe of pygmies that dwell on the eastern side of the main island. To make sure the PCs keep their part of the deal, the Pygmy King insists that one of the PCs (or an NPC henchman) stay behind as a “privileged guest”, actually a hostage, in the village.
3. The PCs travel into the swamp, find the sacred grotto and steal the three stones (blue, violet, and indigo) from the altar of the monstrous gods of the Swamp-Dwellers. Taking the stones back towards the village on the main island, the player characters are intercepted by Batutu, the witch-doctor of the pygmies, who reveals that these are “rainbow stones”, part of a set of seven stones that once belonged to Kwalu, a long-dead evil sorcerer. Batutu begs the PCs not to give the stones to Tiku, fearing that they will corrupt him.
4. Following the witch-doctor’s advice, the PCs hide the stones in the jungle and return to the Pygmy King empty-handed, claiming to have failed their mission. However, the Pygmy King refuses to free the party member he still holds as hostage, and demands that the player characters retrieve four other colored stones from a ruined city atop the “Forbidden Mountain”.
5. The player characters retrieve the first three stones from their hiding-place and then ascend the Forbidden Mountain. The nameless ruins are guarded by an ageless winged guardian. If the PCs defeat the winged guardian, they find the four remaining rainbow stones (yellow, orange, red, and green).
6. But the Pygmy King has sent his spies and warriors after the PCs. Surrounded by a large force of pygmies, the PCs discover an overgrown trail that leads into caverns below the nameless ruined city, and hide there. Thus having unwittingly carried some or all of the seven rainbow stones into the former lair of the ancient sorcerer Kwalu, the PCs face off against this

*“Narcotic silence, opiate gloom:
The painted parakeets are gone,
The blazoned butterflies withdrawn.
Nocturnal blossoms, weird and wan,
Like phantom wings and faces bloom.”*
-- Clark Ashton Smith: *Jungle Twilight*

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undead menace as he manifests to reclaim his phylactery stones!

7. If the PCs defeat Kwalu, they find his great treasure hoard, but getting this hoard back to civilization – past hostile pygmy tribes, rival Zadjite traders, and fierce Taikangian pirates – can be a great adventure on its own!

Random encounters from the encounter tables should be used to add variety and unpredictability both to sandbox and linear play. And of course, feel free to change anything you don't like, and make it your own by expanding the module with additional locations, creatures and plots.

The Setting

The adventure takes place in the World of Xoth, an original sword and sorcery setting inspired in part by Howard's Hyboria, Smith's Zothique, Leiber's Nehwon, Carter's Lemuria, Saunders' Nyumbani, and the Wilderlands from Judges Guild.

The World of Xoth, as a sword and sorcery setting, differs in many ways from the standard "high fantasy" world described in the core rules. Here, the world is dominated by human races; other races (degenerate survivors of an earlier age) and supernatural monsters exist only in hidden or lost enclaves far from human civilization. Combat is bloody and brutal, and magical healing is limited or does not exist. The use of real magic or sorcery is uncommon, and when used its effects tend to be subtle. Sorcerers are almost always villains, tainted by cosmic evil. Permanent magical items are extremely rare, and never for sale.

To establish the proper atmosphere for the adventure contained within this book, you are strongly encouraged to visit the website at <http://xoth.net/blog> for more information about the setting, additional rules and guidelines, and links to even more material.

A Word to the Wise

This book makes occasional references to mature themes such as human sacrifice, slavery, drugs, racism and perverted sexuality. Such themes, which are staples of the sword and sorcery genre, are simply assumed to be unpleasant but undeniable facts of life in the grim fantasy world described.

The sensible reader should quickly note that these themes are not the focus of the book; they are not explored in-depth, nor are they used gratuitously.

Remember that this is a work of fiction, and stuff in this book should not be taken as an endorsement of these things in the real world. That said, let's get on with the game.

The Silver Lotus

Found only in the dark depths of certain caves on the Silver Lotus Isles in the Eastern Ocean, guarded by hostile pygmies, the fragile leaves of this lotus are destroyed by direct exposure to sunlight.

This potent herb induces sleep, grants pleasurable dreams (but sometimes strange visions and nightmares), and for magic-users, it boosts and restores magical power.

Effects: A creature that inhales the smoke produced by burning the dried and crushed silver leaves must make a Fortitude save (DC 20) or suffer 1d3 points of Wisdom damage. Another save must be made 1 minute later, and if failed the creature falls unconscious for 1d6 hours. If the second saving throw is successful, the creature feels elated and the the pleasure from activities such as eating or drinking or love-making is increased.

Many "lotus-eaters", as those who take the drug are sometimes called, choose to fail the second saving throw, as it is necessary to gain the main beneficial effects of the lotus. Roll on the following table to determine what an unconscious creature experiences:

Roll (1d100)

1-10. Deep, restful sleep (the creature cannot be slapped to awaken; any fatigue or exhaustion condition, as well as any temporary ability damage except that caused by addiction to the silver lotus, is removed from the creature)

11-50. Pleasurable dreams (the creature feels nourished and does not need to eat or drink for 24 hours; additionally, spellcasters can immediately memorize new spells, even if it is less than 24 hours since they last memorized spells)

51-75. Ecstatic pleasure (spellcasters cast spells at +2 caster levels, and others gain the effects of a *heroism* spell, for the next 8 hours)

76-85. Lotus-tainted vision of different time and/or place (similar to a *legend lore* spell and may require multiple uses of the lotus to provide a complete vision)

86-90. Memory loss or modification (as per a *modify memory* spell, with the exact effect determined randomly; spellcasters have an additional 10% chance to permanently forget a spell, which may be relearned as if it was a new spell)

91-98. Frightful nightmares (as per a *nightmare* spell)

99-100. Ultimate terror (as per a *phantasmal killer* spell)

Some pygmy shamans know how to turn fresh silver lotus leaves into a paste that can be smeared on weapons. The poison is frequently employed during hunting and warfare and has the following statistics: Type injury; Fort DC 15; Onset immediate; Frequency 1/round for 2 rounds; Effect *confused* 1 round/unconscious 1d3 hours; Cure 1 save.

Crafting: Preparing a dose of silver lotus follows the standard crafting procedure. Working under the light of the full moon, the crafter (usually an alchemist or a witch) must dry and crush the leaves of the lotus and make a Craft (alchemy) check (DC 30). Rolling a natural 1 on the Craft skill check exposes the crafter to the effects of the lotus. Exposure to direct sunlight destroys the fragile leaves immediately.

Market Price: 100 gp. The listed price is for Zadj and the coastal provinces of Yar-Ammon. Further afield, a dose of silver lotus may be sold for even higher prices.

Addiction: Using the silver lotus carries a risk of addiction. Any time a character takes the lotus drug and fails the initial saving throw, he becomes addicted. If a character makes the save, he is not addicted and the effects of the drug persist as normal. If he fails the save, he contracts an addiction.

The general rules for addictions are given below. Addiction to the silver lotus is a severe addiction.

Should a character take multiple doses of the same drug in a short period of time, addiction becomes more difficult to resist. The DC of a drug's saving throw increases by +2 every time a character takes another dose of that drug while still suffering from ability damage caused by a previous dose. Keep track of how high this DC rises, even for characters already addicted to a drug, as it determines the DC necessary to overcome the disease.

Addiction manifests in three different degrees of severity: minor, moderate, and severe. Each drug notes what type of addiction failing a save against it results in. Each addiction causes a persistent penalty to ability scores, lasting for as long as the character has the disease. In the case of moderate and severe addictions, the character also cannot naturally heal ability damage dealt by the drug that caused the addiction.

Each form of addiction encourages sufferers to continue making use of the drug they are addicted to. While a character is benefiting from the effects of the drug he is addicted to, he does not suffer the penalties of his addiction disease. While he still receives the benefits of the drug and takes ability damage as normal, the disease's effects are mitigated. As soon as the drug's benefits expire, the disease's effects return.

Minor Addiction: Type disease, variable; Save variable; Onset 1 day; Frequency 1/day; Effect -2 penalty to Con; Cure 2 consecutive saves

Moderate Addiction: Type disease, variable; Save variable; Onset 1 day; Frequency 1/day; Effect -2 penalty to Con and Str, target cannot naturally heal ability damage caused by the drug that caused this addiction; Cure 3 consecutive saves

Severe Addiction: Type disease, variable; Save variable; Onset 1 day; Frequency 1/day; Effect -2 penalty to Dex, Con, Str, and Wis; target cannot naturally heal ability damage caused by the drug that caused this addiction; Cure 3 consecutive saves.

As addictions are diseases, they can be cured as such, through the use of spells like *remove disease* or by succeeding at Fortitude saves over time. Unlike with other diseases, an addicted character can only make a Fortitude save to overcome his addiction after a day of not taking the drug he is addicted to. The DC of this Fortitude save is equal to the highest addiction DC his drug use has reached (not necessarily the DC that addicted him if he has continued to make use of the drug while addicted). This DC decreases by -2 for everyday the character does not make use of the drug, to a minimum of the drug's base addiction DC.

Depending on the severity of the character's addiction, it might take two or three consecutive successful Fortitude saves to overcome the disease. Should a character take a dose of the drug he's addicted to, he immediately relapses, causing the addiction DC to instantly return to its highest DC and negating any successful past saves.

Rumor Table

Bards, rogues, and other player characters with skill points in Diplomacy or Knowledge starts play knowing a random rumor from the table below.

1. The harbor-master of Iraab is corrupt; the smugglers pay him to ignore their shipments of lotus. [True]
2. Drinking swamp-water provides immunity to the effects of the Silver Lotus for 8 hours. [False]
3. There is something strange about the serving-girls working at Madame Ling's Red Lantern restaurant in Iraab. [True]
4. The Silver Lotus Isles are home to colossal flesh-eating lizards. [False]
5. The Sea Reavers use the Silver Lotus Isles as a hideout. [True]
6. The tallest mountain peak of the Silver Lotus Isles is an active volcano. [False]
7. The Silver Lotus intensifies the pleasures of lovemaking tenfold. [True]
8. Tiku the Pygmy King has a bodyguard of giant warriors. [False]
9. The Silver Lotus can steal your memories. [True]
10. The Nameless City of the Ancients atop the Forbidden Mountain is haunted by ghosts. [Partly true]

Central Coast (Yar-Ammon and Zadj)

Climate: Sub-Tropical to Tropical

Terrain: Coast

Random Encounters (1d20)

1. Fish-man of Ilzad; avoids combat and withdraws into the deep.
2. Shark (80%) or whale (20%); seen in the distance.
3. Sea Reavers of Khora (70%) or Taikangian pirates (30%); vessel damaged after a naval battle with rivals.
4. Merchant vessel from Ghazor (40%), Zadj (30%), Nabastis (20%) or Taikang (10%); laden with foreign goods.
5. Djaka; paddling in canoes, fishing and scouting.
6. Shipwreck (40%) or drifting boat (60%); maybe cursed.
7. Flotsam (75%) or jetsam (25%); random equipment.
8. Octopus (50%) or squid (50%); fighting fish.
9. Giant turtle; laying eggs on the beach.
10. Sea serpent; hidden just below the surface.
11. Floating corpse (80%) or half-drowned creature (20%)
12. Sea-hawks (25%), eagles (50%) or giant bird (25%)
13. Devilfish (B2)
14. Low tide reveals fish-man shrine (30%) or un-plundered shipwreck (70%)
15. Severe weather (storm 60%, typhoon 30% or tsunami 10%)
16. Giant frogs; nearby is a weird green rock.
17. Monitor lizard; it has recently swallowed a victim.
18. Crab swarm; crawling on drowned sailors.
19. Mutiny (25%), disease (25%) or spoiled food (50%)
20. Seaweed; animates on moonlit nights.

Chapter 1: The Silver Lotus Isles

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The Silver Lotus Isles is a small archipelago, a week's voyage by sail from the coast of Zadj, a rich and despotic emirate whose capital is the splendid gold and marble port city of Iraab.

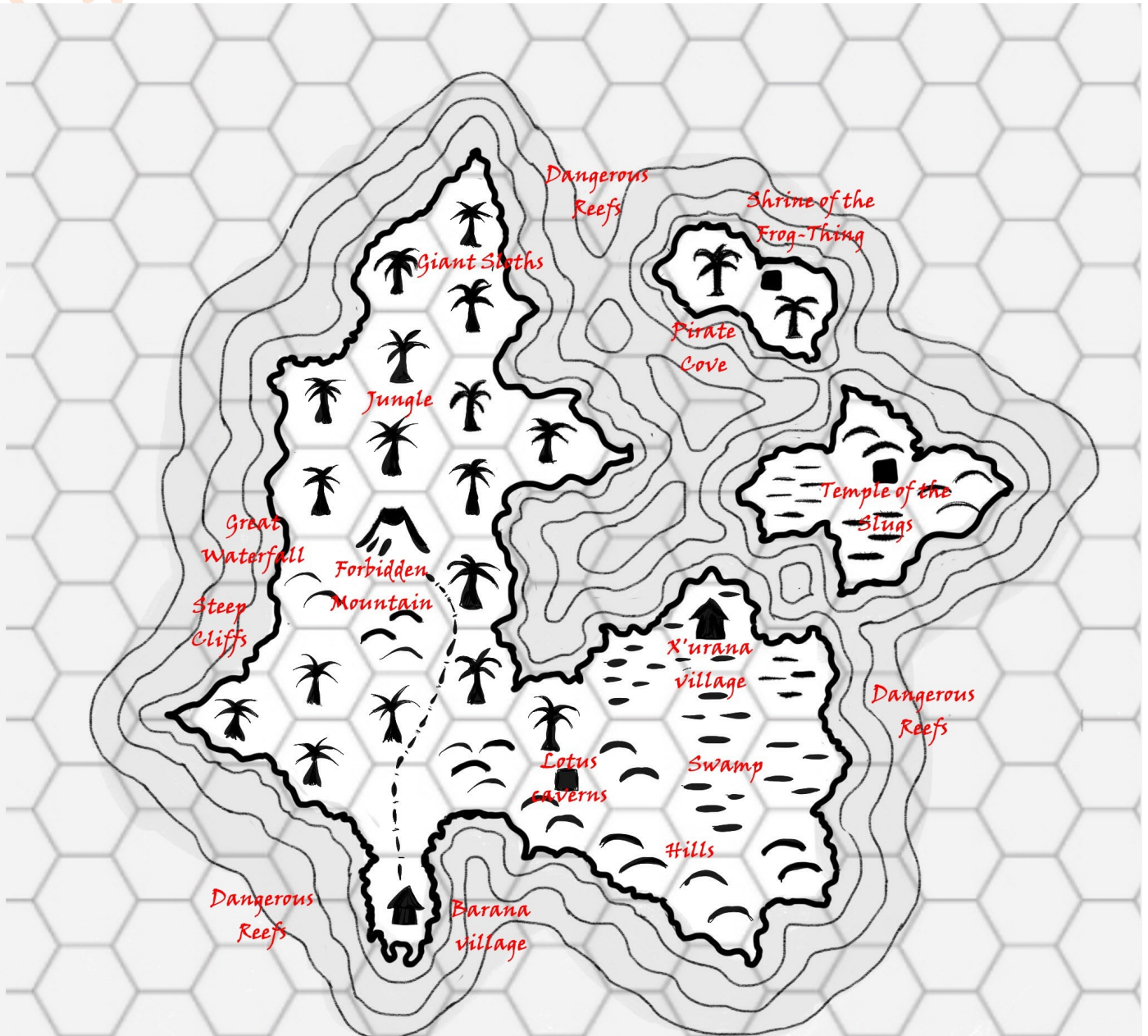
The archipelago consists of three islands, protected by an outer ring of dangerous, hidden reefs that are very difficult to navigate. Only a few captains of Iraab know the secrets of the reefs. Zadjite merchants usually anchor their ships outside the ring of reefs, and wait for the pygmies of Barana, who ferry the merchants ashore in their small canoes. This gives Tiku, the decadent and tyrannical Pygmy King of Barana, great advantage in negotiations, as few can enter or leave the main island without his knowledge and permission.

Some pirates know their way around the reefs to the north and use the coves of the North Isle, in particular, as temporary bases for their raids.

Wilderness Exploration

If running this adventure as a “sandbox” exploration game, use the exploration rules presented in the Ultimate Campaign book (also available free online as part of the Pathfinder Reference Document) to track movement and to generate hazards appropriate to the terrain. Random encounter tables are provided throughout this chapter.

Each hex on the hex map is 6 miles across.



The Main Isle

This island is far larger than the two other isles in the archipelago. The western part of the island is mostly covered by jungle. The west coast has tall, sheer cliffs. A tall mountain plateau in the middle of the island divides the north from the south. The plateau is over 1,000 feet above sea level, and on the western side of the mountain, facing the sea, is a massive waterfall that emerges from an underground river inside the mountain.

The northern part is heavily jungled and home to giant sloths; huge but slow-moving animals that are often hunted by the Barana pygmies using poisoned arrows.

The southern part is less heavily jungled and the coastal cliffs are less steep. On the southern tip is Barana, the main village of the coastal pygmies, ruled by Tiku the Pygmy King. For more information about Barana, see Chapter 2.

The easternmost tip of the island is covered by swamp. Hidden inside the mangrove swamp of the east coast is X'urana, the main village of the "Swamp-Dwellers". Just across the strait from X'urana is the Swamp Isle. For more information about X'urana and the Swamp Isle, see Chapters 3 and 4.

The Silver Lotus grows in deep chasms and caverns several places on the main island. One such place is about midway between the Barana and the X'urana; these caverns are detailed in the following section.

The Caverns of the Silver Lotus

The Silver Lotus lives and grows underground, for sunlight destroys it; moonlight, on the other hand, appears to amplify and strengthen its weird powers. The lotus may be found in multiple places on the island, but the location described below is known and visited by both the coastal pygmy tribes and the swamp-dwellers. It is located in the hills roughly equidistant from both pygmy villages.

