

Encounters in the Savage Jungles



5E
Supplement

Jeff C. Stevens

With: Tim Bannock, Casey Bax, Benoit de Bernardy, Chris Bissette, M.T. Black, Merric Blackman, Alex Clippinger, Wes Cordell, Elven Tower, Josh Kelly, Ginny Loveday, Jean Lorber, Tony Petrecca, Patrick E. Pullen, Matt Sanders, and Bryan Stevens



Encounters in the Savage Jungles

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THE CAST OF WRITERS

Tim Bannock (@neuronphaser) – Tim has quite a few products on the DMs Guild, and his *Curse of Strahd DM's Kit & Screen* is a Platinum best-seller! Check out Tim's website neuronphaser.com for articles, reviews, and free stuff!

Casey Bax (@mid_mo_gamer) – This is Casey's first work on the DMs Guild. He's a member of my D&D group, and the coordinator of the yearly Dungeons of Awesome gaming convention we hold in Joplin, Missouri. Although I've not been DM'd by Casey yet, I've heard tales of his creativity, so I asked him to contribute to the Quick Encounters section of this supplement. He didn't disappoint!

Benoit de Bernardy (@BenoitBernardy) – the man responsible for this product's awesome layout, and the owner of Goblin Stone. Benoit is also the creator of the best-selling, 5-star rated adventures *Banquet of the Damned* and *Scarab of Death*. Check out his fantastic website: goblinstone.com

Chris Bissette (@pangalactic) – Chris recently published a supplement called *Jungle Goodies – The Treasures of Chult*. He's the man behind the ENNIE nominated loottheroom.uk.

MT Black (@MTBlack2567) – MT is a fantastic producer of 5th Edition content. His name is listed on 39 DM's Guild products, with the collaboration product *Elminster's Guide to Magic* currently sitting at #1 in the Most Popular section.

Merric Blackman (@MerricB) – If you follow D&D on Facebook and Twitter, you've probably heard of Merric. Merric is an avid gamer and writes many articles about Dungeons & Dragons. He's also a fantastic reviewer of DMs Guild products! Check out his blog at merricb.com.

Alex Clippinger (@Aclippinger) – a fantastic young writer who has what it takes to create fine adventures. Alex has written several adventures based in Chult, and he's recently created a collection of his work titled *Alex Clippinger's 2017 Bundle*.

Wes Cordell (@ratkingnow) – Wes is owner of ratkingnow.wordpress.com – a website where you can find some cool information and his free *Random Spell Generator* table. Be sure to check out *Wes's Armory of Tharizdun* on the DM's Guild.

Josh Kelly (@jcoltkelly) – a great writer and a cool person. Josh has written several adventures, and a couple of *Adventurers League* adventures – one of which is titled *Shackles of Blood*.

Ginny Loveday (@ginnyloveday) – Ginny is the former D&D *Adventurers League* US Southeast Regional Coordinator. She's also a coordinator for *Save vs. Hunger* – a charity gaming convention held in Maryville, Tennessee. Find out more at www.savevshunger.org

Jean Lorber (@jlorber4) – Jean's *Volo's Lost Encounters* is a great collection of encounters, receiving a 5-star review from Merric Blackman. Jean's fairly new to the DMs Guild, but I expect we will see many great things from him soon.

Tony Petrecca (@TonyPetrecca) – I love this man's style! Tony's jungle encounter introduces an NPC named TimReh. To learn about more bizarre creations of the mad druid Elpam and the archmage Accertep, check out his adventure *Hunted!*

Patrick E. Pullen (@raistlin0072) – artist, map maker, and adventure writer. If you need adventures, stock art, puzzles, riddles or commissions, Patrick is your man.

Derek Ruiz (@ElvenTower) – owner of Elven Tower RPG Maps. Derek has been my cartographer for several of my projects, and he does fantastic work. His website, elventower.com, was recently nominated for an ENNIE award! If you need a map, get in touch with Derek!

Matt Sanders (@Trenchcoatdwarf) – Matt runs the dwarvesintrenchcoat.com website, and he recently collaborated with Chris Bissette to create *Jungle Goodies – The Treasures of Chult*.

Bryan R. Stevens (@iamyournerd) – my little brother, who I must thank for getting me back into the world of D&D! Without him, I wouldn't be creating today. Love you, bro!

Jeff C. Stevens (@jcorvinstevens) – that's me!

ABOUT THIS SUPPLEMENT

Thank you for purchasing *Encounters in the Savage Jungles* – the third installment of my Savage Encounters supplements. In this supplement you get:

- † 23 fully-developed encounters / mini-adventures
- † 15 Quick Encounters
- † New weapons and armor
- † New creatures
- † Custom maps
- † Original art

Inspired by the vast area of exploration in the Tomb of Annihilation campaign, this supplement provides encounters and mini-adventures you can use while the party explores the uncharted jungles of Chult. It can also be used in your home game, and not just in jungle settings. Many of the encounters could easily be adjusted to wilderness settings.

As with *Encounters in the Savage Cities* and *Encounters in the Savage Frontier*, I reached out to other Dungeon Masters Guild writers for encounter submissions. I also asked a few new writers who hadn't published on the Guild yet. With these supplements, I want to give you a valuable resource for your gaming sessions, and I want to share the imagination, creativity, and the writing styles of various authors with you.

As always, this supplement was a lot of work, but it was also a lot of fun. I want to say **Thank You** to all the writers, artists, cartographers, and everyone else who had a hand in making this product what it is. Please take a moment to read the short biographies in *The Cast of Writers* section. If you're on Twitter, be sure to follow them!

Thanks for purchasing *Encounters in the Savage Jungles*! We hope you enjoy the encounters!

Now—go play D&D!

- Jeff C. Stevens

PS: If you like this supplement, please leave a rating, a review, or give it a shout-out on your favorite social media application. Your feedback and promotion of the product really does help!

RUNNING THE ENCOUNTERS

Text in textboxes is to be read to the players. Feel free to summarize the descriptions if that is more your DMing style.

Text in orange boxes is for your information and should not be read to the players.

The stat blocks for the creatures in this module can be found in the 5th Edition Monster Manual or in Volo's Guide to Monsters.

Official Wizards of the Coast books referenced:
MM = 5th edition Monster Manual
PHB = 5th edition Player's Handbook
DMG = 5th edition Dungeon Master's Guide
VGtM = Volo's Guide to Monsters
ToA = Tomb of Annihilation

Unless otherwise noted, assume all **NPCs** have the stats of a commoner (MM, p 345). **Maps:** for all maps, 1 square = 5 feet.

Although we give you a good idea of how the encounter should go, we have no idea how your players will react to these situations. Be prepared to be unprepared and have fun! Let your imagination fly!

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DAM KOBOLDS!

By **Tim Bannock**

“In a stretch of jungle abundant in ryath root and zabou mushrooms (Tomb of Annihilation; Appendix C), a band of kobolds has built a dam to help keep their harvest bountiful. Molding the caves behind a waterfall into a dangerous lair, these kobolds are sure to challenge parties much more powerful than one would expect!”

Type: Combat
CR: 6

DMs NOTES

This encounter area lends itself well to theater-of-the-mind combat because of the dozens of crawlspaces only accessible to kobolds (or other small creatures), the many vertical drops, and the non-standard terrain. That said, creative use of battle maps that depict vertical surfaces, or counters that can show relative height positioning can also be used to great effect in these encounters.

DMs should note that the kobolds make frequent use of the ryath root (Tomb of Annihilation; Appendix C) they harvest in the upper levels of their lair, and this provides them with more hit points. These kobolds can take a lot more hits before being defeated, and that will make the party’s time in these twisting and turning tunnels a lot more challenging! For ease of reference, the following monsters featured in this encounter have the noted hit point maximum:

- † Kobold (CR 1/8; MM): 10 hit points.
- † Winged kobold (CR 1/4; MM): 15 hit points.
- † Kobold scale sorcerer (CR 1; VGtM): 40 hit points.
- † Kobold dragonshield (CR 1; VGtM): 55 hit points.
- † Kobold inventor (CR 1/4; VGtM): 20 hit points.
- † Ogre (CR 2; MM): 70 hit points.

This encounter uses varying degrees of cover, which is discussed in Chapter 9 of the Player’s Handbook. For easy reference, a summary of the cover rules is listed below:

- † Half cover: +2 bonus to AC and Dexterity saving throws
- † Three-quarters cover: +5 bonus to AC and Dexterity saving throws
- † Total cover: can’t be targeted by an attack or a spell.

This encounter also uses the Squeezing into a Smaller Space rule, which is discussed in Chapter 9 of the Player’s Handbook. For easy reference, a restatement of the rules is provided below:

- † A creature must spend 1 extra foot for every foot it moves through a smaller space, it has disadvantage on attack rolls and Dexterity saving throws, and attacks against it are made with advantage while it is in the smaller space.

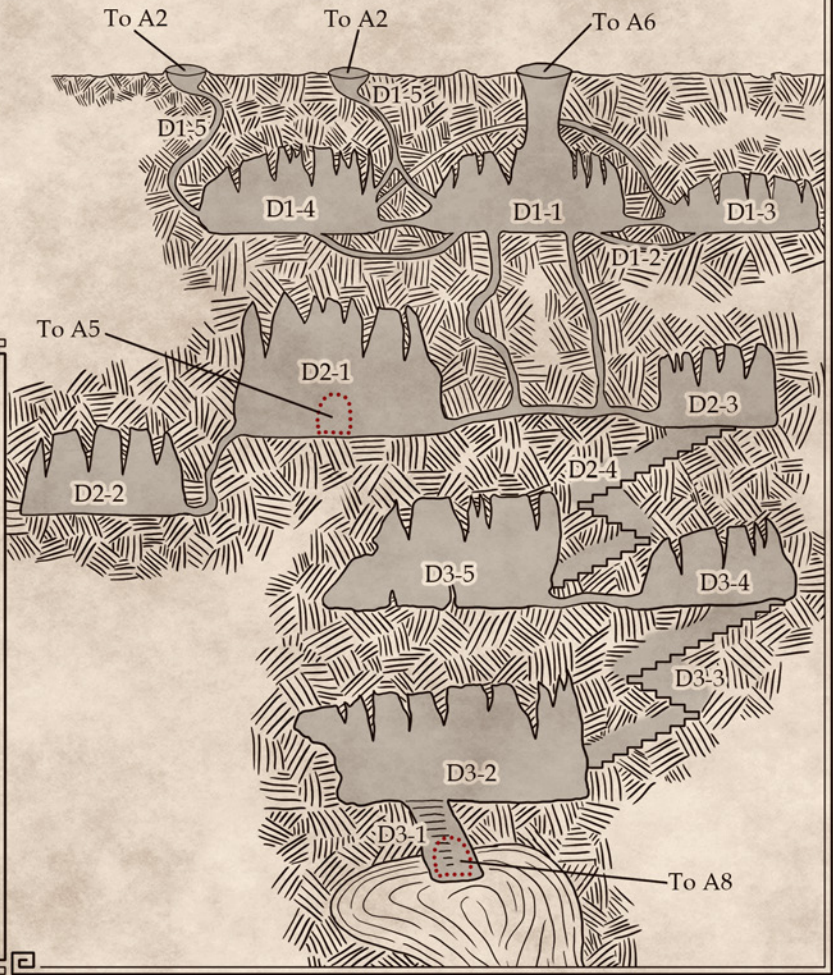
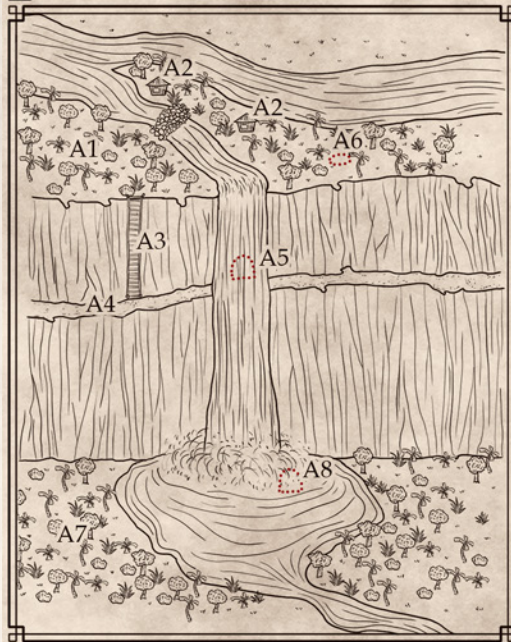
WILDERNESS AREA

The encounter begins when the party follows any length of river that descends toward naturally broken terrain, such as a valley. The river forks, with one side partially dammed before the excess flows over the side of a sheer cliff. The waterfall drops 100 feet into a shallow pool before flowing into the valley below.

There are several entrances to the kobold lair, but the residents arrogantly assume the terrain is enough to camouflage their hideout or dissuade attempted raiders. Still, the kobolds maintain some “defense systems” (see Area A2), and have patrols, though they are just as often involved in menial work, hunting, or foraging, so they aren’t particularly alert.

Patrols. There are two patrols, one near the dam that also serves to forage and hunt (and therefore isn’t very alert): treat these kobolds as having a **DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) check** for noticing any activity. The second patrol is active near the pool formed at the bottom of the waterfall, and are much more alert. They have

Dam Kobolds!



a **DC 16 Wisdom (Perception) check**. Neither group looks for activity on the ledge (middle section).

Each patrol consists of 3 **kobolds**, 1d4 **kobold dragonshields**, and 1 **green guard drake** (CR 2; VGtM).

A1. TOP-SIDE

Jungle. The river and dam appear amongst the thick jungle foliage. Everything up to 10 feet to either side of the river is difficult terrain.

River. The river has a strong current; the dam does little to slow it. Attempts to swim across the river require a **DC 15 Strength (Athletics) check**. Succeeding means the character moves as normal in their intended direction, while failure means the character is carried 40 feet downriver by the current. In the area past the dam, towards the waterfall, the **DC is only 12**.

Dam. The dam is only partially constructed, so it only slightly impedes the current of the water as it heads towards the waterfall (see the DCs for

swimming in the river, above). However, moving across the dam on foot is entirely possible, though it is difficult terrain. Taking the dash action at any point while in a space on the dam requires a **DC 15 Dexterity saving throw**, or else you fall prone. Failing by 5 or more causes you to slip into the water, and be swept 20 feet downstream towards the waterfall.

Cliff and Waterfall. The sheer cliff drops 40 feet down to a narrow ledge (see Area A4), and then it's 60 feet from this ledge to the pool or ground below; that's a 100-foot total drop from the topside to the lower area on the map. Falling past the ledge provides creatures with a chance to make a **DC 14 Dexterity saving throw** to land on that ledge (and taking any appropriate damage from the fall). Failing that, creatures tumble all the way down to the lower area. Creatures that land in the water below take only half damage from a fall.

A2. LOG LAUNCHERS

There are two small straw, vine, and wood huts that are concealed in the jungle on the far side of the river; a **passive Wisdom (Perception) score of 14** will notice these huts (but not their contents without closer inspection). In each of these, beyond the window-sized “arrow slits,” are makeshift ballista that the kobolds use to fire thick, blunted tree branches designed to knock opponents off of the dam or even off of the cliff. The huts provide the ballista and kobold crew with half cover.

The sentries (a crew of 3 **kobolds** in each hut) are not very alert; assume they’ve made a **DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) check** for noticing any activity unless the alarm is raised by a patrol. The ballista works exactly as standard ballista (Dungeon Master’s Guide; Chapter 8) except as noted below. The crew of three is able to fire once per round (so long as all crew members are using their actions as noted: one to load, one to aim, and one to fire). The attack that the ballista delivers is modified, however, as noted here:

Log Launcher. Ranged Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, range 60/240 ft., one target. **Hit:** 11 (2d10) bludgeoning damage and the creature must succeed at a **DC 14 Strength saving throw** or be pushed 5 feet away and knocked prone.

A3. ROPE LADDER

This rope ladder descends 40 feet to the ledge below.

A4. LEDGE

The ledge is only 5 feet wide, forcing creatures of large size or bigger to squeeze while moving on the ledge.

A5. CONCEALED CAVE ENTRANCE

Behind the waterfall is a cave entrance leading to Room D2-1.

A6. PIT TRAP ENTRANCE

This entrance is concealed by vines and brush, making it a 30-foot deep hidden pit trap for the unwary (DMG; Chapter 5). Those who explore the pit’s edge can discover the concealed vine-and-rope ladder that leads safely down with a **DC 13 Wisdom (Perception) check**.

A7. DOWN BELOW

Jungle. The area here is thick with foliage and marshy from the waterfall and pond. The entire area is difficult terrain.

Pond. The pond was once much bigger, but the dam has slowly caused it to shrink somewhat. Still, the earth here is marshy, and the pond reaches a depth of about 20 feet at its deepest, though it averages about 10 feet deep. It forms a small stream that runs for a few miles.

A8. SUBMERGED CAVE ENTRANCE

10 feet below the surface of the pond is a cave entrance that the kobolds can use to access Room D3-1.

INSIDE THE KOBOLD LAIR

The environment of the kobold lair is as follows:

General. The chambers are all roughly square or circular in shape, with some irregularities due to being mostly natural caves. As such, assume the rooms are about as big around as they are wide, as depicted in the map. For example, Room D1-1 is about 35 feet across, and therefore would be depicted on a battle map as a rough square or circle that measures about 7 squares from any wall to its opposite. Any areas marked as tunnels are sized for small creatures to be able to move unhindered, but medium and large creatures must squeeze.

Light. The lair is in complete darkness. Any areas with an opening to the outside—whether it’s an uncovered pit or a cave entrance—will have dim light during the daytime.

Walls, Ceilings & Floors. Most of the environment is made up of natural caves and some crudely excavated earth. As such, the walls are solid stone, and there are many natural stalactites and stalagmites. All chambers and tunnels are considered difficult terrain unless otherwise noted, but the kobolds are not affected by this as they are intimately aware of the lair.

LEVEL 1

This area is made up of ryath root harvesting areas and the defensive areas of the kobolds’ lair.

D1-1. HIGH CAVERN

This ceiling of this cavern averages about 15 feet high, though the stalactites make some areas as low as 10 feet. The pit is another 15 feet or so above this, and the rope and vine ladder descends from the lip of the pit, down into the middle of this room. There’s a 50% chance that there are a few sentries in this room: 4 **kobold dragonshields** and 2 **kobolds**. Broken barrels

and chests, once used to store ryath root and other food items, are being used as makeshift furniture and can be upended to provide half cover.

D1-2. TUNNELS

There are several tunnels marked on the map, and the DM can improvise additional ones, allowing the kobolds fairly easy movement through the upper levels of the complex. Some may be obvious, some may be concealed and require a **passive Wisdom (Perception) of 14** to discover, but all of them exist at floor level and ascend or descend gradually enough that there's very little climbing involved. That said, they are all sized for the kobolds: small creatures can move freely, but medium or large creatures must squeeze. Any creatures bigger than that cannot navigate these tunnels. Additionally, creatures using the tunnels for cover from which to fire upon interlopers receive the benefits of three-quarters cover.

Any time a character enters a tunnel for the first time, there's a 50% chance that there are 1d4 **kobolds** moving about, or harvesting ryath root.

D1-3. HARVESTING ROOM

This cavern is only about 10 feet high and features a half-dozen rope-and-vine ladders as well as a few logs that the kobolds can stand on to reach the ceiling and access tunnels higher up. These tunnels are where the kobolds harvest ryath roots that are then placed into baskets and barrels and stored elsewhere (see Rooms D1-4 and D3-2). There are 1d4+4 **kobolds** at any given time harvesting ryath root, and they are protected by a single **kobold dragonshield** and 2 **giant weasels** (CR 1/8; MM).

There are two logs that rest on a simple block-and-lever so that they can be upended and rolled 10 feet, either to provide half cover to anyone using them as such or to trip opponents as an attack. In the latter case, an individual log takes up a space that's 10 feet long and 5 feet wide, moves 10 feet from its starting position, and anyone in the line of its movement must make a **DC 13 Dexterity saving throw** or be knocked prone.

D1-4. ARMORY & STORAGE

The kobolds process and store ryath root in barrels and baskets in this room, as well as store some simple weapons and the branches

they'll carve up and use in the log launchers. Standing guard in this room—usually asleep, unless an alarm has been raised by ballista crew fleeing into this tunnel from Area A2 (above) or elsewhere in the complex—are 2d4 + 2 **kobolds** and a **kobold inventor**. These kobolds all suffer from the poisoned condition, as they have overdosed on ryath root in order to “have some fun” (now they are just woozy and occasionally barf). Two of the kobolds are armed with two glue bombs each.

Glue Bomb. Each creature within 10 feet of the bomb's target point must succeed on a **DC 11 Dexterity saving throw** or be restrained. The target or another creature within reach of it can use an action to make a **DC 11 Strength check**; if the check succeeds, the effect on the target ends.

D1-5. BALLISTA TUNNELS

These tunnels operate exactly like those described in Area D1-2. Entryways into these tunnels exist underneath trapdoors in the huts used to conceal the log launchers (see Area A2). The trapdoors are not concealed in any way, but they are trapped with **collapsing roof traps** (Dungeon Master's Guide; Chapter 5) designed to cave in the tunnels.

LEVEL 2

The mid-level caverns act as a means for penning animals that the kobolds use as pets and mounts, as well as an area to unwind.

D2-1. LOOKOUT

2 **kobold dragonshields** and 2 **kobolds** stand watch in this cave, which looks out on the waterfall. In the event of a raid, they will split up: the dragonshields head to the stables (Area D2-2) to wrangle some help and the kobolds scamper off to raise the alarm in Area D1-1 and D2-3.

D2-2. STABLES

In this cave are 2 **green guard drakes** that wander about and a 10' x 10' wooden cage with 4 **giant weasels**.

D2-3. GAME ROOM

A **kobold inventor** and 2 **kobolds** can be found here playing a macabre game; they toss small wooden rings through holes smashed into large animal skulls that have been hung on the walls in

a staggered formation. Their positioning makes it difficult—but not impossible—to get the rings to pass through multiple skulls on their way back down to the floor.

D2-4. TRAPPED STAIRWAY

The stairs here are wide, and at the top (near where the stairs start in Room D2-3) is a lever that unleashes a torrent of some sticky liquid when pulled. With the stairs thus coated, a creature that ends its turn on the first 10 feet of steps has to make a **DC 14 Strength saving throw** or become restrained; the creature may repeat this saving throw at the end of each of its turns.

LEVEL 3

The lower-level areas of this complex are the food stores and living quarters of the kobolds.

D3-1. SUBMERGED STEPS

Accessed via Area A8 which is located 10 feet below the surface of the water, these stairs lead back about 10 feet before emerging from the water in Room D3-2.

D3-2. FOOD STORES

The kobolds use this large chamber to cultivate zabou mushrooms, dry and store fish and game, and haul in any ill-gotten goods by way of the underwater entrance (see Area D3-1). The kobolds aren't big on manners either, so they often eat here. At any given time, there are 1d6 + 2 **kobolds** chowing down, a **green guard drake** and 3 **kobold dragonshield** sentries, and the kobolds' menial laborer: Drurg the **ogre**.

The food crates and barrels can be used to provide half cover. A cooking fire in a corner near the stairwell provides any of the kobolds with the ability to toss a firebomb. The kobolds are all equipped with one, but they need to be lit: this simply requires being adjacent to an open flame (it is not an action to light a firebomb, just to attack with it).

Fire Bomb. Each creature within 10 feet of the bomb's target point must succeed on a **DC 11 Dexterity saving throw** or take 4 (1d8) fire damage, or half as much damage on a successful saving throw.

D3-3. TRAPPED STAIRWAY

The switchback stairs here are better quality than those in Area D2-4 as they are used much more heavily—they don't count as difficult terrain, unlike most of the complex—but they are still trapped. It takes activation of a lever in either Area D3-2 (at the bottom of the stairs) or Area D3-4 (at the top of the stairs) for the trap to be armed, but once it is, the going gets rough: every 15-20 feet there is a section of the stairs that triggers **poison darts** (DMG; Chapter 5) to fire from either wall. All told, there are five such trapped sections of the stairway.

D3-4. DEN

This area is a lounging area, dining room, and playroom for the kobolds. At any given time, there are 2d4 **kobolds** here. The den includes pallets, barrels, crates, tree stumps, and other makeshift furniture that can be used as half cover.

D3-5. LAIR

This is the sleeping area for the kobolds, filled with makeshift pallet beds strewn with fronds and leaves to make them comfortable. A steel cage hung high up near the ceiling (about 25 feet up) houses the "queen": **Lilyandranine**, a captured **orange faerie dragon** (CR 2; MM) who wants nothing but freedom from this wretched prison! She has been abused pretty badly and only has 1 hit point.

This particular group of kobolds believes faerie dragons are inferior to the large dragons, so they taunt and pelt the poor dragon with rotten food. They are led by a **scale sorcerer** (VGtM), and include his honor guard of 4 **kobold dragonshields** and a court of 2 **winged kobolds** and 6 **kobolds**. The furniture here—which includes a wide, wicker chair sized for a human and thus appearing rather absurd when the sorcerer sits on it, dangling his feet—can be turned into half cover. Additionally, the two winged kobolds each have a single glue bomb.

Glue Bomb. Each creature within 10 feet of the bomb's target point must succeed on a **DC 11 Dexterity saving throw** or be restrained. The target or another creature within reach of it can use an action to make a **DC 11 Strength check**; if the check succeeds, the effect on the target ends.

THE BUTCHER

By *Benoit de Bernardy*

“A psychopathic gnome butcher and his dysfunctional family attack travelers to make sausages that they sell to the cannibalistic goblins living in the jungle.”

Type: Exploration & Social
CR: 4

DMS NOTES

This encounter has been calculated to present a tough challenge to four characters of 4th level; that is, with an APL (average party level) of 4. If the party decides to attack the entire family and their pets, there's a real risk that one of the PCs will die.