"Lianas were drooping above him from the island trees like uncoiled serpents, and epiphytic orchids, marked with ophidian mottlings, leaned toward him grotesquely from lowering boughs. Immense butterflies went past on sumptuously spotted wings." -- Clark Ashton Smith: The Seed from the Sepulchre

1A. Chasm

A hidden path meanders through the jungled hills before it reaches a narrow, deep chasm (300 feet long, 30 feet wide, 60 feet deep, Climb DC 25). Thick lianas hang from the green canopy above and can be used to climb down into the caverns below (Climb DC 15).

The sides of the chasm are crawling with monstrous crickets, which attack anyone climbing the rock wall, or use their leap attacks to jump onto anyone climbing the lianas.

Main Isle Encounters

Climate: Tropical

Terrain: Hills, Jungle

Random Encounters (1d10)

1. Giant sloth (megatherium); only in jungle north of Forbidden Mountain, otherwise reroll
2. Monkey swarm; become aggressive if territory crossed
3. Snake, giant viper (mamba); hides in clothing as PC gets dressed after resting
4. Exotic bird; with valuable feathers, but difficult to catch
5. Jungle Djaka hunters, carrying monkey pelts, heads and/or meat; avoid direct encounter, instead setting traps, or following and ambushing if/when PCs encounter other creatures
6. Djaka pit trap (spiked pits smeared with silver lotus poison)
7. Carrion moth or giant butterfly
8. Giant cockroach or cockroach swarm; emerging from rotted tree when disturbed
9. Centipede, giant whiptail; consuming a giant sloth corpse
10. Mobats (at night only, or in cave; otherwise reroll)

FUNGAL CRAWLERS (3-12)

CR 3

XP 800 each

hp 26 each (Pathfinder Bestiary 2)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Confusion (Ex) The bite of these fungal crawlers causes *confusion* (Will DC 14, duration 4 rounds). This replaces the standard poison effect.

1B. Hidden Descent

If the grass growing along the edge of the chasm is searched (Perception DC 20), a crack in the cliff face may be found which offers an easier descent (Climb DC 12) with only a 20% chance of encountering the fungal crawlers from Area 1A. This route is a well-kept secret among the pygmies, who always use it to access the caverns.

2. Dark Cavern

In the darkness at the bottom of the chasm, where sunlight never penetrates, are even bigger vermin, patiently waiting for their next meal. These albino creatures are aggressive hunters that have adapted to a life in darkness.

ALBINO CAVE SOLIFUGIDS (3-6)

CR 4

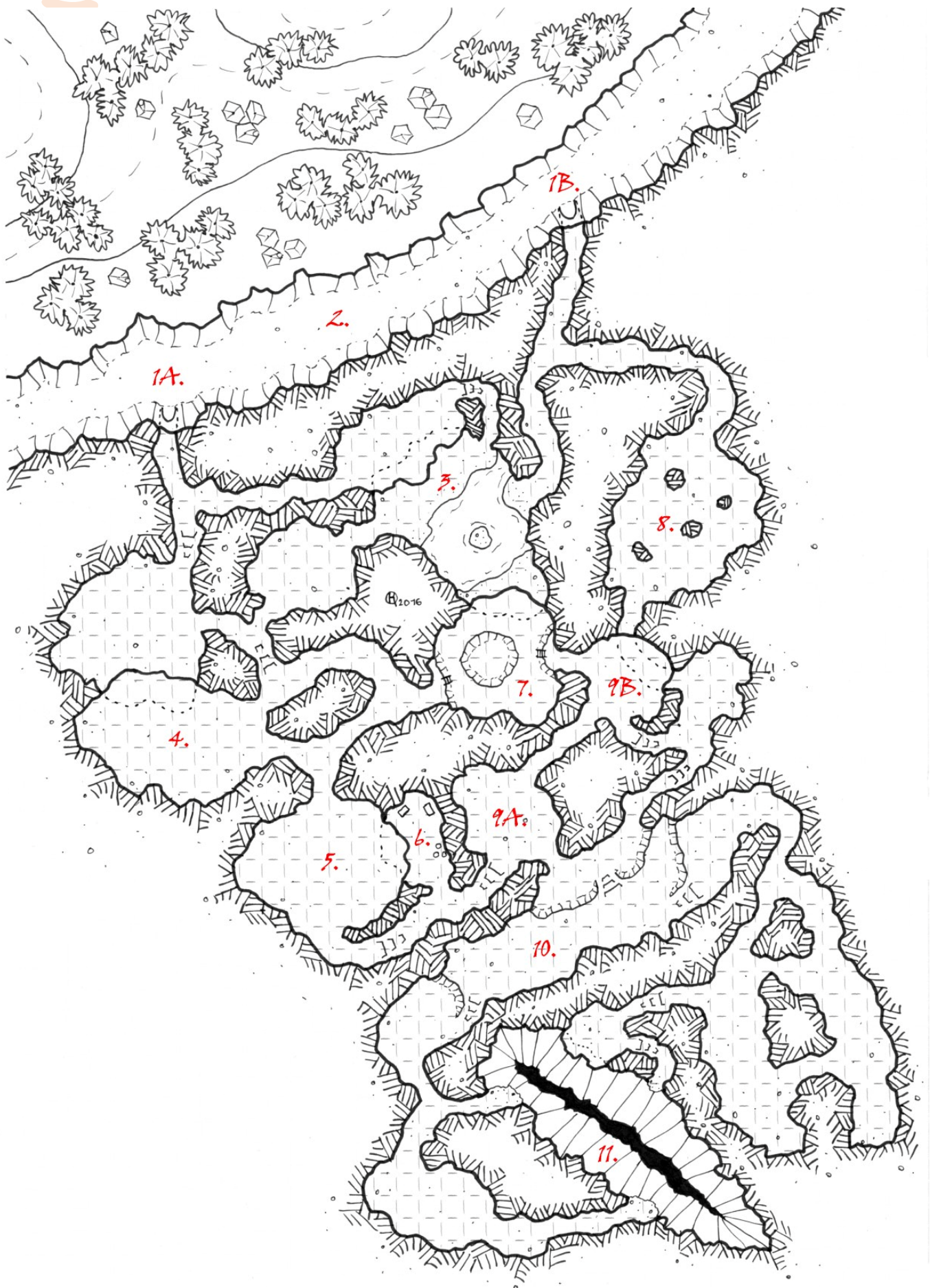
XP 1,200 each

hp 45 each (Pathfinder Bestiary 2)

3. Flooded Cave

Most of this cave is covered by calm, murky water (30 feet deep, Swim DC 10). There are no creatures lurking in the pool,

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but a nasty worm-like predator, a jungle grick, has crawled into the cave and is hiding in the darkness of the ceiling above.

JUNGLE GRICK **CR 4**

XP 1,200

N Medium Aberration

Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., scent; Perception +12

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 14, flat-footed 15 (+4 Dex, +5 natural)

hp 37 (5d8+15)

Fort +4, **Ref** +5, **Will** +8

DR 10/magic

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., climb 20 ft., swim 30 ft.

Melee bite +6 (1d4+3), 4 tentacles +1 (1d4+1)

TACTICS

Before Combat The grick hides and waits until a victim exposes itself by swimming in the pool before it swings down to attack.

Morale The creature retreats if it loses more than two-thirds of its hit points.

STATISTICS

Str 16, **Dex** 18, **Con** 17, **Int** 3, **Wis** 18, **Cha** 9

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +6; **CMD** 20 (can't be tripped)

Feats Combat Reflexes, Skill Focus (Perception), Stand Still

Skills Climb +11, Perception +14, Stealth +8 (+16 in forest terrain); Racial Modifiers +8 Stealth in forest terrain

Languages Aklo (cannot speak)

Special Notes This type of jungle grick has adapted to water and has a Swim speed instead of the Toughness bonus feat.

4. Ancient Skeletons

Scattered across the floor of this grotto are brittle human bones and grinning skulls, all covered in thick layers of silvery dust, mold and spiderwebs. They are the remains of men from the nameless, ruined city atop what the pygmies call the "Forbidden Mountain".

Among the ancient bones are five masterwork battleaxes and a +1 *keen battleaxe* all made from bronze, two bronze breastplates, and a bronze helmet. All this equipment is covered by silvery dust but is whole and usable.

5. Narcotic Spores

The walls and floor of this cave are coated with thick layers of silvery spores. Any creature passing through the cave on foot kicks up a cloud of spores which fills a 20-foot radius and persists for 5 rounds before dispersing.

All creatures within the cloud must succeed on a Fortitude save (DC 16) or be affected by powerful hallucinations as long as they remain in the cloud and for 1d4 rounds after leaving the area. This is similar to the spore attack of the Silver Lotus (see the New Monsters appendix for details).

6. More Ancient Skeletons

Decayed bones protrude from thick beds of silvery mold here. Torches (or other light sources) reveal the glitter of several golden items among the bones; a dozen bracers, anklets and necklaces (worth a total of 750 gp) and a gold-hilted masterwork cold iron dagger.

In front of the bone-heap and the treasure is a near-invisible spiderweb (Perception DC 20 or stumble into the web and become trapped), spun by a large black spider which hides in the darkness in the back of the cave.

GIANT BLACK WIDOW SPIDER **CR 3**

XP 800

hp 37 (Pathfinder Bestiary 2)

7. Pit

The floor of this grotto is 40 feet below the tunnels leading into it. Those wishing to cross it must climb down on one side and climb up on the other side (Climb DC 15). Those failing the Climb check by 5 or more fall down and suffer falling damage as usual, plus an additional 1d6+5 points of damage from jagged rocks at the bottom of the pit.

8. Silver Lotus Pygmy Zombies!

Lurking in this cave are the transformed remains of a group of ten pygmies that fell victim to the very lotus they were sent to harvest. They appear as stumbling, stunted creatures with pale, silvery skin covered with bits of plant growth.

SILVER LOTUS PYGMY ZOMBIES (10) **CR 1**

XP 400 each

Male Djaka Warrior 1

N Medium plant

Init +4; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +1

DEFENSE

AC 11, touch 11, flat-footed 11 (+0 no armor, +0 Dex, +1 size)

hp 12 (1d10+2)

Fort +4, **Ref** +0, **Will** +1

Defensive Abilities plant traits, death burst; **DR** 5/slashing;

Immune electricity; **Resist** cold 5

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee shortspear +4 melee (1d4+4, 20/x2)

Special Attacks none

STATISTICS

Str 16, **Dex** 10, **Con** 14, **Int** -, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +1; **CMB** +4; **CMD** 14

Feats Improved Initiative

Skills Climb +7, Swim +7

SQ slave of the lotus, seed-bearer

Combat Gear shortspear

9A and 9B. Young Silver Lotus

Each of these twin grottoes has a floor covered with a thin layer of silvery dust, walls overgrown with thin pink vines, and in its center a young specimen of the Silver Lotus.

In its immature form, the lotus flower vaguely resembles the victims it sprouted from; the one in location A grew from a human, while the plant in location B has grown from a snake that fell through the upper chasm and ended up here. Both are gross, twisted mockeries of their former selves. As the flowers grow into their mature forms, they slowly shed all traces of their original hosts.

The human-like young lotus in location A grew from a merchant-explorer forced into the chasm by a group of pursuing

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pygmies. It still has bits of its possessions embedded inside the plant body, including three solid gold rings (worth 100 gp each), a curved dagger of excellent Iraabite craftsmanship with a hilt set with sapphires (worth 500 gp), and a small ivory figurine of a shapely woman (worth 350 gp). Naturally, any attempt to extract the items will be met with swift doom from the tentacles of the lotus creature.

YOUNG SILVER LOTUS (2)

CR 7

XP 3,200 each

hp 82 each (New monsters appendix)

“At the same time the singing grew louder, sweeter, more imperious, and the swaying of the great plant assumed an indescribably seductive tempo. It was like the allurements of voluptuous sirens, the deadly languor of dancing cobras. Thone felt an irresistible compulsion: a summons was being laid upon him, and his drugged mind and body must obey it.” -- Clark Ashton Smith: The Seed from the Sepulchre

10. The Silver Lotus

Surrounded by skulls and bones, a fully grown silver lotus lairs in one corner of this large cavern. The huge monstrous plant looms tall with its long stalk and large star-shaped leaves. A hallucinatory spore mist hangs around the plant, from which weird, distorted faces are constantly emerging, dissolving into nothingness, and re-forming moments later.

SILVER LOTUS

CR 8

XP 4,800

hp 115 (New monsters appendix)

11. Netherworld Chasm

This great chasm appears bottomless, and is in fact at least 2,000 feet deep. Along the sides grows a latticework of throbbing and pulsing silvery and pink vines, forming a great webbing of intertwined plants that holds together scores of skeletons and corpses in various stages of decomposition, filling the chasm as far as the eye can see. The air is pregnant with narcotic spores.

Anyone coming near the pit is subject to being rendered comatose from the spores, grabbed and covered by hungry vines, and slowly becoming part of the colossal vegetable network.

“At last Thone hung supine amid the lethal, ever-growing web; bloated and colossal, the plant lived on; and in its upper branches, through the still, stifling afternoon, a second flower began to unfold.” -- Clark Ashton Smith: The Seed from the Sepulchre

Attempts to set the plant webbing on fire simply causes parts of it to collapse and fall further down into the chasm.

However, any fire larger than a torch will also ignite invisible spores in the air; with a great puff, a large spore smoke cloud rises and causes very strong hallucinations (treat as a *symbol of insanity* with a 200 feet radius).

The North Isle

This small island has steep hills covered with dense jungle. On the southwest coast there are white sandy beach coves that provide excellent shelter from winds, and anchorage for pirate vessels.

A pirate ship from far-off Taikang has recently found its way here. The vessel, the *Ghost Turtle*, is undergoing repairs after an indecisive battle with a rival pirate ship. The captain, Li Fan, captured his enemy's second mate, who was tortured to reveal the secrets of navigating the reefs surrounding the archipelago.

Li Fan has established a base on a sheltered beach and has sent teams of his crew into the jungle to cut down timber to use for repairs. Li Fan's men have yet to come across a strange temple in a small, heavily jungled valley in the interior. But since the island is small, they are likely to discover the valley and the temple soon.

North Isle Encounters

Climate: Tropical

Terrain: Hills, Jungle, Beach

Random Encounters (1d6)

1. Pirates (1-20); collecting timber for ship repairs, exploring ruins, or drinking and gambling
2. Cockatrices (3-5); only if near ancient ruins, otherwise reroll
3. Snake; easily confused with a hanging vine
4. Giant frogs (3-8); hidden in marsh
5. Wasp swarm; angered by trespassing
6. Giant ants (3-6); nearby is a clean-picked skeleton

The Ghost Turtle

The Ghost Turtle is a Taikangian junk ship with three masts and a crew of 40 pirates. It is currently drawn up on the beach for repairs, with the forecastle facing the jungle.

1. Helm

Atop the aftcastle of the ship is the poop deck where the helmsman, pilot and captain are located when the vessel is at sea. It is currently used as a watchtower; there are two guards from the crew stationed here at all times, keeping watch out across the waters.

GHOST TURTLE CREW (2)

CR 1

XP 400 each

Male Civilized Warrior 1/Rogue (Thug) 1

N Medium humanoid (Taikangian)

Init +4

DEFENSE

AC 15, touch 14, flat-footed 11 (+1 padded armor, +4 Dex)



XP4: Land of the Silver Lotus

hp 16 (1d10+1 plus 1d8+1)
Fort +3, Ref +6, Will +0

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee shortsword +5 (1d6+1, 19-20/x2, finesse)

Ranged dagger +5 (1d4+1, 19-20/x2, range increment 10 ft.)

Special Attacks sneak attack +1d6, frightening

TACTICS

During Combat Swarm opponents, flank and attack with two weapons and sneak attack.

STATISTICS

Str 12, Dex 18, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10

Base Atk +1; CMB +2; CMD 16

Feats Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Finesse

Skills Acrobatics +9, Climb +6, Intimidate +5, Profession (sailor) +5, Stealth +9, Swim +6

SQ Educated, Frail

Combat Gear short sword, dagger, padded armor; Other Gear wineskin, 5 gp

The crew of the *Ghost Turtle* are a motley mix of deceitful thieves and violent sailors from Taikang and Ghoma. They are loyal to Li Fan as long as he is successfully leading them to plunder and riches.

2. Forecastle w/ ballista

At the other end of the ship, facing towards the beach and the jungle, is the forecastle. There are always two guards on duty here. A ballista (3d8 points of damage, two rounds to reload) is mounted on a swivel, allowing it to be used in a 180-degree angle.

3. Main Deck

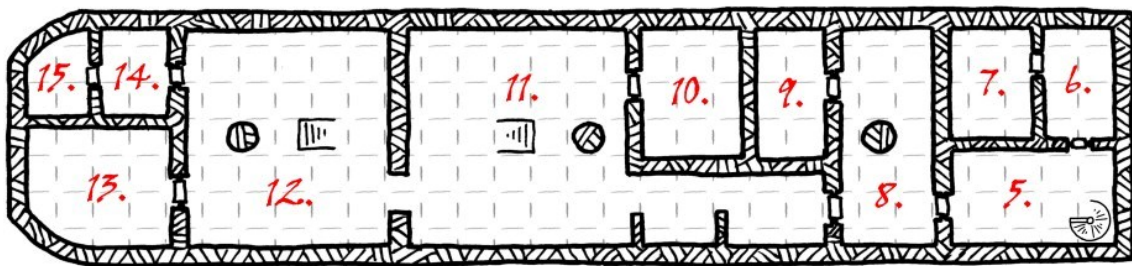
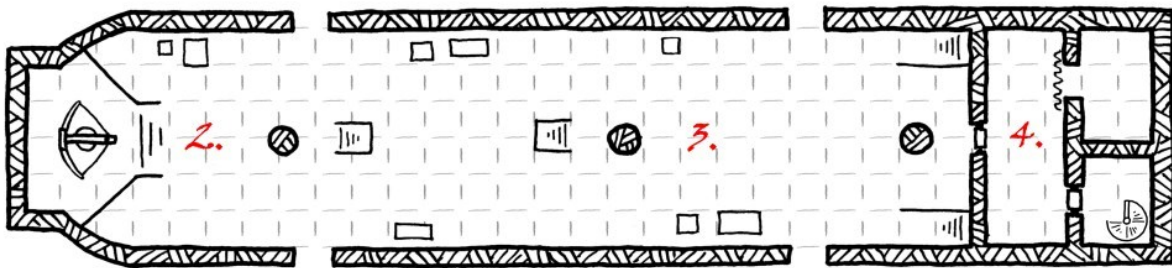
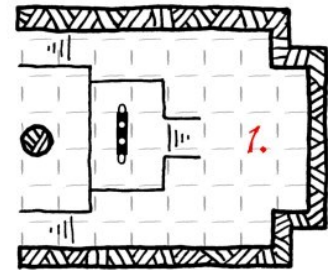
The main deck has three masts. The front mast is currently broken and a replacement is being sought in the jungle beyond the beach. There are also damages to the hull being worked on by the carpenters in the crew. There are 1d6-1 sailors here.

4. Captain's Quarters

The captain's quarters are divided into a large office and a smaller bedroom. The office is lavishly decorated with yellow and red silken hangings. On one wall is a large silver shield engraved with a turtle design (worth 500 gp).

Taikangian Pirate Vessel

"The Ghost Turtle"



LI FAN, CAPTAIN OF THE GHOST TURTLE **CR 5**

XP 1,600

Male Civilized Fighter 6
N Medium humanoid (Taikangian)

Init +2

DEFENSE

AC 18, touch 12, flat-footed 16 (+6 breastplate, +2 Dex)

hp 34 (4d10+8)

Fort +6, **Ref** +3, **Will** +4

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.

Melee falchion +9 (2d4+8, 18-20/x2)

Ranged heavy crossbow +6 (1d10+4, 19-20/x2, range increment 120 ft.)

Special Attacks bravery

STATISTICS

Str 18, **Dex** 14, **Con** 14, **Int** 10, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +6; **CMB** +10; **CMD** +22

Feats Combat Reflexes, Improved Bull Rush, Iron Will, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (falchion), Weapon Specialization (falchion)

Skills Intimidate +7, Profession (sailor) +8, Swim +11

SQ Educated, Frail, Armor Training

Combat Gear falchion, heavy crossbow, breastplate; **Other Gear** jade ring (150 gp), small steel mirror, silk rope

Li Fan has a delicate nose set between cold, slanted eyes. He is potbellied and shirtless, clad in loose silk pantaloons with gaudy eastern designs.

The Taikangian is a skilled warrior and experienced sailor. He is quick to anger, but also joyous and sociable and rather generous with his men.

The captain's office is locked with a good lock (Disable Device DC 25). Behind another locked door next to the captain's office there is a circular stairway going down to the ship's kitchen.

5. Kitchen

The captain himself is often found here, looking for a snack to fill his already well-rounded belly.

6. Wine Cellar

The long voyage across the Eastern Sea has taken a great toll on the ship's store of wine. There are currently only 20 wine bottles left here, each worth 10 sp.

7. Treasure Room

Protected by two locks (the captain carries one key, and the first mate carries the other key) is a small room with three stout wooden chests. Each chest contains 1,000 gp of plundered spoils.

8. Pantry

Filled with stores and provisions, worth a total of 500 gp.

9. Guest Room

Aboard the vessel is a tall, regal man clad in immaculate gold-trimmed green silk robes; he is supposedly a councillor from a city of Taikang, but is in fact an ambassador from the secret oriental empire of ghouls on his way to do business with Madame Ling of Iraab, an infamous merchant-lady long established in the pleasure quarters of that city.

HUAN-YI, SECRET GHOUL AMBASSADOR **CR 8**

XP 4,800

Ghoul Bard (dirge bard) 8

CE Medium undead

Init +7

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 13, flat-footed 16 (+4 armor, +3 Dex, +2 natural)

hp 113 (10d8+68)

Fort +8, **Ref** +9, **Will** +11

Defensive Abilities channel resistance +2; **Immune** undead traits

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee bite +10 (1d6+2 plus disease and paralysis), 2 claws +11 (1d6+2 plus paralysis)

Ranged masterwork composite shortbow +11/+6 (1d6+2, x3)

Special Attacks bardic performance 24 rounds/day (move action; countersong, dirge of doom [DC 20], distraction, fascinate [DC 20], inspire competence +3, inspire courage +2, suggestion [DC 20]), disease (DC 17), paralysis (1d4+1 rounds, DC 19, elves are immune to this effect)

Bard Spells Known (CL 8th; concentration +14)

3rd (3/day)—*confusion* (DC 19), *crushing despair* (DC 19), *glibness*

2nd (6/day)—*allegro*, *fleshy facade* (DC 18), *inflict moderate wounds* (DC 18), *mirror image*

1st (6/day)—*disguise self*, *expeditious retreat*, *hideous laughter* (DC 17), *ray of enfeeblement* (DC 17), *silent image* (DC 17)

0 (at will)—*ghost sound* (DC 16), *mage hand*, *message*, *prestidigitation* (DC 16), *summon instrument*

TACTICS

Before Combat Huan-Yi disguises himself as a human using both mundane and magical means. If at all possible, he avoids conflict to avoid revealing his true nature and jeopardizing his mission. He would much rather pretend to be a friend and betray opponents later.

During Combat If his presence is detected, the ghoul ambassador begins combat by casting *confusion*. He then starts a bardic performance (typically dirge of doom). Before he actually enters melee, he casts *allegro* to gain additional attacks.

STATISTICS

Str 15, **Dex** 17, **Con** -, **Int** 17, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 22

Base Atk +7; **CMB** +9; **CMD** +22

Feats Ability Focus (paralysis), Combat Casting, Improved Initiative, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (claw)

Skills Bluff +19, Diplomacy +19, Disguise +19, Intimidate +19, Knowledge (arcana) +16, Knowledge (local) +20, Knowledge (religion) +15 (+19 to identify undead creatures and their abilities), Perception +15, Perform (oratory) +14, Perform (percussion) +19;

Racial Modifiers +4 Knowledge (religion) to identify undead creatures and their abilities

SQ bardic knowledge +4, haunting refrain (+4 to demoralize, -2 penalty on saves against bard's fear effects), secrets of the grave

Combat Gear masterwork composite shortbow, chain shirt;

Other Gear disguise kit, pouch of semiprecious gems (1,000 gp), gold signet ring with symbol of oriental fortress

10. Armory

The armory is locked; the captain carries the key. The room contains 20 sets of scale mail and close to a hundred melee weapons, including scimitars, axes, pikes, and a smattering of exotic oriental weapons.

11. Cargo Hold

Ideally, this large room would be filled to the brim with looted treasure. Sadly for the pirates, the long voyage across the Eastern Ocean has not provided many rich targets and so the cargo hold contains only a few large wooden crates of common trade goods (yet still worth a total of 1,500 gp).

12. Crew Quarters

The resting-place of crew when they are not otherwise occupied with work. There are typically 1d8 sailors here; either sleeping, gambling or arguing.

13. Officer's Quarters

Behind a locked door, this room offers some privacy to the ship's officers, including the first and second mates, the navigator and the master carpenter. They are rarely all here at the same time, even at night.

14. Storage

This chamber contains extra space for various maritime equipment, such as ropes, hooks, weights, torches, water tanks, bells and whistles, and even some primitive diving equipment.

15. Prison

The small prison holds Airun of Khora (Male Decadent Fighter 4), the captured second mate of the *Two-Headed Bull*, a rival pirate vessel based in the Isles of the Sea Reavers. Airun has been tortured to reveal the secrets of navigating the treacherous reefs around the Silver Lotus Isles. He is smarting for revenge against Li Fan and his crew.

The Shrine of the Frog-Thing

Those that penetrate the heavy jungle vegetation in the middle of the island discover a tranquil, weirdly silent valley. Further into that vale are the weathered remains of a moss-grown stone wall, broken and fallen in several places. The wall surrounds a great courtyard. Tall grass grows between the cracked flagstones, and a half-ruined, circular building with multiple arched entrances stands within the courtyard.

In the courtyard are half a dozen life-like stone statues of human women (marked with stars on the map). Though the statues are weathered and broken, and the ground is littered with pieces of stone, traces of the excellent original craftsman-



ship are still evident. The statues are Yar-Ammonite in style and the women resemble priestesses. The petrified possessions of each woman includes an ornate golden necklace in the shape of a leering frog (worth 500 gp, if restored from stone to gold).

“They stood in a great hall, whose floor was of polished stone, littered with dust and broken stones, which had fallen from the ceiling. Vines, growing between the stones, masked the apertures. The lofty roof, flat and undomed, was upheld by thick columns, marching in rows down the sides of the walls. And in each space between these columns stood a strange figure...”

— Robert E. Howard: *Iron Shadows in the Moon*

Lurking in the tall grass and behind blocks of fallen walls is a flock of 12 cockatrices. They have brightly colored wings, a reptilian tail, and a head resembling a rooster.

As these reptilian parrots rush to attack intruders, they emit high-pitched squawks that sound eerily like human speech. The phrase “*xa nadul ia yadulama!*” can clearly be heard, repeated by all the creatures in a cacophony of cackling and squawking.

COCKATRICE (12) **CR 3**

XP 800 each
hp 27 each (Pathfinder Bestiary)

The archways lead into a great chamber with a huge statue of a tentacled, three-eyed amphibian thing with a large gaping mouth. A successful Knowledge (religion) check (DC 12) suggests that this is an idol of Yibboth, the sacred toad of Fakhuum, whose priests are reputed to worship a golden “frog-thing” as well as all manner of aquatic lizards and toads.

The frogemoth statue is surrounded by another half dozen female statues similar to those in the courtyard.

It is possible to crawl into the mouth of the statue. In that small hollow (a 5-foot cube) is an alcove with a clutch of six cockatrice eggs. An egg may be removed, but doing so without replacing its weight in the alcove causes a trapdoor to unlock and drop the egg-stealer down into an acid-filled pit beneath the statue.

ACID PIT TRAP **CR 4**

XP 1,200
Type mechanical; **Perception** DC 25; **Disable Device** DC 20

EFFECTS

Trigger location; **Reset** manual

Effect 30-ft. deep pit (3d6 falling damage) filled with acid (2d4 acid damage per round in the pit, and for 4 rounds after leaving the pit), DC 20 Reflex avoids

Development: After defeating the cockatrices, the PCs might want to restore the statues to retrieve the golden necklaces. In addition to regular means such as *stone to flesh* spells, a successful Knowledge (religion) check (DC 16) reveals that all statues would be immediately restored to flesh if a ritual of blood sacrifice is performed in front of the idol of Yibboth. If the statues are somehow restored to flesh, the ancient priestesses thank the PCs and offer them rewards.

Each player character is offered a golden necklace from a priestess. Should a PC accept the offer and place the necklace around his neck, he becomes bonded to the idol (see the Idol Bonded special quality) while the priestess is freed from the bond. The player character does not gain any other special abilities of a true Daughter of Yibboth from the necklace. The bonding to the idol will not be immediately apparent, and revealed only when a PC tries to leave the area. The necklace can only be removed if another creature willingly accepts it, or by a successful *break enchantment* spell (caster level 16).

Leadership among the women is divided between Ti-Ya, a dusky beauty with cold green eyes, and Na-Ke-Nu, who is voluptuous and pale-skinned with purple tattoos on her thighs. The two women hate each other, a fact which might be exploited by clever player characters.

Destroying the frogemoth idol is possible (900 hp, hardness 8, Break DC 65) and immediately kills any creatures bonded to the idol (and any such bonded creatures will therefore fight desperately to resist the destruction of the idol). However, breaking the idol also triggers a local earthquake within 1d10 rounds (with effects as per the *earthquake* spell). Furthermore, 1d4 hours later, a much stronger quake rips apart the whole North Isle and submerges most of it beneath slimy water. Sailors will avoid the area in the future, saying the waters are cursed by Yibboth.

DAUGHTERS OF YIBBOTH (12) **CR 3**

XP 800 each
hp 27 each (New monsters appendix)

The Swamp Isle

This island is situated due east of the Main Isle. It has large wetlands with swamp and mangrove forest to the west and south, with semi-jungled hills rising in the north and east.

The Swamp Isle and its main feature, the Temple of the Slugs, is further detailed in Chapter 4.

Special Attacks Bomb 2d6

Spells Prepared Spell DC 14 + spell level

3rd (2/day)—*dispel magic, twilight knife*

2nd (3/day)—*feast of ashes, hold person, vomit swarm*

1st (8/day)—*beguiling gift, burning hands, mage armor, sleep*

0 (4/day)—*bleed, guidance, message, stabilize*

TACTICS

Before Combat Precast *mage armor*.

During Combat Attack with *sleep* spell and/or *slumber* hex, then *hold person* on strongest opponent.

STATISTICS

Str 10, **Dex** 12, **Con** 10, **Int** 18, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 12

Base Atk +4; **CMB** +3; **CMD** 14

Feats Dodge, Improved Initiative, Extra Hex (Evil Eye), Spell Focus (Enchantment)

Skills Craft (alchemy) +15, Heal +13, Intimidate +12, Knowledge (arcana) +15, Knowledge (nature) +15, Spellcraft +15

SQ Sturdy, Feral, Superstitious, Cantrips, Hex (Cauldron), Witch's Familiar (Bat), Hex (Healing), Hex (Slumber), Patron Spells (Charm Animals, Speak with Animals), Alchemy, Brew Potion, Discovery, Poison Resistance +2, Swift Alchemy

Combat Gear Quarterstaff, Blowgun; **Other Gear** two flasks of alchemist's fire, one vial of antitoxin, one smokestick, one dose of vermin repellent, one dose of Kaava musk, three doses of Silver Lotus, two doses of Djaka poison

Living among the pygmies of the village is Ugar, an old Ghazorite sailor, who speaks Zadjite and Djaka and acts as the interpreter and translator for Tiku and a guide and pilot for Zadjite merchant vessels approaching the village. Ugar is thin and gaunt, with yellowed teeth and an unkempt white beard that he constantly strokes.

Ugar is secretly possessed by the ancient spirit of Iwai, one of the four chieftain-kings of the Nameless City. Ten years ago, Ugar the sailor was part of a band of Ghazorite sailors and buccaneers that came to the island. The motley band went up to the plateau on the Forbidden Mountain; by this time there were two winged guardians left in the ruins of the city. After a battle that left more than half of them dead, the Ghazorites managed to slay one of the guardians and drive away the other. The sailors found several of the rainbow stones and used them to open the crypt of the chieftain-kings of old.

But unknown to all, the spirit of the chieftain-king Iwai haunted the crypt and possessed Ugar. As the pirates prepared to leave with the treasures of the crypt, the winged guardian returned and slew everyone except Ugar, who fled to the Djaka village of Barana. Under the influence of Iwai, Ugar became a henchman of Tiku and slowly over the coming years built trust with the chieftain. Ugar/Iwai now attempts to use Tiku's greed to convince the pygmy king to break the old taboos and return to the Forbidden Mountain to collect the rainbow stones.

UGAR THE OLD SAILOR **CR 6**

XP 2,400

Male Nomadic Rogue (Scout) 7

N Medium humanoid (Ghazorite)

Init +8; **Senses** Perception +11

DEFENSE

AC 18, touch 15, flat-footed 13 (+3 studded leather, +4 Dex, +1 Dodge)

hp 42 (7d8+7)

Fort +3, **Ref** +9, **Will** +5

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.

Melee Handaxe +9 (1d6+2, 20/x3, finesse)

Ranged Dagger +9 ranged (1d4+2, 19-20/x2, range increment 10 ft.)

Special Attacks sneak attack +4d6, scout's charge

STATISTICS

Str 15, **Dex** 18, **Con** 12, **Int** 10, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 15

Base Atk +5; **CMB** +7; **CMD** 21

Feats Deceitful, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Iron Will (b), Weapon Finesse

Skills Acrobatics +14, Bluff +14, Climb +12, Escape Artist +14, Linguistics +10, Perception +11, Profession (sailor) +11, Sleight of Hand +14, Stealth +14

SQ Proud, Unpredictable, Bowlegged, Trapfinding, Evasion, Trap Sense +2, Rogue Talent (Fast Getaway), Rogue Talent (Honeyed Words), Rogue Talent (Befuddling Strike)

Combat Gear handaxe, dagger, studded leather; **Other Gear** gold necklace (worth 270 gp) and cloak of blue silk trimmed with silver (worth 80 gp), three doses of Silver Lotus

Special Notes Ugar is currently possessed by a haunt (see Chapter 5 for more information). He suffers from moderate addiction to Silver Lotus.

The Warrens

The warrens of the Pygmy King are filled with traps, pits, dead ends and secret tunnels. Only creatures of Small size or smaller can move normally through the corridors; others must squeeze.

Tiku the Pygmy King holds court in the hill east of the village, while the shaman Batutu dwells in the warrens to the west.

West Hill

W1. Entrance

Two pygmy warriors stand guard at each side of a stout wooden door (2 inches thick, 20 hp, hardness 5) with arrow slits (archers behind arrow slits have improved cover that gives them a +8 bonus to Armor Class, a +4 bonus on Reflex saves, and the benefits of the improved evasion class feature). The door can be barred (Break DC 25). In case of an alarm, the warriors outside withdraw behind the doors and the pygmies fire their poisoned arrows through the arrow slits.

BARANA PYGMY WARRIORS (2) **CR 1**

XP 400 each

Male Savage Ranger 2

N Small humanoid (Djaka)

Init +2; **Senses** Perception +8

DEFENSE

AC 18, touch 13, flat-footed 16 (+4 hide armor, +2 Dex, +1 size, +1 natural)

hp 19 (2d10+4)

Fort +5, **Ref** +5, **Will** +1

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.