BACKGROUND

Robert Evans is a gnome butcher who found love where he least expected: he married a goblin woman, and not just any woman, the daughter of a cannibalistic goblin chieftain. At first, her father disapproved (they always do), but he changed his mind after trying the gnome's sausages, even making Robert a business proposition. Today, the butcher, his wife, **Whyinna**, and their adoptive sons, **Bree** and **Doul**, attack travelers who get too close to their home in the jungle, and make sausages out of their flesh and blood.

THE ENCOUNTER

The encounter begins when the PCs stumble upon the remains of a trade caravan but don't find any bodies. Robert and his family stole the cargo and brought the staff back to their home where he intends to turn them into succulent sausages.

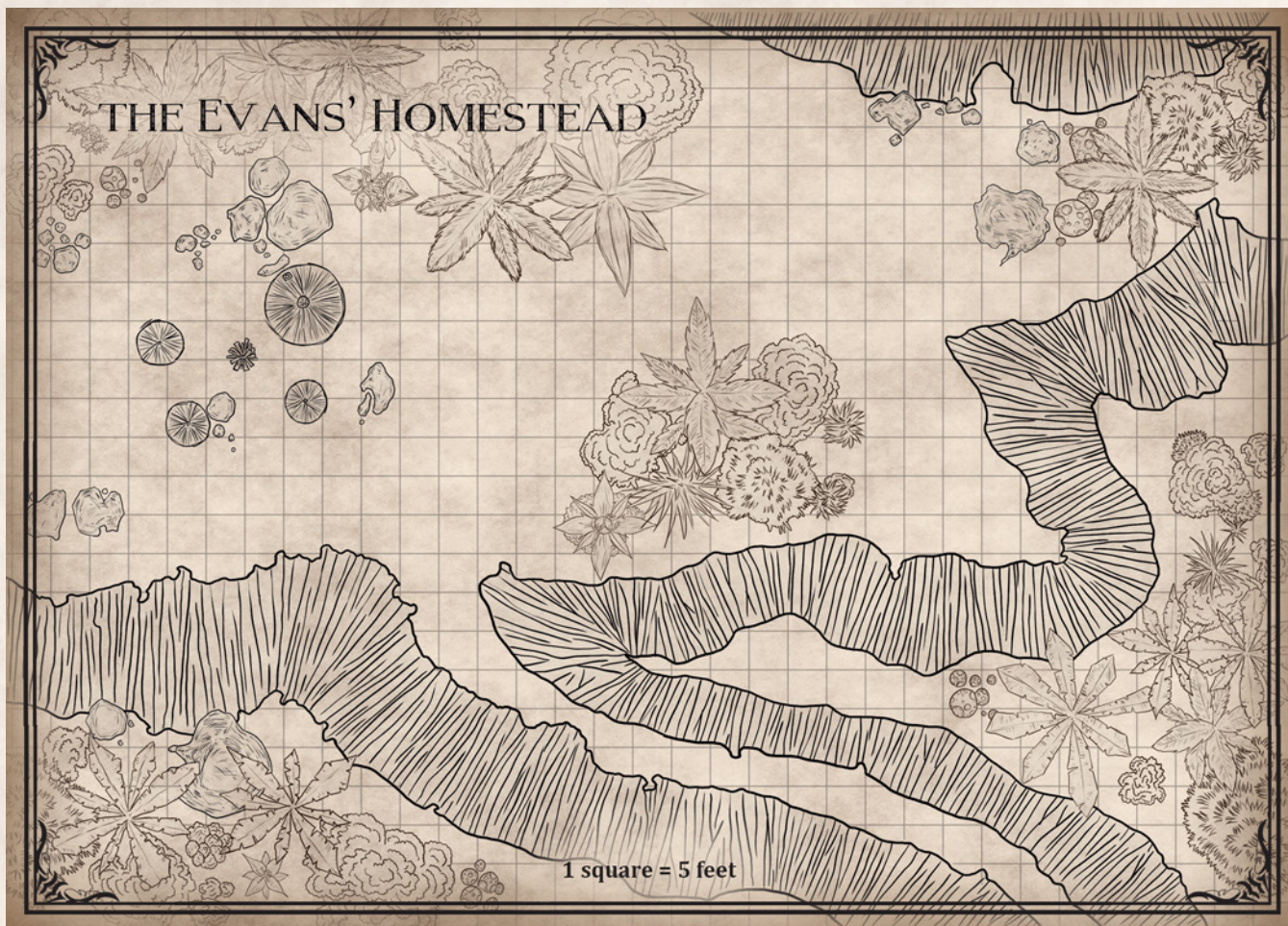
THE CARAVAN

Read or paraphrase the following:

As you're walking through the jungle, the scent of decaying flesh suddenly fills your nostrils. Through the thick vegetation, you discern the remains of a caravan. The corpses of four giant lizards are lying on the ground, their bodies riddled with arrows. They still have their harnesses and died attached to one another with thick rope. Their saddlebags are missing, and not a single human being, dead or alive, is in sight. Judging from the obvious tracks on the jungle floor, the caravan staff was taken captive by savages, and they will most likely die if you don't find them quickly.

There isn't anything valuable for the PCs to steal; the goblins took everything of value. The arrows have an obsidian tip and colorful feathers from jungle birds, suggesting that a local tribe did this. If the characters decide the caravan staff's fate is their business, there are only a couple of ways they can find the captives. The easiest way is to follow the assailants' tracks with a **DC 12 Wisdom (Survival) check**.

The PCs can also make a **DC 16 Intelligence (History) check** to learn that the arrows are like the ones used by Batiri goblins. The Batiri are a tribe of cannibalistic goblins who live in the surrounding jungle. They believe their evil god lives in the sky and build their homes as high as possible. If one of the PCs climbs up a tree, they notice a jagged hill sticking out from the forest canopy. A successful **DC 12 Intelligence (History) check** reveals that this is where they will most likely find the goblins.



THE EVANS' HOMESTEAD

Robert Evans and his family built their home at the top of a craggy rock, protruding from the jungle below. After attacking the caravan, Robert made sausages from the dead people and is keeping the survivors captive in a cave, in the jungle, some one hundred yards away from the homestead.

When the PCs arrive at the Evans' home, read or paraphrase the following:

The assailants' trail leads you to a small homestead at the top of a hill overlooking the jungle. A large bamboo hut and three smaller ones surround a campfire. A female goblin wearing tribal clothing is grilling sausages and boiling manioc over the fire. You hear someone shouting in the Common tongue "Honey, is lunch ready, I'm starving". A gnome wearing a tacky explorer's outfit comes out of the larger hut, grabs the goblin by the waist, and passionately kisses her.

If the PCs immediately attack, Robert (**bandit captain**; MM) and Whyonna (**cult fanatic**; MM) fight back as best they can, taking cover behind the rocks and trees around the huts. Two rounds later, their two adoptive sons Bree and Doull (**scouts**; MM) and their two pet **flying snakes** (MM) join the fight. The two goblins are wearing tribal clothing, armor, and masks, and are carrying shortbows. If the PCs wait, Bree and Doull join their parents and share a meal.

GOBLIN NPCs

Whyonna, Bree, and Doull all have the goblin's Nimble Escape racial feature.

Nimble Escape. The goblin can take the Disengage or Hide action as a bonus action on each of its turns.

TALKING TO THE EVANS

If the characters come out in the open and make their presence known, Robert is immediately friendly to them and invites them to share their meal (human meat). He introduces his family and asks the PCs what brings them in such a remote location. He tells them the following:

- † He says his name is Robert Evans. His wife is Whynna, and the two stupid looking goblins wearing masks are his adoptive sons Bree and DouL.
- † He and his wife tried hard to have children of their own, but apparently, goblins and gnomes can't breed. That's why he adopted the two morons.
- † He's been living in the jungle for years. He makes a decent living making and selling sausages to the surrounding goblin tribes.
- † He doesn't know anything about a caravan raid or what happened to the staff (he's lying).

The gnome is very chatty and even gives the PCs a tour of the place. During their conversation, the PCs might notice a few details that suggest the gnome and his family aren't what they appear to be. First, Robert is lying about not knowing anything about the caravan. Characters who succeed on a **DC 14 Wisdom (Insight) check** discern the deception. Secondly, the arrows in Bree and DouL's quivers are identical to the ones that were used to kill the giant lizards. The adventurers can make a **DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check** to notice the detail. Lastly, some of the bones in Robert's workshop (the large hut) are human. During the tour of the homestead, PCs who succeed on a **DC 12 Wisdom (Medicine) check** identify the bones.

After the meal, Bree goes back to playing in the jungle and DouL returns to the cave where the caravan staff is being held captive.

THE PRISONERS

The caravan guards were killed during the attack and are now sausages dangling from a meat hook in Robert's workshop. The survivors are held captive in a cave in the jungle, near the Evans' homestead. The PCs can easily find the place by searching the area around the bamboo huts or by discretely following DouL after their meal with the family.

When the PCs arrive at the cave, read or paraphrase the following:

You have found the survivors of the caravan raid. They're being held captive in a cave in the jungle. A goblin wearing a Batiri mask and a carrying a shortbow is standing guard in front of a locked wooden cage.

How the PCs free the prisoners is open-ended. One of Robert's two adoptive sons (**scout**; MM) and his pet **flying snake** (MM) guard the place most of the time (even at night); they only leave their post to enjoy a quick meal with their family. If the characters manage to surprise the guards and take them out before they have a chance to act, it will take the Evans hours to notice that the prisoners are missing, giving the PCs enough time to flee. The adventurers can also convince the (rather stupid) goblin sentry that Robert asked them to guard the prisoners, create a distraction, etc. If the PCs fail to sneak up on the goblin, a fight ensues, and the rest of the family arrives at the cave two rounds later: a **bandit captain** (MM), a **cult fanatic** (MM), a **scout** (MM), and a **flying snake** (MM). The cage to the prisoner's pen is locked with a poor-quality padlock (**DC 10**).

TREASURE

The entire family treasure is in a small chest, hidden underneath Robert and Whynna's bed. A character that casually searches the hut only needs to succeed on a **DC 12 Intelligence (Investigation) check** or a **DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) check** to notice the chest; thoroughly inspecting the place will reveal it without a check. A **poison needle trap** (DMG) protects the chest. The PCs find 80 gp, 450 sp, 4 citrines worth 50 gp apiece, a *potion of greater healing*, and a *potion of fire breath* within.

STAIRS TO NOWHERE

By Chris Bissette

“A self-styled ‘Jungle Guide’ promises to lead the party to a site of ancient power, but not every ancient site is an excuse to loot and pillage.”

Type: Exploration & Social

CR: Any

DMS NOTES

This encounter is not designed to explicitly challenge your players or put them in any immediate danger. Instead, it is intended to provide you with a toolbox to seed adventures with, using an interesting NPC and a selection of possible locations. Think of this as an idea generator for when your party goes off the rails and you must wing it, rather than an encounter that you can pick up and drop into your game whole-cloth.

The ultimate aim of this encounter is to help you make the world the PCs inhabit feel alive and lived-in. The jungles are filled with ancient sites whose purpose is long forgotten, places that that existed before the PCs arrived in the world and that will continue to exist after they are gone. Many of these places have already been explored and looted by other adventuring groups, leaving nothing but ruins and fragmented stories.

This encounter concerns one such site, but the table at the end presents ideas for other locations that Baka may offer to lead the party to, should you choose to make him a permanent feature of your campaign.

Running this encounter should be an exercise in improvisation. Baka is jovial and full of obscure information, and he loves to talk. Not everything he says is true, and you should feel free to embellish anything he says to the party as much as you like. Ultimately, the site he leads them to may not hold anything of interest. If you already have a session planned, this could simply be an interesting waypoint on the road to further adventure.

THE ENCOUNTER

Baka Trailshell is an extraordinarily long-lived turtle who has made his home in and around the jungles of Chult (or an equivalent area in your campaign world). He is a bard, a teller of tales and collector of strange and unusual information. Baka was once an adventurer but soon found that he didn't like the life of constant danger. Now he trades in information and offers his services as a guide to many of the stranger locations that he knows of within the jungle.

Baka always wears a thick green and brown cloak that completely covers his shell. On the shell itself is painted a map of the island, showing routes and paths that are not to be found on other maps, and sites that Baka has discovered himself. For 50 gp he will allow groups to spend half an hour or so copying his map. Of course, if you happen to get him talking, he might just forget to keep track of time whilst you copy it down.

Baka is most likely encountered in a tavern, where he spends his nights spinning tall tales in exchange for drinks. He has traveled Chult extensively—he has seen the ruins of Mezro and Hisari, he has traveled to the Snout of Umgar—but he is reluctant to tell stories of those places. As he tells it, those fabled sites have been reduced to little more than tourist traps these days. He is much more interested in the smaller places off the beaten track, the spots he himself discovered.

Baka is a reliable guide in so much as he knows his way through the jungles. The information he gives about what is to be found is often embellished for dramatic effect, but he never outright lies about things.

Baka is more than happy to be enlisted as a guide; he charges 5 gp per day, with a discounted rate of 40 gp per tenday as long as it is paid in advance.

The encounter begins whenever you decide Baka should make an appearance.

MEETING BAKA

It may be one of the strangest sites you have seen; an old turtle leaning up against a tree, his long green cloak pulled to the side, and a group of would-be adventurers gathered around him inspecting the back of his shell and furiously scribbling onto a sheet of parchment.

Before any details become clear the turtle stands upright and pulls the cloak back down across his shell.

“Time’s up!” he says, smiling warmly. “Best of luck to you! And remember, if you need a guide, Baka is always willing.”

If the party approach Baka, he can tell them the following:

- † His name is Baka Trailshell.
- † He is a guide-for-hire who knows more than anybody else about the secrets the jungle has to offer.
- † The group who just left were copying the map from his shell. The party can see it—for a price.
- † He has just discovered an ancient site deep in the jungle that he believes holds an entrance to a place of great power. He doesn’t know how to gain entry, but he can lead the party there.
- † He calls the site “The Stairs to Nowhere” because that is literally what they are. He is fairly confident that it is the entrance to a forgotten dungeon.

THE BROKEN TEETH

If the party enlist Baka as a guide he will lead them on a long trek through the jungle that lasts the best part of a day, taking the adventurers way off the beaten track along trails that only he seems to be able to see. Feel free to spice up the journey with random encounters suitable for your game, or else simply summarize the journey and allow the party to arrive unhindered.

The place Baka has brought you to is deep in the heart of the jungle. The dense canopy overhead almost blots out the sky. The foliage around you teems with unseen life, scurrying and burrowing and leaping from branches above you. Then you step into the clearing, and all falls silent.

The stairs are enormous, each step a giant block of dark stone nearly six feet tall, stretching up thirty feet to end in jagged, broken masonry. The bottom step is partially buried in the earth.

“That goes deeper”, Baka says. “Much deeper. Or so I hear.”

If the adventurers question Baka about the stairs, he will happily tell them everything he knows. He will also embellish facts when it suits him in order to tell a more dramatic story, and he has been doing this for so long that he has convinced himself that everything he says is the truth.

Wisdom (Insight) checks and the like to detect deception will reveal nothing; Baka is perfectly earnest and believes he is being truthful.

Baka knows the following things about the stairs, but you should feel free to invent anything else you like:

- † These few steps are all that remains of a grand stairway that once stood here. Legend has it that it was built to connect the Underdark to a vast kingdom in the clouds.
- † The Underdark entrance was sealed once the builders realized exactly how bad an idea it was to open a door between that place and the surface.
- † There is a means to open a seal somewhere near the stairs, but nobody has ever been able to find it.
- † The sealed entrance lies in a chamber deep below the ground at the base of the stairs. At some point somebody collapsed the earth onto the staircase, so accessing that chamber requires freeing the stairs—either through digging or some other means.
- † The kingdom in the clouds is now in ruins, but the broken staircase should still point the way to it.

POTENTIAL OUTCOMES

Being confronted with this site, your players are likely to form their own ideas and conclusions about what is going on here and how they should proceed. You are encouraged to allow them to succeed in whatever they try to do, and see where the session takes you. If you would rather

be prepared, though, you can use the following list of ideas to prompt the next phase of the adventure:

- † A series of hidden levers—or mystical runes, if you are feeling fancy—is hidden among the trees ringing the clearing. Activating them causes the earth to part, revealing more stairs plunging down into the ground.
- † A strange cult believes that their god once dwelled in the cloud city. They see this site as a means to release him from his prison there, and they have been studying it for some time. They keep a close eye on the site, and they will attempt to dispose of anybody who begins poking around.
- † The stairs are not broken at all. They are disguised by powerful illusion magic and still lead to the floating city—which isn't abandoned and doesn't welcome visitors.
- † The stairs are the tongue of an ancient and powerful mimic who has disguised itself as a dungeon. It has been slumbering here for centuries and attempts to reveal the entrance to the dungeon if the party wake it.

OTHER SITES

Baka knows many places of interest in the jungles, and he will be more than willing to guide the party to them (assuming they don't go full murder hobo and kill him the first time they meet him, of course). All of these sites are interesting, but it is up to you to decide exactly how interesting they are. Do they lead to treasure, danger, and glory, or are they just hunks of old stone that have been forgotten for good reason? Use the following of possible locations that Baka knows:

- † A ring of ancient stone archways stands in the middle of a deep swamp. Legend has it that speaking the right words in the center of the ring will open portals to far-off realms.
- † A valley so narrow you could describe it as a gorge cuts through the earth in the middle of the jungle. It is the place where stegosaurus go to die, and the ground there is littered with their bones. A tribe of kobolds has moved into the caves in the walls of the valley, building fortifications out of the bones.
- † Where the jungle ends there is a stretch of unblemished white sand beach. There you can find the skeletal remains of huge worm-like creatures that once hunted on the coasts.

- † A race of intelligent ape-people once lived in sprawling treetop settlements in the western part of the jungle. They are long extinct, but the ruins of their towns are a sight to behold.

MONSTER STATISTICS

BAKA TRAILSHELL

Medium humanoid (turtle), neutral good

Armor Class 17 (natural)

HP 22 (4d8 + 4)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	15 (+2)	12 (+1)	11 (-0)	13 (+1)	16 (+3)

Saving Throws Dex +4, Wis +3

Skills Athletics +2, Performance +5, Survival +3

Senses passive Perception 11

Languages Aquan, Common

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Fireside Tale. Baka can tell a story while taking a short rest. Any ally who hears the tale regains an extra 1d6 hit points if it spends any Hit Dice to regain hit points at the end of that rest. Baka can confer this benefit on himself as well.

Spellcasting. Baka is a 4th-level spellcaster. His spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 13, +5 to hit with spell attacks). He has the following bard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at-will): *friends, mage hand, vicious mockery*

1st level (4 slots): *charm person, healing word, heroism, identify, sleep*

2nd level (3 slots): *invisibility, locate object*

Taunt (2/Day). Baka can use a bonus action on his turn to target one creature within 30 feet of him. If the target can hear Baka, the target must succeed on a DC 13 Charisma saving throw or have disadvantage on ability checks, attack rolls, and saving throws until the start of Baka's next turn.

ACTIONS

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 2 (1d4) slashing damage.

Quarterstaff. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 (1d6) bludgeoning damage, or 4 (1d8) bludgeoning damage when used with two hands.

Shortbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage.

Shell Defense. Baka withdraws into his shell. Until he emerges, he gains a 4 bonus to AC and has advantage on Strength and Constitution saving throws. While in his shell, Baka is prone, his speed is 0, he has disadvantage on Dexterity saving throws, he can't take reactions, and the only action he can take is a bonus action to emerge.

IDOL OF THE THREE-HEADED GOD

By M.T. Black

“The adventurers find a strange idol and must overcome a bizarre and dangerous curse.”

Type: Combat
CR: 1-10

THE IDOL

The adventurers are travelling through the jungle when they discover a grotesque idol. You can place the idol wherever you wish, but some good possible locations are:

- † Atop an ancient stone altar
- † In a grotto behind a waterfall
- † In a small alcove in a weathered monolith

If the adventurers take a closer look at the idol, read or summarize the following:

The statue is about a foot tall and is made from some sort of green stone, now cracked and worn with age. It was carved with primitive, though evocative strokes, and depicts a grotesque figure. The body is that of a kneeling pot-bellied woman. Three beast heads emerge from the shoulders: an ape, a lion, and a snake.

A *glyph of warding* protects the idol. The glyph erupts with magical energy in a 20-foot-radius sphere when someone touches the idol, and each creature in the area make a **DC 12 Dexterity saving throw**. A creature takes 22 (5d8) thunder damage on a failed saving throw, or half as much damage on a successful one.

THE CURSE

The idol is also protected by a curse. A wave of creatures will attack the adventurers each night following the removal of the idol. These attacks will continue for three nights.

FIRST NIGHT

On the first midnight following the removal of the idol, five **apes** (MM) appear and attack the adventurers. These creatures are fey spirits in material form rather than beasts. Though they have identical statistics to regular apes, they do not grow tired, nor do they need to eat, drink or breathe. They will relentlessly follow the adventurers, even swimming across oceans or climbing mountains to reach them.

If the idol is returned to the place from which it was taken, the creatures disappear. The creatures also disappear when killed.



SECOND NIGHT

On the second midnight following the removal of the idol, three **lions** (MM) appear and attack the adventurers. They have the same fey nature as the apes described above, and they exhibit the same behavior.

THIRD NIGHT

On the third midnight following the removal of the idol, two **giant constrictor snakes** (MM) appear and attack the adventurers. They have the same fey nature as the creatures described above, and they exhibit the same behavior.

CONCLUSION

If the idol is returned to the place it was taken from, the adventurers will no longer be attacked by the creatures. If the adventurers defeat all three waves of creatures, they can keep the idol without further trouble. The idol may be sold for 300 gp at an appropriate marketplace. However, the curse resets itself when the idol changes possession, transferring to the new owner.

SCALING SUGGESTIONS

The following suggestions are not cumulative:

APL	Glyph Damage	Save DC	First Night	Second Night	Third Night	Idol Value
1	13 (3d8)	8	2 apes	1 lion	3 constrictor snakes	100 gp
2	17 (4d8)	8	3 apes	2 lions	1 giant constrictor snake	200 gp
3	22 (5d8)	10	5 apes	3 lions	2 giant constrictor snakes	300 gp
4	26 (6d8)	10	7 apes	3 lions	2 giant constrictor snakes	400 gp
5	30 (7d8)	12	1 giant ape	7 lions	4 giant constrictor snakes	500 gp
6	36 (8d8)	12	1 giant ape	8 lions	5 giant constrictor snakes	600 gp
7	40 (9d8)	14	1 giant ape	9 lions	5 giant constrictor snakes	700 gp
8	44 (10d8)	14	1 giant ape	11 lions	7 giant constrictor snakes	800 gp
9	46 (11d8)	16	2 giant apes	11 lions	7 giant constrictor snakes	900 gp
10	52 (12d8)	16	2 giant apes	13 lions	8 giant constrictor snakes	1000 gp

THE LOST TREASURE-HUNTER

By Merric Blackman

“The adventurers discover a lost explorer and his magic sword, and the fungus that killed him!”

Type: Exploration

CR: 5

An old stone wall becomes visible through the jungle undergrowth as you make your way forward. Not much of the building remains; two walls, no roof. Inside you can make out a lump of scarlet and azure fungus somewhat resembling a man. A gleaming sword-blade protrudes from the fungal mass, untouched by rust. A misty rain covers it all. What do you do?

DMs NOTES

The fungal mass is a **spitting fungus**, a very dangerous occurrence of the natural world. The sword is **Schatzjaeger**, a *+1 longsword*, with the ability to detect precious metals within 60 feet. The name of the sword is scribed into the hilt, and its ability can be used two times each day, recharging at dawn.

The spitting fungus, per its name, will spit spores at each creature that approaches within 30 feet. It will continue to make this attack on initiative count 20 on each succeeding round against each creature within range. A creature may avoid the spore attack by succeeding on a **DC 15 Dexterity saving throw**. On a failed save, the creature is struck and a blob of fungus sticks to the creature, inflicting 7 (2d6) poison damage and infecting the creature with spore fever. Creatures immune to poison are immune to spore fever. A creature may spend an action to scrape the fungus off with a blade, unaware of the other effects.

At the beginning of each day, a creature infected by spore fever must make a **DC 15 Constitution saving throw**. On a failed save, the creature's maximum hit points are reduced by 10, and a fungal growth can be seen emanating from the impact point, covering more and more of the creature's body. If a creature dies while infected by spore fever, its body quickly converts entirely into a new spitting fungus. The disease

is a particularly pernicious one, and the use of a *lesser restoration* spell will only restore the hit points lost that day, not cure disease. A *greater restoration* spell or similar magic of 5th level or higher is the only way to destroy the spores completely. I advise that you not inform the players of the way to destroy the infection; they must either figure it out themselves or hire a sage (at some expense!) to discover it.

A *greater restoration* spell cast upon a spitting fungus will destroy it utterly. Otherwise, treat it as AC 5 with 100 hit points. It is immune to cold, fire, lightning and poison damage, and fails all relevant saving throws. Any cold, fire or lightning attack on it will cause it to form a protective outer coating that makes it look like it has been destroyed, but it is only dormant until a living creature moves within 10 feet of it. A successful **DC 18 Intelligence (Nature) check** will reveal the subterfuge.

The possessor of the longsword was Hyrum Kalvanus, a well-respected explorer who went missing a decade ago. A successful **DC 13 Intelligence (History) check** will reveal its provenance. His heirs will pay 2,000 gold pieces for the return of Schatzjaeger. If the heirs learn about the sword and it is not returned, an **assassin** will be sent on the track of the party to recover it; if the assassin fails, no further attempts will be made.

ASAD THE MERCHANT

By Jeff C. Stevens & Alex Clippinger

“A traveling merchant peddles tribal weapons.”

Type: Roleplay

CR: Any

DM'S NOTES

Asad al'Sarif (see below), who was originally created by Jean Headley and appeared in *Encounters in the Savage Cities*, was a merchant and trader of exotic spices. He's recently given up that career and is now a collector and peddler of tribal weapons and antiquities.