Melee Shortspear +6 (1d4+4, 20/x2)

Ranged Shortbow +6 (1d4 plus poison, 20/x3, range increment 60 ft.)

STATISTICS

Str 16, **Dex** 14, **Con** 14, **Int** 10, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +2; **CMB** +4; **CMD** 16

XP4: Land of the Silver Lotus

Feats Point-Blank Shot, Poison Use (b)

Skills Climb +8, Intimidate +5, Knowledge (nature) +5,
Perception +8, Stealth +11, Survival +6

SQ Sturdy, Feral, Superstitious, Track, Wild Empathy

Combat Gear shortspear, shortbow, hide armor, 3 doses of silver lotus poison

W2. Primitive Laboratory and Fetish-Room

The wooden shelves of this chamber are filled with all manner of shamanistic fetishes, batches of dried herbs, exotic bird feathers, clay jars filled with crushed insects and powdered monkey bones, bird eggs of various sizes and colors, and collections of weirdly shaped rocks and wooden sticks.

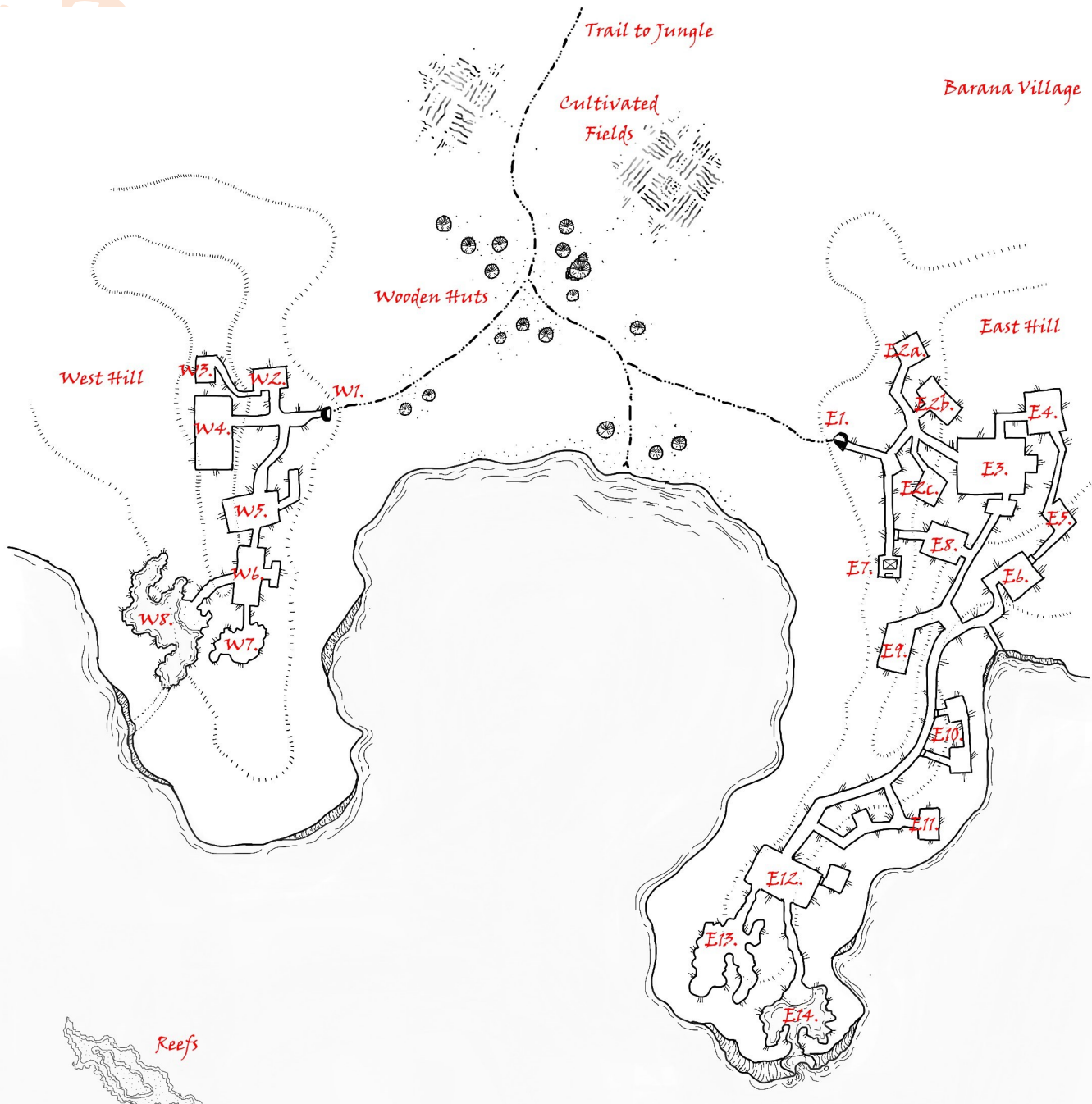
On the floor are several fireplaces ringed by stones, used by Batutu to brew his potions, extracts, poisons and antidotes. Among the items are 10 potions of *cure moderate wounds*, 5 doses of silver lotus poison, one *elixir of love*, and 5 doses of antitoxin.

W3. Shaman's Quarters and Ancestor Shrine

This private chamber is furnished with a small chair, a worn wooden table, and a filthy sleeping-mat.

Placed atop a low stone bench is a small collection of shrunken heads of the ancestors, which can be used for *augury* once per day, *divination* once per week, and *speak with dead* once every full moon; the collection includes the withered head of Bara, the progenitor of the Barana tribe and one of the pygmy twins who stole some of the rainbow stones from Kwalu, as detailed in the introduction to Chapter 5.

If the shrunken heads are damaged or destroyed, the ghosts of the ancestors are released; Bara has the statistics of a wraith and each of the other skulls releases a shadow (up to a maximum of 8 shadows). The spirits immediately attack those that damaged the heads, but fade after 10 rounds.



W4. Barracks

These barracks belong to pygmy warriors loyal to the shaman. However, one of the warriors is a spy that reports to Tiku the Pygmy King. His name is Sutu and he has identical stats to the other pygmy warriors, but has maximum hit points. There are a total of 12 pygmy warriors here, with statistics identical to those in area W1.

W5. Hall with Hidden Portcullises

A lever in the secret chamber to the east can be pulled to release, or raise, a set of wooden portcullises (3 inches thick, 30 hp, hardness 5, Break DC 25, Lift DC 25) that seal the two entrances to this hall. Contained intruders are then pelted with poisoned arrows through the portcullises.

W6. Hall with Dead-End Trapped Door

Those who try to open the false door at the end of this hall trigger a javelin trap. The javelins drop from small holes in the ceiling and all creatures in the corridor are targeted by one javelin each.

JAVELIN TRAP **CR 2**

XP 600

Type mechanical; **Perception** DC 20; **Disable Device** DC 20

EFFECTS

Trigger location; **Reset** manual

Effect attack +15 ranged (1d6+6)

W7. Storage

This natural cavern contains baskets of dried food, clay jars filled with freshwater, and piles of coconuts. There is enough food here to feed the whole village for several weeks.

W8. Underground Pool and Underwater Tunnel

Most of this grotto is filled with water. Several canoes are moored to the ground near the tunnel to the north. Another tunnel in the south end of the grotto leads to a narrow opening to the the open sea. The tunnel exit is well-camouflaged on the outside.

East Hill

E1. Entrance

The main entrance to the Pygmy King's hill is guarded by four pygmy warriors. Heaps of rocks are piled 5 feet high outside the tunnel entrance; these grant the guards cover against missile attacks. The heavy wooden door (same statistics as area W1) is set 15 feet inside the entry tunnel. Four more warriors stand guard behind the door.

E2. Guardrooms (A, B, C)

Each of these rooms house six pygmy warriors, the Pygmy King's personal guard. They are all loyal mostly out of fear, and will be quick to surrender (and change allegiances) if Tiku is defeated or slain.

E3. Hall of the Pygmy King

In his underground hall, King Tiku sits on a tall (for him) throne, which has been carved from the skull of a giant sloth. The throne and the floor is covered with rugs of monkey fur. Tiku is surrounded by his harem of young slave girls, while "big" (that is, medium-sized) visitors are forced to stoop under the low roof, an indignity that Tiku enjoys to inflict.

Tiku often revels in barbaric splendor, devouring dishes of monkey meat, fried lizards, and cooked eggs of the Nirra-bird, all guzzled down with imported Ghazorite wine, while watching his concubines dance suggestively to the slow beating of tribal drums.

E4. Harem

A collection of very young slave girls dwell in these cramped quarters. The girls have been purchased from agents of the Slave Sultans of Al-Qazir and delivered to Tiku via merchant-captains of Iraab. There are currently four Zadjites, two Yar-Ammonites, one Azimban and one Nabastissean girl here. When the girls become too old for Tiku's taste they are taken out into the jungle and disposed of.

The Pygmy King's current favorite is actually the oldest of the lot, one Nadira, a raven-haired girl formerly of Khariya. Nadira actually enjoys her current position and fantasizes about becoming the "Queen" of Barana (believing herself special, she doesn't realize that Tiku will soon tire of her). Nadira is wily and sadistic and is often found in area E11 where she can harass and torture her younger rivals among the harem girls for imagined slights and baseless accusations. If she were to lose the protection of Tiku (either through his eventual disinterest, his fall from power, or his death), she would use her wiles and tender age to maximum effect to gain a new protector that she can manipulate. Player characters beware!

E5. Treasury

Tiku has hidden away his treasures in this room, behind strong wooden doors with good metal locks (DC 25). Inside half a dozen locked wooden chests are the following items: 48 bottles of fine Ghazorite wine (worth 25 gp each), a selection of Zadjite steel swords and daggers (worth 1,500 gp in total), four pearl necklaces (worth 200 gp each) and 16 pearl earrings (worth 50 gp each), a Yar-Ammonite goddess figurine carved from ivory (worth 500 gp) and six gold rings (worth 250 gp each).

XP4: Land of the Silver Lotus

E6. Storage

The storage room contains 20 giant sloth pelts (worth 100 gp each), six bags of exotic bird feathers (worth 75 gp each), and 200 large planks of fine teak wood suitable for boat-building and furniture (worth 10 gp each).

E7. Trapped Dead-End

There is a false door in this room, and a concealed pit trap in front of the door.

CONCEALED PIT TRAP **CR 3**

XP 800

Type mechanical; **Perception** DC 25; **Disable Device** DC 20

EFFECTS

Trigger location; **Reset** manual

Effect 30-ft.-deep pit (3d6 falling damage); DC 20 Reflex avoids; all targets in a 10-ft.-square area

E8. Trapped Hall

The ceiling of this hall is rigged with a falling stone block trap. The trap's trigger is a thin tripwire which is only set up if trouble is expected, otherwise the room is safe to pass through.

FALLING BLOCK TRAP **CR 5**

XP 1,600

Type mechanical; **Perception** DC 20; **Disable Device** DC 20

EFFECTS

Trigger location; **Reset** manual

Effect attack +15 melee (6d6); all targets in a 10-ft.-square area

E9. Ugar's Residence

This is the dwelling of Ugar, the old Ghazorite sailor who acts as Tiku's interpreter. The old man's room is filthy and contains little of value except a trove of Silver Lotus drugs (6 doses) hidden in the wall (Perception DC 20).

Ugar has two pygmy warrior bodyguards; one of these (Nigu) is a spy working for Batutu, who suspects that Ugar has some evil secret, but has so far not been able to discover what it is.

E10. Prison Pits

The cells currently contain three captured warriors from the swamp-dwelling X'urana pygmy tribe, a Zadjite merchant named Irrhim that tried to cheat Tiku by paying for goods with glass baubles instead of gems, and two silent Yar-Ammonite priests who were shipwrecked on the island during a sea voyage.

Each prisoner is bound with jungle ropes and placed at the bottom of a 20 feet deep pit. Four pygmy warriors guard the prison and occasionally throw scraps of food down to the captives.

E11. Snake Pit

This circular pit is 10 feet in diameter and 20 feet deep. The edges of the pit have been greased with warthog fat to make climbing near-impossible. The bottom of the pit is crawling with a swarm of poisonous green snakes.

SNAKE SWARM **CR 2**

XP 600

hp 16 (Pathfinder Bestiary 3)

There is a 50% chance to encounter the concubine Nadira here, punishing one of the other harem-girls based on some false accusation.

E12. Storage

This chamber has wooden crates filled with dried fruits, cured meats and dried fish. All villagers are required to donate food to this storage, to be redistributed at the King's discretion in times of crisis and need.

E13. Secret Cavern

The existence of this cavern is known only to Tiku and (unknown to Tiku) also to Nadira. A Perception (DC 25) check is required to find the concealed passage from area E12. There is a small cache of weapons and dried food in one corner of the cavern.

E14. Underground Pool and Secret Escape Tunnel

The tunnel leads south to a cavern mostly flooded by seawater. Roughly 15 feet below the surface of the water, at the far edge of the pool, is another tunnel that leads out to sea. There is a 50% chance of encountering a crab swarm in this area.

CRAB SWARM **CR 4**

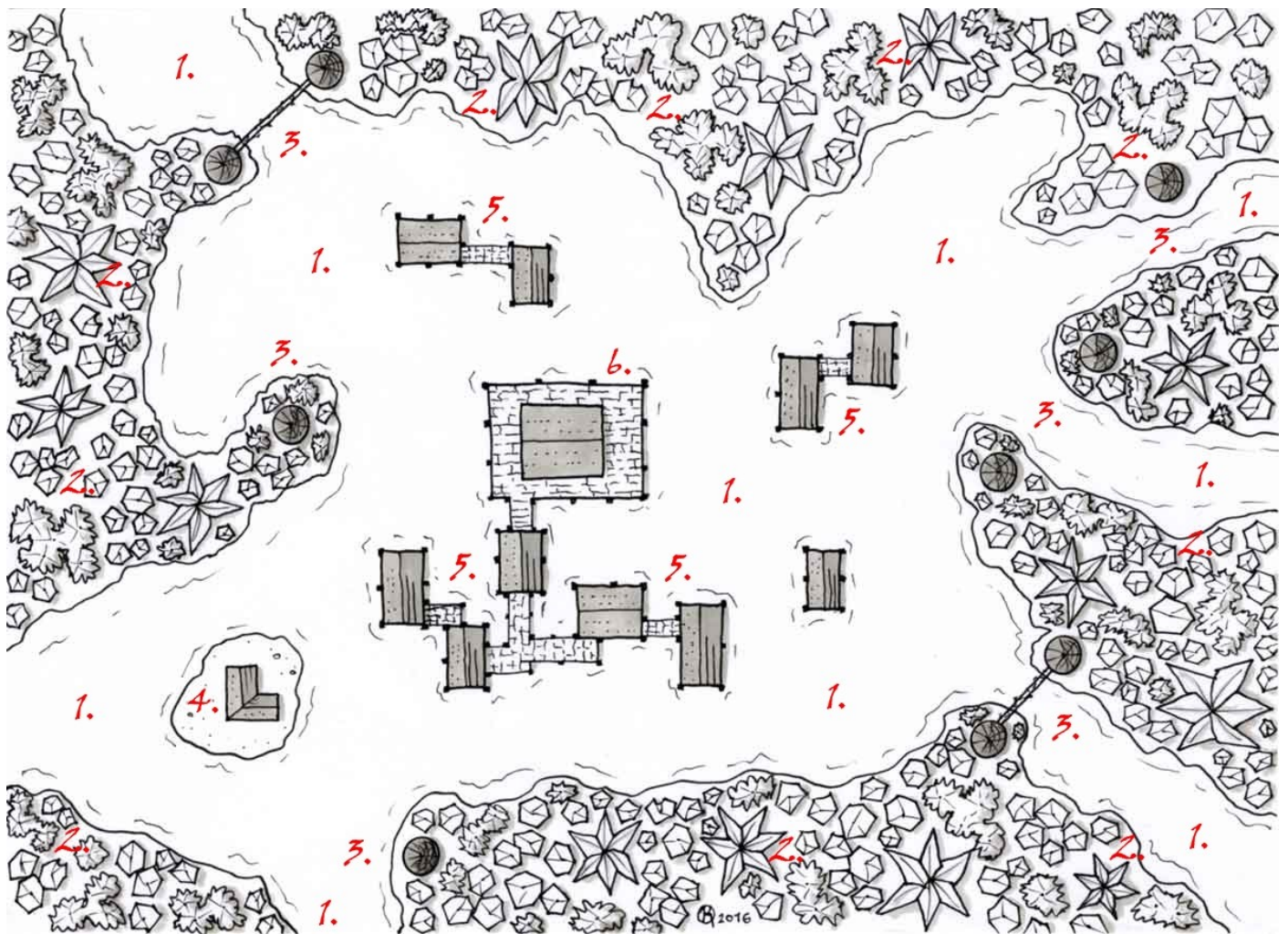
XP 1,200

hp 38 (Pathfinder Bestiary)

“On an ivory stool, flanked by giants in plumed head-pieces and leopard-skin girdles, sat a fat, squat shape, abysmal, repulsive, a toad-like chunk of blackness, reeking of the dank rotting jungle and the nighted swamps. The creature’s pudgy hands rested on the sleek arch of his belly; his nape was a roll of sooty fat that seemed to thrust his bullet head forward. His eyes gleamed in the firelight, like live coals in a dead black stump. Their appalling vitality belied the inert suggestion of the gross body.”

– Robert E. Howard: *The Vale of Lost Women*





2. Quicksand Pits

Several patches of quicksand provide a deadly natural barrier around the swamp pygmy village.

Patches of quicksand present a deceptively solid appearance (appearing as undergrowth or open land) that might trap careless characters. A character approaching a patch of quicksand at a normal pace is entitled to a DC 8 Survival check to spot the danger before stepping in, but charging or running characters don't have a chance to detect a hidden patch before blundering into it. A typical patch of quicksand is 20 feet in diameter; the momentum of a charging or running character carries him 1d2 × 5 feet into the quicksand.