He loves the finer things in life—fine wine, exotic spices, precious oils and soaps, and fancy, colorful clothing. He has a certain elegance about him, which is obvious by the way he glides when he walks, makes smooth hand-gestures when he speaks, and the calm, almost hypnotic soft vibrato of his voice.

Seldom does he hide his interest in an item. He enjoys learning about where it was found, what occurred to retrieve it, and any history there is to learn.

USING ASAD

Asad can be used in many ways. He has a small shop in a town where he trades for tribal weapons and antiquities, displays them, and then sells the items to adventurers and tourists. Tribal vases, rugs, armor, weapons, and clothing adorn the shelves and walls of his shop—most of which are for sale.

Asad also has a small wagon, which is covered in a bright purple canvas. The exterior of the wagon is decorated with a multitude of brightly-colored feathers, making the wagon a surprising, yet pleasant, spectacle.

There is a noticeable odor about the wagon, strong but not necessarily unpleasant. Asad has open pots of ointment, made with pungent herbs and spices, hanging in the wagon to keep the insects away. Incidentally, it also helps keep the carnivores at bay, since Asad smells like plants instead of meat.



The adventurers might encounter Asad on the road as he travels from one city or village to the next—appearing at just the right time to give assistance to a group of troubled adventurers.

Asad might also be found being held-up by bandits (2 bandits per party member). If rescued, Asad offers either a 50% discount to one of his items or a free Identify service.

Asad is a merchant, but not a swindler. He drives a hard bargain when haggling, but doesn't want to lose a sale. He's not easily cheated, deceived, or persuaded, but he does give in to intimidation.

ASAD'S ITEMS

WEAPONS

Name	Cost	Damage	Weight	Properties
<i>Simple Melee Weapons</i>				
Knobkerrie	1 gp	1d6 bludgeoning	3 lb.	Light, thrown (20/60)
Mambele	3 gp	1d6 piercing	1 lb.	Light, thrown (20/40),
Sjambok	5 sp	1d4 slashing	1 lb.	Finesse
Toothed Club	20 gp	1d4 bludgeoning and 1d4 piercing	6 lb.	
<i>Simple Ranged Weapons</i>				
Atlatl	2 gp	See description	2 lb.	Loading (spears only)
Heavy Sling	4 sp	1d6 bludgeoning	½ lb.	Ammunition, ranged (60/240)
<i>Martial Melee Weapons</i>				
Khopesh	8 gp	1d6 slashing	3 lb.	Finesse, light
Macuahuitl	20 gp	1d8 bludgeoning or 1d8 slashing	5 lb.	Versatile (1d10)
<i>Martial Ranged Weapons</i>				
Boomerang	3 gp	1d8 bludgeoning	2 lb.	Ranged (50/150), special

ARMOR

Armor	Cost	Armor Class (AC)	Strength	Stealth	Weight
<i>Medium Armor</i>					
Ichcahuipilli	12 gp	12 + Dex modifier (max 3)	—	—	10 lb.
<i>Heavy Armor</i>					
Tlahuiztli	100 gp	14 + Dex modifier (max 2)	Str 12	Disadvantage (sight only)	30 lb.
<i>Shield</i>					
Nguni shield	5 gp	+1 bonus to AC	—	—	2 lb.

ARMOR DESCRIPTIONS

ICHCAHUIPILLI

Passed down from centuries of Omuan tradition, the ichcahuipilli is a tough armor made from layers of interwoven cloth, often fortified with hide. Though not as strong as other medium armors, the ichcahuipilli has a number of advantages in Chult. It is the lightest medium armor available by weight, which also allows for a greater contribution from a wearer's Dexterity score than other armors. In addition, the breathable material and flexibility of the armor mean that its wearer does not take disadvantage on saving throws against exhaustion due to dehydration.

NGUNI SHIELD

The nguni shield is an oval-shaped shield, usually made of toughened hide. It is made of weaker materials than traditional metal or wooden shields, offering only a +1 bonus to Armor Class. However, the shield can be donned with only a bonus action and doffed freely. In addition, spellcasters who have proficiency with shields and use a nguni shield are considered to have the hand free for spellcasting purposes. However, the nguini shield cannot benefit from the Shield Master feat. Chultan Nguni Shields are made almost exclusively from dinosaur hides, making them an agreeable armor for druids who learn to use them.

TLAHUIZTLI

Another traditional armor learned from the ancient days of the Omuan. Unlike the lighter ichcahuipilli worn over the torso, the tlahuiztli was a tougher set of heavy armor that also covered the legs and arms, usually reserved for the most fearsome warrior castes. This armor incorporated more toughened hides into its creation, usually from tougher herbivores like the brontosaurus and triceratops, or apex predators like the Tyrannosaurus Rex. The thicker armor is still relatively light and gives potential benefit from a wearer's Dexterity score, something unique to heavy armors. Tlahuiztli still imposes disadvantage on Stealth checks, but only for those relying on sight, and for good reason. The tlahuiztli is constructed with considerable flamboyancy, sporting anything from helmets made from the head of an Allosaurus, to claws and teeth springing from the back and shoulders,

to a helm-crest made from a Stegosaur plate. Even the most functional and down-to-earth craftsmen of Port Nyanzaru or the jungle tribes follow these guidelines, honoring the tradition of making tlahuiztli armor as imposing as it is functional.

WEAPON DESCRIPTIONS

ATLATL

Also known as a spear-thrower, the atlatl is a long wooden tool with a slight curve and cupped notch at one end. This notch is fitted with darts or spears; the wielder grips the atlatl in their palm and the ammunition between thumb and forefinger, swinging the atlatl above their head and releasing the ammunition just past the apex of the swing. This gives the thrown ammunition greater power and stability. When wielding an atlatl, the range of darts and spears is doubled to (40/120), though spears have the loading property when thrown using an atlatl.

Magical atlatls, if bought or discovered, act like magical bows and impart their bonuses on the ammunition thrown while using them.

BOOMERANG

Chultans originally devised the boomerang as a device of entertainment; athletes made a show of hurling these remarkable contraptions down Malar's Throat or over the waters of the bay, their odd design causing the device to return to a skilled thrower's hand. Some skilled throwers began using the boomerang as a weapon that could return if their attack failed to connect.

Special: When you make an attack roll against a target that fails to hit, the boomerang sails high for another 20 feet and then slides 15 feet to the left or right (determined by the thrower) of the original path, before looping around to the space you threw it from, provided no creature or obstacle stops its flight. The thrower can catch the returning boomerang as a reaction on its next turn, provided it is within 5 feet of the location it threw from.

If an obstacle is in the return path, roll a d20. If the result is equal to or higher than the target's AC, the boomerang hits that obstacle and deals normal damage.



KNOBKERRIE

The knobkerrie is a shaped wooden club that was carved to have a rounded, heavy end., This simple customization keeps the weapon's ease of use, but makes it superior to a simple club. In addition, the weighting of the club allows it to be thrown short distances while hunting.

KHOPESH

An evolution of the battleaxe, the khopesh is a sickle-sword with a curving crescent at one end. This crescent was weighted and sharpened at one end, giving it the general shape and power of a battleaxe without the larger blade. Chultan mercenaries often carry a Khopesh as a smaller, secondary weapon, as they are lighter and less expensive than other blades.

HEAVY SLING

The flexible, rain-hungry trees of Chult often lack the rigidity necessary to make a good bow. When fighters or hunters don't want to carry numerous thrown weapons, they have learned to make do with simpler weapons like the sling. Chultans have made a point of improving upon the design, weighting the pocket of the sling for stronger momentum.

MAMBELE

Mambele is a general term for wicked, multi-bladed throwing daggers . They are generally curved forward from the hilt, and usually have a secondary sharp spur halfway up the blade, which gives these knives a stylized 'F' shape. The curve of the blades and secondary spur make these weapons poor melee weapons but devastating when thrown. Artisans in Port Nyanzaru often make the sharp points and secondary spurs from dinosaur teeth and claws, or make the forward-thrust blades look like the open mouth of a striking serpent. Treasure hunters covet the ceremonial mambele that can be found in many ruins. These mambele are made with spurs of jade or other precious stones, or even teeth that have been delicately etched with scrimshaw techniques. These precious artifacts fetch triple or quadruple the price of a normal mambele, with particularly fine pieces fetching even more.

MACUAHUITL

The macuahuitl is a wide wooden club that has been rimmed with a number of spikes or blades. Wielded with one or two hands, this weapon can apply either bludgeoning or piercing damage at the wielder's discretion. The most functional macuahuitl made at Port Nyanzaru are wood or metal clubs with metal blades. However, the tribes of the Chultan jungles use embedded dinosaur teeth for the spiky rim, and more than a few port artisans use similar materials in order to catch the eye (and business) of visiting adventurers. Macuahuitl found in lost cities and old ruins are coveted works of art, stylized with ancient glyphs and sporting blades of gleaming obsidian and jade, tripling their monetary value. Firenewt warriors sometimes carry obsidian macuahuitl but the blades are simply the jagged shards these creatures pick up from the volcanic regions they call home, lacking artistry.

SJAMBOK

The sjambok is a piece of animal hide that has been rolled and cured into a long, flexible cylinder. This whip-like weapon does little damage but is popular as a means of driving livestock. Some dinosaur racers or other dinosaur riders use sjambok as a goad, though it's considered dangerous to use on even the best-trained predatory animals.

TOOTHED CLUB

'Club' is a poor term for these weapons, which have a thick, curved question-mark shape. The rim of the club is lined with shark or dinosaur teeth, which accentuate the heavy blow of the club by puncturing through armor and flesh.

MONSTER STATISTICS

ASAD AL'SARIF

Medium humanoid (human), lawful neutral

Armor Class 15 (breastplate)

HP 9 (2d8)

Speed 30 ft

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)	18 (+4)

Skills Arcana +3, Deception +6, Insight +3, Intimidation +6, Persuasion +6

Senses passive Perception 12

Languages Common, Elf, Dwarf, plus any two of the region he is in

Challenge 1/8 (25 XP)

Identify. Asad may cast the *identify* spell 1/day, and he typically charges 50 gp for the service.

Won't Be Fooled. Having negotiated many deals, Asad is an expert at the craft of noticing when others are trying to con him. As a result, Asad has advantage on checks versus someone trying to persuade or deceive him.

ACTIONS

Rapier. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft, one creature. *Hit:* 5 (1d8 + 1) piercing damage.

THE NEST

By Elven Tower

“The adventurers climb a cliff unaware that two territorial pterodactyls are protecting their nest.”

Type: Combat
CR: 2-4

DMS NOTES

This is a low-level encounter appropriate for a jungle environment. The party is traveling through the jungle when their path is blocked by a cliff face which extends for miles on either side. Climbing the rocky surface is not difficult in and by itself, but the pterodactyls will attack as the adventurers climb. The creatures referred to as pterodactyl in this encounter use the pteranodon stats (CR 1/4; MM).

THE ENCOUNTER

THE CLIMB

The cliff is 100 ft. high. Characters attempting to climb the cliff must succeed on a **DC 14 Strength (Athletics) check** to be able to move half their walking speed in any direction. Failure means the character is unable to find a path or a stone to grab onto and is unable to move momentarily. A check result of 9 or less means the character loses his footing and falls to the bottom of the cliff. A creature that falls from the cliff takes 4 (1d6) bludgeoning damage for every 10 ft. it falls. Falling from the very top of the cliff would amount to 31 (10d6) bludgeoning damage.

Cautious characters taking the time to set up pitons from a climbing kit may roll the climbing checks with advantage. If there are not enough climbing kits for all characters, it is up to the DM to determine who gets the benefit, depending on the players' description of their actions.

AERIAL ATTACK

The pterodactyl nest is 80 feet above and hidden behind a rocky outcropping. When the adventurers climb to a height of 40-50 ft., the two **pterodactyls** attack.

When the pterodactyls attack, read or summarize the below:

Drops of sweat roll down your foreheads and cheeks as you hug the side of the cliff. It looks taller than before, now that you are hitting the mid-point of your climb. It becomes difficult to fight vertigo as you look down to the jungle at the cliff's base. A cry in the sky and the flap of wings makes you suddenly alert.

It's difficult to turn around and see while holding your position on the cliff face. Two flying figures approach at high speed. You can't see them clearly as they are flying from the sun.

- † The pterodactyl's instinctive hunting strategy is to fly with the sun to its back, blinding its prey as it swoops down.
- † The pterodactyls have advantage on their first attack because of this.
- † Any attack against the pterodactyls on the first turn of battle is rolled with disadvantage for the same reason.
- † A pterodactyl attacks once every two turns—performing its Flyby ability and then spending the next turn moving to attack again.
- † A pterodactyl makes use of its Flyby ability to stay away from melee attacks. It never stays adjacent to the adventurers.
- † The only way to attack them is with ranged attacks, provided the PCs can use them while climbing, or to ready an action to attack the pterodactyls when they perform their next Flyby.

Every time a character is hit by a pterodactyl, it must succeed on a climbing check (as specified above) to avoid falling from the cliff. In the event of a fall, if another adventurer is up to 10 ft. below, he may attempt a **DC 14 Strength (Athletics) check** to catch the falling character. Depending on the falling character's size and weight, the DM may impose advantage or disadvantage on this roll.

THE NEST

After dealing with the pterodactyls, the adventurers may continue climbing up. They will reach the outcropping where the nest is hidden. Inside the nest are 4 pterodactyl younglings. These creatures are similar to their parents except for being small-sized. Their attacks deal 3 (1d4) piercing damage and they only have 1 hit point. They are also territorial, and react aggressively towards strangers. Killing one or two will make the rest afraid. They will try to find a safe spot close to the cliff face.

Inside the nest, the adventurers will find 1d3 unhatched pterodactyl eggs. The eggs are 8 to 9 inches tall and blueish in color. Any character that holds an egg can feel the unhatched infant trembling inside. A successful **DC 14 Wisdom (Nature) check** reveals that these eggs are very close to hatching. Each day there is a cumulative chance that any of the eggs hatch. The infant pterodactyl imprints on the first creature it sees. It thereafter follows that creature around like its parent, demanding to be fed. If the characters manage to keep the baby pterodactyl alive, it eventually reaches adulthood after 6 months. Track its growth using the Pterodactyl Maturation Table.

ADJUSTING CR

As written, the encounter is appropriate for four 3rd level characters. If you wish to adjust the CR, you can add or remove pterodactyls as you see fit. 4 pterodactyls would be appropriate for a level 4 party. Alternatively, you could replace the stats for the pterodactyls or baby pterodactyls with stronger variations of them. Adding a few hit points will increase the challenge a lot because of the way the encounter works. Falling from the cliff is the real danger in this encounter, and having more pterodactyls or more hit points will increase the odds of this outcome.

PTERODACTYL MATURATION

Age	Size	Save DC
Infant (up to 1 month)	Tiny	AC 8; 1 hit point; speed 10 ft.; Str 8 (-2); no effective attacks.
Young (1-3 months)	Tiny	AC 9; 4 hit point; speed 10 ft. fly 20 ft.; Str 10 (+0); Attack: Bite. +2 to hit, they deal 1 piercing damage. Reach 5 ft.
Juvenile (3-6 months)	Small	AC 10; 8 hit point; speed 10 ft. fly 40 ft.; Str 10 (+0); Attack: Bite. +2 to hit, they deal (1d4) piercing damage. Reach 5 ft.
Adult (6+ months)	Medium	See the Monster Manual (Pteranodon)

ENTER THE OUROBOROS

By Joshua C. Kelly

“In the jungle lurks a massive stone serpent that can devour entire villages. If you find yourself swallowed by this monstrosity, know that your death is assured, but will be neither imminent nor painless.”

Type: Combat & Exploration
CR: 11-17

DMs NOTES

Ouroboros is a massive snake shaped construct created by ancient yuan-ti artificers. It devours creatures whole and slowly kills them via a series of chambers meant to simulate a snake’s digestive system.

IS THAT TEMPLE WATCHING ME?

The encounter begins when the party is unfortunate enough to cross paths with Ouroboros. Despite its gargantuan size, the massive snake-like construct attempts to stalk the characters until it is within striking distance. The head of the snake is 15 ft. high and 30 ft. wide with clusters of giant emeralds for eyes. The snake’s body is hundreds of feet long. When immobile it appears to be a finely carved temple in the shape of a giant snake.

INSIDE THE OUROBOROS

General. The air is hot and humid. The walls, floors, and ceiling all blend together in a slowly writhing mosaic of scale-shaped stones.

Light. The interior is in complete darkness unless otherwise noted.

Sphincter Doors. The rooms inside the snake and the entrance and exit are separated by circular portals. When closed each door appears to be an 8-foot wide circular pattern of stone scales slightly darker than the surrounding walls. When a living creature touches one of the doors a point at the center of the door dilates and the outer ring of the door extends to envelop the creature. Creatures who touch the door but want to escape its grasp must succeed a **DC 18 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check**; failure results

in the door engulfing and forcing the creature into the next room, dealing 9 (2d8) bludgeoning damage in the process. These doors only allow creatures to move one way through the simulated digestive system.

A. ESOPHAGUS

This room is a circular tunnel 45 ft. long and 20 ft. in circumference with sphincter doors on either end, though only the rear door opens into the Stomach (Area B). Characters swallowed by Ouroboros enter at the forward end of the room. The first 30 ft. of the room shift and move wildly as Ouroboros attacks, sometimes changing into a vertical shaft as the snake raises its head to strike.

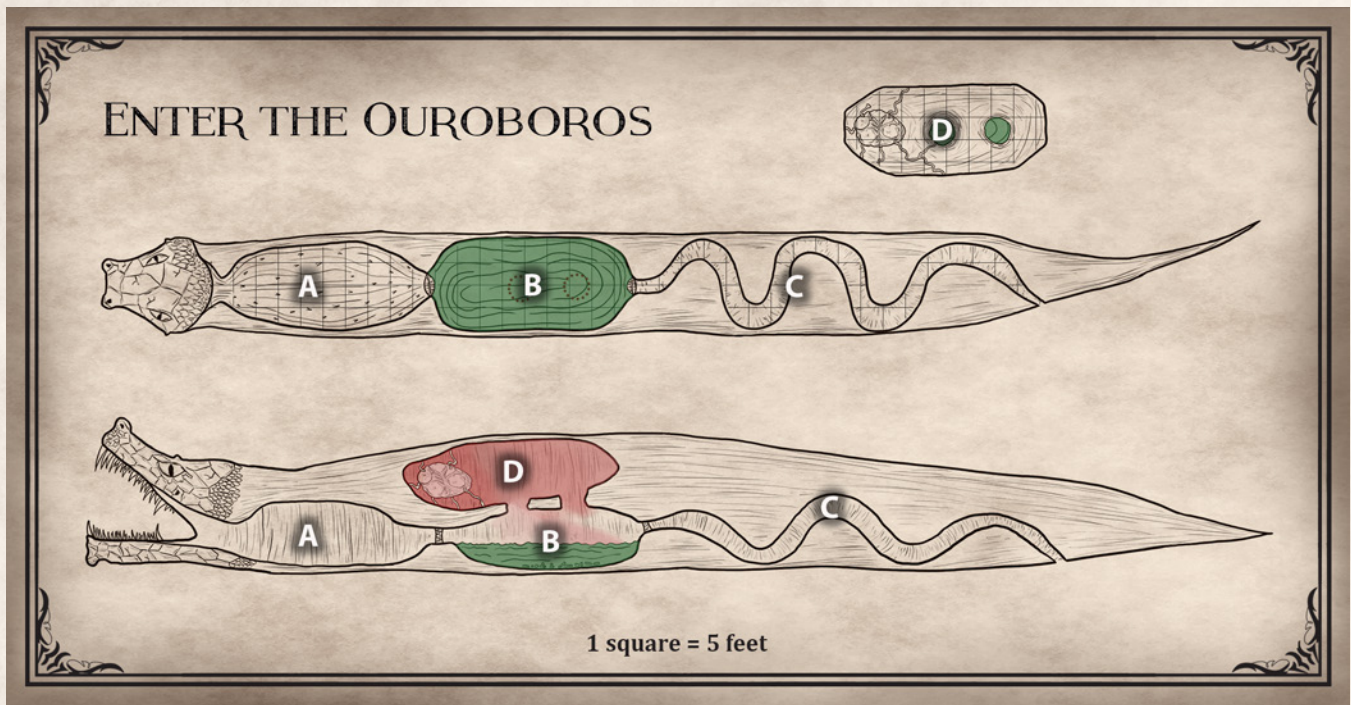
Read or paraphrase the following:

The jaws of the snake snap shut, and its stone throat closes around you until you can barely breathe. You are pummeled and battered as the undulating walls push you through this smooth stone shaft. The walls recede, and you find yourself at the end of a long dark corridor that slowly undulates around you.

Six previously devoured **bullywugs** (CR ¼; MM) have been surviving inside this room for several days and have formed a symbiotic relationship with their captor. They ensure that creatures coming through the mouth are stripped of any useful equipment and quickly pushed through the door in the rear to feed their host. They are starving and desperate but unable to escape.

When the first character enters this area, the bullywugs are at the rear of the room forcing a small herbivore (DM’s discretion, but perhaps a goat, pony, or mastiff) through the sphincter door to the Stomach (Area B). They plan to do the same to anyone who enters.

The room contains quite a few useful pieces of equipment including several bundles of rope, an assortment of simple tools, six torches, and two magic items from the below table, determined randomly by rolling a d8.



d8 Magic Item

- 1 *Dust of dryness*
- 2 *Philter of love*
- 3 *7 +2 arrows*
- 4 *Potion of hill giant strength*
- 5 *Lantern of revealing*
- 6 *Wand of magic detection*
- 7 *Goggles of night*
- 8 *Rope of climbing*

B. STOMACH

This room is shaped like the lower half of a bisected cylinder. It is 45 ft. long, 20 ft. wide and 10 ft. tall in the center. It is almost filled with liquid acid leaving a 1/2 ft. tall pocket of air at the ceiling. The acid churns with a circular current. Every round a character begins their turn in this acid they take 5 (1d6 + 1) acid damage and are pushed 15 ft. towards the rear of the area. If a character chooses to dive to the bottom of the chamber the current will push them back towards the beginning of the room at the same rate.

The ceiling of the room is a stone lattice with many small holes through which a bright red-light shines. The pulsing throb of Ouroboros' heart can be heard throughout the room. Each time the character takes damage the light from the heart throbs in a bright pulse.

The acid has worn several larger holes in the ceiling that a small or medium-sized creature can climb through to reach the Chest Cavity (Area D). The nearest one is 25 ft. from the room's entrance.

Inside the pool of acid is a **water elemental** (CR 5; MM) that attacks all creatures in this space. The elemental is immune to the chamber's acid damage. If the elemental is destroyed, Ouroboros takes 92 (12d10 + 48) points of force damage.

At the rear of the room is another sphincter door that leads to the Intestine (Area C).

C. INTESTINE

This room is a cramped tunnel 5 ft. in circumference that curves and winds around itself but leads steadily aft-ward. It is 90 ft. long, difficult terrain, and ends with another sphincter door that allows creatures to exit Ouroboros. Halfway down this corridor is a magic item from the below table, determined randomly by rolling a d6.

d6 Magic Item

- 1 *5 +3 crossbow bolts*
- 2 *Potion of speed*
- 3 *Potion of vitality*
- 4 *Potion of invisibility*
- 5 *Scroll of prismatic spray*
- 6 *Scroll of move earth*

When a character begins their turn in the intestine roll 1d4; on a 1 a **dust mephit** (CR 1/2; MM) emerges from the wall to attack them. When a mephit is destroyed, Ouroboros takes 16 (5d6) force damage and each creature in the intestines takes 9 (2d8) bludgeoning damage and is ejected out the rear exit, no save.

D. CHEST CAVITY

This room is a horizontal half cylinder separated from the Stomach below (Area B) by a stone lattice. In the center of the room is a giant heart made of rubies and glowing with a bright red light that pulses in time to its throbbing beat.

Attacking the heart is the best way to destroy Ouroboros as it can take damage from creatures inside the chest cavity. The heart has the same AC and saving throws as Ouroboros. Though it lacks any damage resistance, it shares the same pool of hit points.

The heart defends itself with spells chosen at random from the Heart Spells table below. Using its heart to cast a spell counts as a bonus action for Ouroboros. The heart has +7 to hit with spell attacks and its spells have a **DC 15 to saving throw**. All spells are cast as if they used a 3rd level spell slot. Ouroboros does not need to concentrate to maintain the effects of any of its heart spells and they last as per the spell description. Effects from duplicative spells are not cumulative. The heart can only cast one spell per round and it chooses its targets at random if there is more than one present:

d6 Heart Spell

- | | |
|---|------------------------|
| 1 | <i>Magic missile</i> |
| 2 | <i>Thunderwave</i> |
| 3 | <i>Scorching ray</i> |
| 4 | <i>Ray of sickness</i> |
| 5 | <i>Bane</i> |
| 6 | <i>Blindness</i> |

DEVELOPMENTS

When Ouroboros is reduced to 0 hp or less it disintegrates into a long pile of stone and debris. The acid in its stomach is immediately neutralized and the mephit and the water elemental inside of it disappear. Any living creatures trapped inside the construct when it is destroyed can climb their way out of the rubble in 1 round.

ADJUSTING THE CHALLENGE RATING

As written Ouroboros is a CR 17 encounter. To adjust the challenge rating make the following non-cumulative adjustments.

CR 11

- † Ouroboros has the following stats: Attack +6, AC 16, HP 190
- † Ouroboros only makes one attack per round.
- † The sphincter doors don't deal any damage.
- † There are 2 bullywugs inside the Esophagus (Area A).
- † There is no water elemental in the Stomach (Area B).
- † Ouroboros' heart has +2 to hit with spell attacks and its spells have a saving throw DC of 10.
- † The dust mephits in the Intestine (Area C) do not have their Death Burst or Blinding Breath abilities.

CR 13

- † Ouroboros has the following stats: Attack +7, AC 16, HP 220
- † Ouroboros only makes one attack per round.
- † The sphincter doors deal 1d4 bludgeoning damage.
- † There are 4 bullywugs inside the Esophagus (Area A).
- † There is no water elemental in the Stomach (Area B).
- † Ouroboros' heart has +3 to hit with spell attacks and its spells have a saving throw DC of 12.
- † The dust mephits in the Intestine (Area C) do not have their Death Burst ability.

CR 15

- † Ouroboros has the following stats: Attack +8, AC 17, HP 245
- † The sphincter doors deal 1d8 bludgeoning damage.
- † There are 4 bullywugs inside the Esophagus (Area A).
- † Replace the water elemental in the Stomach (Area B) with a water weird.
- † Ouroboros' heart has +4 to hit with spell attacks and its spells have a saving throw DC of 14.
- † The dust mephits in the Intestine (Area C) do not have their Death Burst ability.

TREASURE

The remains of Ouroboros contain piles of rubies and emeralds totaling 15,000 gp in value. This is in addition to any treasure noted in the room descriptions above.

MONSTER STATISTICS

OUROBOROS

Gargantuan construct, unaligned

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)

HP 279 (16d20 + 112)

Speed 20 ft., swim 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
28 (+9)	5 (-3)	24 (+7)	4 (-3)	10 (+0)	5 (-3)

Skills Stealth +3, Perception +6

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical weapons

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities frightened, grappled, petrified, poisoned, prone, stunned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 16

Languages —

Challenge 17 (18,000 XP)

Heart Spells. As a bonus action, the heart of Ouroboros can cast one spell per the description (Area D).

Immutable Form. Ouroboros is immune to any spell or effect that would alter its form.

Iron Stomach. Ouroboros is immune to all damage dealt by creatures inside it unless otherwise noted in the adventure text above.

Magic Resistance. Ouroboros has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Magic Weapons. Ouroboros' attacks are considered magical.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The Ouroboros makes two attacks, one bite, and one tail slam attack.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 15 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 22 (3d8 + 9) piercing damage. If the target is a Large or smaller creature, it must succeed on a DC 19 Dexterity saving throw or be swallowed by Ouroboros. A swallowed creature takes an additional 9 (2d8) bludgeoning damage and begins its next turn in the Esophagus (Area A).

Tail Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 15 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 31 (4d8 + 12) bludgeoning damage.

LEGENDARY ACTIONS

Ouroboros can take 2 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. Ouroboros regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

Detect. Ouroboros makes a Wisdom (Perception) check vs. a creature or object.

Ground Slam. Ouroboros slams its body against the ground. All creatures within 30 ft. must succeed on a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw to avoid being knocked prone. This attack also affects all creatures inside Ouroboros who make their saving throw with disadvantage.

Retaliatory Swallow. Ouroboros makes a bite attack against a creature that attempted a melee attack against it during the current round.

FIRE AND FANGS

By Joshua C. Kelly

“The jungle holds many a bog where fiery gasses rise from the muck; the lizardfolk know to set their ambushes there.”

Type: Combat

CR: 1 per character

DMS NOTES

The players cross a noxious bog that seeps flammable gases where they are ambushed by lizardmen launching flaming javelins. Feel free to use the map provided or create your own based on the description below.

Your players will suspect an ambush the moment you draw a map or describe the terrain in detail; consider rolling their perception and survival checks in secret as they enter the bog but before the combat encounter begins.

THE FIERY BOG

General Features. The bog is 30 ft. wide by 45 ft. long and bordered on all sides by thick vegetation that is impossible to pass through. At its narrowest point, the bog is 15 ft. wide.

Water Depth. The murky bog waters are 3 ft. deep in most places but there are areas where the ground drops away and the water is 6 ft. deep. The deeper areas are impossible to detect unless a character has blindsight.

Lighting. The lizardmen lack the means to set their ambush at night. The encounter takes place during the day when the area is covered in bright light.

Swamp Gas. When a character enters the bog, they must succeed on a DC 11 Wisdom (Survival) check to detect the presence of a foul gas; failure results in nothing being detected.



If the character succeeds by 5 or more, they understand the gas is flammable and can be easily set alight.

Any open flame such as a torch, lantern, or fire arrow ignites the gas pocket in the square it is in. When the gas pocket in a square ignites it deals 5 (1d4 + 2) fire damage to all creatures in that square. A spell that sends a magical fire effect through a given area (such as *fire bolt* and *produce flame*) ignites the gas pocket in every square the effect passes through, including the square the caster is in. Gas can only ignite in any given square once per round. The gas is contained in small pockets, igniting a gas pocket in one square does not ignite the gas pockets in surrounding squares.

Area of effect spells that deal fire damage simply increase their total fire damage by 5 (1d4 + 2) fire damage. This increase can only apply to a given square once per round.

At the DM's discretion, creatures in the bog can use their reaction to attempt to dive underwater. If the creature succeeds on a **DC 14 Dexterity saving throw**, it dives underwater before their square catches fire, taking no damage. Creatures already underwater when the square they are in catches fire automatically take no damage from the fire.

AMBUSH!

There is one **lizardfolk bandit** for each character in the party. They are lying in wait on a small island 15 ft. long and 10 ft. wide at the far end of the bog, which is outside the area of the gas. The lizardfolk have built a hunting blind out of branches and mud that grants them partial cover (+2 bonus to AC and Dexterity saving throws) and a +10 bonus to Dexterity (Stealth) checks while they are on the island. The blind itself has AC 10, 16 HP and is immune to piercing damage.

The lizardfolk wait until the characters are halfway across the bog before attacking. One lizardfolk needs to light their brazier before the rest can throw their flaming javelins. A character with a **passive Perception of 15** or higher, or one that succeeds on a **DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check**, notices the brazier being ignited and avoids being surprised.

The lizardfolk then launch their flaming javelins in high arcs that ignite the swamp gas when they land. On a miss, the javelin lands in a random square, igniting the gas in that square. Roll a d8 to determine where the arrow lands, with '1' being the leftmost square in front of the target. If the attack misses by 5 or less, the flame dies out as the javelin flies through the air, and no random roll is required.

The lizardmen flee when half or more of their numbers are killed. They dive into the bog water and attempt to swim away. Each bandit carries a purse containing a mix of coin that totals 3d6 gold pieces.

MONSTER STATISTICS

LIZARDMAN BANDIT

Medium Humanoid, neutral evil

Armor Class 16 (natural armor, shield)

HP 45 (6d8 + 18)

Speed 30 ft., swim 30 ft

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	13 (+1)	16 (+3)	8 (-1)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)

Skills Perception +3, Stealth +5, Survival +3

Senses passive Perception 13

Languages Common, Draconic

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Hold Breath. The lizardfolk bandit can hold its breath for up to 15 minutes at a time.

Silent Teamwork. The lizardfolk bandits can communicate with hand signals and expression, conveying complex information without making a sound.

ACTIONS

Bone sword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) slashing damage.

Flaming Javelin. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 30/120, one creature. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage and 2 (1d4) fire damage. A javelin attack can miss and still deal fire damage, see "Ambush!" above.

Hungry Bite (Recharge 5-6). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* (1d6 + 2) slashing damage. If the lizardman bandit causes damage with this attack it gains 3 hp.

COLLECTOR'S EDITION

By Jean Lorber

“The players come across a zoo collector’s operation in the middle of the jungle, filled with animals living in terrible conditions. The misguided collector can be convinced of the inhumanity of his operation, but his treacherous henchmen may fight to keep this lucrative scheme going.”

Type: Interaction, Investigation & Combat
CR: 5-7

DMS NOTES/BACKGROUND

The gnomish Beetroot Family runs an animal-collecting operation, procuring exotic beasts for the private menageries of princes and merchants along the Sword Coast. The enthusiastic-but-clueless Yazigoot Beetroot is currently in charge of the operation.

Yaz genuinely likes animals, but his involvement in the day-to-day operations is limited by his extremely poor eyesight. He’s content with cataloging newly-acquired beetles,



birds, and preserved specimens. He leaves the animal wrangling and “care” to his crew of hired hands. This is a poor decision as the henchmen treat the animals with little respect. In addition, the hired help is plotting to kill the gnome and make off with many of the more valuable creatures.

THE ENCOUNTER

As the party nears the camp, located deep in the jungle, read or paraphrase the following:

A cacophony of animal sounds rises out of the jungle, appearing to come from a clearing ahead. You hear birds, monkeys, and the roars of larger animals. A voice calls out indistinct orders above the ruckus.

A successful **DC10 Intelligence (Nature) check** reveals that this is no natural assemblage of animals; you hear predators and prey together but no sounds of a struggle. The PCs can move to the edge of the clearing and observe the camp without fear of detection (moving with stealth allows advantage to any later applied checks). They are closest to Area A unless they stated they desire to seek out the source of the noise (Area B).

THE COLLECTOR'S CAMP

General. A large clearing surrounded by jungle. A few small tents, some wagons, and many cages of various sizes.

Terrain. Exposed dirt, muddy in high-traffic areas (difficult terrain).

A. CATALOGUING STATION

Read or paraphrase the following:

In front of a tent, a young gnome sits reading on a tabletop. Around him are piles of feathers and insects and two tiny, mummified reptiles. He looks up from his tome, unsurprised, and says: “Hello. Do you think it’s ‘quetzalcoatluses’ or ‘quetzalcoatli’?” He blinks slowly through thick glasses and waits for your answer.

This is **Yazigoot** (gnome commoner), who appears to be happily reading a leather-bound book titled ‘Specimens from the Darkest Jungle’. Any **Wisdom (Insight) check** reveals that he is friendly and harmless. He talks animatedly about animals and invites the PCs to look around. He declines any offer to venture back to the large animal pens, citing his, “... poor eyesight and a related tendency to fall on my face ...”.

Treasure: Yaz’s book is worth 20 gp to the right collector. Inside Yaz’s tent is a locked cabinet (a successful **DC13 Dexterity (Thieves Tools) check** to open) containing 1,000 gp and some Beetroot family tricks of the trade: 5 scrolls of *animal friendship* and 1 tincture of enlarge/reduce (same as the spell when applied to the skin) and a *ring of animal influence* inside an ornate velvet box (the box has a 10 gp value).

B. ANIMAL PENS

A series of cages is spread across the encampment. Each cage houses a different species, most of which seem to be suffering from malnutrition or anxiety. A muzzled kamadan stuffed into a small cage seems particularly miserable. Most noticeable is a far cage that towers over the others, covered by a thick cloth.

A 5-foot tall pile of dung next to the largest cage might raise a red flag (encourage Wisdom (Nature) checks)—beating a DC10 reveals that this is dinosaur dung). Inside the cages are the following: a blindfolded **ebelis** (CR 1; ToA), a muzzled **kamadan** (CR 4; ToA), a **vegepygmy** (CR ¼; ToA), a **thorny** (CR 1; ToA), and 2 **velociraptors** (CR ¼; ToA). The large cage contains a **tyrannosaurus rex** (CR 8; MM). A successful **DC 12 Intelligence (Medicine) check** shows that the T-Rex is drugged and covered to keep it calm. All cages are double-latched but not locked. Opening a cage requires 2 actions or just 1 action with a **DC 8 Dexterity check**.

The crew of henchmen is here, feeding animals, repairing cages and plotting when/how to execute their coup. The crew consists of a halfling **spy** (CR 1; MM) who silently eyeballs the PCs while smoking a pipe, a **bugbear** (CR 1; MM) who samples the animals’ food before feeding them, and their leader, a dwarf **bandit captain** (CR 2; MM) who boasts of capturing a creature while rattling its cage.

C. TENTS

Four tents circling a smoldering campfire make up the sleeping quarters for the crew. One tent is occupied by the last henchwoman—a sleeping human **cult fanatic** (CR 2; MM). She attempts to sneak behind the PCs after combat has started.

Treasure. Each tent contains a lockbox, hidden somewhere within. If time is limited, a DC10 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals the location of the lockbox. With no time limit, all boxes can easily be found. A **DC14 Dexterity check using thieves’ tools** will open any lockbox. The 4 boxes contain the following: 3d20 gold pieces, a *dagger +1*, a scrimshaw walrus worth 20 gold pieces, and a folded love letter to a woman named Lilly, stained with drops of blood.

ENCOUNTER DEVELOPMENTS

If the PCs meet the henchmen before Yaz, the dwarf bandit captain demands to know the PCs business. He quickly becomes “friendly” and takes the PCs to Yaz. A **DC 13 Wisdom (Insight) check** sees through the false cheer and reveals high levels of tension. The halfling spy attempts to hide in Yaz’s tent to eavesdrop on any conversation.

If confronted with evidence of animal mistreatment, Yazigoot doesn’t believe it at first. A successful **DC 12 Charisma (Persuasion) check** is required to make him recognize the truth. The check is made with advantage if some righteous role-play shaming precedes it. A failed check results in Yaz disbelieving what he is seeing, becoming angry and insisting the PCs leave as he summons his crew. If convinced, Yaz looks sad and orders the creatures freed, even the dangerous ones.

Any mention of ending the collecting operation will trigger the henchmen’s mutiny. A **DC 11 Wisdom (Insight) check** reveals meaningful looks and subtle hand signals among the henchmen, signaling that some sort of plan is afoot. They might feign compliance, but their plan is to lure the PCs over to the cages, release the kamadan and watch the carnage. They will fight from atop the cages and engage in melee only if pressed. Once in combat, the bandit captain yells “...Kill them all, even the gnome!” The kamadan shakes its muzzle free after 2



rounds. All animals flee if they reach half their normal Hit Points. A **DC 14 Wisdom (Animal Handling) check** convinces the kamadan to redirect its attack to one of the henchmen.

In desperation, a henchman might attempt to unlock the T. Rex cage. This could quickly become a deadly encounter for the PCs, so there are opportunities to improve their chances. The T. Rex takes a few rounds to shake off the drugs, which gives it disadvantage on its attack rolls. Yaz loses his glasses but might help with items

from his cabinet or just yell: “Inside my cabinet! My ring! The tincture! On the creature!”. This gives the spy the same idea though. If this looks to be too deadly, don’t release the T.Rex. Just let your PCs keep wondering about what’s in that giant cage.

If the PCs win, Yaz thanks them, sighs and begins to make ready to head back north with an empty wagon. He thanks the PCs for saving him and gives them 500 gold pieces from his cabinet.

LEND A HAND, WON'T YOU?

By Jean Lorber

“The players stumble upon a friendly fellow adventurer, swinging from a snare and surrounded by bodies. All around them are clues as to what led up to this moment. It’s in the players’ best interest to quickly piece together the story before things get violent...again.”

Type: Investigation & Combat
CR: 4-6

DMs NOTES/BACKGROUND

The dashing, narcissistic burglar Lim Quicksteel (master thief; CR 5; VGtM, p216) has met his match during a jungle tomb robbery. He almost defeated a shrine’s defenses (by sacrificing some companions), but dropped a valuable idol as he fled. Upon exiting the shrine, he killed his remaining companions (more gold for him) but then was ambushed by two shrine guardians who witnessed the whole thing. Lim killed one but was trapped in the other’s druidic spell.

The initial boxed text is purposefully vague about the scene, to encourage investigation. Sorting through Lim’s story is central to the encounter. Multiple examples of his lies are presented in insets along with clues for how your PCs might uncover them.

Note that all shrine guardians (aka tribal warriors (CR 1/8; MM, p350) are armed with clubs, not spears.

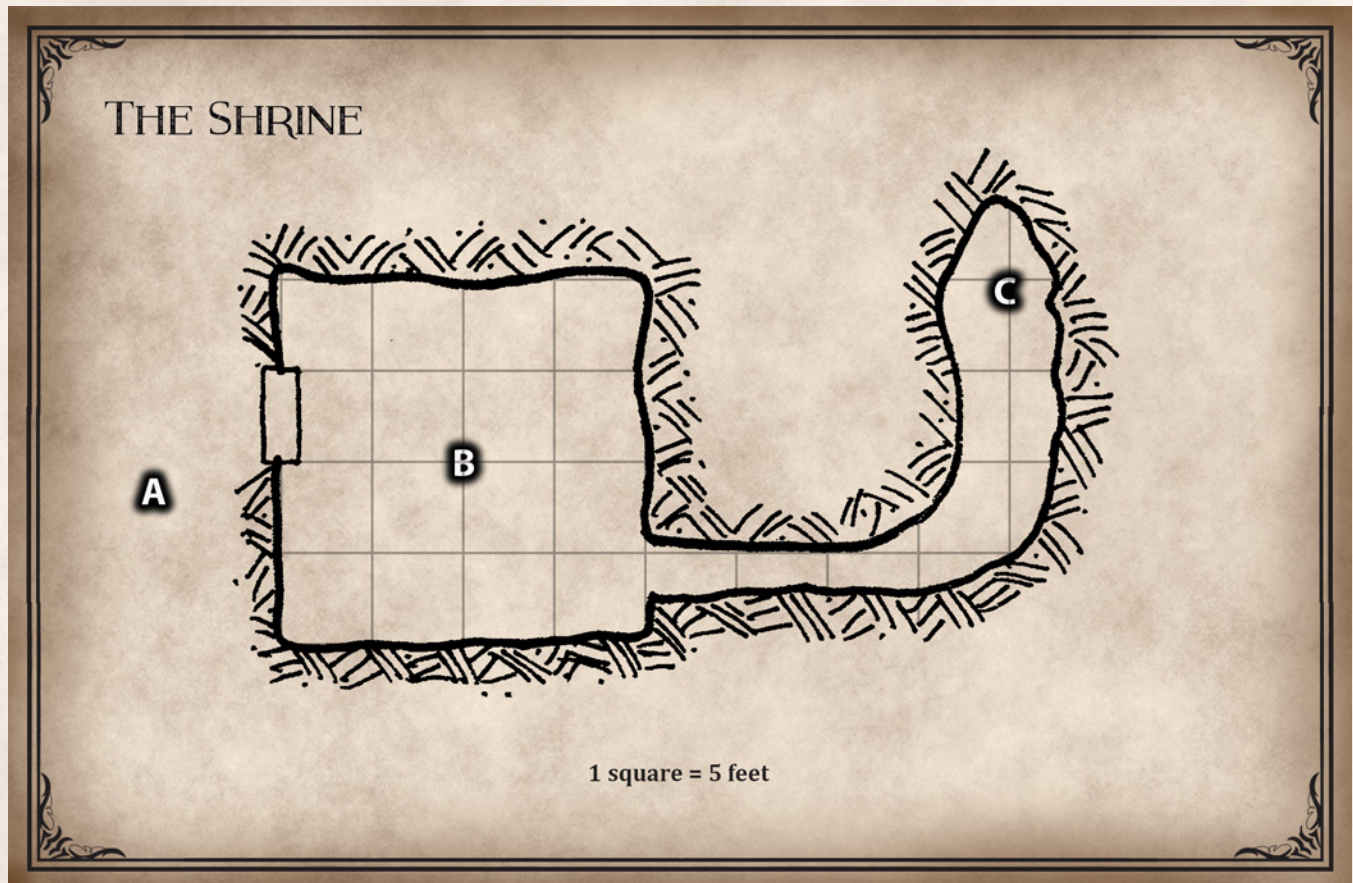
SHRINE SITE

The encounter begins when the party walks up on the shrine and the stand-off between Lim and Ixka. The environment of the opening scene is as follows.

General. A large clearing surrounded by dense jungle.

Terrain. Bare dirt jungle floor.

Sounds. The jungle is alive with animal calls.



A. SHRINE SURROUNDINGS

You walk into a small clearing and take in an unusual sight: a person, upside-down and suspended off the ground by a long vine. He is thoroughly restrained, swaying to and fro. There is a stone building behind him, bodies on the ground below him, and a figure wearing a wooden hawk mask off to the side of him. The upside-down figure speaks with a refined accent: "I say, you there! It appears I'm in a spot of trouble."

The upside-down figure is **Lim**, restrained by a vine. The dead bodies are a shrine guardian and two of Lim's companions. Lim's two rapiers are on the ground nearby, as are his companions' weapons (maul, mace) and the guardian's weapon (a carved club-see clue below).

Lim's plan is to get free, find the idol he dropped, then run. Lim picks up his rapiers if

Gestures: The DM must attempt to relate the story of Lim and his cohorts attempting to steal the idol. Since there is no way for the two sides to know if they are truly understanding one another, you may use your own judgment when to stop 'gesturing' the story. You may allow a **DC 12 Intelligence (Insight) check** to allow the players to discern the meaning of the gestures if you wish, or you may just accept what the players think they gather from the gestures.

freed, or admits they are his if asked. He is in a hurry as he suspects that more shrine guardians are on the way. But he banters calmly with the PCs: "We thought we'd have a go at this shrine. Had a bit of bad luck, then these local chaps arrived. Anyway..."

The hawk-masked figure is **Ixka** (druid; CR 2; MM, p346), protector of this shrine. She has been battling Lim and used her last spell slot to cast *entangle*, restraining him. She is now simply hanging on to the vine to physically keep Lim trapped. But she's wounded and visibly straining, which is obvious to the PCs when they arrive. She is also barefoot (see clue below).

If the PCs free Lim or approach Ixka threateningly, Ixka runs for reinforcements while **3 tri-flower fronds** (CR ½; ToA, p234) cover her

retreat. Lim attempts to use the PCs to get the idol. Ixka returns in 15 minutes with **10 tribal warriors** who attempt to kill everyone.

If the PCs approach Ixka cautiously or just talk, she stays put. She doesn't speak their language but tries to tell them about Lim using gestures*. Then she leaves to intercept her reinforcements, returning 15 minutes later with 10 tribal warriors to kill Lim. They leave the PCs alone, as long as they haven't taken the idol.

CLUES

Lim's Lie: "These chaps came along and killed my party."

Clue: Lim's party all have stab wounds, but the shrine guardian has only a club-**DC8 Intelligence (Investigation)** or if PCs inspect bodies.

2nd Lie: "Well, they disarmed my men and used their own weapons against them."

Relevance: The stab wounds implicate Lim, the only blade-wielder around.

Lim's Lie: "The attackers were all over us!"

Clue B: The dead shrine guardian and Ixka are barefoot, and only 2 sets of bare footprints can be found in clearing-**DC8 Wisdom (Survival)** check.

2nd Lie: "Well, they attacked from the trees."

Relevance: Lim's story sounds fishy. The evidence doesn't match his story.

B. FALSE IDOL ROOM

The entrance to this room is blocked by a boulder (a trap triggered by Lim). Moving it requires 2 simultaneous **DC13 Strength (Athletics) checks**. Once inside:

A ledge juts out of the far stone wall, with a golden, snake-headed idol on it. A body lies sprawled against the far wall. There is a boulder-sized hole in the ceiling and a furrow in the mud floor shows the boulder's path to the door. Stone debris and a broken short sword have been mashed into the furrow.

The body is one of Lim's crew, a sacrificial lamb sent to trigger the expected trap. The hole in the ceiling was caused by the boulder trap springing. A **DC10 Intelligence (Investigation) check** reveals signs of an explosion and a partially-open trap door in the floor that leads to area C.

Lim dropped the real hawk-headed idol when fleeing the boulder and it was mashed into the mud floor. It is hidden from view, but hopefully, your PCs are clued in to take a look. Each round of digging has a 2 in 6 chance of finding the real idol. The idol is covered in a blue-colored poison; if touched to skin a **DC13 Constitution saving throw** is needed to avoid 3d8 poison damage. If it is uncovered, a blue, poisonous sheen is noticeable with a **DC10 Intelligence (Investigation) check**.

Trap: The snake-headed idol is illusory. It covers a *glyph of warding* which is visible with a **DC 13 Wisdom (Perception) check**. Any interaction with the idol triggers an explosion, doing 4d8 thunder damage to all in the room, no save. Disabling the rune requires a **DC 12 Intelligence (Arcana) check**. If Lim finds the real idol, he might throw a rock at the snake-headed idol in an attempt to trigger the glyph, then run.

Treasure: Mushed in the mud is the real hawk-headed idol. Solid gold, 1000 gp value.

C. TRUE SHRINE

The hole leads to a 3 foot-high, earthen-walled tunnel. A bluish glow is emanating from somewhere beyond a left turn, 10 feet away.

The real idol was kept at the end of this tunnel on a small pedestal. Around the corner is the body of one of Lim's crew, killed when he touched the idol. Its poison stained his hands a glowing blue. Lim then stole the idol with gloved hands and exited just ahead of the boulder.

The blue-glowing gloves are in Lim's pocket and can be noticed by a creature with a **passive Perception of 18** or higher, with a successful **DC 18 Wisdom (Perception) check**, or if Lim is searched. Residual poison covers the gloves and any creature touching the gloves must pass a **DC 13 Constitution saving throw** or suffer 7 (2d6) poison damage and be poisoned for 2d4 rounds.

CLUES

Lim's Lie: "We never found anything in this bloody shrine. Poor Jekk died for nothing."

Clue: There are new scrape marks on the empty pedestal—automatically visible if a PC crawls to this location.

2nd Lie: "Well, there was an idol here but it was just a wooden carving of some rubbish crocodile god."

Relevance: Lim's "clarification" should make him seem suspect. A character passing a **DC 10 Intelligence (Insight) check** realizes a wooden idol wouldn't have left scrape marks on the wall.

ENCOUNTER DEVELOPMENTS

If the PCs leave without interacting with anyone, then they encounter 10 **tribal warriors**, on their way to defend the shrine. A fight breaks out without some seriously convincing role-playing. A **DC 12 Charisma (Performance) check** is required if the players attempt to 'gesture' their way out of the situation. A failure results in the tribal warriors believing the PC just threatened them.

In all situations, time the warriors' entrance for maximum effect: just as someone discovers the idol, they hear chanting and the ritualistic clacking of wooden clubs outside.

If the PCs return the idol, an appreciative Ixka gives the PCs two of the below magic items, determined randomly by rolling a d8:

d8 Magic Item

- 1 *Ring of protection*
- 2 *Ring of animal influence*
- 3 *Potion of greater healing*
- 4 *Staff of the adder*
- 5 *Wand of web*
- 6 *Stone of good luck*
- 7 *5 +1 sling bullets*
- 8 A set of *sending stones*

WHAT A FUNGI!