Effects of Quicksand: Characters in quicksand must make a DC 10 Swim check every round to simply tread water in place, or a DC 15 Swim check to move 5 feet in whatever direction is desired. If a trapped character fails this check by 5 or more, he sinks below the surface and begins to drown whenever he can no longer hold his breath (see the Swim skill description in Using Skills).

Characters below the surface of quicksand may swim back to the surface with a successful Swim check (DC 15, +1 per consecutive round of being under the surface).

Rescue: Pulling out a character trapped in quicksand can be difficult. A rescuer needs a branch, spear haft, rope, or similar tool that enables him to reach the victim with one end of it. Then he must make a DC 15 Strength check to successfully pull the victim, and the victim must make a DC 10

Strength check to hold onto the branch, pole, or rope. If both checks succeed, the victim is pulled 5 feet closer to safety. If the victim fails to hold on, he must make a DC 15 Swim check immediately to stay above the surface.

3. Tree Watchpost

Several concealed watchposts are placed in the treetops around the village. From these vantage positions the pygmies communicate with each other (and with their ruler) using bird cries. A successful Knowledge (nature) check (DC 15) allows a character to realize that the sounds are imitations rather than real bird cries.

X'URANA PYGMY WARRIORS (1-6)

CR 2

XP 600 each

Male Savage Rogue (Scout) 3

N Small humanoid (Djaka)

Init +3 (+3 Dex); **Senses** Perception +6

DEFENSE

AC 18, touch 14, flat-footed 15 (+3 studded leather, +3 Dex, +1 size, +1 natural)

hp 23 (3d8+6)

Fort +3, **Ref** +6, **Will** +1

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.

Melee Club +5 (1d4+3, 20/x2)

Ranged Blowgun +6 (3 plus poison, 20/x2, range increment 20 ft.)

XP4: Land of the Silver Lotus

STATISTICS

Str 14, **Dex** 16, **Con** 14, **Int** 10, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 12

Base Atk +2; **CMB** +3; **CMD** 16

Feats Point Blank Shot, Stealthy, Poison Use (b)

Skills Acrobatics +9, Climb +8, Disguise +7, Escape Artist +9, Knowledge (local) +6, Perception +6, Stealth +13, Swim +8

SQ Sturdy, Feral, Superstitious, Trapfinding, Evasion, Rogue Talent (Surprise Attack), Trap Sense +1, Hold Breath

Combat Gear club, blowgun, studded leather, three doses of silver lotus poison; **Other Gear** bone necklace (worth 5 gp)

The lookouts try to stay hidden and continue spying on intruders as long as possible, but if a general alarm has been raised (via fake bird cries), the lookouts start a surprise attack by throwing buckets filled with crabs down on passing canoes. Then the pygmies continue their attack using blowpipes.

CRAB SWARM (VARIABLE) **CR 4**

XP 1,200 each

hp 38 (Pathfinder Bestiary)

4. Prison Island

On this small island is a prison hut. Current captives include Izana, the daughter of a rich Zadjite merchant, and Korun, a man who claims to be a sailor but who is really a Sea Reaver pirate and a thief (and a terrible drunkard, too). The prisoners are bound, but there are no guards, as no one would dare an escape through the crocodile-infested swamp lake.

5. Tribal Huts

The swamp pygmies live in these communal thatched huts, each rising out of the murky swamp water on stilts of sturdy wood. The huts are connected to each other with rope bridges made from jungle lianas. Each hut houses around 30 adult pygmies (with statistics as per area 3), stores of food (fish, turtle eggs, berries) and weapons (bows and arrows, blowpipes and darts). Inside bags of reptile-skin are smokesticks made from special jungle wood that can be burned to keep away mosquitoes and stirges.



6. Witch-House

The Great House of the swamp village is the dwelling of the old crone Y'xatu, the witch-doctor of the tribe. The house itself rests on a wooden platform raised 20 feet above the swamp water on massive, slimy stilts. The exterior of the hut is decorated with bird skeletons, exotic flowers and dried reptile skins.

A giant dragonfly controlled by Y'xatu hides in the foliage above the hut and swoops down to attack intruders.

GIANT DRAGONFLY **CR 4**

XP 1,200

hp 45 (Pathfinder Bestiary 2)

Hidden in the shadows of the house are half a dozen swamp zombies that attempt to push opponents back into the water where their brethren can finish them off.

SWAMP [JUJU] ZOMBIES (6) **CR 2**

XP 600 each

hp 15 each (Pathfinder Bestiary 2)

The entrance is flanked by clusters of skulls painted yellow and black. Inside the witch-hut is a great open space with a grim stone altar, faintly illuminated by flickering torches, upon which is lined a row of six weathered skulls. The skulls are trapped and explode in a burst of bone fragments and flame if moved in the wrong sequence (the proper sequence is known only to the hag queen).

EXPLODING SKULLS TRAP **CR 5**

XP 1,600

Type mechanical; **Perception** DC 20; **Disable Device** DC 20

EFFECTS

Trigger touch; **Reset** none

Effect explosion (6d6+6 bone and fire damage); DC 14 Reflex save for half damage; all targets in a 20-ft.-radius burst

A hidden compartment (Perception DC 20) inside the altar contains 20 doses of dried silver lotus leaves, a bag of exotic bird feathers (worth 250 gp), a wooden box with 48 yellow berries (each functions as a *goodberry* with no expiration date), and a crocodile-skin pouch containing 99 perfect white pearls (worth 100 gp each).

Y'xatu herself dwells in a dirty corner of the hut. She carries a ritual bone dagger (a +3 *ghost touch* dagger) and the *dread drums of the swamp* (see the chapter opening for details of this magic item). The true form of the hag is old and wrinkled, with pale mottled skin like that of a toad, but she often uses her sorcery to appear as a young and beautiful woman. Regardless of her shape, the hag retains her cold, reptilian eyes.

Y'XATU, HAG QUEEN OF THE X'URANA **CR 5**

XP 1,600

N Medium monstrous humanoid

Init +1; **Senses** darkvision 90 ft.; **Senses** Perception +15

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 11, flat-footed 18 (+1 Dex, +8 natural)

hp 58 (9d10+9)

Fort +6, **Ref** +7, **Will** +7

SR 16

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., swim 30 ft.

Melee 2 claws +13 (1d4+4 plus weakness) or ritual dagger +16/+11 (1d4+7, ghost touch)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 9th)

Constant—*pass without trace*, *speaking with animals*, *water breathing*
 At will—*alter self*, *charm animal*, *dancing lights*, *ghost sound* (DC 12),
tree shape, *whispering wind*

STATISTICS

Str 19, **Dex** 12, **Con** 12, **Int** 15, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 14

Base Atk +9; **CMB** +13; **CMD** 24

Feats Alertness, Blind-Fight, Combat Casting, Deceitful, Great Fortitude

Skills Bluff +13, Disguise +13, Knowledge (arcana) +11, Perception +15, Sense Motive +9, Stealth +13, Swim +18

SQ mimicry

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Weakness (Su) Y'xatu's claws sap strength from those she strikes. Each time Y'xatu hits a foe with her claw attack, the victim takes 2 points of Strength damage unless he resists the weakness with a DC 16 Fortitude save. Alternatively, Y'xatu can attempt to inflict even greater weakness on a foe by making a touch attack — this variant requires a standard action, and cannot be attempted in the same round Y'xatu makes claw attacks. The opponent touched must succeed on a DC 16 Fortitude save or take 2d4 points of Strength damage. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Mimicry (Ex) Y'xatu can imitate the sounds of almost any animal found near its lair.

SPIRIT-SNAKE FAMILIAR

CR 2

XP 600

hp 19 (Pathfinder Bestiary)

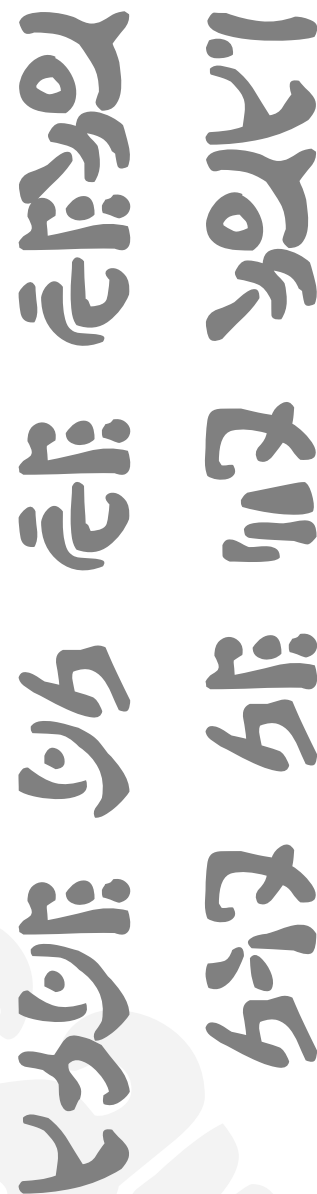
Special Notes Y'xatu's familiar is a mottled yellow serpent that coils around the wrinkled, flabby skin of the crone. Normally, it has the statistics of a constrictor snake (CR 2), but once per day for up to 10 rounds, the snake can turn into a spirit-snake with stats equal to a wraith (like a wraith, it is powerless in sunlight). The spirit-snake does not have the create spawn ability.

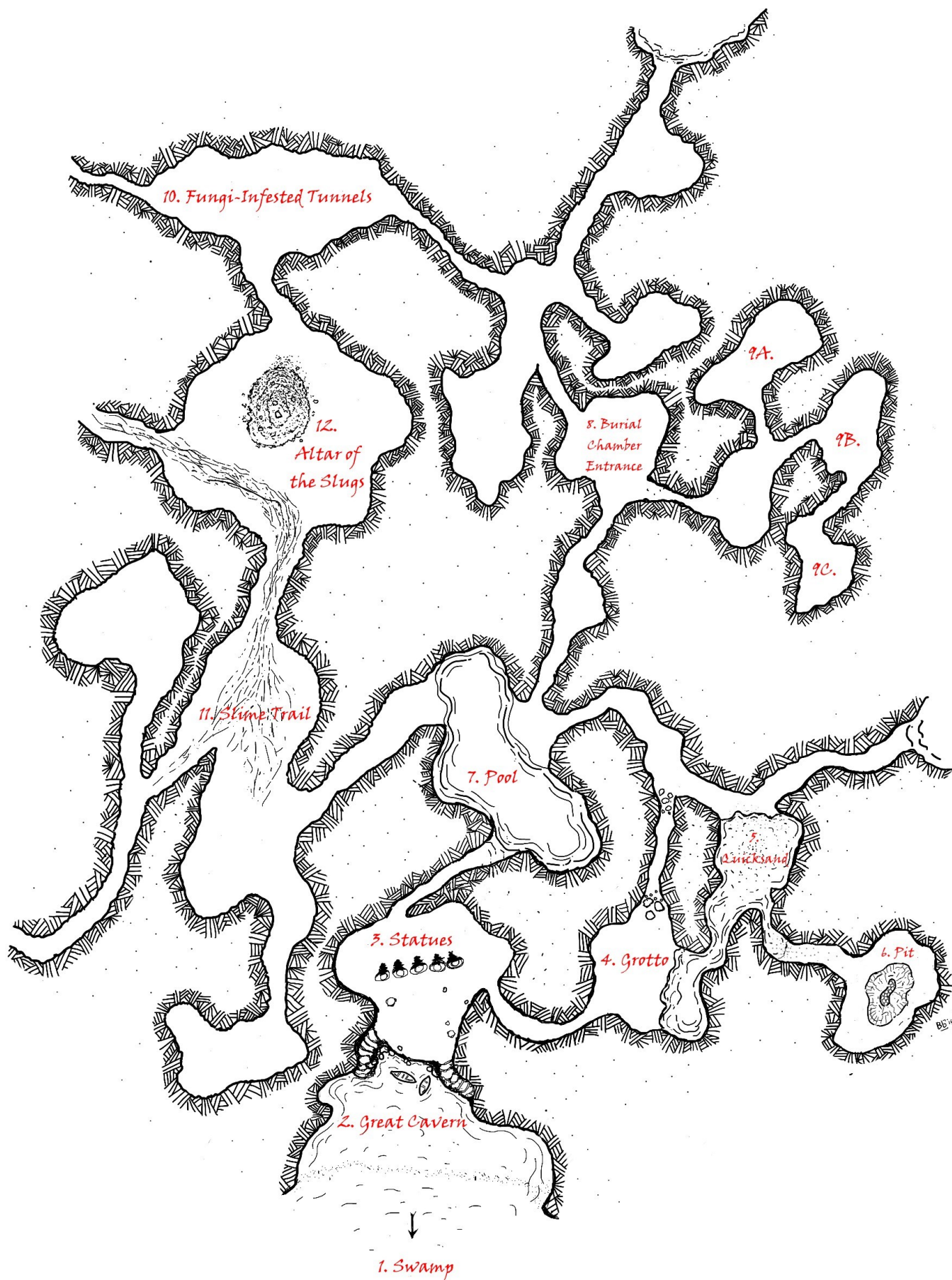
Development: The X'urana village plays no direct part in the default adventure outline as described in the introductory chapter, but it might come into play in various ways in a sandbox game. Here are some ideas:

- The PCs may discover the village by exploration.
- The PCs may have a random encounter with swamp Djaka and follow the pygmies back to the village, either as friends or foes depending on the outcome of the encounter.
- The PCs may learn of the hag's hidden trove of pearls and decide to raid the village.
- The PCs may seek to free a prisoner held in the village.
- The PCs may have allied with Tiku the Pygmy King of Barana (or perhaps the Taikangian pirates) for an attack on the village.

The hag Y'xatu is not necessarily a foe to be defeated. She can also be a useful ally, providing information, assistance, or even warriors and guides to protect and escort the PCs. She speaks at will to animals and knows much of what happens in the swamp and beyond. She is also old and knowledgeable about the Forbidden Mountain and the Nameless City, as well as the background history of Kwalu the Rainbow-Stealer and how to destroy him permanently by throwing the Rainbow Stones into the great waterfall (see area 8 in Chapter 6).

The price of Y'xatu's cooperation is steep, however. She desires a night with the player character with the highest Charisma score (who must also be male and at least size category Medium). Whether the old crone uses *alter self* to turn into a form more pleasing to the eye during the mating depends on the negotiation skills of the PCs...





XP4: Land of the Silver Lotus

The fanatical guardians of the cave-temple are a group of lesser druids who originally held sway in the X'urana village, but were deposed when Y'xatu the crone came to power in the village.

The priests now dwell in and around the temple and plan their revenge against Y'xatu.

PYGMY PRIESTS OF THE SLUG-GODS (5-8) CR 4

XP 1,200 each

Male Savage Druid (Swamp Druid) 5

N Small humanoid (Djaka)

Init +1 (+1 Dex)

DEFENSE

AC 18, touch 13, flat-footed 16 (+4 hide armor, +1 Dex, +1 Dodge, +1 size, +1 natural)

hp 41 (5d8+15)

Fort +6, **Ref** +2, **Will** +7

OFFENSE

Speed 15 ft.

Melee Club +4 (1d4, 20/x2)

Ranged Dart +5 (1d3, 20/x2, range increment 20 ft.)

Spells Prepared Spell DC 13 + spell level

3rd — *contagion*, *nature's exile*

2nd — *barkskin*, *summon swarm*, *warp wood*

1st — *entangle*, *longstrider*, *obscuring mist*, *shillelagh*

0 — *guidance*, *light*, *resistance*, *stabilize*

STATISTICS

Str 10, **Dex** 12, **Con** 14, **Int** 10, **Wis** 16, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +2; **CMD** 13

Feats Combat Casting, Dodge, Toughness

Skills Heal +11, Knowledge (nature) +8, Spellcraft +8, Survival +11

SQ Sturdy, Feral, Superstitious, Nature Bond, Nature Sense, Orisons, Wild Empathy, Marshwright, Swamp Strider, Pond Scum

Combat Gear club, dart, hide armor; **Other Gear** bag of tobacco, ritual flutes, and *potion of water breathing*

Note that all caverns beyond this point are unlit, and that any light source will attract the slugs.

4. Grotto with Concealed Tunnel

This grotto has a heap of rocks in the northern corner, behind which is a concealed tunnel (Perception DC 15). To the east is a pool of knee-deep, murky water (which costs double movement to move through) that leads to area 5.

5. Quicksand

Shallow water conceals a large patch of quicksand that could prove fatal to cross for the unwary. See area 2 in Chapter 3 for details of the effects of quicksand.

6. Pit

This large hole in the ground contains about thirty slug eggs, each approximately a foot in diameter. Developing embryos can be seen swimming inside the semitransparent eggs. The eggs will eventually hatch and grow into giant slugs.

7. Pool

This cavern is split in two by a large pool of slimy green-brown water. The pool is 50 feet deep. The stagnant water is easy enough to cross (Swim DC 10) on the way in, but may be an unwelcome barrier for those fleeing from a horde of giant leeches (see area 12).

8. Burial Chamber Entrance

This chamber marks the entrance to the burial chambers of the swamp-dwelling pygmies. The walls are painted with primitive scenes of warriors hunting crocodiles, giant turtles and brightly colored birds.

The entrance to area 9 is just big enough for a Small creature; anyone larger must squeeze through and may get stuck (Reflex save DC 15 for each 20 feet crawled, and apply any armor check penalty to this saving throw). Stuck creatures can be pulled out by a helping creature making a Strength check (DC 15); the stuck creature must make a Dexterity check (DC 10) to come along. If both checks succeed, the stuck creature is pulled free; if one or both checks fail, the stuck creature suffers 1d6 points of damage from being dragged against the jagged rocks, and remains stuck.