By Ginny Loveday

“Wherein the party stumbles into a ritual of death and creation, disturbing a tribe of savage plant creatures. In this encounter, the party finds a carefully laid trap of a tribe of vegepymies hoping to grow their numbers.”

Type: Combat & Exploration

CR: 1-10

DMS NOTES

Vegepymies are fungus creatures that live in tribes, hunting and spreading their spores. They most commonly inhabit dark areas that are warm and wet, like underground caves or dense forests. They prefer to eat fresh meat, bone, and blood. They originate from remains left behind by a creature killed by russet mold.

THE ENCOUNTER

PLANT AMBUSH!

The encounter begins when the party walks into a lush clearing, approximately 50-feet across, with a large flat mushroom growing near the center surrounded by a patch of reddish brown mold growth. Atop the mushroom lies a faintly glowing stone.

INTERRUPTION, OR JUST BEGINNING?

The environment of the clearing is as follows:

General. The forest is dense and closing in all around. The stench of rotting vegetation hangs heavy in the air. The clearing is roughly 50-feet across. The mushroom in the center rises about a half foot from the ground, sturdy and flat on top.

Light. Though the party has entered a clearing, the canopy still soars overhead blocking most of the light. The area is dimly lit.

Surfaces. The clearing has a surface of hard packed dirt with patches of an odd reddish-brown mold growing and is surrounded by dense trees and surface vegetation. Any travel outside of the clearing is difficult terrain.

A. ON THE EDGE OF THE CLEARING

It seems as if you’ve been hacking your way through the dense undergrowth for hours when suddenly your guide stops ahead as the thick foliage gives way to a small clearing. The light filters dimly through the thick canopy still soaring overhead. The stench of rotted vegetation wafts on a slight breeze. As you step into the clearing, you notice a large mushroom growing near the center of the clearing, with an odd-looking stone perched atop it. The stone appears to glow and pulse from within.

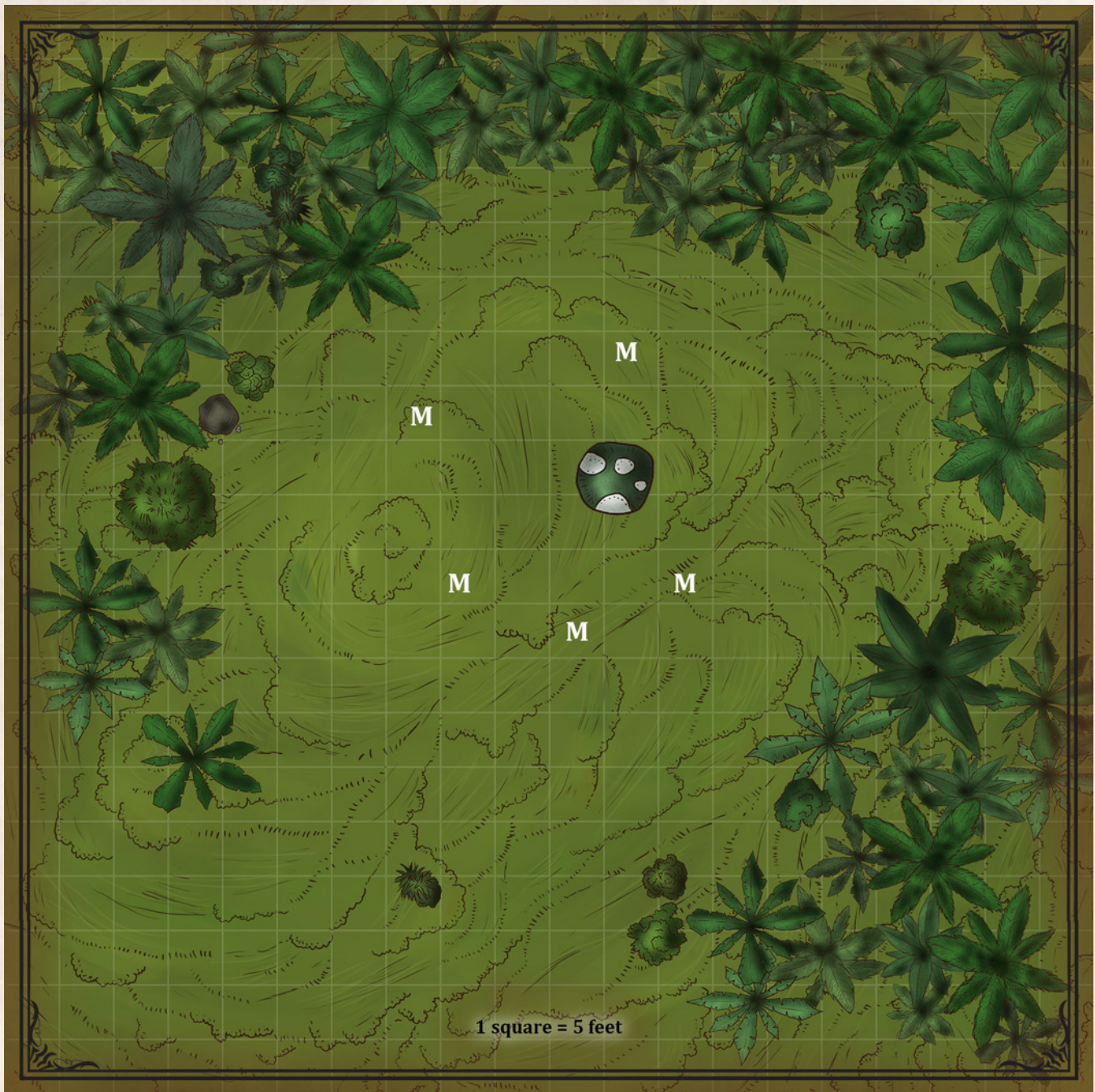
As the party walks into the clearing, keep track of where they move as patches of russet mold require anyone who approaches within 5 ft. of it to make a **DC 13 Constitution saving throw** (see sidebar below for complete info on the russet mold).

The stone was found by the vegepymies in a cave system occupied by a fearsome lich; they liberated it after noticing the effect that it had on humanoids to cause them to blindly flee, thinking that they could use it to trick unwitting victims into falling prey to the russet mold in their home habitat.

B. REACHING THE ROCK

As you finally approach the center of the clearing, the stone seems to pulse faster, flickering madly as you near its perch on the mushroom.

The stone is about the size of a normal humanoid fist, etched with a crude drawing of a demonic face. Describe it as glowing faintly red in the dim light of the clearing. If a party member picks up the stone, have them, and any other party member standing in a 30-foot cone behind them, make a **DC 13 Wisdom saving throw** or suffer the effects of a *fear* spell. Keep in mind the russet mold as they flee if any remains in the clearing.



C. AMBUSH AWAKENED

Once the party picks up the stone, or after a suitable amount of time has passed with them standing in the clearing, have the plants attack from the edges of the clearing. Any party member with a **passive Perception below 10** is surprised.

A movement from the edge of your vision suddenly startles you as you become aware that some of the surrounding vegetation appears to have come to life!

Six **vegepygmies** (CR ¼, VGtM), a **vegepygmy chief** (CR 2, VGtM), and two **thornys** (CR 1, VGtM) have crept from the edge of the clearing and have surrounded the party with their crude weapons drawn in a menacing manner.

The vegepygmies prefer to hang back at the edge of the clearing using their slings, luring party members into the thick underbrush, while the chief and his thornys menace any weak looking players in melee combat.

RUSSET MOLD

The fungus known as russet mold is reddish-brown in color and found only in places that are dark, warm, and wet. Russet mold that spreads out across a metal object can be mistaken for natural rust, and a successful **DC 15 Intelligence (Nature) or Wisdom (Survival) check** is required to identify it accurately by sight in such a case.

Any creature that comes within 5 feet of russet mold must make a **DC 13 Constitution saving throw** as the mold emits a puff of spores. On a failed save, the creature becomes poisoned. While poisoned in this way, the creature takes 7 (2d6) poison damage at the start of each of its turns, sprouting mold as it takes damage. The creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success. Any magic that neutralizes poison or cures disease kills the infestation.

A creature reduced to zero hit points by the poison dies. If the dead creature is a beast, a giant, or a humanoid, one or more newborn vegepygmies emerge from its body 24 hours later: one newborn from a Small corpse, two from a Medium corpse, four from a Large corpse, eight from a Huge corpse, or sixteen from a Gargantuan corpse.

Russet mold can be hard to kill since weapons and most types of damage do it no harm. Effects that deal acid, necrotic, or radiant damage kill 1 square foot of russet mold per 1 damage dealt. A pound of salt, a gallon of alcohol, or a magical effect that cures disease kills russet mold in a square area that is 10 feet on a side. Sunlight kills any russet mold in the light's area.

CONCLUSION

If any party members died and their bodies were not resurrected, have the guide describe the transformation of their body into the appropriate number of vegepygmies.

If removed from the jungle, the mysterious stone slowly loses its glow. It seemed to be an artifact of some sort designed to repel intruders. From where exactly, is currently unknown. Based on the image on the rock though, players could be led to believe it is from the Tomb of Annihilation.

ADJUSTING THE CHALLENGE RATING

APL 1: Fear save DC 10. 4 Vegepygmy

APL 2: Fear save DC 11. 4 Vegepygmy and 1 Thorny

APL 3: Fear save DC 12. 4 Vegepygmy and 1 Vegepygmy Chief

APL 4: As written

APL 5: Fear save 14, 6 Vegepygmy, 1 Vegepygmy Chief, and 1 Thorny

APL 6: Fear save 15, 6 Vegepygmy, 1 Vegepygmy Chief, 2 Thorny

APL 7: Fear save 15, 8 Vegepygmy, 1 Vegepygmy Chief, 2 Thorny

APL 8: Fear save 16, 12 Vegepygmy, 2 Vegepygmy Chief, 1 Thorny

APL 9: Fear save 16, 12 Vegepygmy, 2 Vegepygmy Chief, 3 Thorny

APL 10: Fear save 18, 12 Vegepygmy, 2 Vegepygmy Chief, 3 Thorny

TIMREH!

By Tony Petrecca

“An eccentric tree dweller protects the PCs from possible doom on the jungle floor... but trouble comes from above.”

Type: Combat, Role Play & Exploration

CR: 2-5

DMS NOTES

TimReh (Pronounced Tim-Ray; see stat block) is a bizarre hybrid of squirrel, goblin, and who knows what else, created by the twisted magical experimentations of the mad druid Elpam and the arch mage Accertep. TimReh fled his home when he witnessed his ‘mother’, Elpam, slaughtered by one of her creations, and has made his way wandering the treetops since.

TimReh, already quite eccentric, was driven a touch mad by the horrors he witnessed. A tree dweller by nature, TimReh is fearful of life on the ground, and his meanderings from tree top to tree top eventually led him to the vast and glorious jungle he now calls home.

Given his upbringing by a wicked, mad human, he is a surprisingly good-natured fellow with a strong affinity for human companionship. TimReh speaks in broken common, referring to himself in third person, while often seeking friendship with those who pass beneath him. Unfortunately, though, his freakish nature makes sealing such friendships challenging for him. Nevertheless, he gets protective on the rare occasions when folk “like mom” pass through the dangerous jungle he now dwells in. He does not want to see more of them slaughtered.

Ever wary of what prowls the jungle floor, he wanders through the jungle canopy, at night sleeping in a hammock slung between high tree branches. Unbeknownst to TimReh, a treetop threat has settled in above his latest perch.

TIMREH’S GREETING

The encounter begins when the traveling party passes into TimReh’s territory. When that occurs, read or paraphrase the following:

The hot air is thick with moisture as you make your way through the dark jungle today. Fit or not, your body strains at the effort required of the travel. Sweat soaks your clothes, and insects nip at any exposed flesh they can find... sometimes they manage to find their way to the unexposed bits as well. Just when you think it couldn’t get more miserable you get the unmistakable feeling you’re being watched.

Readying your weapons, you gaze about, seeing naught but the eternal greens of the jungle canopy. Suddenly something leaps down from above, landing on a branch 15-feet above the trail.

“TimReh! TimmmReehh!”

The excitable creature is, well... what is it? It’s not too large, four-foot tall perhaps. It seems to be humanoid, though it has powerfully large legs and is currently perched on all fours. It is furry - brown, with gray stripes. It appears to have goblinoid proportions to its face and body, but has a bit of a snout and whiskers, and a large furry tail, nearly as long as its torso, sprouts from its backside. It wears leather pants and a jerkin, and has a shortbow and quiver slung to its back. Its broad mouth grins, revealing razor-sharp teeth.

“TimReh make friends!”

And thus introduces TimReh. Though the party might find it suspicious, TimReh is sincere in his desire to make friends with the group. This should be a grand opportunity to introduce a fun new NPC. Ham TimReh up for humor and fun while he interacts with the PCs, keeping in mind his stunted phrasing and constant referral

to himself in the third person. Note that he is fearful of the ground. He will not come down from the trees, though he will find low perches from which to converse.

TimReh wants to follow along on the group's path for a while, offering his help as a scout. "TimReh help, spot from above! If danger - TimReh sees it coming!" TimReh isn't interested in payment, though he'll certainly take gifts given. He just wants companionship for a bit.

Should the party turn hostile, TimReh will defend himself, scurrying to the backs of trees for total cover while fleeing to the heights of the canopy. But, once he's safe, he'll follow along from high above regardless.

Once the greetings and initial interactions are completed, the party will no doubt wish to continue with their travels. TimReh will climb up into the canopy above and follow along, acting as a scout for the group whether invited or not. He is remarkably stealthy, and his swift climbing speed should allow him to keep pace with the party with relative ease. He will frequently point out how useful he can be, stating repeatedly "Danger - TimReh can see it coming."

TimReh intends to escort the party through the entirety of his territory, with the size of his territory left up to the DM. The escort should last at least one full day's march, but if you're having fun with TimReh's companionship he can provide escort for as long as he remains entertaining. Eventually he should prove his worth as an escort, which brings us to the following:

DANGER BELOW - TIMREH SEES IT COMING!

As the party continues its travels, read or paraphrase the following:

The day has not gotten any cooler, but it certainly has gotten more interesting. Your new 'friend', TimReh, paces your travels from high in the canopy above, leaping from branch to branch, tree to tree. He's remarkably stealthy most of the time, though his stealth is interrupted from time to time when he talks to himself - "TimReh! TimReh's a good scout. Trouble today, trouble today, TimReh sees it coming!"



After several hours, TimReh offers a signal to stop - by dropping a branch in front of your party. You look up to see him dropping low to converse quietly.

"Goblin trouble. Goblin ambush." he says, pointing up the trail. "Told you - TimReh sees it coming!"

TimReh has spotted a group of ten **goblins** (MM) in hiding on either side of the trail ahead. The ambush is roughly 100 feet away, where the goblins are taking cover under bushes and behind trees, ready to pounce on passersby on the trail. Thanks to TimReh's keen eye a plan can be made to thwart the ambush. TimReh is a fine shot with his bow, and will gladly participate in any offensive. TimReh can easily find a firing position amongst the branches that affords him three quarters cover.

TREASURE

The goblins have some coin amongst them. Each goblin has 1d20 silver pieces in a belt pouch.

SCALING SUGGESTIONS

CR 2: Reduce the number of goblins to 6

CR 3 & 4: As written

CR 5: Add two more goblins and two goblin bosses

DANGER ABOVE - TIMREH DOES NOT SEE IT COMING!

With the ambush successfully thwarted, TimReh should have the party's trust, and quite possibly their friendship as well. The party continues its travels until dusk when TimReh insists that the jungle floor is far too dangerous for sleeping. "Beasts, nasty beasts, prowl at night. Come with TimReh. Down is dangerous. Up is safe! Trouble - TimReh sees it coming!"

Whether he convinces the party to join him sleeping in the trees or not, TimReh takes his rest on a branch above the party. If the party chooses to rest in trees, sufficiently strong and broad branches can be found up to thirty feet from the canopy floor. Let the party decide just how high up in the trees they rest and make note of it in case falling becomes an issue.

Unbeknownst to TimReh, foul beasts have taken perch above, and they will pounce on TimReh in the middle of the night. At the appropriate time at night read or paraphrase the following:

Finally, some rest. The air cools a bit as the moon rises and you slip into slumber.

You are awakened in a start to a scream from above. TimReh has been pulled from his perch, and is being hauled up into the darkness!

"Trouble! Trouble caught TimReh! TimReh did NOT see it coming!"

TimReh has been grappled by the filament of a **forest fisher** (see stat block) that is perched on a branch thirty-feet above. The creature is not alone, as another forest fisher attacks from above as well. Since they are perched on sturdy branches above, the forest fishers have partial cover from attacks directed at them from below.

FIGHTING IN THE TREES

Generally speaking, climbing the trees of the jungle canopy should be a simple task when PCs aren't pressured for time. With ample branches to use as handholds, creatures without a climb speed treat tree climbing as difficult terrain.

However, under the duress of combat the situation is more dire. During combat, a creature attempting to use their movement? to scale a tree must make a **DC 12 Strength (Athletics) check** or fail to move that round. Creatures that fail that check by 5 or more lose their grip and fall, taking 1d6 points of bludgeoning damage for each 10 feet they plummet. Falling creatures may attempt another **DC 12 Strength (Athletics) check** to break their fall. Success halves the distance of the fall.

TREASURE.

The forest fishers discard their prey once satiated. They have no treasure on their tree branch perches. However, a successful **DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check** (before or after the encounter) of the forest floor below their perch reveals a decomposing elf corpse under a bush beneath the trees. She wears a silver necklace with an amethyst pendant worth 125 gp, and has a *potion of healing*, a *potion of climbing*, and a spell scroll containing *goodberry* in her backpack.

SCALING SUGGESTIONS

CR 2: Reduce the number of fishers to 1

CR 3 & 4: As written.

CR 5: Add two more forest fishers.

WRAPPING UP

With the day's encounters done TimReh's role could end here. His further involvement in the party's adventures is left entirely up to the DM. However, he could make for an interesting repeat NPC, popping up from time to time to say... TimReh!

MONSTER STATISTICS

FOREST FISHER

Medium monstrosity, unaligned

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)

HP 38 (7d8 + 7)

Speed 30 ft., climb 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	16 (+3)	13 (+1)	4 (-3)	12 (+1)	5 (-3)

Skills Perception +3, Stealth +6

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13

Languages —

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Ambusher. The forest fisher has advantage on attack rolls against any creature it has surprised.

Forest Camouflage. The forest fisher has advantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks made in forest or jungle terrain.

Sniper. When the forest fisher is hidden from a creature and misses with its spike launcher or filament grab attacks, making the attack does not reveal the forest fisher's position.

Spider Climb. The forest fisher can climb difficult surfaces, including upside down on ceilings, without needing to make an ability check.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The forest fisher makes one attack with its filament grab, uses reel, and makes one attack with its spike launcher or pincer.

Filament Grab. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 40 ft., one target. *Hit:* The target is grappled (escape DC 13). Until the grapple ends, the target is restrained and has disadvantage on Strength checks and Strength saving throws, and the forest fisher can't use its filament grab on another target.

Pincer. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d10+3) bludgeoning damage.

Spike Launcher. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, range 30/60, one target. *Hit:* 8 (2d4 + 3) piercing damage.

Reel. The forest fisher pulls a Large or smaller creature grappled by its filament grab up to 15 feet straight toward it.

Surface cousins to cave fishers, these bizarre insect-like monstrosities feed by ambushing from above. The forest fisher catches its prey by extending filaments from their frightening proboscis, then finishing the prey off with its launched spikes and powerful pinchers.

This forest fisher is a reskin of the cave fisher found in Jon Leitheusser's *Book of Beasts: Underdark Vault*. You can check out this excellent bestiary on the Dungeon Master's Guild.

TIMREH

Small humanoid, chaotic good

Armor Class 16 (leather armor)

HP 44 (8d8 + 8)

Speed 30 ft., climb 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	20 (+5)	13 (+1)	8 (-1)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)

Skills Athletics +6, Perception +5, Stealth +8

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 16

Languages Common

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Keen Hearing and Sight. TimReh has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing or sight.

Powerful Leaper. TimReh has advantage on Strength (Athletics) checks that involve jumping. TimReh doubles his Strength score when determining long jump and high jump distances cleared.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. TimReh makes two melee attacks or two ranged attacks.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6+3) piercing damage.

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6+3) slashing damage.

Shortbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, range 80/320, one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d6+5) piercing damage.

CRYPT OF THE GOLDEN MUMMY

By Patrick E. Pullen

“Crypt of the Golden Mummy is an encounter for a party of 4 to 6 adventurers of levels 5 to 7. It takes place in a lost crypt hidden deep in a jungle, possibly in Chult. The adventurers are seeking the remains of an ancient wizard who was mummified in solid gold. They will have to get around the crypt’s guardian, solve a puzzle and avoid a deadly trap if they are to succeed in their quest.”

Type: Puzzle, Traps, Combat Encounters
CR: 5-7

DMs NOTES

The PCs have delved deep into the jungle to find a legendary, golden mummy in a deadly crypt. The legends say the mummy is encased in pure gold. If they can survive, the party could be very wealthy. The PCs can be following a newly discovered map or lured to the crypt by rumors from a tavern bard.

THE CRYPT

The environment of the crypt is as follows.

General. The walls and ceiling are hewn stone. The ceilings are twenty feet high. The ground is earthen and stone.

Light. There is no light within the tomb, save what the party brings with them.

1. THE ENTRANCE

Once the party reaches the entrance, read or summarize the following:

After a long trek through the jungle, you finally reach your destination—the Crypt of the Golden Mummy. A large stone slab serves as a door to the tomb. It is covered with strange, bright red vines. They will have to be cleared before you can open the door.

The door to the crypt is covered in thick poisonous vines that will first need to be cleared before entering. If the vines are touched with bare skin, the PC must make a **DC 14 Constitution saving throw**; failure results in the PC taking 4 (1d6) poison damage (half as

much on a successful save). Complicating the situation, if the vines are burned, they release a poisonous gas. If inhaled the gas causes 4 (1d6) poison damage per round in a 20-foot radius (no save) and must immediately pass a **DC 14 Constitution saving throw** or become paralyzed for 1d4 rounds. To prevent further damage, the paralyzed PC will then have to be dragged to safety. The gas dissipates after the fire goes out.

Pulling the vines away by hand takes 20 minutes, whilst using slashing weapons reduces the time to 10 minutes. Due to the vine being very dry and extremely flammable, burning the vines reduces the time to 5 minutes, but also creates the poisonous gas mentioned above.

Should you wish to add tension to the situation, you may consider adding a random monster into the mix, making it more difficult to clear the door. The door is a heavy stone block which can be moved aside with a successful **DC 15 Strength check**.

Clearing the vine allows the characters to open the door and proceed into the crypt. Once inside the crypt the PCs find an empty antechamber with an opening to room 2.

2. THE PUZZLE ROOM

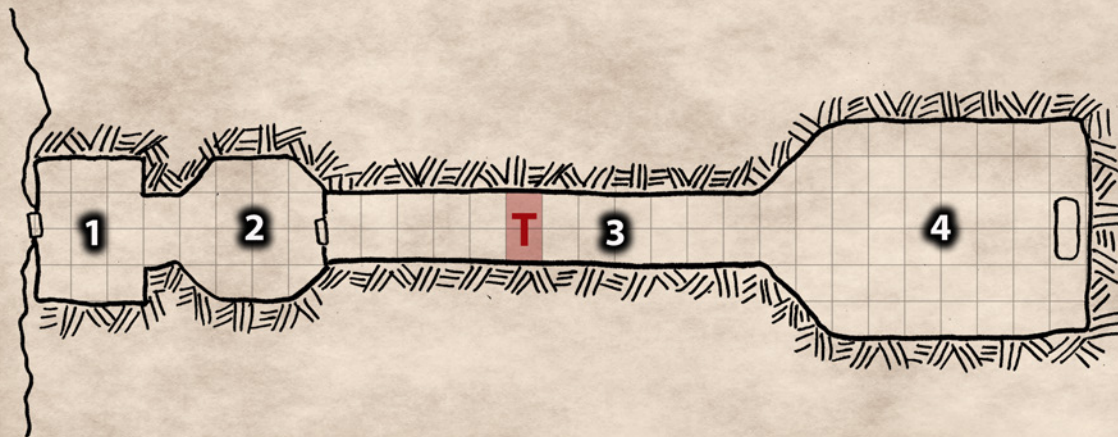
Progress beyond this room is blocked by a large iron door in the east wall. The door has no visible handles or hinges. It is magically locked and cannot be bypassed with anything short of a *wish* spell. Attempting to identify the magic used reveals a strong aura of conjuration magic holding the door in place until the riddle is answered.

When approached, a magic mouth appears on the door and asks the following question, which must be successfully answered before the door will open.

Read the following:

“A horse outside of the Dripping Dagger Inn is tied to an 8-foot long rope. 12 feet away from the horse is a pile of hay. Without breaking the rope, the horse can eat the hay whenever it chooses. How is this possible?”

CRYPT OF THE GOLDEN MUMMY



1 square = 5 feet

Answer: The other end of the rope is not tied to anything.

If your players are having trouble with the puzzle, you may allow a **DC 14 Intelligence (Insight) check** to drop a subtle hint. Correctly answering the riddle causes the door to roll aside, allowing the party to continue.

3. THE TRAPPED HALL

This 10-foot wide hallway is trapped with a spring-loaded pressure plate, marked with a “T” on the map. The plate is hidden by dirt and debris. A **DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) check** by a creature actively searching the hallway reveals the hidden pressure plate. Passive Perception checks should not apply here as the trap cannot be seen without actively clearing the debris.

A successful **DC 15 Dexterity check** using thieves’ tools disarms the trap. A failed check, or anyone stepping on the pressure plate, set the trap off. The ceiling, 20 feet above the pressure plate, contains a trap door which opens when the trap is triggered, causing a 10-foot square **gelatinous cube** (CR 2; MM) to fall on the victims below. A successful **DC 14 Dexterity saving throw** is required to avoid the gelatinous cube; failure results in those within the area becoming engulfed within the cube.

4. THE MUMMY’S TOMB

The mummy rests in a closed sarcophagus along the eastern wall of this chamber. Anyone who tampers with the sarcophagus magically summons the crypt’s guardian—a horrific **chimera** (CR 6; MM) that was once the mummified wizard’s pet. The beast appears in a flash of light in the closest unoccupied space near the doorway to the west side of the room, blocking any attempt to escape. The chimera will not negotiate. It attacks as soon as it is summoned, and fights to the death.

Treasure: Inside the sarcophagus is the mummified wizard, encased in gold. Its value is to be determined by the DM, basing the decision on their current campaign. The trouble will be getting the extremely heavy gold-encased mummy out of the tomb.

As an added concern, you can have the **mummy** (CR 3; MM) be undead and trapped within the gold. Once the PCs have the gold melted or stripped away, it animates and attacks. Keep in mind that melting the gold could injure the mummy. Perhaps it is protected from the heat by magic. It is up to you, as the DM, to determine where to go from here.

AN UNINVITED GUEST

By Patrick E. Pullen

“An Uninvited Guest is an encounter for a party of 4 to 6 adventurers of levels 7 to 9. It takes place in a wild jungle, possibly in Chult. The adventurers have been searching for a lost group of explorers. With no luck, the party has set up camp for the night. While they rest, there is a disturbance nearby. Something very large is rumbling around in the jungle and headed for the camp. A Triceratops charges out of the underbrush and appears to be attacking the camp when in fact it is running from a much more dreaded beast; a Tyrannosaurus Zombie.”

Type: Combat
CR: 7-9

DMS NOTES

The PCs have been sent into the jungle to find a missing party of adventurers. After a long day of searching, they have found no sign of the lost group. It is dark and they are too far from town to hike back before nightfall. They find a clearing with a stream close by and decide to set up camp for the night.

THE ENCOUNTER

DINO ATTACK!

The encounter begins when the party has settled in for the night at their newly built campsite. As the DM, you can decide exactly when the attack occurs. You may also want to roll a random time for the encounter, perhaps after a nightly watch schedule has been set.

THE CAMPSITE

The environment of the campsite is as follows.

General. The camp is set up in a small jungle clearing. The night air is hot and humid. The sounds of the jungle come from all around.

Light. The moon is out providing some dim light through the thick canopy.

1. THE DISTURBANCE

The adventurers have awakened as something huge crashes through the jungle toward them. This is a **Triceratops** (CR 5, MM), which is fleeing a **Tyrannosaurus Zombie** (CR 8, ToA). The players will not know this, however, and may feel threatened by the panicking dinosaur. It is possible that they will attack the Triceratops, completely oblivious to the larger threat approaching.

Read or summarize the following:

The ground slowly begins to tremble as if a mild earthquake is rumbling through the area. From the North, you realize a large animal is tearing through the jungle and headed straight toward the camp. A large dinosaur bounds into the clearing. Its head is huge. The back is shaped like a shield with two large horns above the beast's eyes and one horn protruding from its snout. It pauses momentarily at the sight of you and then thunders forward.

If the characters attack the Triceratops, it defends itself up until the Tyrannosaurus Zombie enters the clearing. At that point, it attempts to flee the battle.

2. THE REAL THREAT

The real threat comes two rounds later, as the confused Triceratops tries to fight or escape the adventurers, and the Tyrannosaurus Zombie crashes out of the jungle. At this point, the Triceratops makes a frantic dash in a random direction, possibly trampling one or more of the party members. Roll a d8, with 1 being the top left square behind the Triceratops, to determine the direction of the charge. Reroll any result which would put the Triceratops in range of the Tyrannosaurus Zombie.

A character may attempt a **DC 13 Dexterity saving throw** to avoid the path of the fleeing Triceratops. On a failed save, the character is hit with a gore attack and trampling charge. On a successful save, the character jumps out of the way of the charge.



Since the Triceratops is frightened and being attacked, its frantic retreat negates the requirement of moving 20 feet before using its trampling charge ability.

The trees to the north rip apart as another huge dinosaur crashes into the clearing. This one is much more menacing than the first. Standing much taller, it roars loudly, piercing the night air. The beast stands on two thick hind legs and has a pair of short, stubby arms. Its maw is lined with six-inch razor-sharp teeth. Something about the beast is even more disturbing, though. It appears to be rotting. Bits of putrid flesh sag from areas of exposed bone.

Its head turns in your direction as it unleashes another horrifying roar. Its left eye socket exposes a black, gaping hole, while the right eye, white and glazed over, appears to track you.

The Tyrannosaurus Zombie ignores the other dinosaur when it enters the camp and redirects its focus to the adventurers. If defeated, 1d4 humanoid **zombies** (CR 1/4, MM) erupt from the dinosaur's gut and attack the PCs.

If you wish to give your characters treasure, you can add it to the possessions of the zombies. The zombies can be random victims of the Tyrannosaurus Zombie, or perhaps they are the missing party that the adventurers have been looking for. In the latter case, have some identifying equipment on the zombies such as a beloved one's wedding ring, which was previously described to the party.

SUBSTITUTE GUARDIANS

By Rat King Games

“An adult bulette has become desperate for food and is ravaging a forest in search of some tasty morsels. The dryads who live here are devastated and are no match for it. The dryads are in crisis and ask the characters for help, with refusal simply not an option.”

Type: Combat & Exploration

CR: 5

DMs NOTES

The bulette is exceptionally desperate and will attack the characters, seeing them as a tasty meal. The dryads are friendly fey, but wary and scared. They will ask the characters for help, but if the characters refuse, they will continually warp the woodland magic to turn the characters back toward the bulette.

Format: any boxed text is meant to be read aloud. These are also only suggestions, feel free to open up the world and add your own flavor! Change the descriptions and place to match your campaign or session!

THE ENCOUNTER

A. TIMBEEEEERRR!!!

The encounter begins when the party walks into a forest clearing; the dust has settled but it looks as if all the trees have either been uprooted or snapped like toothpicks.

Read or summarize the below:

Birds sing a greeting to you as you enter this section of the jungle. The gentle creek that rolls by seem to add to the natural chorus around you, and sunlight streaks through trees like golden ribbons tied to the ground.

As you move deeper into the jungle, you notice the birdsong fading and the smell of freshly split wood and damp dirt in the air. You enter a clearing of felled trees and devastated land. Many towering trees have been snapped and uprooted like toothpicks and the dust from their trunks and roots is still dancing about the air; it doesn't seem as though it has had time to settle yet.

As they enter the clearing the players can easily see the destruction. The description of the destroyed clearing may cause them to assume a multitude of different monsters. Feel free to let them talk about it and make some checks.

WISDOM (PERCEPTION)

DC 11: There are many holes coming from the ground. Something burrowed up here and uprooted the trees.

DC 15: All trees that have been felled have been cut off near the ground, with what looks like some sort of bite marks.

DC 20: It seems like one of the trees has a pattern in the bark that resembles a face. Then you see its eyes move flicking between you, your party, and the destruction around you. (This is one of two dryads)

INTELLIGENCE (NATURE)

DC 11: Bulettes are likely the cause of this destruction.

DC 15: All information the DM wishes to share about bulettes from their stat block in the monster manual.

DC 18 (Only if at least one dryad has been spotted): Dryad stat blocks.

B. A LITTLE GENEROSITY... AND MUSCLE

The **dryad** (MM) are desperate for help. A bulette has ravaged their home while it searched for food, and the dryad want the characters to get rid of it.

Read or summarize the below:

A strange branch reaches out to you from one of the nearby standing trees. As the branch extends, you hear a voice behind it. "Please, will you help?"

A beautiful creature that mirrors the forest itself steps from the tree, its camouflage more advanced than any naturally occurring you've ever seen. Its dark green orbs stare into you, and with its hand still extended, it asks once more. "Please?"

There are two dryad and they are very timid. They speak some Common, but are younger dryad and speak Elvish more fluently. If the characters speak to them in Common, they have a hard time speaking. Their sentences are short and hard to follow. If the characters speak Elvish, the dryad can easily communicate exactly what is going on. If there is an elf in the party, the dryad speak to it directly, otherwise, the dryad assume the party only speaks Common unless an adventurer attempts to speak to them in the Elvish tongue.

The dryads tell the party of the bulette that emerged from the ground and destroyed the jungle. They want the bulette destroyed so it cannot return and do more damage. They are afraid the bulettes will destroy their home trees, which would cause the dryads to fall into madness.

If the adventurers agree to help, the dryads will aid them in the battle by casting *barkskin* on two adventurers with an AC of less than 16. In addition, they offer a reward of a handful of *goodberry* and a *potion of barkskin*.

If the adventurers refuse the request, the dryad use their Fey Charm to charm two adventurers into helping them. If this occurs, they will not reward the characters with the *potion of barkskin*.

C. DINNER TIME (COMBAT)

Read or summarize the below:

The ground beneath you begins to tremble and the trees around you begin to shake and sway. A loud clap of thunder bursts out in a deafening roar, and the strange thing is... it's coming from beneath you.

A large set of jaws bursts from the ground, throwing soil into the air. A creature with long, thick claws lumbers out of the hole and races toward you, it's gray jaws snapping as it charges.

There are actually two **bulettes**, but the dryad have only seen one. On the third round of combat, a second bulette emerges from the ground.

CONCLUSION

If the bulettes are defeated, they yield no items of their own. If the characters agreed to help the dryad, the dryad will reward them with the following: a *potion of barkskin* and ten *goodberries* (they remain fresh and useable for two days). If you wish to reward additional treasure, you could give the PCs a *+1 longbow* or a *+1 shortbow* made of Yew and handcrafted by the dryad.

If the players didn't agree to help the dryad they flee as soon as the battle is over and leave a pile of six regular *goodberry* behind for the characters.

NEW MAGIC ITEMS

POTION OF BARKSKIN

Potion, uncommon

When you drink this potion, you gain the effect of the *barkskin* spell. The potion's dense brown liquid has tiny pieces of bark floating in it.

PINCER MOVEMENT

By Matt Sanders

“An explorer and his band of porters have been attacked by Jungle Grabber Crabs. There is still time to save some of them from a grisly fate.”

Type: Combat & Exploration

CR: 2

DM'S NOTES

This encounter is designed to present a challenge for a party of four to five adventurers of 2nd level, but can easily be adapted up or down a level. As written, this encounter takes place along a river, but could easily be changed to a lake. It could even be moved underground with a pool of water in a cave.

This encounter mentions the possibility of drowning. If this occurs in your game, please reference Suffocating (PHB) and use those rules to reflect drowning.

The Jungle Grabber Crab (new creature; see below) is an opportunistic predator that tries to drag its prey into a body of water, drown it, and then drag the corpse back to its burrow to feast. On land, they are slightly sluggish and clumsy. As a result, the crabs try to grab prey and disappear into the water where they are at an advantage.

A SCREAM!

The encounter begins when the party hears a scream nearby. Depending on their current location, they can rush through the forest to reach the edge of the river, or follow the river and catch sight of the explorers' plight when they round a bend and see the campsite.

When the party reaches the campsite, read or paraphrase the following:

You see a campsite in chaos, its owners attacked while preparing a meal. Four raggedly-dressed young men are being dragged towards the river by huge, flat, mud-gray crabs. The ones in the pincers scream and clutch at the ground. A couple of men are still standing, bashing at the crabs with pots and sticks.

(Continued on next column)

A tall, bearded man stands atop a wooden crate in the middle of the camp, bellowing orders at the porters as he fends off two claw-snapping crabs with a rapier.

THE RIVER'S EDGE

The environment of the river's edge is as follows.

General. Short, rough grass covers the ground, with small stones strewn around.

Light. Lighting is dependent on the time of day, but Grabber Crabs like to strike when their prey is less aware, so dusk or dawn are particularly suitable.

Walls & Floors. The ground becomes wet and slippery as it slopes downward to the river bank.

A. ON THE BANK

There are eight crabs in total. Four already have porters (**commoners**; MM) in their claws, two more are close to ensnaring the two remaining upright porters, and the final two are close to **Brannigan Stokes** (noble; MM), attempting to grab him with their claws to drag him back to the water and their burrow.

Each round, the crabs drag the porters closer to the water. They reach the water in 3 rounds (or 1d4) where they attempt to drown the porters and drag the bodies away to their burrow. The two remaining crabs will attack Brannigan Stokes and try to drag him off, too.

If a crab successfully gets a porter into the water and stays there for one round, it then tries to scuttle off and into the crabs' burrow. The burrow entrance is hidden, but is revealed if:

- † a player watches a crab carry a porter to its burrow
- † by succeeding on a **DC 17 Wisdom (Perception) check**
- † by a PC who has a **passive Perception of 17** or greater when near the river bank.

The crabs are not easily convinced to drop a person once they have it in one of their claws. Instead, they attack with their remaining claw while backing away and toward the water.



At an appropriate time during combat, read or summarize the following:

The bearded man is grabbed by the leg by one of the crabs. He maintains his demeanor and begins bashing at the crabs with the round guard of his rapier. He shouts “If this expedition is lost, we will all suffer for it. Save me, you fools!”

B. IN THE WATER

Read or summarize the following:

The slow-moving water of the river is murky at the best of times, but the thrashing of the desperately struggling porters has churned up mud and silt. It is treacherous underfoot and the crabs are hard to see once submerged. Pincers and chitinous joints lurch out of the water without warning and attack.

The mud at the edge of the water is extremely slippery, and any PC or NPC stepping onto it must make a **DC 10 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check**. On a failed check, the creature falls prone, ending its turn. If successful, or after one failed attempt, the PC has learned how to steady itself on the slippery terrain and no further checks are required. The crabs are not subject to this check.

Once in the water, the crabs have a significant advantage as they are not affected by underwater combat (PHB; Chapter 9). If the combat is going well for the party, give the crabs the advantage of underwater combat as soon as they enter it. If it is going poorly for the party, hold off on applying underwater rules until both the PC and the crab are deep into the river.

C. AFTER THE FIGHT

Once the crabs are dead and if he is alive, Brannigan Stokes introduces himself and heartily thanks the party for saving him and what is left of his expedition. He is a tall, fair-haired man, but travel in the jungle has taken its toll. His clothes are torn and stained, and he looks a little hollow around the cheeks.

He explains they are a search party, looking for Brannigan's brother, Livingstone. Livingstone was searching for a lost tomb, defiled by his ancestors. He sought to return burial artifacts stolen from the tomb, which he believed were responsible for the bad luck that had befallen his family in recent generations. Following his disappearance, Brannigan has come to search for his brother and finish the job.

In thanks, he gifts the party 50 gp and a set of map-making tools worth 100 gp. He has no further use for them as the cartographer in his group died of a fever some weeks ago. The map making tools confer advantage on Survival checks to make maps or measure distances.

He also tells the players they can help themselves to some of the supply crates around the camp, as with his reduced number of porters he will be unable to carry it all. The players can stock up on rations, rope and other wilderness travel gear such as tents, bedrolls and lamp oil.

THE CRAB BURROW

The environment of the river's edge and the burrow is as follows:

General. Hard mud peppered with stones and debris from the crabs feeding. A foul stench of rotting meat and damp fills the air.

Light. The burrow is almost totally dark, just a few rays of light spill through a couple of small holes in the ceiling.

Walls & Floors. The ceiling is between 6 and 7 feet high, meaning tall PCs will struggle and jumping or anything acrobatic is almost impossible. The roughly round chamber is 20 feet across.

If the party find the burrow and investigate it, or follow some of the crabs back, they find a large burrow at the water's edge which ramps sharply up after the entrance.

Read or summarize:

The low-roofed burrow opens into a roughly round chamber. A few shafts of light struggle through small holes in the ceiling. A powerful stench of rotting meat pervades. More of these foul crabs sit chewing on the bodies of some porters.

There are two more **jungle grabber crabs** (see below) in the burrow, plus any that successfully escaped the previous battle. Their home having been invaded, these crabs are much more aggressive and rush towards the party. Instinctively knowing they are at a disadvantage in their burrow, the crabs try to push the party back towards the burrow entrance in an attempt to move the fight outside and closer to the water.

If the party defeat the crabs in their lair, they find lots of gnawed bones from humanoids and animals strewn around the cave. Most of the possessions that remain with the bones are water-damaged, corroded, damaged by crab claws, or all the above. One damp and moldy leather pouch contains a small stone idol of an eagle carved in an angular style. It can be sold for 75 gp.

MONSTER STATISTICS

JUNGLE GRABBER CRAB

Medium beast, unaligned

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)

HP 25 (3d10 + 9)

Speed 30 ft., swim 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	15 (+2)	16 (+2)	4 (-3)	10 (+0)	4 (-3)

Skills Stealth +6

Senses blindsight 40 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages —

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

Amphibious. The jungle grabber crab can breathe air and water.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The crab makes two attacks but loses its grapple ability.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5ft., one target.

Hit: 5 (1d6 + 2) and the target is grappled (escape DC 13).

The crab has two claws, each of which can only grapple one target.

EXPLODING GNOMES

By Bryan R. Stevens

“A band of gnomes is ambushing travelers on a jungle trail.”

Type: Combat
CR: 4

DMS NOTES

This side encounter takes place on a trail in the middle of a jungle.

ENCOUNTER BACKGROUND

Thavhal Vunakaga, a wealthy heavysset Goliath, had never been much of an adventurer; he spent most of his life making money with his real-estate talents. Three days ago, he chartered Bilkas, a Gnome adventure guide, to take him safely through the jungle with guarantees of seeing some exciting wildlife. One day into the excursion, Bilkas led Thavhal into an ambush where five more gnomes were waiting. Thavhal was not prepared to defend himself and went down with ease. The gnomes stripped him of his packs, but were not strong enough to move his overweight Goliath body off the path; what were they to do? One of the gnomes, Orcryn, had an idea; one week ago, they had ambushed a young wizard transporting flasks of Alchemist's Fire. It was Orcryn's idea to use the flasks to explode and incinerate the body. All the gnomes agreed because who doesn't like blowing stuff up? They all ventured back to camp to retrieve the flasks, but it has taken multiple trips to accumulate enough of them. They have twenty-four flasks tucked around the body and are returning to the scene of the crime with one last load of Alchemist's Fire to destroy the evidence and clear the path.

ENCOUNTER INTRODUCTION

Read or paraphrase the following:

As you continue to travel down the trail to [insert destination here], you see a large body in the middle of the path ahead. As you draw closer, you see the body is a deceased portly Goliath that has been stripped of his belongings.

Further inspection of the Goliath reveals the twenty-four flasks of a green liquid carefully placed around the body. A successful **DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana) check** reveals that the green liquid is Alchemist's Fire.

ENCOUNTER

The encounter begins when the party discovers the flasks around the large Goliath body. Seconds later, a group of Alchemist's Fire-toting gnomes emerge from the jungle foliage.

Read or paraphrase the following:

After further inspection of the body, you notice multiple flasks of a green liquid tucked in around the sides of the corpse. Suddenly, you hear rustling from the jungle ahead. Six gnomes emerge from the foliage ahead, each carrying multiple flasks of the same green liquid.

The gnomes attempt to hide the flasks behind their backs and deny any involvement with the deceased body on the trail. If they feel threatened, they will attack the party with the flasks of Alchemist's Fire.

If the party is close to the Goliath body, the gnomes may try to target it and set off all the flasks of Alchemist's Fire around the corpse. If this happens, each creature within 10 feet of the body must succeed a **DC 15 Dexterity saving throw** or take 8d6 fire damage; half damage on a successful save.



AFTER THE ENCOUNTER

After the encounter, the party can find their way to the gnomes' camp with a successful **DC 15 Wisdom (Survival) check**.

The gnome campsite consists of two gnomes, a firepit, and four tents, with each tent containing a small wooden chest. Each chest is locked but can be opened with a successful **DC 13 Dexterity (Thieves Tools) check**.

The chests contain 7 small gems worth 25 gp each, 53 gp, a gold bracelet, necklace, and earring set, each worth 25 gp, and 85 sp.

MONSTER STATISTICS

FOREST GNOME AMBUSER

Small humanoid (gnome), chaotic neutral

Armor Class 15 (studded leather)

HP 18 (4d6 + 4)

Speed 25 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
8 (-1)	16 (+3)	13 (+1)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)

Skills Athletics +2, Performance +5, Survival +3

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11

Languages Gnomish, Common

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Gnome Cunning. The gnome has advantage on all intelligence, wisdom and charisma saving throws vs magic.

Innate Spellcasting. The gnome's spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 12). The gnome can innately cast the following spells, requiring only verbal components:

Cantrips (at-will): *minor illusion*

ACTIONS

Dagger. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d4 + 3) piercing damage.

Shortbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage.

Alchemist's Fire. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, range 20 ft., one target. *Hit:* The target catches fire and takes 1d4 fire damage at the start of its next turn. While on fire the target has disadvantage on attack rolls. The target can extinguish the flames by using an action to make a DC 10 dexterity saving throw.

IT'S DADDY TIME!

By Jeff C. Stevens

"A sentient dagger is lost in a field of... well... um ..."

Type: Exploration

CR: Any

DMS NOTES

I don't know why, but this encounter popped into my head. I wanted to create something fun and slightly disgusting, and I know my players have dug through many a pile of dung searching for treasure. I hope you can find a use for this!

This encounter introduces **Daddy**—a sentient magical dagger. Its stats are at the end of the encounter.

Daddy wasn't pleased with its last owner, so it coaxed the owner into a fight with a huge dinosaur. Daddy knew the owner would lose the fight. It didn't mind, it wanted to be found by someone else. Its previous owner just wasn't deadly enough for Daddy.

THE ENCOUNTER

WHAT'S THAT SMELL?

The encounter begins with the party entering a large clearing filled with huge piles of dinosaur dung. Read or summarize:

A foul smell floats on the breeze—not of death and decay, but rather of excrement. At first it was only a bit noticeable but, as you continue, the smell's intensity rises.

Soon, the source comes into view—a 60-foot radius clearing filled with huge piles of what you assume is dinosaur dung. Flying insects swarm above the dung piles, creating a low, incessant hum.

A muffled voice cuts through the hum. "Hmp mm", you hear, but just vaguely.

A character passing a **DC 18 Intelligence (Insight) check** believes the voice is saying "Help me!".

Daddy senses the presence of the adventures and calls for help. It's buried only a few inches from the surface of a dung pile on the left of the clearing. A character with a **passive Perception of 14**, or one succeeding a **DC 14 Wisdom (Perception) check**, knows the general direction the sound came from. Daddy continues to call out, with his muffled voice becoming louder or quieter as the adventurers move closer to him, or farther away.

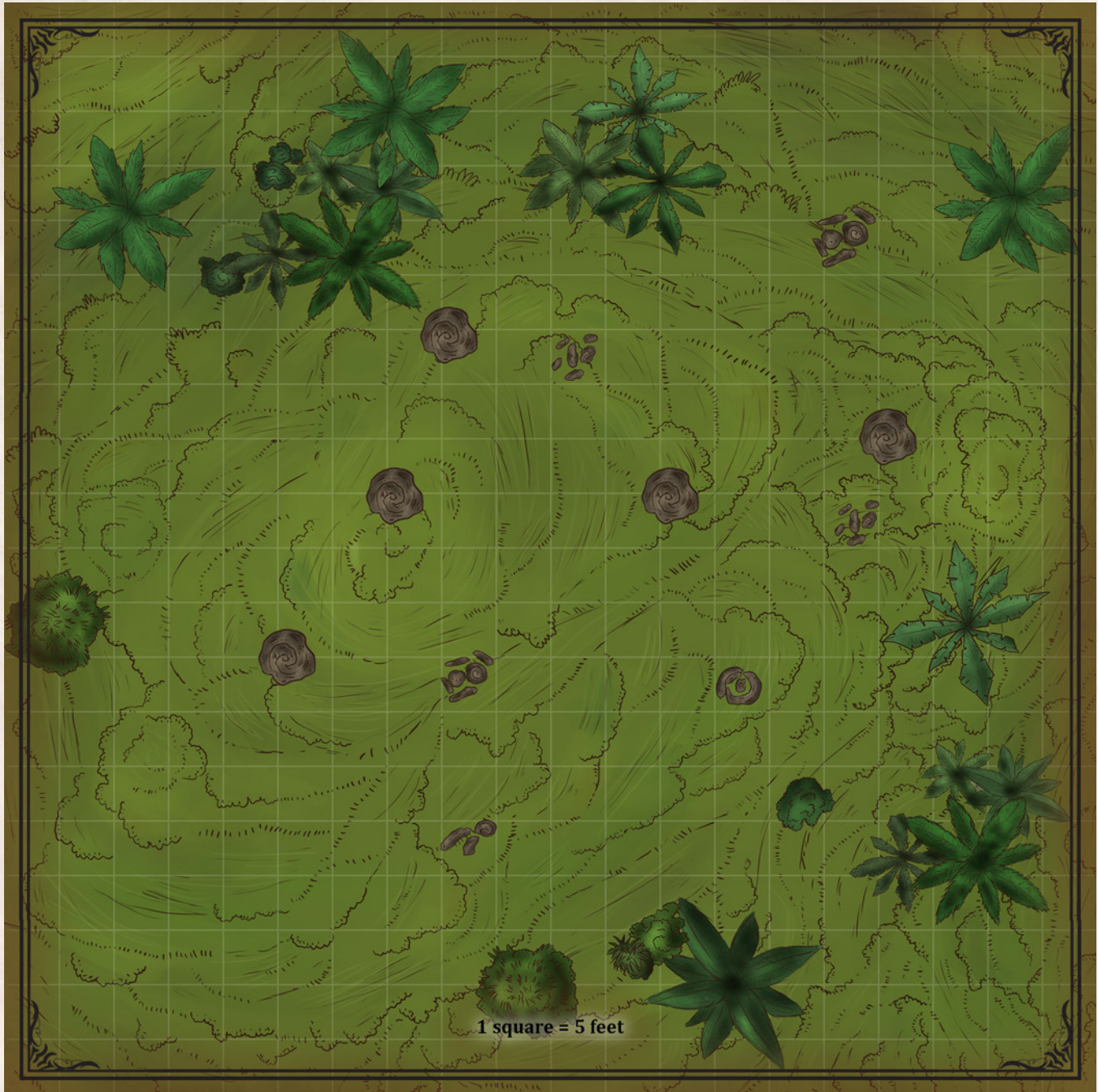
If the adventurers dig through the dung piles, describe this as you wish. Any character with a Constitution score below 13, either digging or not, must make a **DC 13 Constitution save**. Failure results in the character nearly retching from the smell and their actions, or from the disgusting actions of its party members.