9. Burial Chambers

The areas marked A and B on the map are similar in appearance. Each is a low-ceilinged burial chamber where several pygmies have been interred. The skeletons are covered with decorative seashells. Small votive figurines carved from fish-bones are placed near each corpse. Each skeleton is protected by a *glyph of warding* that triggers a *bestow curse* spell on those who disturb the bones.

Separated from the other tombs by a large pile of heavy rocks is tomb C, wherein rests the corpse of X'ura, the progenitor of the X'urana tribe. His skin has been naturally preserved by swamp mud, and although his mind and soul is long since departed, his body lives on as a bog mummy. He clutches a +2 *dagger of wounding*, a weapon stolen from an altar in the Nameless City that he used to kill his own brother.

If disturbed, the bog mummy rises to slay the interloper and then returns to its mindless rest.

X'URA (BOG MUMMY) CR 6

XP 2,400

hp 60 (Tome of Horrors Complete)

10. Fungi-Infested Tunnels

The giant slugs feed on fungus and lichens in the deep recesses of these subterranean tunnels. Among the fungi growing here are several groves of violet fungi that pose little danger to the giant slugs, but which most humans would be wise to avoid.

VIOLET FUNGI (3-12) CR 3

XP 800 each

hp 30 each (Pathfinder Bestiary)



11. Slime Trail

The floor of this natural cave tunnel is covered with a thick white slime trail, 15 feet wide. The sticky mucus is considered difficult terrain and may also entangle creatures (as per an *entangle* spell, DC 20). The slime trail remains for 1 hour after the giant slug has passed through the area.

Anyone foolish enough to follow the slime trail to its source faces one or more hungry giant slugs. The swamp-dwelling pygmies would consider it an honor to be consumed by one of their slimy deities, but player characters might feel slightly different about that prospect.

GODS OF THE SWAMP (GIANT SLUGS) (1-2) CR 8

XP 4,800 each

hp 102 each (Pathfinder Bestiary)

12. Altar of the Slugs

The connecting tunnels lead into a huge natural cave. In the center of the cavern is a natural stone mound, 15 feet tall, roughly shaped like a stepped pyramid. The whole room is bathed in weird blue light emanating from three shining gems placed near the apex of the pyramid.

These gems are the blue, indigo and violet rainbow stones of Kwalu, stolen by the twin pygmy brothers and later carried here by X'ura the Kinslayer before his death (see the introduction to chapter 5 for details).

The sides of the pyramid-mound have dozens of small, circular holes, which provide excellent handholds and footholds to climb the mound (Climb DC 10).

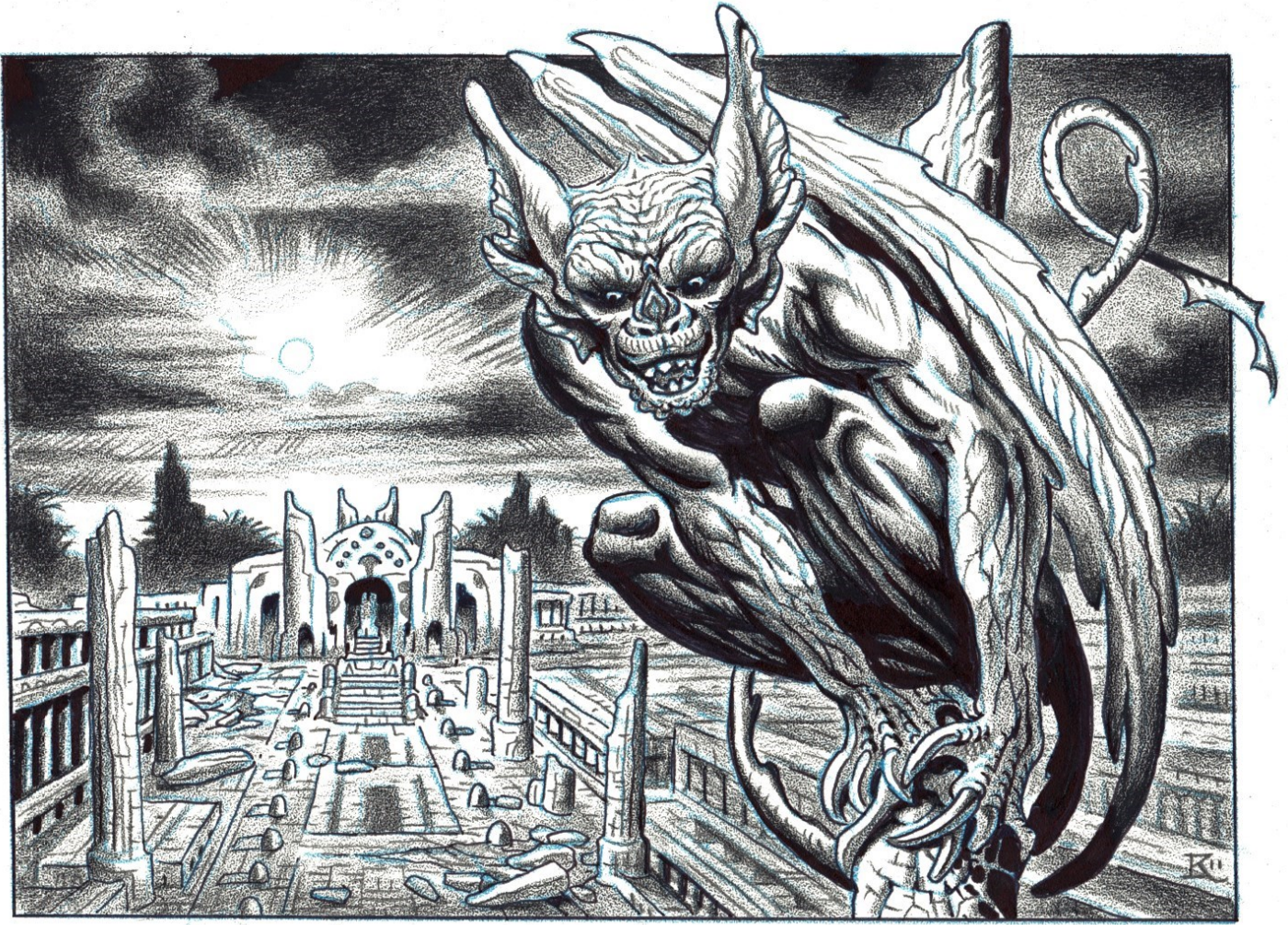
However, as any climber will learn when he has reached the top of the mound, the holes are also home to swarms of repulsive black leeches that emerge from the mound through the holes and quickly surround the whole mound as soon as one of the sacred stones are removed from the top of the mound. In the first round, 4 leech swarms emerge from the mound (one on each side), followed by 1 more swarm per round, up to a maximum of 12 swarms.

The leeches pursue anyone carrying the shining gems as far as the temple entrance (area 2) and even beyond into the swamp (area 1). If the gems are dropped, the leech swarms stop their pursuit and begin the slow process of carrying back the stones to the mound in area 12.

LEECH SWARMS (12) CR 4

XP 1,200 each

hp 39 each (Pathfinder Bestiary)



It did not take long before their entire society became slaves to the lotus and their civilization swiftly collapsed. As the lotus supply dwindled, clans and individuals fought each other for more. The four kings of the city sealed themselves inside Kwalu's domed building with their treasures and their last lotus reserves. As a final defence against their own minions, the kings summoned four winged creatures and bound them by the magic of the rainbow stones to guard their crypts.

Having finally exhausted their supply of lotus inside the dome, the kings starved to death. Only then did they discover the nature of the curse that Kwalu had laid upon them, for the kings were unable to find peace in death. Their souls remain in the crypt, waiting for a day when they can possess a new body and perform the task they must do before they can achieve eternal rest: To gather all the rainbow stones and return them to Kwalu.

The Nameless City and the Winged Guardian

The Nameless City is located on a natural plateau atop the Forbidden Mountain. The Ancients constructed a road paved with stone leading up to the city from the lowlands of the island. Although the flagstones are now cracked and covered by heavy vegetation, it is still possible to discern a path through the wilderness with a successful Survival check (DC 10).

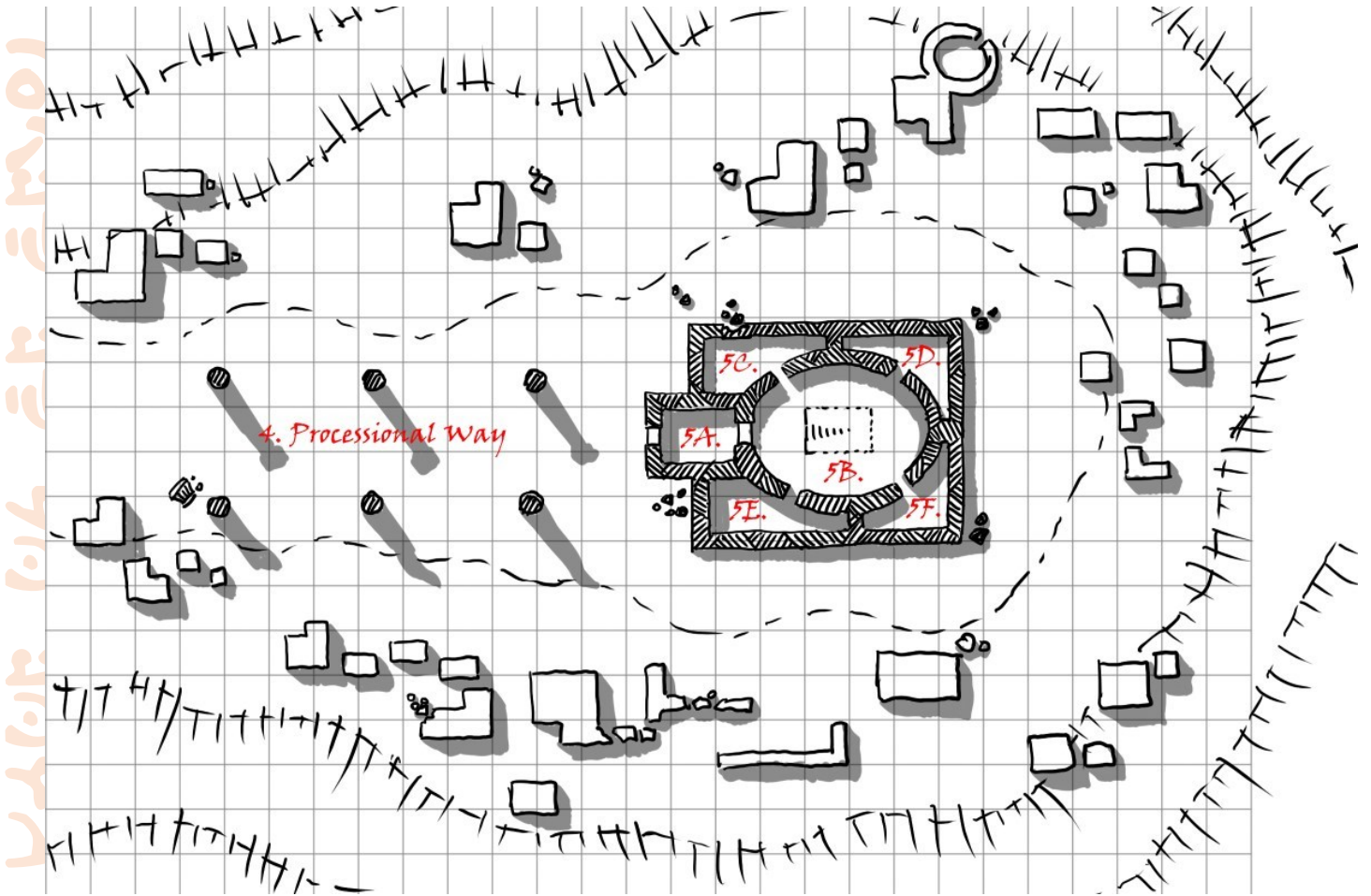
About halfway up the mountain, there is a natural vantage point where one can overlook the Silver Isles archipelago to the east. With a successful Perception check (DC 15) it is possible to spot a Taikangian junk that has been dragged up on the beach of a jungle bay on the small island to the northeast (assuming the Taikangian pirates are still there, see Chapter 1 for details).

About one mile from the Nameless City itself, a secondary trail leads away from the main road. The trail passes through a stone portal and one descends via a carved stone stairway into a jungled valley on the south side of the mountain plateau (see Chapter 6 for details).

1. City Gates

The main road continues to the top of the mountain, where the ancient, jungle-choked ruins of a great city can be glimpsed. The road passes through a massive, imposing gatehouse of moss-covered stone, 40 feet tall and 20 feet wide. The wooden doors have long since rotted away, leaving only pairs of rusted iron hinges to hint at its once-awesome grandeur.

The gatehouse is covered with lianas and creepers, and among the natural flora there are also three assassin vines that reach out to grab anyone passing through the gate. Since an assassin vine looks like a normal plant when at rest, a DC 20 Perception check is required to notice it before it attacks for the first time. Anyone with ranks in Survival or Knowledge



(nature) can use either of those skills instead of Perception to notice the plant.

ASSASSIN VINES (3) **CR 3**

XP 800 each
hp 30 each (Pathfinder Bestiary)

2. Overgrown Ruins

The plateau is dotted with the remains of lesser buildings, cracked stones and fallen pillars uprooted by rampant vegetation.

If exploring the ruins, there is a 25% chance per hour to encounter some vermin (a giant whiptail centipede or slicer beetle), and also a 25% chance to discover wall paintings (initially covered with moss) that depict a race of tall, black-skinned men and women. These Ancients are shown in various poses: navigating the ocean in large boats, building temples and domed palaces, hunting wild beasts, gazing at the stars, and smoking lotus flowers. The overall impression is of a sophisticated (but perhaps decadent) culture.

GIANT WHIPTAIL CENTIPEDE **CR 3**

XP 800
hp 38 (Pathfinder Bestiary 2)

SLICER BEETLE **CR 4**

XP 1,200
hp 39 (Pathfinder Bestiary 2)

There is an additional 10% cumulative chance per hour to discover the relatively recent remains of an adventuring party somewhere in the ruins. These are the fallen companions of Ugar, who fell in battle with the winged guardian of the ruins (see Chapter 2 for details). Among the weathered skeletons is a scattering of Ghazorite metal weapons (short swords, daggers and javelins), bits of armor (including a masterwork chain shirt) and a mix of coins from various lands (a total value of 800 gp).

3. Well

The city's primary well is very overgrown (Perception DC 20 to find). The shaft is 200 feet deep and links with the underground River of Life (see Chapter 6 for details).

4. Processional Way

The paved road that leads to the central domed building (area 5) is flanked by six tall pillars, two of which have fallen and now lie blocking the street. On top of one of the still-standing pillars, 30 feet tall, is the nest of the one remaining winged guardian of the dome.

From its vantage point, the guardian can spot intruders all across the ruins. It remains immobile, appearing as a statue, until opponents approach the dome, or until it gets a chance to pick off opponents one by one (such as lone guards by the campfire, or characters leaving the party to heed nature's call).

Hidden under a rock atop the pillar are four of the rainbow stones of Kwalu. These stones are keys to the crypt itself (area 5).

WINGED GUARDIAN OF THE NAMELESS CITY **CR 7**

XP 3,200

hp 62 (New monsters appendix)

5. Domed Crypt

Unlike the other ruined buildings of the dead city, this central, domed building of the city is seemingly untouched by time. Neither moss nor vine covers its polished stone walls.

The building has a single stone door, with seven small sockets on the frame above the door. If four rainbow stones are placed above the door to the building, the otherwise impenetrable door opens. If all seven rainbow stones are placed above the door, the secret inner chamber (see area 5B) opens as well.

If an attempt is made to break into the building without using the stones as keys, a prismatic wall springs up around it.

5A. Antechamber

The north and south walls of this small entrance chamber are decorated with murals. Each mural shows two chieftain-kings, each raising his hands towards a winged, bat-like creature.

5B. Large Oval Hall

The floor of the central chamber is strewn with a fine grey powder which at first glance appears to be dust, but which smells faintly of lotus. Four chambers are accessible from the central hall; a skeleton rests in each adjoining chamber.

There is a secret door (Perception DC 25) in the floor of the oval hall. The door is *arcane locked* (Disable Device DC 20, Break DC +10), which is automatically unlocked and opened if all seven gems are placed in the sockets above the outer door of the domed building.

The stairway beneath the secret door leads down to a small chamber. The stairway is protected by a *glyph of warding* causing 10d8 points of electricity damage (Reflex DC 16 for half damage). The glyph is not triggered if the door was opened by placing the gems in their sockets.

The secret chamber contains Kwalu's treasure hoard (total value around 22,000 gp). The hoard consists of the following items:

- 12 large bronze bowls (braziers) with claw-shaped feet (300 gp each)
- 16 serpent-shaped armbands of bronze (50 gp each)
- 48 oblong golden earrings (50 gp each)
- 20 pearl necklaces (150 gp each)
- 4 life-size stone statues of lions (250 gp each)
- 12 large ivory tusks (40 kilos apiece), carved with scenes of elephant hunting (200 gp each)
- 100 large amphorae of olive oil (15 gp each)
- 16 clay jars of incense (50 gp each)
- 18 small monkey figurines carved from red coral (150 gp each)

"It was but the ghost of a city on which they looked when they cleared a jutting jungle-clad point and swung in toward the in-curving shore. Weeds and rank river grass grew between the stones of broken piers and shattered paves that had once been streets and spacious plazas and broad courts. From all sides except that toward the river, the jungle crept in, masking fallen columns and crumbling mounds with poisonous green. Here and there buckling towers reeled drunkenly against the morning sky, and broken pillars jutted up among the decaying walls. In the center space a marble pyramid was spired by a slim column, and on its pinnacle sat or squatted something that Conan supposed to be an image until his keen eyes detected life in it."

– Robert E. Howard:

The Queen of the Black Coast

- 24 drinking-horns of rhino horn (15 gp each)
- 40 laquered tortoise-shells (10 gp each)
- 80 bronze hand-axes (6 gp each)
- 20 longswords (5 gp each)
- 4 longswords, masterwork (305 gp each)
- 8 iron battle axes (10 gp each)
- 4 bronze breastplate armors (200 gp each)
- 50 bales of mold-infested cloth (worthless)

The walls of the chamber are decorated with vivid murals of Kwalu; a tall, muscular black man shown grasping seven gems in front of a great waterfall with a rainbow rising above it.

5C. Northwest Crypt

This is the crypt of Iwai, who in life was thin, suspicious and restless. His spirit currently possesses Ugar the sailor in the Barana village (see Chapter 1 for details).

Iwai's skeleton rests on a stone slab surrounded by dozens of pottery jars. Most of the jars are open or have suffered cracks, and silvery traces of lotus dust is everywhere. Only one jar is still intact, it contains a sticky grey liquid (a dose of *stone salve*).

5D. Northeast Crypt

Kyuja was a fat and hedonistic individual, with a boisterous laughter.

His yellowed skeleton rests on top of four smooth hematite (iron) mirrors (worth 50 gp each). The mirrors can be "activated" by polishing the surface. By doing so a moving image from the city's past can be glimpsed in the mirror.

- The first mirror shows the four chieftains backstabbing Kwalu and each of them taking a gem from the corpse.

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- The second mirror shows Kwalu's body being burned and his ashes scattered to the wind.
- The third mirror shows the discovery of silver lotus flowers in the swamp and the city falling into decay as the people become slaves of the lotus.
- The fourth mirror shows the chieftains summoning giant bats and transforming them into stone guardians of the domed building, where the chieftains retreat with their last reserves of silver lotus.

Kyuja's spirit lurks invisibly in a corner of his tomb, waiting for an opportune moment to attack and possess an intruder. If possible, he waits until a potential victim is alone, so it can be possessed without the knowledge of his companions.

KYUJA'S SPIRIT (HAUNT)

CR 4

XP 1,200

N Medium undead (incorporeal)

Init +6; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +10

DEFENSE

AC 15, touch 15, flat-footed 12 (+2 deflection, +2 Dex, +1 dodge)

hp 32 (5d8+10)

Fort +3; Ref +3; Will +6

Defensive Abilities rejuvenation; Immune channel energy, undead traits

Weakness vulnerability to *dispel evil/good/law/chaos*

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft., fly 30 ft. (perfect)

Melee incorporeal touch +5 (1d4 cold plus 1d3 Dex)

Special Attacks Dexterity damage, malevolence (DC 14), strangle

STATISTICS

Str —, Dex 15, Con —, Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 14

Base Atk +3; CMB +3; CMD 18

Feats Blind-Fight, Dodge, Improved Initiative

Skills Fly +9, Intimidate +10, Perception +10, Stealth +10

SQ alternate form

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Alternate Form (Su) A haunt's natural form is that of a translucent image appearing much as the person did in life. As a standard action, it can alter its form so as to appear as a floating, luminescent ball of light (possibly being mistaken for a will-o'-wisp in this form). In this form, it cannot use its Dexterity damage attack or its malevolence attack. It retains its incorporeal form and can make an incorporeal touch attack that deals normal damage (but not Dex damage). A haunt remains in one form or the other until it chooses to assume a new one (as a standard action). A change in form cannot be dispelled. A haunt cannot change forms while using its malevolence attack (that is, while possessing a host).

Malevolence (Su) Once per round, a haunt can merge its body with a creature on the Material Plane whose Dexterity has been reduced to 0 (either through the haunt's touch or by some other means). This ability is similar to a *magic jar* spell (caster level 10th or the haunt's Hit Dice, whichever is higher), except that it does not require a receptacle. To use this ability, the haunt must be adjacent to the target. The target can resist the attack with a successful DC 14 Will save. A creature that successfully saves is immune to that same haunt's malevolence for 24 hours. If the save fails, the haunt vanishes into the target's body (whose Dexterity temporarily returns to normal) and attempts to complete its unfinished task. If the haunt completes its task, it leaves the host and fades away forever. When the haunt leaves the host, the host's Dexterity drops back to 0. If the host body is slain while the haunt is in possession of it, the creature becomes tied to that area and can never leave. Its unfinished task remains the same.

Rejuvenation (Su) In most cases, it's difficult to destroy a haunt through simple combat: the "destroyed" spirit restores itself in 1d4 days. Even the most powerful spells are usually only temporary solutions. The only way to permanently destroy a haunt is to use *dispel evil/good/law/chaos* (depending on the haunt's alignment) or determine the reason for its existence and set right whatever prevents it from resting in peace. The exact means varies with each spirit and may require a good deal of research, and should be created specifically for each different ghost by the GM.

Strangle (Su) If a creature possessed by a haunt has an alignment opposite to that of the haunt on either the law/chaos or good/evil axis, it attempts to strangle the host using its own hands (i.e., the hands of the host body). Unless precautions are taken to restrain the possessed victim's hands, they immediately reach for the throat and begin strangling the haunt-possessed body. An opponent takes 1d4 points of damage each round until its hands are forcibly restrained with a successful CMB check, the haunt is ejected from the body, or the victim dies.

Vulnerability (Ex) A haunt can be forcibly ejected from a host if *hold person* is cast on the victim and the haunt fails its Will save. A *dispel evil/good/law/chaos* spell (depending on the haunt's alignment) instantly ejects the creature from the host and deals 1d6 points of damage per caster level to the haunt. A haunt slain in such a manner cannot rejuvenate and is permanently destroyed.

The haunt is the spirit of a person who died before completing some vital task. A haunt inhabits an area within 60 feet of where its body died and never leaves this area. (Note — a haunt in possession of a material body can in fact leave its area and must do so in order to finish its task.) It desires but one thing; its final rest. To accomplish this, it must possess a living creature and finish the task that prevents it from achieving everlasting slumber. A haunt only attacks humanoid creatures.

A haunt attacks with its incorporeal touch. It concentrates on a single foe, attempting to render it helpless by draining its Dexterity. Once that victim reaches Dexterity 0, the haunt uses its malevolence ability to possess the body and then attempts to complete the task that binds it to this plane. If the haunt is attacked while possessing a body, it uses all the abilities of the host to defend itself.

Special Notes: The stat block above is for a standard haunt. The haunts created by the dying curse of Kwalu in this adventure can turn invisible instead of appearing as a ball of light. Also, any creature possessed by one of these haunts suffers from a moderate addiction to the silver lotus drug (see introductory chapter) as long as he is possessed.

5E. Southwest Crypt

The bones in this crypt are big, for Zwekalathu the chieftain was a hulking, brutal man, prone to rages and violent outbursts. The bulky skeleton clutches a +2 *handaxe* of bronze. The spirit of Zwekalathu attacks intruders immediately, without any tactical sophistication. Unlike the other chieftains, he lacks the ability to possess victims and is simply a near-mindless brute.

ZWEKALATHU'S SPIRIT (SHADOW)

CR 3

XP 800

hp 19 (Pathfinder Bestiary)

5F. Southeast Crypt

On a plain stone dais rests a skeleton draped with a necklace of seashells. This is Ngega the Treacherous, the oldest of the four chieftains and the one who convinced the three other conspirators to strike against Kwalu. Ngega dabbled in sorcery and used the silver lotus to explore the black arts. He researched the ritual used to create the winged guardians of the dome.

On the dais next to the skeleton are six yellowed scrolls of arcana. The first five scrolls contain the spells *stoneskin*, *black tentacles*, *confusion*, *enervation* and *stone shape* (caster level 7). The sixth scroll is cursed and is in fact a *vacuous grimoire*.

NGEGA'S SPIRIT (HAUNT) CR 4

XP 1,200
hp 32 (Tome of Horrors Complete)
Special Notes: Can turn invisible instead of appearing as a ball of light.

1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6.



GIANT BLACK WIDOW SPIDER

CR 3

XP 800

hp 37 (Pathfinder Bestiary)

After the stone portal, the trail descends into a jungled valley by way of a set of steep stairs carved into the hillside. The trail continues through the valley. There is a 25% chance per hour to encounter 1d2 giant spiders in the valley.

The Vale of Standing Stones

At a junction, a narrow dirt trail branches off the main path and leads to a clearing with three great standing stones set to form a triangle. The stones are ochre-red with a rough, uneven surface. The ground between the stones is barren; nothing grows there and no animals, not even birds or insects, are to be seen near the stones. The standing stones were old before even the so-called Ancients arrived on the island and built their city on the mountain. Each stone is marked with a barely visible (Perception DC 18) glyph: A dagger, a circle (actually a full moon), and a tentacle. If innocent blood is spilled inside the triangle, a gaseous white cloud with misty tentacles is summoned. If the blood sacrifice is done during the night of the full moon, the creature serves the summoner for up to 1 hour; at any other time the creature immediately attacks the summoner.

SLAVE OF THE STANDING STONES (MIHSTU)

CR 8

XP 4,800

hp 92 (Pathfinder Bestiary 2)

The Eaters of the Dead

The jungle path through the valley ends on the south side of the Forbidden Mountain, where an overhang of rock forms an immense cave. The jagged stone floor inside the cave counts as difficult terrain. A large underground lake, fed by some unseen stream, splits into two wide rivers here; one flowing east and the other flowing west. The ancient priests knew the former as the River of Life and the latter as the River of Death.

On the far side of the river there is a natural path on a ledge that follows the River of Death downstream as it flows west through the mountain.

At one point where the river is narrow, three stepping stones form a bridge of sorts to the other side. The stepping stones are wet and slimy. It takes an Acrobatics check (DC 12; base DC 5, double for no running distance, +2 for slippery) to jump from each stone to the next. If the check is failed by 4 or less, a Reflex save (DC 20) can be attempted to grab hold of the stone after having missed the jump (where he can be helped out of the water by another nearby creature making a DC 15 Strength check); failing by 5 or more means the creature falls into the water.

The river water is not very cold, but fast-moving, and will swiftly carry anyone to the waterfall and beyond (Swim DC 15 to remain in place, DC 20 to move upriver).

The cave floor on the far side of the lake is full of foul-smelling bat droppings; a colony of giant bats lairs in the ceiling above the waters of the River of Death. When the priests of the death-cult deposited the deceased into the river, the bats would sometimes snatch the dead from the river and

eat them before the bodies could float downriver to the waterfall that marked the entrance of the underworld according to the beliefs of the cult. Now, after the practices of the death-cult have largely ceased, the monstrous bats are happy to hunt and eat the living as well.

CORPSE-EATING BATS (2-8)

CR 4

XP 1,200 each

N Large magical beast

Init +4; **Senses** blindsense 120 ft., low-light vision; Perception +8

Aura stench (10-foot radius, Fort DC 17 negates, sickened for 1d6+4 minutes)

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 15, flat-footed 15 (+4 Dex, +6 natural, -1 size)

hp 42 (4d10+20)

Fort +9, **Ref** +8, **Will** +2

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft., fly 40 ft. (good)

Melee bite +8 (2d6+7 plus disease)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.

Special Attacks screech, disease

STATISTICS

Str 21, **Dex** 19, **Con** 20, **Int** 6, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 6

Base Atk +4; **CMB** +10; **CMD** 24

Feats Flyby Attack, Skill Focus (Stealth)

Skills Fly +10, Perception +8 (+12 when using blindsense), Stealth +7; Racial Modifiers +4 Perception when using blindsense

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Disease (Ex) Filth fever: Bite — injury; save Fort DC 17; onset 1d3 days; frequency 1/day; effect 1d3 Dex damage and 1d3 Con damage; cure 2 consecutive saves. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Screech (Su) Once per day as a standard action, a corpse-eating bat can produce an ear-splitting screech that stuns other creatures in a 20-foot-radius burst. All creatures within the area must make a DC 17 Fortitude save or be staggered for 1d3 rounds. Other bats are immune to this effect. This is a sonic mind-affecting effect. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Stench (Ex) These beasts are covered with foul-smelling droppings and stink of death and corruption (10-foot radius, Fort DC 15 negates, sickened for 1d6+4 minutes). The save DC is Constitution-based.

These creatures appear as ugly hybrids of rats, bats and monkeys. If approached during the day when the bats are sleeping, the PCs can try to sneak past them with Stealth checks (although it might be difficult to be stealthy when crossing the stepping stones in the cavern). At night, the bats are awake and attack automatically.

The Temple of the Death-Cult

The ancient cult of death was based in the caverns along the underground river. The priests still dwell here, as undead creatures, and perform their sacerdotal duties as if they were alive. Although the dead priests see perfectly in the dark, they keep the cave tunnels lit with torches and the chambers heated with coal-burning braziers.

1. Antechamber

A robed acolyte waits here. During the day, it appears to be a portly, black-skinned man. If night has fallen, this illusion has faded and the creature is a walking corpse with withered flesh and rotting vestments.

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Regardless of appearance, the creature behaves in the same way: If approached, the acolyte speaks in an unknown tongue, signals the PCs to follow him, and then turns his back and walks up the stairway to the shrine. It does not defend itself if attacked. Only those who touch or otherwise physically interact with the creature gets a saving throw against its powers of illusion.

DEAD ACOLYTE (HUECUVA) **CR 2**

XP 600

hp 16 (Pathfinder Bestiary 3)

2. Stairway

This winding tunnel has wide steps carved into it. The walls are decorated with faded murals depicting funeral processions with priests carrying the dead on biers.

3. Shrine of Death

This large chamber was once a natural cavern, but is now decorated with tall columns topped with faceless, monstrous figures on top. Bronze braziers give off muted light and the soft odor of incense.

One long wall has been polished and painted with a large mural depicting how the dead were sent to the afterlife: black-skinned, robed funeral priests in procession in large natural cavern, throwing corpses into a fast-flowing, narrow underground river.

A group of robed and hooded priests are assembled here; their leader carries a serpent-headed staff. The priests are huecuvas; but rather than being the animated remains of heretical clerics, they are death-cultists who continue to perform their sacred duties even in undeath.

With the singlemindedness of the undead, the cultists attempt to dress the PCs with golden jewelry (which the PCs probably won't mind), then carry them downstairs in a funeral procession to the river and throw them into it (which the PCs probably will mind).

DEAD PRIESTS (HUECUVA) (12) **CR 2**

XP 600 each

hp 16 each (Pathfinder Bestiary 3)

Treasure: The priests' treasure includes the golden funeral jewelry (grave offerings) they try to adorn the PCs with, worth a total of 1,200 gp.

4. High Priest's Chamber

This chamber has spartan furnishings and is a study of some sort. Among the items found here is a scroll of *remove curse* and *death ward* (caster level 7), four potions of *cure serious wounds*, and seven intact flasks of embalming oils (function as per the *gentle repose* spell when applied to a corpse; caster level 7). Written on a piece of skin is a description of the secret rituals required to craft a necrophidius, by animating the bones of a long-dead giant snake.

On the wall next to the entrance a series of crude pictograms have been scratched into the stone; these were made by the dying high priest after he was poisoned by Kwalu. The pictograms can be deciphered with an Intelligence check (DC 15) to reveal how the cultists were betrayed by one of their own.

IKU-NKAIU, DEAD HIGH PRIEST **CR 4**

XP 1,200

CE Medium undead

Init +10; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +9

Aura faithlessness (30 ft.)

DEFENSE

AC 23, touch 16, flat-footed 17 (+6 Dex, +7 natural)

hp 28 (3d8+15)

Fort +6, **Ref** +7, **Will** +8

DR 5/magic or silver; **Immune** undead traits

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee 2 claws +8 (1d4+7 plus disease)

STATISTICS

Str 21, **Dex** 22, **Con** —, **Int** 12, **Wis** 20, **Cha** 20

Base Atk +2; **CMB** +7; **CMD** 23

Feats Improved Initiative, Weapon Focus (claw)

Skills Perception +9, Stealth +13

SQ false humanity

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Aura of Faithlessness (Su) The huecuva and all undead creatures within 30 feet receive a +2 profane bonus on Will saves made to resist channeled energy and positive energy effects.

Disease (Ex) Filth fever: Injury; save Fort DC 16; onset 1d3 days; frequency 1/day; effect 1d3 Dex damage and 1d3 Str damage; cure 2 consecutive saves. The save DC is Charisma-based.

False Humanity (Su) During the day, a huecuva is cloaked in an illusion that makes it look, sound, and feel like the living creature it once was. This effect functions similarly to *disguise self* — if a creature interacts directly with a huecuva, it can attempt a DC 16 Will save to see through the illusion. Regardless, the huecuva's scent never changes — it always exudes a faint stench of grave dust and decay. Creatures with the scent ability receive a +4 bonus on any Will saving throw made to see through this illusion. At night (regardless of whether the huecuva itself knows night has fallen) this illusion fades and reveals the creature for what it truly is. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Iku-Nkaiu carries a black, serpentine staff topped with an ivory snake skull (worth 400 gp and the wielder is immune to the Dance of Death ability of the necrophidius guardian).

5. Acolytes

This chamber is home to two acolytes who suffered an especially violent death when Kwalu poisoned the members of the cult. They are garbed just like the others, so PCs might mistake them for huecuvas, but they are in fact wights.

POISONED ACOLYTES (WIGHTS) (2) **CR 3**

XP 800 each

hp 26 each (Pathfinder Bestiary)

6. Bone Guardian

Guarding the approach to the death-cult's temple from the riverside is a construct built from the skeleton of a giant snake



and mounted with a human head. The cult still preserves the secret of its construction (see area 4), although this particular creature is unusually big and strong and its construction was the result of many senior priests working together.