Once found, Daddy thanks the adventurers for rescuing it. It explains it is the greatest dagger in the land, and it will definitely be beneficial for them to take it, after it is cleaned up, of course.

SPICING UP THE ENCOUNTER

As written, the encounter should be a lot of fun. Below are only a few ideas you could use to add to the encounter:

- † A dinosaur comes to 'visit' the area. If the adventurers are digging through the dung, the beast looks at them, sniffs at them, turns around, and then does its business. It isn't interested in filth covered adventurers.
- † The dinosaur could be hungry enough to attack the filthy adventurers. If this occurs, characters can attempt to hide behind dung piles which proved partial cover. Once a dung pile (0 AC) is hit with 10 or more point of damage, or stepped on by a large dinosaur, it is considered flattened and no longer grants cover.
- † A group of bandits, who often come to this area and dig through the dung piles for treasure, arrive as the party is looting the poop:



APL Bandits

- 1 6 Bandits (CR 1/8, MM)
- 2 1 Bandit Captain (CR 2, MM), and 1 Bandit
- 3 1 Bandit Captain and 4 Bandits
- 4 1 Bandit Captain, a Druid (CR 2, MM) and 2 Bandits
- 5 1 Gladiator (CR 5, MM), a Scout (CR 1/2, MM), and 2 Bandits

- 6 A Gladiator, a Bandit Captain, and a Scout
- 7 1 Gladiator, 1 Archer (CR 3, VGtM), and 2 Bandits
- 8 1 Blackguard (CR 8, VGtM), 1 Scout, and 1 Bandit – OR – 3 Archers (CR 3, VGtM)
- 9 1 Blackguard and 2 Archers
- 10 1 Blackguard and 4 Archers

NEW MAGIC ITEMS

DADDY

Weapon (dagger), legendary (requires attunement by a creature of non-lawful alignment)

Daddy is a sentient magic item that wants to be known as the greatest dagger in the land, and it feels the only way to do this is to yell its catchphrase whenever it is used in an attack. On a successful hit, Daddy yells 'It's Daddy Time!'.

You gain a +2 bonus to attack and damage rolls made with this weapon. It has the following additional properties:

Protection. While attuned to Daddy, you gain a +1 to armor class and saving throws.

Innate Spellcasting. Daddy can cast the following spells at 1st level once per day if it feels inclined to do so based on the reason given. The wielder must ask Daddy to cast the spell and give a reason for casting it—an impending battle, death, destruction, and mayhem: *bless*, *compelled duel*, *cure wounds*, *heroism*.

Sentience. Daddy is a sentient chaotic neutral weapon with an Intelligence of 9, a Wisdom of 10, and a Charisma of 18. It has hearing out to a range of 60 feet.

The weapon can speak, read, and understand Common, Dwarf, Gnome, Elf, and Orc. Its voice is powerful, commanding, yet humorous and sounds like someone is trying to whisper very loudly.

Personality. With its end goal of becoming the greatest dagger in the land, Daddy has sometimes (12 so far) had to lead its wielder astray, coercing them into no-win situations. Daddy does this if he isn't used very often in battle, or if kills are taken away from him by other adventurers. To spread his name, Daddy wants to be involved in kills, and he wants his voice heard.

Daddy is against taking prisoners unless it can be convinced doing so will lead to more battles and destruction.

Daddy wants to be the main weapon for its wielder, so it scoffs at any attempt to attune to another weapon. If this conflict occurs, Daddy makes a **Charisma check contested by the wielder's Charisma check**. Consult Chapter 7, page 216, of the *Dungeon Master's Guide* on how to resolve the conflict.

THE LOST VAULT OF JALELEL

By Jeff C. Stevens

“A lost tomb holds a magical prize, but greedy adventurers are in for a surprise.”

Type: Exploration / Combat
CR: 1-10

DM'S NOTES

This encounter is written to present a challenge for a party of four to five adventurers of 1st level, but scaling options are included at the end of the encounter. The Lost Vault of Jalelel is also mentioned in the encounter titled Stiggy Tongl, and it may be used to lengthen that encounter.

HOOKS

Tribe rumors: The adventurers learn of a stone door covered in vines and obscured by thick brush. Chiseled into the door are the outlines of four hands.

Map: The adventurers acquire a map leading to a lost ruin. Scribbled in what appears to be blood is the word Jalelel. Should they inquire with locals about Jalelel, they learn the man was a master craftsman of shields, with rumors that some were magical.

Villagers: Villagers tell the adventurers of a stone door covered in vines and brush. Chiseled into the door are the outlines of four hands.

None: No hook is given. The party just stumbles upon the entrance to The Lost Vault of Jalelel.

THE ENCOUNTER

The encounter begins with the party finding the stone door of the vault. Read or summarize:

A stone patio leads to a cave entrance in the hillside. A thick and weathered granite door—concealed by moss, vines, and overgrown bushes—is built into the cave entrance.

The door has no obvious keyholes or levers, but chiseled or carved into the door are the outlines of four right hands.

THE ENTRANCE TO THE VAULT

Opening the door requires four individuals to place their right hands on the door, in the chiseled spots. Doing so causes the door, and a 10-foot radius section of the ground centered on the door, to quickly swing around, and the adventurers find themselves inside the dark vault. Anyone not within 10 feet of the door when it is activated is not transported into the vault.

Note: DM may adjust the number required based on the number of members of the party.

From inside the vault, using the handprints on the door does not grant access to the outside. Once that feature has been used, it must be reset. Inspecting the area inside the vault and near the vault door reveals a slotted area in the wall and to the left of the door. A character passing a **DC 12 Intelligence (Insight) check** believes this could be a mechanism to activate the door. Inserting an item in the door does not reset the mechanism. Only a shield created by Jalelel inserted into the slot or a successful **DC 20 Dexterity check using thieves' tool** resets the door.

THE INTERIOR

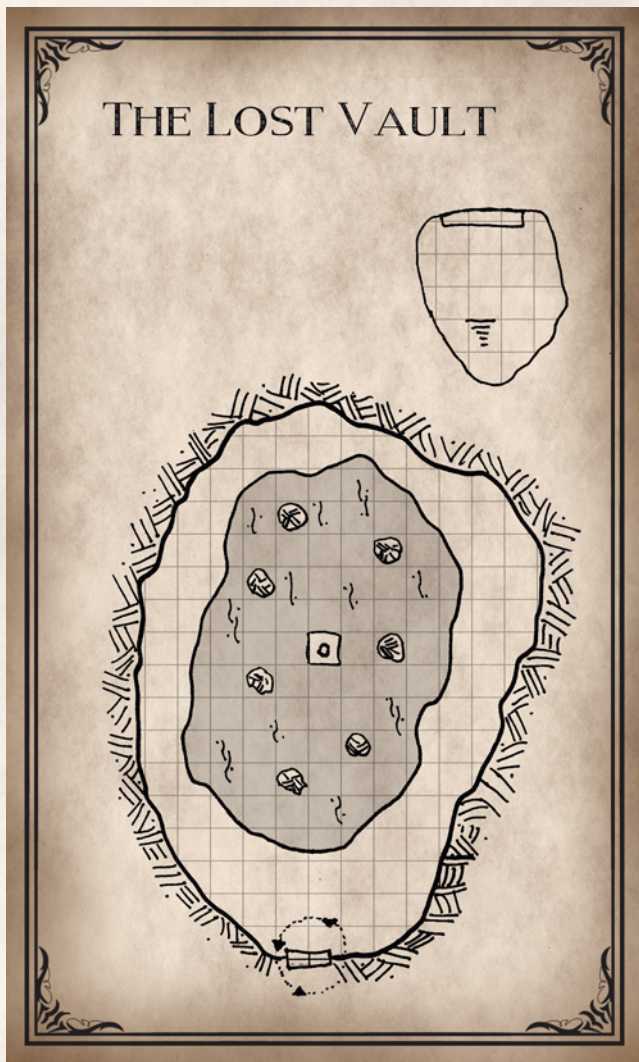
The interior of the vault is dark and is made from a natural cave. Small drops of water occasionally drop into the lake from the 30-foot-high cave ceiling.

You find yourselves in a large cave-like room. A quiet lake is in the center of the cave. Pedestal-like rock formations scattered in the lake lead to a stone platform near the center.

The pedestals may be used to access the stone platform in the middle of lake. The platform is used to progress further into the vault.

THE LAKE

A **creature (see scaling suggestions)** resides in the lake, guarding the door to the hidden vault from any who are unworthy of the prize within.



A small stone pad is built in the center of the lake. A creature swimming to, or jumping to the pad, is attacked by the creature in the water. For a party of APL 1-2, the **zombie quippers** (see “Monster Statistics” below) jump out of the water, their razor-sharp teeth chattering as they fly throw the air, and attempt to bite the jumper.

THE STONE PAD

A small bowl containing three gold coins and four small gemstones rests on a 4-foot-tall, thin metal rod in the center of the stone pad. Removing a gem or coin causes the metal rod to raise 1-inch for each item removed. If this occurs, a loud click is heard under the water. The click is a trap door, along the edge and below the surface of the lake, releasing another of the creatures into the water.

If all coins and gems are removed from the bowl, two creatures are released into the water, and the stone pedestals and platform begin to

tremble; crumbling apart if the gems and coins are not replaced in two rounds. Access to the hidden vault is forever lost, unless the party is very creative (DM discretion).

If a coin or gemstone is added to the bowl, the bowl lowers 1-inch, and a low rumble is heard emanating from the westmost square next to the stone pad. If 50 or more gold coins or gems are added to the bowl, a stairwell opens in the westmost square. The stairs lead down and into the hidden vault.

THE HIDDEN VAULT

As the adventurers enter this room using the stairs, read or summarize the below:

The stairs descend 10-feet into a very odd room. There appear to be no physical walls, but rather some type of transparent objects is keeping the water from entering this area. The room is dry, yet a few zombie-looking quippers swim along the invisible barrier where the walls and ceiling should be.

Three tribal-looking shields hang on a rack near the far end of this room, each carved with a different style face. One appears to be laughing, another crying, and the last has its mouth open as if yelling.

An image of an old, dark-skinned man appears in the center of the room. “Greetings,” says the image. “Having passed my test, I deem you worthy to take one of my shields, but no more than one. Choose wisely.” The image smiles, looks up, and then slowly fades away.

The first shield touched by a character is considered the chosen shield. When touched, the shield creates a dim yet noticeable blue flash of light. That shield may then be removed from the wall, carried out of the room without further incident from creatures in the moat, and used to reset the door mechanism.

SO... THEY TOUCHED ANOTHER SHIELD

If another shield is touched, that shield’s special property is activated, and the shield disintegrates. Moments later, the invisible barrier begins to dissolve, slowly filling the room with water. In addition, a loud rumble is heard as the stone pillars fall apart, becoming useless, and a loud click is heard as another creature is released into the lake.



The hidden vault fills with water in 5 rounds. An adventurer remaining in the room finds itself at the bottom of the lake and 10 feet underwater.

With the stone pedestals destroyed, an adventurer must swim to the edge of the lake while possibly being attacked if any creatures remain in the lake. Unless an adventurer has a swim speed, each foot of movement costs 1 extra foot.

The edges of the lake are sheer stone, requiring an adventurer to make a successful **DC 10 Strength (Athletics) check** to successfully exit the lake.

RESETTING THE DOOR

Placing the bottom of the shield into the slot on the wall creates a noticeable 'click' and resets the door. The characters must place their right hands on the door to activate it, which causes the door to swing back to the outside. Any character not within 10 feet of the door when this occurs is trapped inside the vault.

The main door automatically resets after 24 hours.

NEW MAGIC ITEMS

THE ANCIENT SHIELDS OF JALELEL

Armor (shield), very rare, requires attunement

Jalelel was a master at crafting magical shields. Those on the wall represent some of his finest work.

Once attuned to the shield, the wielder may speak a command word as a bonus action, which causes the shield to cast the spell assigned to it. The command word is chosen while attuning to the shield, and the ability may be used once per long rest. The spells assigned to each of the three shields are as follows:

Shield	Spell
Smiling Shield (left)	<i>Tasha's hideous laughter</i>
Crying Shield (middle)	<i>Fear</i>
Angry Shield (right)	<i>Thunderwave</i>

In addition, the shields have been created to increase in power as the wielder increases in adventuring experience:

ADJUSTING THE CHALLENGE RATING

APL 1: 4 zombie Quipper (they rest at the bottom of the pool and are not noticeable)

APL 2: 6 zombie Quipper

APL 3: A Water Weird (CR 3; MM), increase Athletics check to 12

APL 4: A Water Weird, +10 HP, increase Athletics check to 12

APL 5: A Water Elemental (CR 5; MM), increase Athletics check to 14

APL 6: A Water Elemental, +15 HP, increase Athletics check to 14

APL 7: A Water Elemental, +30 HP, increase Athletics check to 16

APL 8: 3 Water Weirids, increase Athletics check to 16

APL 9: 2 Water Elementals, increase Athletics check to 18

APL 10: 2 Water Elementals, +20 HP each, increase Athletics check to 18

Level	Bonus	Spell DC	Damage
1-2	+1 shield	12	2d8
3-5	+1 shield	14	2d8
6-9	+2 shield	16	3d8
10+	+3 shield	18	4d8

The increase remains in effect as long as the original wielder retains possession of the shield. If another creature attunes to the shield, it resets and gains the abilities equal to the new wielder's level.

MONSTER STATISTICS

ZOMBIE QUIPPER

Tiny undead, unaligned

Armor Class 13

HP 2 (1d4)

Speed 0 ft., swim 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
2 (-4)	16 (+3)	11 (+0)	1 (-5)	2 (-4)	1 (-5)

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities exhaustion, poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 9

Languages —

Challenge 0 (10 XP)

Blood Frenzy. The zombie quipper has advantage on melee attack rolls against any creature that doesn't have all its hit points.

Undead Fortitude. If damage reduces the zombie quipper to 0 hit points, it must make a Constitution saving throw with a DC of 5 + the damage taken, unless the damage is radiant or from a critical hit. On a success, the zombie quipper drops to 1 hit point instead.

Leaping Attack. As an action, the zombie quipper can leap out of the water, attacking a creature within 5 feet of it. This ability may also be used as a reaction, with the zombie quipper while attacking a creature attempting to jump over it.

ACTIONS

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 1 piercing damage.

NO ORDINARY PROJECTILE

By Jeff C. Stevens

“Tribal hunters are waiting to ambush their target when the adventuring party enters the ambush area. Too bad for the adventurers—the tribal hunters eat all types of flesh!”

Type: Combat
CR: 1-10

DMS NOTES/BACKGROUND

This encounter includes special tribal arrows, which the hunters use to immobilize or confuse their prey. A list of the arrows is found at the end of the encounter, and you may choose which arrows the hunters are using.

THE ENCOUNTER

As the adventurers trek through the savage jungle, they come upon a 50-foot radius clearing with a wooden pedestal in the center. Read or paraphrase the following:

The bugs under the jungle canopy have been atrocious. The gnats are the worst of all—constantly buzzing in your ears, flying up your nose, and landing in your eyes. The humidity under the canopy is the perfect breeding ground for these pests.

Ah! A clearing! A dry and open clearing with only a bit of tall vegetation. A welcome sight, indeed!

But...what's that in the center? A stump, or a pedestal? Something red and meaty rests on top, and black flies (why more bugs?) buzz around the object.

The clearing is indeed more inviting. Although it's in the sun, it will make a nice place to dry out wet clothing and footwear, escape the troublesome gnats and other insects that make sleep impossible, and allow for a dry place to sleep.

However, the clearing is surrounded by tribal hunters armed with longbows and arrows.... special arrows.

THE PEDESTAL

On top of the pedestal, covered in maggots and swarmed by biting black flies, rests a large chunk of rotting, smelly meat. The pedestal is a bait station used by the tribal hunters who had planned to take down a large-sized jungle creature today. The adventurers look like a tasty meal, so the hunters make them the target.

THE HUNTERS

The hunters are experts in camouflage, and they lay in wait on the opposite side of the clearing. The pedestal also acts as a range gauge for the hunters, and they attack when one or more party member reaches the pedestal. They remain hidden along the edge of the jungle until a party member falls victim to the effects of their special arrows. Then, another hunter leaves its hiding spot to melee attack the drugged adventurer before the effect wears off.

If there is more than one creature to target, each hunter targets a different creature. Once a creature is under the effect of a tribal arrow, that hunter then switches to normal arrows, attacking the effected creature from a distance.

Each tribal hunter carries three special arrows, with the inventory randomly chosen by the DM by rolling a d8 (with 1 being Haha and 7-8 being Seeya). The suggested cost per arrow, if bartered for or purchased, is 100 gp.

TRIBAL ARROWS

A few tribes have learned to cultivate the poisonous vegetation of the jungle. After collecting and drying poisonous plants and flowers, the tribespeople crush them into a fine powder, place the powder in a small woven pouch, and then attach the pouch to the tip of a projectile. They have found this to be a very efficient way to hunt. It's easier to kill a creature if it can't attack.

Due to the shape and weight of the customized projectile, the range of the projectile used is ½ of that listed in the PHB.



On a successful hit, these projectiles deal 1 point of bludgeoning and cause one additional effect listed from the Tribal Arrows below.

The potency is often increased or decreased based on the prey the tribe is hunting. For a party of level 1-4 characters, reduce the DC by 2. For a party of level 9 and higher, increase the DC by 2.

ADJUSTING THE CHALLENGE RATING

APL 1: 1 scout (CR ½; MM), 2 tribal warriors (CR 1/8; MM). Arrow effect save reduced by 2.

APL 2: 3 scouts, 2 tribal warriors. Arrow effect save reduced by 2.

APL 3: 4 scouts, 3 tribal warriors. Arrow effect save reduced by 2.

APL 4: 4 scouts, 4 tribal warriors. Arrow effect save reduced by 2.

APL 5: 2 archers (CR 3; VGtM), 2 tribal warriors with +10 HP each

APL 6: 2 archers, 4 tribal warriors with +10 HP each

APL 7: 2 archers, 4 thugs (CR ½; MM)

APL 8: 3 archers, 4 thugs with +15 HP each

APL 9: 3 archers, 4 thugs with +20 HP each. Arrow effect save increased by 2.

APL 10: 4 archers, 4 thugs, and one veteran (CR 3; MM). Arrow effect save increased by 2

TRIBAL ARROWS

Arrow	Constitution Save DC	Effect	Duration of Effect
Haha	13	The creature falls prone and perceives everything as hilarious for the duration.	2 rounds ⁽²⁾
Burna	13 ⁽¹⁾	The creature's body becomes covered in red, inflamed hives. All attacks, ability checks, and savings throws are at disadvantage.	3 rounds
Itcha	13 ⁽¹⁾	The creature itches all over its body. It uses its actions and reactions to scratch whatever areas it can reach.	3 rounds
Nosee	15	The creature loses the ability to see. Attacks and Dexterity saves are at disadvantage; movement is halved.	2 rounds ⁽²⁾
Outsa	15	The creature blacks out and falls prone, unaware of its surroundings.	2 rounds ⁽²⁾
Hackup	13	The creature begins coughing incessantly. All attacks, ability checks, and savings throws are at disadvantage.	2 rounds ⁽²⁾
Seeya	13	On a failed DC 13 Dexterity saving throw, the creature is under the effect of the Faerie Fire spell.	3 rounds

(1) Repeat the Constitution saving throw at the end of each of the affected creature's turns to end the effect.

(2) The effect also ends if the affected creature takes damage.

STIGGY TONG!

By Jeff C. Stevens

“A fearsome creature has made its lair near the entrance of a hidden tomb.”

Type: Combat

CR: 1-10

DM'S NOTES

This encounter is designed to present a challenge for a party of four to five adventurers of 1st level, but scaling options are included at the end of the encounter. You may use this encounter as an add-on before the party enters a lost ruin, tomb, or temple. You could also build on this encounter, having tribes or locals speak of the dangerous Stiggy Tong that no one has ever seen.

This encounter includes two new creatures—**Giant Chameleon** and **Tyrannosaurus Chamaeleonidae**—either of which can be used depending on the level of the party. The stat blocks for these creatures are located at the end of the encounter.

HOOKS

Tribe rumors: The adventurers hear warnings from local tribes, perhaps only making out the repeated phrase ‘Stiggy Tong!’.

Map: The adventurers acquire a map leading to a lost ruin. Stiggy Tong! is written somewhere on the map.

Villagers: Villagers tell the adventurers of a fearsome, ghost-like presence that guards the deep jungle.

None: No warning is given. The party just stumble upon Stiggy Tong as they attempt to enter a newly-found tomb or ruin.

THE ENCOUNTER

The encounter begins with the party entering a small clearing and seeing the entrance to a lost tomb or ruin. Read or summarize:

There it is! Across a small clearing, you can make out the entrance to the lost tomb of Jalelel—covered in lush green vines and buried behind overgrown weeds and bushes. It’s no wonder it’s remained lost for so long.

To reach the entrance, the party must cross the 50-foot radius clearing, or trek through the dense jungle that lines either side of the clearing.

Hidden along the jungle tree line, perfectly camouflaged and undetectable, is Stiggy Tong. The beast has found this location to be a very good hunting ground, with the clearing allowing it to use its Sticky Tongue ability easily.

Stiggy Tong targets the creature at the rear of the line, so as not to draw attention to itself. Stiggy Tong’s tongue attack is very fast, and difficult to notice.

THE STICKY TONGUE

The target, if hit with the sticky tongue, is immediately pulled back to Stiggy Tong’s mouth and is considered grappled. In addition, if Stiggy Tong’s attack succeeded by 5 or more, the tongue covers the creature’s mouth and it is unable to call out for help. Lastly, if the target failed its Perception check (see below) it has no idea what happened. It just knows it’s in the jaws of a large beast.

WHAT JUST HAPPENED?

Whenever Stiggy Tong makes an attack, the creature being attacked and the creature directly in front of it must make **DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) check**. On a success, the creature sees something out of the corner of its eye, but can’t discern what it was. On a result of 20 or higher, the creature sees something appear to run into the woods, but can’t discern what it is. On a failed check, no one notices anything. They would notice that a party member is missing, though.

Once Stiggy Tong has swallowed its prey, it then finds a new target and uses its sticky tongue attack again.

ADJUSTING THE CHALLENGE RATING

APL 1: Use Giant Chameleon as written

APL 2: Use Giant Chameleon as written

APL 3: Use Giant Chameleon—add 15 HP, +1 AC

APL 4: Use Giant Chameleon—add 30 HP, +1 AC

APL 5: Use Giant Chameleon—add 45 HP, +2 AC

APL 6: Use Tyrannosaurus Chamaeleonidae—reduce to 105 HP

APL 7: Use Tyrannosaurus Chamaeleonidae; reduce to 120 HP

APL 8: Use Tyrannosaurus Chamaeleonidae as written

APL 9: Use Tyrannosaurus Chamaeleonidae—add +20 HP, +1 AC

APL 10: Use Tyrannosaurus Chamaeleonidae—add +30 HP, +1 AC

MONSTER STATISTICS

GIANT CHAMELEON

Large beast, unaligned

Armor Class 11

HP 36 (6d10 + 6)

Speed 20 ft., climb 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	13 (+1)	13 (+1)	2 (-4)	10 (+0)	3 (-4)

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages —

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

False Appearance. While the chameleon remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from its jungle surrounding such as a thicket of bushes or dark tree line.

ACTIONS

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 30 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 7 (1d10 + 3) piercing damage, and the target is grappled (escape DC 13). Until this grapple ends, the target is restrained, and the giant chameleon can't bite another target.

Sticky Tongue. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 30 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 7 (1d10 + 3) bludgeoning damage, the creature is pulled into the mouth of the chameleon, and the target is grappled (escape DC 13). Until this grapple ends, the target is restrained, and the chameleon can't use this attack on another target.

Swallow. The giant chameleon makes one bite attack against a Medium or smaller target it is grappling. If the attack hits, the target is swallowed, and the grapple ends. The swallowed target is blinded and restrained, it has total cover against attacks and other effects outside the giant chameleon, and it takes 10 (3d6) acid damage at the start of each of the giant chameleon's turns. The giant chameleon can have only one target swallowed at a time.

If the chameleon dies, a swallowed creature is no longer restrained by it and can escape from the corpse using 5 feet of movement, exiting prone.

TYRANNOSAURUS CHAMAELEONIDAE

Huge beast, unaligned

Armor Class 13

HP 136 (13d12 + 52)

Speed 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
25 (+7)	10 (+0)	19 (+4)	2 (-4)	12 (+1)	9 (-1)

Skills Perception +4

Senses passive Perception 14

Languages —

Challenge 8 (3,900 XP)

False Appearance. While the Tyrannosaurus Chamaeleonidae remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from its jungle surrounding such as a thicket of bushes or dark tree line

ACTIONS

Multitattack. The Tyrannosaurus Chamaeleonidae make two attacks: one with its bite or sticky tongue attack, and one with its tail. It can't make both attacks against the same creature.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 10 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 33 (4d12 + 7) piercing damage. If the target is a Medium or smaller creature, it is grappled (escape DC 17). Until the grapple ends, the target is restrained, and the Tyrannosaurus Chamaeleonidae can't bite another target.

Sticky Tongue. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 30 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 20 (2d12 + 7) bludgeoning damage, the creature is pulled into the mouth of the tyrannosaurus, and the target is grappled (escape DC 17). Until this grapple ends, the target is restrained, and the Tyrannosaurus Chamaeleonidae can't bite another target.