BONE GUARDIAN **CR 5**

XP 1,600

N Large construct

Init +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +2

DEFENSE

AC 20, touch 13, flat-footed 16 (+4 Dex, +7 natural, -1 size)

hp 46 (3d10+30)

Fort +3, **Ref** +6, **Will** +5

DR 5/bludgeoning; **Immune** construct traits

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee bite +9 (1d10+10 plus paralysis)

Special Attacks dance of death

STATISTICS

Str 24, **Dex** 19, **Con** —, **Int** —, **Wis** 15, **Cha** 1

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +9; **CMD** 23 (can't be tripped)

Skills Stealth +12; Racial Modifiers +12 Stealth

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Dance of Death (Ex) A necrophidius can entrance opponents by swaying back and forth as a full-round action. All creatures within 30 feet who can see the necrophidius when it uses its dance of death must succeed on a DC 15 Will save or be dazed for 2d4 rounds. This is a mind-affecting effect. The save DC is Constitution-based and includes a +4 racial bonus.

Paralysis (Su) Any living creature that is bitten by a necrophidius must succeed on a DC 13 Fortitude save or be paralyzed for 1d4 rounds. The save DC is Constitution-based and includes a +2 racial bonus.

7. Pathway along the River of Death

Somewhere along the pathway is a stranded funeral barge with a badly decayed corpse slumped against one side of the boat. The corpse wears 400 gp worth of golden jewelry. The corpse-eating bats have left the body alone since it is not truly "dead".

COFFER CORPSE **CR 3**

XP 800

CE Medium undead

Init +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +6

DEFENSE

AC 14, touch 11, flat-footed 13 (+1 Dex, +3 natural)

hp 16 (2d8+4 plus 2)

Fort +2, **Ref** +1, **Will** +4

Defensive Abilities deceiving death, channel resistance +2;

DR 5/magic and bludgeoning; **Immune** undead traits

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.

Melee slam +4 melee (1d4+4 plus grab)

Special Attacks death grip (1d4+4), fear

STATISTICS

Str 16, **Dex** 12, **Con** —, **Int** 6, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 14

Base Atk +1; **CMB** +4 (+8 grapple); **CMD** 15

Feats Toughness

Skills Intimidate +6, Perception +6, Stealth +5

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Death Grip (Ex) Because the coffer corpse grasps the victim's throat, a creature in its death grip cannot speak or cast spells with verbal components.

Deceiving Death (Ex) In any round in which a coffer corpse is struck for 6 or more points of damage (whether the damage

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bypasses the creature's damage reduction or not), the creature slumps to the ground, seemingly destroyed. If it has fastened its death grip on a victim, it releases its hold when it falls. A DC 20 Sense Motive check sees through the ruse (necromancers gain a +2 competence bonus on this check). On its next turn, the coffer corpse rises again as if reanimated, triggering its fear ability.

Fear (Su) A creature viewing a coffer corpse rise after it uses its deceiving death ability must make a DC 13 Will save or become panicked for 2d4 rounds. This is a mind-affecting fear effect. The save DC is Charisma-based.

A coffer corpse's natural weapons are treated as magic weapons for the purpose of overcoming damage reduction.

The coffer corpse attempts to push opponents into the river (or get opponents onto the barge and then push the barge off the rocks, letting the river take it).

The path along the river is slippery and wet, so running is impossible here. Additionally, some sections are narrow (11 inches) and require a successful Acrobatics check (DC 10, +2 for slippery ground) to navigate. If the check is failed, the character slips and falls into the river.

The current here is strong and the Swim checks are more difficult (DC 20 to remain in place, DC 25 to move upriver). If a character fails a Swim check and is taken downriver by the current, there are two chances to grab and hold onto a rock outcropping (Reflex DC 16 and DC 18, respectively). Failure means the character is carried by the current into the skull cave and is flushed out through the great waterfall.

8. The Gate to the Underworld – Kwalu Reborn!

The River of Death eventually reaches a grotto where the river empties into a great waterfall; the current is very strong here (Swim DC 20 to remain in place: DC 25 to move upriver). The water rushes out from twin cave mouths at the top of the mountain and falls down a full 1,000 feet. Near sea level, the falling water crashes on an outcropping of rocks, covering the whole lower area in a watery mist.

Development: The rainbow stones function as Kwalu's phylactery, but can only restore him within this grotto. Bringing the stones back into the grotto causes Kwalu's body to reform; a sudden wind brings swirling ashes into the grotto, and the wind-borne dust then starts to solidify, turning into bones, which are then clothed with black flesh. The whole process takes just seconds – Kwalu is reborn!

Kwalu automatically gains initiative and in the surprise round uses *telekinesis* to attempt to snatch the stones from whoever holds them. The next round, he uses *animate dead* to animate skeletons from the bones scattered all over the grotto. Kwalu can't cast other spells until he has rested, but attacks with a paralyzing touch. He has a considerable Damage Resistance and also gains all the benefits of the rainbow stones if he has managed to take them.

Restoring the ancient sorcerer to life lays to rest the haunts of the four chieftains cursed by Kwalu.

If one or more rainbow stones are thrown into the waterfall, Kwalu loses damage reduction (DR 5 per stone). If all stones are thrown into the waterfall, they permanently lose their magic and Kwalu crumbles to dust again immediately. Destroying the stones also restores the majestic rainbow at the end of the waterfall.

KWALU THE RAINBOW-STEALER

CR 12*

XP 19,200*

Human lich necromancer 11

N Medium undead (augmented humanoid)

Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., life sight*; **Perception** +24

Aura fear (60-ft. radius, DC 18)

DEFENSE

AC 23, touch 14, flat-footed 21 (+4 armor, +2 deflection, +2 Dex, +5 natural)

hp 111 (11d6+55 plus 15 *false life*)

Fort +6, **Ref** +7, **Will** +11

Defensive Abilities channel resistance +4; **DR** 15/bludgeoning and magic; **Immune** cold, electricity, undead traits

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee touch +5 (1d8+5 plus paralyzing touch)

Special Attacks grave touch* (9/day), paralyzing touch (DC 18), power over undead* (9/day, DC 18)

Spells Prepared* (CL 11th)

6th — *circle of death* (DC 22), *eyebite* (DC 22), *globe of invulnerability*
5th — *cloudkill* (DC 21), *feeblemind* (DC 21), *telekinesis*, *waves of fatigue*

4th — *animate dead*, *bestow curse* (DC 20), *black tentacles*, *enervation*, *screaming*

3rd — *dispel magic* (2), *haste*, *suggestion* (DC 19), *vampiric touch* (2)

2nd — *blindness/deafness* (DC 18) (2), *darkness*, *detect thoughts* (DC 18), extended *mage armor* (already cast), *false life* (already cast), *spectral hand*

1st — *charm person* (DC DC 17), *obscuring mist*, *protection from evil*, *ray of enfeeblement* (2), *shield* (2)

0 — *bleed* (DC 16), *prestidigitation*, *ray of frost*, *touch of fatigue* (DC 16)

Opposition Schools illusion, transmutation

STATISTICS

Str 10, **Dex** 14, **Con** —, **Int** 22, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 16

Base Atk +5; **CMB** +5; **CMD** 25

Feats Combat Casting, Defensive Combat Training, Extend Spell, Improved Iron Will, Improved Lightning Reflexes, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Maximize Spell, Quicken Spell, Toughness

Skills Craft (alchemy) +20, Intimidate +17, Knowledge (arcana) +20, Knowledge (religion) +20, Linguistics +20, Perception +24, Sense Motive +24, Spellcraft +20, Stealth +24; Racial Modifiers +8 Perception, +8 Sense Motive, +8 Stealth

Special Notes: Kwalu is CR 12 when fully healed and rested and able to cast all his spells, as per the stat block above. Just after being reborn he is CR 8, has AC 19 and 96 hp, and he is only able to cast *telekinesis* and *animate dead*. Of course, if he has managed to take any of the rainbow stones he gains benefits and additional protection from those.

Kwalu is a tall, slender, handsome black man with short-cropped hair and beard. He has weirdly shining eyes and an evil smile. He is clad in a simple loincloth. If he manages to steal back any of his gems he keeps them in his right hand and often stares at them as though mesmerized.

SKELETONS (22)

CR 1/3

XP 135 each

hp 4 each (Pathfinder Bestiary)

Notes: These are skeletons animated by Kwalu from bones scattered on the stones.

Treasure: Various grave goods, including golden rings, necklaces and anklets, have fallen off the corpses being sent on the river through to the waterfall here, and are scattered among the skulls and bones in the grotto, to a total value of 4,000 gp.



Silver Lotus

This huge monstrous plant looms tall with its long stalk and large star-shaped silver leaves. The air around it is pregnant with narcotic spores.

SILVER LOTUS

CR 8

XP 4,800

N Huge plant

Init +4; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +9

DEFENSE

AC 21, touch 8, flat-footed 21 (+13 natural, -2 size)

hp 115 (11d8+66); fast healing 5

Fort +12, **Ref** +3, **Will** +4

DR 10/slashing; **Immune** electricity, plant traits; **Resist** cold 10

Weaknesses vulnerable to fire, sunlight powerlessness

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft., climb 20 ft.

Melee 2 tentacles +15 (1d8+9 plus grab)

Space 15 ft.; **Reach** 15 ft.

Special Attacks hallucination cloud, hypnotic swaying, spores

STATISTICS

Str 28, **Dex** 10, **Con** 21, **Int** 5, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 17

Base Atk +8; **CMB** +19 (+23 grapple); **CMD** 29 (can't be tripped)

Feats Blind-Fight, Improved Initiative, Improved Sunder, Power Attack, Skill Focus (Stealth), Toughness

Skills Perception +9, Stealth +4 (+20 in thick vegetation); Racial Modifiers +16 Stealth in thick vegetation

Languages telepathy (1 mile, other silver lotuses and silver lotus zombies only)

SQ create zombies

ECOLOGY

Environment any underground (Silver Lotus Isles)

Organization solitary or cluster (2-8)

Treasure standard

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Hallucination Cloud (Ex) As a standard action once per minute, a silver lotus can release a cloud of invisible spores in a 20-foot radius. All creatures within the area must succeed on a DC 20 Fortitude save or be affected by powerful hallucinations as long as they remain in the cloud plus 1d4 rounds after leaving the area. A new save must be made each round a creature remains within the affected area. A hallucination cloud persists for 5 rounds before dispersing — a strong wind causes it to disperse immediately. The save DC is Constitution-based.

To determine what hallucination is suffered each round, roll 1d4 and consult the following table.

- 1 Your companions have turned into terrible plant monsters! Attack the nearest friendly creature for 1 round.
- 2 The plant-monster has turned into a beautiful woman (or man, if that is your thing). You are considered helpless against the silver lotus plant for 1 round.
- 3 You are lost in pleasurable dreams! Do nothing for 1 round.
- 4 An item you hold has turned into a dangerous vine! Drop it and flee from the item at top speed for 1 round.

Hypnotic Swaying (Su) As a standard action, a silver lotus can attempt to hypnotize a victim with 60 feet by swaying its stem and waving its silvery leaves. The target must then succeed on a DC 18 Will save or be entranced for 1d6 rounds. An entranced creature can take no action other than to move at its normal speed into a space within the silver lotus plant's reach, at which point an entranced creature remains motionless and allows the lotus to attack or grapple with its tentacles. The save DC is Charisma-based.



Spores (Ex) Any creature struck by a silver lotus plant's melee attack is coated with spores. The creature struck must make a DC 20 Fortitude save or these spores take root in his flesh, and particularly in his lungs. The save DC is Constitution-based. *Silver Lotus Spores*: Disease — inhaled; save Fort DC 20; frequency 1/round for 6 rounds; effect 1d6 Wis damage; cure 2 saves.

Create Zombies (Su) If a victim is reduced to a Wisdom score of 0 by the silver lotus spores, the creature does not fall unconscious, but comes under mental domination by the silver lotus. The body of the victim slowly turns into a plant (see the silver lotus zombie template) within 1d6 days. The victim can be saved if the spore disease is cured before the transformation is complete.

The mature Silver Lotus is a tall plant, with a long grey-green stalk and large, silvery, star-shaped leaves. The ground around it is usually strewn with skulls and bones. A narcotic mist hangs around the plant, giving those who come close weird visions of distorted faces and vistas of alien jungles and moonlit ruins overgrown with creeping vines.

A fully-grown silver lotus reproduces by attacking a creature with its tentacles and releasing its spores. Creatures infected by the spores become mindless zombies controlled by the silver lotus plant. These serve the silver lotus as guards and servitors. A new silver lotus plant may spring from the zombie via the spores.

Silver Lotus Zombie (Template)

A silver lotus zombie looks like the original creature, except that small silvery vines have sprouted from its head, and its skin has taken on a pale, silvery sheen.

Creating a Silver Lotus Zombie

"Silver lotus zombie" is an acquired template that can be added to any living creature, referred to hereafter as the base creature. A silver lotus zombie retains all the base creature's statistics and abilities except as noted here.

Challenge Rating: Same as the base creature +1.

Type: The base creature's type changes to plant. Do not recalculate BAB, saves, or skill ranks.

Senses: As the base creature plus darkvision 60 feet and low-light vision.

Defensive Abilities: A silver lotus zombie gains the following defensive abilities.

Energy Resistance and Damage Reduction (Su) A silver lotus zombie gains damage reduction 5/slashing, immunity to electricity, and resistance to cold 5.

Death Burst (Ex) When a silver lotus zombie dies, it falls to the ground and releases a cloud of narcotic spores. All creatures within a 10 foot radius must succeed on a Fortitude save or be affected by *confusion* for 1 round. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Special Qualities: A silver lotus zombie gains the following special qualities.

Slave of the Lotus (Su) The silver lotus zombie is mentally dominated by its creator, who can communicate telepathically with it slave within 1 mile. The creator may send the zombie further afield, and the zombie will serve it faithfully (and rather single-mindedly), but the master cannot communicate with its slave or give it new orders until the zombie returns within telepathic range.

Seed-Bearer (Ex) There is a 20% chance that a new (young) silver lotus plant will develop from a spore inside the zombie; this kills the zombie over a period of 1d6 days.

Ability Scores: Str +4, Con +4.

YOUNG SILVER LOTUS

CR 7

XP 3,200

N Large plant

Init +4; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +9

DEFENSE

AC 22, touch 11, flat-footed 20 (+2 Dex, +11 natural, -1 size)

hp 82 (11d8+33); fast healing 5

Fort +10, **Ref** +5, **Will** +4

DR 10/slashing; **Immune** electricity, plant traits; **Resist** cold 10

Weaknesses vulnerable to fire, sunlight powerlessness

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.

Melee 2 tentacles +14 (1d6+7 plus grab)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

Special Attacks hypnotic swaying

STATISTICS

Str 24, **Dex** 14, **Con** 17, **Int** 5, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 17

Base Atk +9; **CMB** +17 (+21 grapple); **CMD** 29 (can't be tripped)

Feats Blind-Fight, Improved Initiative, Improved Sunder, Power Attack, Skill Focus (Stealth)

Skills Perception +9, Stealth +10 (+26 in thick vegetation); Racial Modifiers +16 Stealth in thick vegetation

Languages telepathy (1 mile, other silver lotuses only)

ECOLOGY

Environment any underground (Silver Lotus Isles)

Organization solitary or cluster (2-8)

Treasure standard

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Hypnotic Swaying (Su) As a standard action, a silver lotus can attempt to hypnotize a victim with 60 feet by swaying its stem and waving its silvery leaves. The target must then succeed on a DC 18 Will save or be entranced for 1d6 rounds. An entranced creature can take no action other than to move at its normal speed into a space within the silver lotus plant's reach, at which point an entranced creature remains motionless and allows the lotus to attack or grapple with its tentacles. The save DC is Charisma-based.

In its immature form, the lotus flower vaguely resembles the victims it sprouted from, but as a gross, twisted mockery of its former self. As the flower grows into its mature form, it slowly sheds all traces of its original host.

Winged Guardian of the Nameless City

An unholy hybrid of giant bat and cannibal ape, immortalized in a body of mottled black stone.

WINGED GUARDIAN OF THE NAMELESS CITY CR 7

XP 3,200

N Large monstrous humanoid (earth)

Init +8; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +7

DEFENSE

AC 20, touch 12, flat-footed 18 (+3 Dex, +9 natural, -1 size)

hp 62 (5d10+35); fast healing 10

Fort +8, **Ref** +7, **Will** +6

DR 10/magic; **Immune** mind-affecting magic (charms and compulsions)

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft., fly 60 ft. (average)

Melee 2 claws +11 (1d8+6), bite +11 (1d6+6), gore +11 (1d6+6)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

Special Attacks screech

STATISTICS

Str 23, **Dex** 17, **Con** 24, **Int** 10, **Wis** 15, **Cha** 11

Base Atk +5; **CMB** +11; **CMD** 25

Feats Hover, Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Skill Focus (Fly)

Skills Fly +12, Perception +7, Stealth +9 (+15 in stony areas);

Racial modifiers +2 Stealth (+6 in stony environs)

Languages understands Aklo; cannot speak

SQ freeze, singular servitude

ECOLOGY

Environment any (Nameless City)

Organization special (unique)

Treasure standard

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Freeze (Ex) A winged guardian can hold itself so still it appears to be a statue. A winged guardian that uses freeze can take 20 on its Stealth check to hide in plain sight as a stone statue.

Screech (Su) Once per day as a standard action, a winged guardian can produce an ear-splitting screech that stuns other creatures in a 20-foot-radius burst. All creatures within the area must make a DC 19 Fortitude save or be staggered for 1d3 rounds. This is a sonic mind-affecting effect. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Singular Servitude (Su) The winged guardian has been bound to its task by powerful sorcery and performs it with singleminded focus. It is therefore immune to charms and compulsion magic.

These creatures were originally created by the four chieftain-kings who ruled the Nameless City after they had deposed the sorcerer Kwalu.

Using the rainbow-stones stolen from Kwalu, the chieftains summoned four great corpse-eating bats from the caverns beneath the Forbidden Mountain. In a sorcerous ritual the chieftains transformed the bats into immortal stone guardians, tasked with protecting the last refuge of the chieftains.

The winged guardians have performed this task ever after, even though the chieftains are long since dead.



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