Tail. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 20 (3d8 + 7) bludgeoning damage.

Swallow. The Tyrannosaurus Chamaeleonidae makes one bite attack against a Medium or smaller target it is grappling. If the attack hits, the target is swallowed, and the grapple ends. The swallowed target is blinded and restrained, it has total cover against attacks and other effects outside the Tyrannosaurus Chamaeleonidae, and it takes 10 (3d6) acid damage at the start of each of the rex's turn. The Tyrannosaurus Chamaeleonidae can have only three creatures swallowed at a time.

If the Tyrannosaurus Chamaeleonidae dies, a swallowed creature is no longer restrained by it and can escape from the corpse using 5 feet of movement, exiting prone.

Either the gods were trying to make a more ferocious creature than the Tyrannosaurus Rex, or evolution made a mistake. However it came to be, the **Tyrannosaurus Chamaeleonidae** is a fierce predator. Resembling the Tyrannosaurus Rex in physical appearance, the Tyrannosaurus Chamaeleonidae also has the ability to blend in with its environment, and a 30-foot-long sticky tongue, which it uses to capture prey while remaining hidden. Many adventurers new to the jungle have never heard of this creature, as most who encounter it never return. Local tribes call it 'Stiggy Tong'.



YUM YUM!

By Jeff C. Stevens

“The adventurers are dinner guests of a cannibalistic tribe...”

Type: Roleplay

CR: Any

DMS NOTES/BACKGROUND

If for some reason the adventurers become captured by a cannibalistic tribe (perhaps having fallen to the effects of special tribal arrows), this encounter gives them a way out of the heated situation. The PCs may need to roleplay quite a bit. I suggest awarding inspiration, or rolling with advantage, for great roleplay.

Note: Although this encounter assumes the adventurers have been captured, you could adjust it to introduce a new party member. The adventurers, having impressed the tribe in some way, are invited to the tribe’s village for dinner and relaxation. Low and behold, a humanoid wearing adventuring gear is tied to a stake near a large cauldron filled with boiling water.

THE ENCOUNTER

THE TRIBAL VILLAGE

General. A large clearing surrounded by jungle. Fifteen medium-sized thatch huts and one large thatch hut.

Terrain. Exposed dirt.

Population. 30 tribal warriors, 12 children, one shaman, and one Chief Yum Yum (see scaling suggestions). The men and women of this village are all tribal warriors.

Bound and tied to thick bamboo limbs, hanging upside down, the adventurers are carried to a cannibal village. The tribe is very happy to see such a feast! Read or summarize the following:

Bound and tied to bamboo poles, you are carried through the jungle and into a clearing circled by thatch huts. Tribespeople make their way out of the huts and cheer as your captors parade you around the village before stopping in front of a large, black cauldron resting atop a smoldering fire.

The tribesmen carry you over to several wooden pillars, each with several notches cut along the length, and place the bamboo limbs you are tied to on the pillars, where you remain hanging upside down.

Several tribeswomen begin tossing more logs on the fire, causing the flames to rise and the cauldron to steam. A group of small children run up to you and poke your stomachs. One child, a girl and most likely the oldest of the group, leans up to _____ and licks (his/her) face. With a look of satisfaction, she smiles while she pats her belly, and then runs off; the other children scamper along behind her.

Eventually, the chief of the village—Chief Yum Yum—exits the largest hut. Chief Yum Yum demands to hear the story of how the adventurers were captured. The tribesmen speak gibberish and pantomime the actions that occurred. Chief Yum Yum seems very pleased with the story.

As you hang, the villagers begin to chant. The words ‘yum yum’ are said in chorus, the volume rising as the villagers focus their gaze on the largest hut.

As if on cue, the villagers stop chanting as a woman exits the hut. She’s dressed in a robe made of red and green feathers, carries a hardwood staff capped with a humanoid skull, and wears a tall headdress made of long horns and feathers.

While patting her belly and licking her lips, she looks at you. “Jim jabadaba! Shosho mikana!” she says loudly while pointing her staff at the warriors who carried you to the camp.

After the story is told, the villagers begin adding chopped vegetables and spices to the cauldron. They also begin to shave the heads of the adventurers. After all, no one wants hair in their soup.



GETTING OUT OF THE SITUATION

Below are a few things the adventurers may notice in the village, which may allow them the opportunity to get out of their situation. You may come up with additional situations if you wish.

In all the below, if the roleplay is good, no checks are required. Otherwise, the villagers have a **+1 to all checks and saving throws**. The tribe may only untie one or two adventurers to assist with the below situations. Again, if the roleplay is good, you may allow all of them to be freed:

† A young boy is carried into the village, severely injured by what appears to be a claw slash to the chest. A shaman is brought to attend to the boy but has no idea how to help him.

Roleplaying: The adventurers could convince the villagers, using small words and gestures, that they can help the boy. Administering a *potion of healing*, or spells such as *cure wounds*, heal the boy. Doing so grants the party freedom.

† An ox, which is used to turn a grinding stone to create maize, flour, or ground sugar cane, lies next to the stone in obvious distress. Its handler is beside herself, and none of the villagers can get the ox to move.

Roleplaying: The adventurers could convince the villagers, using small words and gestures, that they can help the ox. The ox has an infected sore on its abdomen, and it hurts to stand or walk. Casting *cure wounds*, or similar means or magic, heals the creature. Doing so grants the party freedom.

† A tribesman runs into the village while screaming ‘Stiggy Tong! Stiggy Tong!’. The villagers become agitated and looks of fear fill their faces.

Roleplaying: The adventurers could inquire about Stiggy Tong using simple words. The villagers then describe the beast as best they can. They’ve seen it, but only briefly. Its camouflage keeps it well-hidden (refer to the encounter Stiggy Tong!). The adventurers could volunteer to hunt Stiggy Tong, an offer which the chief gladly accepts.

DINNER TIME

If the adventurers are unsuccessful in their attempts to convince the villagers, they are thrown into the large caldron while still tied to the bamboo, and cooked for dinner.

TREASURE

If the adventurers impress Chief Yum Yum, she may give them a map that leads to the Lost Vault of Jalelel, a leather pouch containing 2d4 uncut emeralds (50 gp each), a *+1 weapon* (leftover from a prior meal), or 6 *tribal arrows* (see No Ordinary Projectile).

ADJUSTING THE CHALLENGE RATING

APL 1 to 3: Use tribal warrior (CR 1/8; MM) for all except the children.

APL 4 to 6: one druid (CR 2; MM), one bandit captain (CR 2; MM), and thirty tribal warriors (CR 1/8; MM)

APL 7 to 10: one conjurer (CR 6; VGtM), one gladiator (CR 5; MM), and thirty tribal warriors (CR 1/8; MM)

In the above suggestions, Chief Yum Yum is either a tribal warrior, bandit captain, or gladiator. In all cases, her Charisma and Wisdom are increased by 2, and her saving throws for those stats are also increased by 2.

Encounters in the Savage Frontier

5E
Supplement

Contributing writers: Chris Bissette, Ken Carcas, Glen Cooper, Jean A. Headley, Richard Jansen-Parkes, Josh Kelly, JVC Parry, Tony Petrecca, Jeff C. Stevens

ENCOUNTERS IN THE CIVILIZED FRONTIER

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APPENDIX A: QUICK ENCOUNTERS

By Casey Bax, Bryan Stevens, and Jeff C. Stevens

“The below are simple encounters that can be used as written or adjusted to your liking. Specific creatures may not be mentioned; you should choose a creature with a CR equal to the adventurers APL.”

You could also use these as hooks or inspiration for a much larger encounter or campaign, or to introduce new player characters to the campaign.”

THE ENCOUNTERS

INJURED TRIBESWOMAN

A tribeswoman, her abdomen slashed open and bleeding, lays on the edge of a path. Rustling can be heard in the jungle that lines the path.

If she is not aided within 3 rounds, she dies, and a dinosaur emerges from the foliage, salivating and ready to eat.

If she is aided in time, the creature in the jungle loses the scent, and the woman thanks the party by giving them a leather pouch containing 7 small emeralds (25 gp each).

BROKEN CANOE

Another group of adventurers, or a couple of travelers, are found standing on a riverbank, yelling at each other. One blames the other for crashing their canoe into a submerged stump, rendering it useless.

Casting *mending* on the canoe repairs it enough so that they can continue their river journey.

A **DC 12 Wisdom (Survival) check** allows an adventurer to find suitable components to repair the canoe.

The travelers don't have much to spare. Perhaps 10 cp, a brittle parchment map, rumors, or information that the adventurers need.

A new PC could be introduced as one of the travelers: the damage to the canoe now has her way of the current guide, and she wishes to join the party.

THORSTOP THE RED

A dwarven cleric (deity of your choice) is found trekking through the jungle. His name is **Thorstop the Red** (thick red hair and beard) and he is on a journey to spread the word and teachings of his deity.

Thorstop (use **acolyte** or **priest**; MM) can provide healing services if the party listen to him preach about his deity. Adjust the healing services to the needs of the party, with Thorstop being able to cast higher-level spells, or provide potions.

Unless you wish to outfit Thorstop yourself, assume he wears a dull grey breastplate over lightweight clothing, carries an explorers pack, and wields a club.

Thorstop could have information about a lost ruin, local tribe or village, or he could help get the party back on the correct trail.

A new PC could be introduced with this encounter:

- † Thorstop just helped another adventurer who is only a mile or so ahead of the party.
- † Thorstop tells them of a solo adventurer in a nearby village who is looking to team up with a party.
- † A solo adventurer, tired of the loneliness and dangers of traveling solo, is with Thorstop when the party encounters him. Thorstop has grown tired of the adventurer's company and begs the group to take his tag-along companion with them.

YOUNG LOVE

A young couple has snuck off into the jungle to enjoy each other's company. In between rustling and giggling are brief pauses of silence. They are oblivious to the threat that is sneaking up on them (**giant constrictor snake**, or DMs choice). A character with a passive **Perception of 15 or higher**, or one passing a **DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check**, notices the sneaky beast in the foliage, just before it strikes out at the young couple. On a failed check, the adventurers do not notice the threat, and the creature attacks one of the young couple.

If saved, the couple is extremely grateful. They invite the adventurers back to one of their homes for rest and dinner, with the understanding that this event not be relayed to their parents.

A new PC could be introduced with this encounter:

- † One of the couple could be a young adventurer who is ready to team up and take on the dangers of adventuring.
- † A sibling who is currently in the village is in between adventures and looking for a new group to join.

A BAG ON THE TRAIL

A medium-sized leather sack is found along a trail, perhaps obscured by some overgrown foliage or a large leaf that has fallen from a palm tree.

The bag could contain anything the DM wishes—necessary equipment, obscure art, a diary with notes about the area, potions, drawings of a ruin entrance, a hand-drawn map of the area. Anything that could lead to further adventure, aid the party, or get the adventurers back on the correct path if they are lost.

A CIRCLE OF TENTS

The adventurers come upon a small campsite with a circle of five tents, with the center-most, far-most tent being double the size of the other tents. The camp is deserted, the firepit is cold, but nothing else looks out of place.

A large creature (one or two **giant constrictor snakes**, or a **giant chameleon**) is resting in the large tent. It's made a quick meal of the original camp members and it finds the large tent a nice place to hide while it digests its meal.

A character passing a **DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check** notices strange footprints or marks in the grass/ground around the camp.

If attacked, the creature regurgitates its last meal and then attacks the party.

The campsite may contain a few useful items (potions, scrolls), but it will most certainly contain a set of cooking utensils, a dagger, the fully-stocked explorers back, and a small wooden chest (**DC 12** if locked) containing 1 pp, 13 gp, 23 sp, and 34 cp.

A new PC could be introduced with this encounter: the last surviving camp member is hiding in a crate, barrel or in the edge of the clearing. Upon seeing or hearing the adventurers, he makes himself noticed.

THE ARM

While walking along a trail or through the dense jungle, the adventurers come upon a forearm, the hand grasping a rolled-up scroll, laying in the middle of the trail or just off to the side.

The body of the arm has been swallowed by quicksand, and it became tangled in roots within the 10-foot square quicksand pit before it died, which is why the forearm is exposed. A character with a **passive Perception of 18**, or one passing an active **DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check**, notices the quicksand before stepping in the area.

If the body is recovered, it could contain any items you wish. The scroll is a map of the area with the note 'beware of quicksand' scribbled in various places. This map could be used as a clue for the adventurers if they have become lost, or a map leading to a lost temple or ruin.

A new PC could be introduced with this encounter: it's possible the adventurer stuck in the quicksand had a pink bamboo straw with them, retained from a fun village experience that involved a large, colorful drink and the pink bamboo straw. The straw, having been kept as a souvenir, is now being used to supply air to the person in the quicksand.

THE MAN IN A BOX

The adventurers come upon a wooden crate along a road or near a path. The crate jitters and moves and a muffled sound is heard from within.

Inside the box is **Pruiz Lado**—a local artist who hired a group of adventurers to escort him and his wagon full of art to a city where he has an exhibition scheduled. The adventurers subdued Pruiz, gagged and bound him, crammed him into a wooden crate from the wagon, and then nailed the crate shut. Poor Pruiz has been trapped in this crate for two days. He's hungry, thirsty, tired, and smells very bad.

Pruiz has no treasure or coin as the other adventurers stole this from him. However, if he is escorted to a city, he offers to paint a portrait of the adventurers. Pruiz is a well-known artist, and his painting could be worth 200 gp to the right buyer.

There is the potential for the party to encounter the group of adventurers who stole Pruiz's wagon and art. There's also the possibility that these thieves encountered a big bad jungle creature, and are found wounded or dead in the jungle.

A new PC could be introduced with this encounter:

- † The person in the box could be a new player character. If so, adjust the backstory accordingly.
- † If the party encounter the thieving adventurers, one of them could be a new player character.
- † A new player character is found driving the wagon back to the scene of the crime, or with the wagon while camping at night. This character just single-handedly dispatched the thieving adventurers.

FLYING PROJECTILES

While traveling, the adventures come upon an area with arrows, bolts, or bullets flying from one side of a path or clearing to another. The shooters, hidden within the dense brush of the jungle, seem to be trading volleys; one side fires, and the projectiles fly, and then the other side replies with its own volley.

Rival tribes, or perhaps children of rival tribes, are at a standoff while trying to declare the border of their lands and hunting grounds. If the party make themselves known, the tribes quickly cease their skirmish, and turn their joint attention to the adventurers, with the adventurers being the new target for the projectiles.

This doesn't have to be a grand encounter. Using just a few tribal warriors, bandits, or similar creatures could make this a quick and easy encounter. Choose whichever adversaries you wish.

MY NECKLACE!

The party comes across a panicked young woman, Isabelle, standing at the side of a well. She was trying to get water out of the well when her necklace came loose and fell into the water below. The necklace was a gift from her late husband and she must get it back. The well is 40-feet deep and has a rope and bucket system suspended above the opening.

Climbing down and back up the damp walls of the well can be accomplished with a **DC 15 Dexterity (Acrobatics)** or **Strength (Athletics) check**.

If the party uses the rope and bucket system to lower someone into the well, roll a d20 on the way down and back up. On a result of 17-20, the rope breaks and the character falls into the water below.

The necklace is a simple silver chain worth 7 gp. If it is recovered, she thanks the party, invites them back to her home for a quick meal and then gives them an old scroll she found in the jungle (3rd level *dispel magic*, *daylight*, *haste*, or *remove curse*).

OH BABY!

The party comes across a horse-drawn cart crashed on the side of the road. One of the front wheels is broken and the horse is dead and full of arrows. Next to the cart on the ground is the body of a deceased Human man also riddled with arrows. A **DC 12 Wisdom (Medicine) check** shows that he has been dead for approximately 3 hours. On the sides of the cart are a few stuck arrows and inside the bed of the cart is a deceased Human woman curled up and on her knees. While investigating the cart, the party hears muffled noises coming from underneath the woman. Moving her body to the side the party finds an unharmed Human baby.

The party must now find a home for the child. While traveling and camping with the child, it will cry from hunger, dirty diapers, etc. The party will need to find a way to take care of the baby's needs or risk attracting the attention of predators and/or monsters. Every four hours, roll a d6 to determine if the infant is happy or not. A result of 1-3 means the infant is unhappy and crying, and a result of 4-6 means the infant is currently either sleeping or happy.

The DM decides what is causing the infant to cry, and successful **DC 12 Wisdom checks**, or fantastic roleplay, reveal the cause to the characters.

As the DM, you could change the encounter to involve any humanoid race that you wish.

A MULE FOR PLAYER CHARACTER

As the party treks through the jungle, their path opens into a clearing where a pack of herbivore dinosaurs is feeding (suggest **Hadrosaurus**, ToA). Startled by the party, the pack darts deeper into the jungle. One dinosaur takes its time, grabbing a few more leaves and then slowly begins to follow the pack.

A character with a passive Perception of 10, or one succeeding on a **DC 10 Wisdom (Perception) check**, notices the lagging dinosaur has a body harness and a collar with a name on it (the DM or the party chooses the name of the dinosaur).

This dinosaur was used as a pack animal. Its previous owner met an untimely demise several months ago while traversing this jungle and the dinosaur found a herd to join, whatever was strapped to the dinosaur previously was lost at that time. The body harness allows up to 8 bags or 4 chests to be strapped to it, with a weight limit of 600 lbs.

In order to capture the animal, a character must approach the dinosaur and pass a **DC 15 Wisdom (Animal Handling) check**, with advantage granted to the roll if the character attempts to entice the creature with a bundle of leaves.

- † Upon success, the dinosaur is domesticated. You can use **DC 10 Wisdom (Animal Handling) checks** to determine how well the dinosaur follows directions given to it. If treated properly, the creature bonds with one of the adventurers, and checks will become unnecessary.
- † Upon failure, the dinosaur snorts, and rushes after its pack.

GRAVEYARD GROVE

Deep in the jungle, the party stumbles onto a grove of trees that are just unique enough to be noticed (red leaves, blue flowers, or maybe gold speckled bark). A character with a **passive Perception of 12**, or one passing a **DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) check** notices something odd about the trees. If they succeed, read or paraphrase the following:

While inspecting the trunks of the trees, you find the hilt of a dagger sticking out. On another tree, half a jeweled amulet protrudes from the trunk. As you continue to look around you notice most of these trees have some type of object protruding from the trunks.

The adventurers have stumbled onto a jungle tribe's graveyard. Any character proficient in Religion should roll a **DC 15 Wisdom (Religion) check**. On a success—the character recalls

a burial ritual that involves planting a tree at the grave of a loved one and leaving an item of remembrance tied around it. As the tree grows, the item is enveloped by the growing tree.

Only a few of the items in the trees hold value. One item (of a former chief of the tribe) is particularly of interest to the party (use a magic item that is really enticing so they have a dilemma but make sure it is an item worn or displayed). If the adventurers spend some time and have the proper equipment, they can extract the items from the tree.

If the party extracts an item, they may encounter the tribe in question later and they may (will) notice their beloved chief's item. How will that go over? What will happen if the tribe inspects the graveyard? Well, the possibilities are endless.

GNOME OVER THE WATERFALL

The characters have arrived at the base of a beautiful waterfall. Read or paraphrase the following:

An awesome waterfall cascades down a 40-foot tall cliff into a beautiful pool before continuing down a stream. As you admire the view from the base of the cliff, a roar sounds in the distance and the ground quakes. As you survey the area to assess the danger, you realize the rumblings are footfalls of a large creature at the top of the cliff. Your attention is drawn to the waterfall as a shout of "Geronimo!!!" rings out. From the top of the cliff, a small figure leaps as a large set of jaws snap after it. The dejected giant crocodile (the owner of the jaws) watches the figure splash into the pool of water below, then reluctantly backs away. You watch the pool to see who will emerge, but no one does.

The jumper was a gnome barbarian named Komek. There is a hidden cavern under the pool of water that Komek has made into his home. To find his home, the characters must be in the pool at the base of the waterfall and then succeed on a **DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) check**. In order to actually access the cavern, the character must succeed on a **DC 15 Strength (Athletics) check**. Due to the depth of the cavern entrance, the characters may roll with advantage if they dive into the pool from the cliff above.

Komek is surprised by the visitors and will defend his home if necessary. If the characters are respectful and friendly, they may attempt a **DC 10 Charisma (Persuasion) check** to prove they are friendly.

† **Success:** Komek will gladly replenish their rations (he has a wide variety of jungle cuisine). He questions the characters about where they are from and what their purpose is. Komek then offers the characters some advice about surviving the dangers of the area. The characters may roll with advantage on 3 upcoming Nature or Survival checks in this area.

† **Failure:** Komek encourages the characters to leave his cave and this area.

If the characters attempt to overpower or intimidate Komek, they may attempt a DC 15 Charisma (Intimidation) check.

† **Success:** Komek will replenish their rations and send them away. If the characters attempt to take more from Komek, he will defend his home.

† **Failure:** Komek attacks the party.

Komek has no treasure as it has no value for him. If you'd like to give the characters a magic item or weapon, it may be looted from the home or given to the characters as a gift.

Note: You can create any necessary stats you need for Komek, depending on the challenge you want to present and the involvement you want him to have. It's possible the characters will want Komek to join their party as a guide for their adventure.

MOANS... MOANS ALL AROUND

There are 3 gourds, each hung in separate trees within a 60-foot radius of each other. When a breeze blows through them, the gourds emit a sound like the moans of a zombie. These were placed to scare away adventurers and travelers (why is up to you).

The object of this encounter is to build tension while the characters attempt to pinpoint where this noise emits from. Naturally, the players will believe a zombie pack is approaching. When they hear a gourd from a 2nd direction they may think there are 2 packs of **zombies**. Finally, when the 3rd sounds they may fear being surrounded.

While trekking through the jungle, anyone with a **passive Perception of 13 or more** hears a moan from somewhere nearby. With a successful **DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check**, the character can pinpoint the direction of the moan. As they approach, a second gourd sounds from another area of the jungle. Again, a successful **DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check** will point them in the direction of the second gourd...

Continue this with the 3 gourds until at least one character pursues a single gourd, ignoring the other 2 gourds sounds. Once they pinpoint a gourd they can attempt a **DC 15 Strength (Athletics) check** to climb the tree and retrieve the gourd. These gourds can then be used by the party.

the Chapel on the Cliffs

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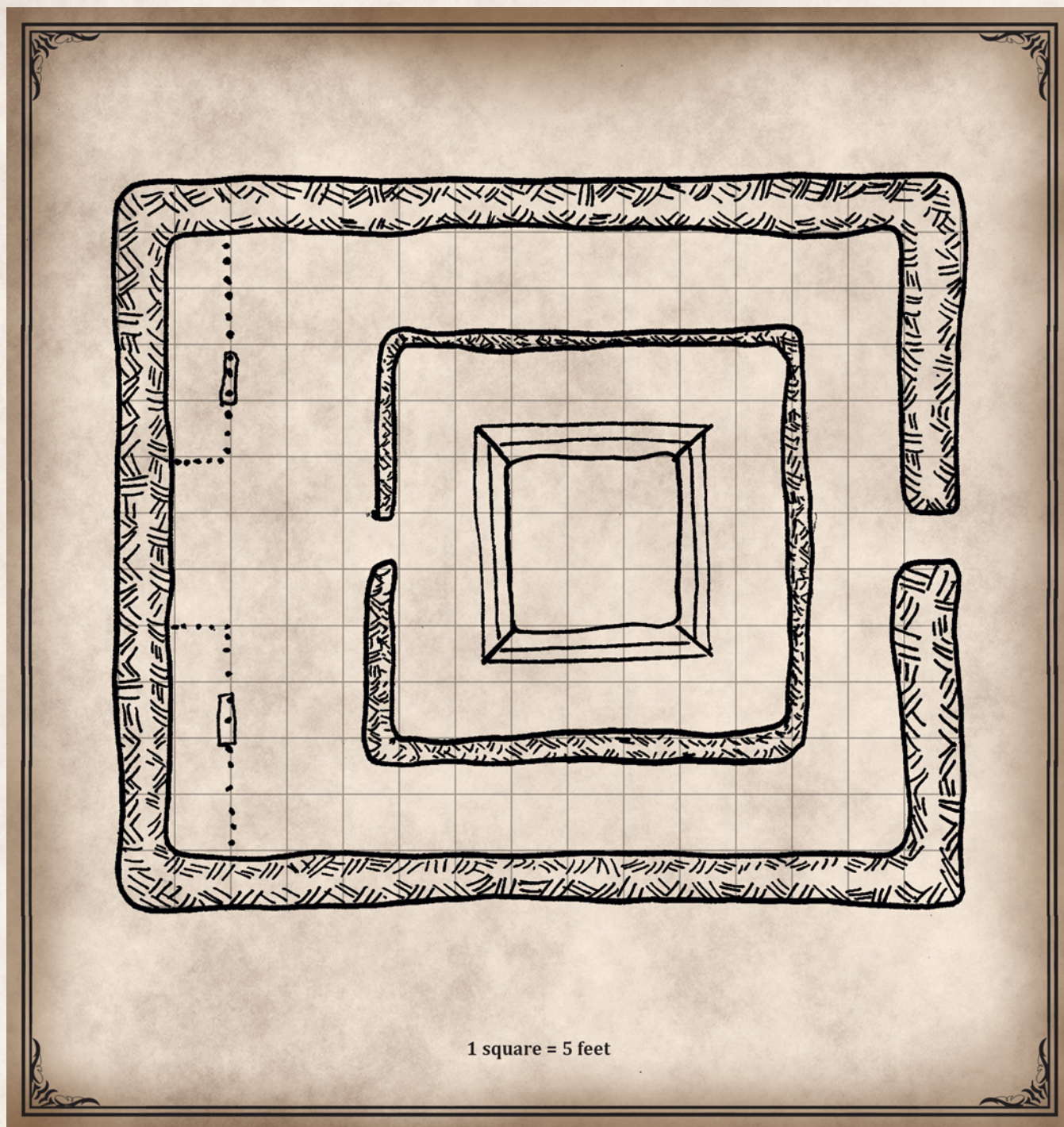
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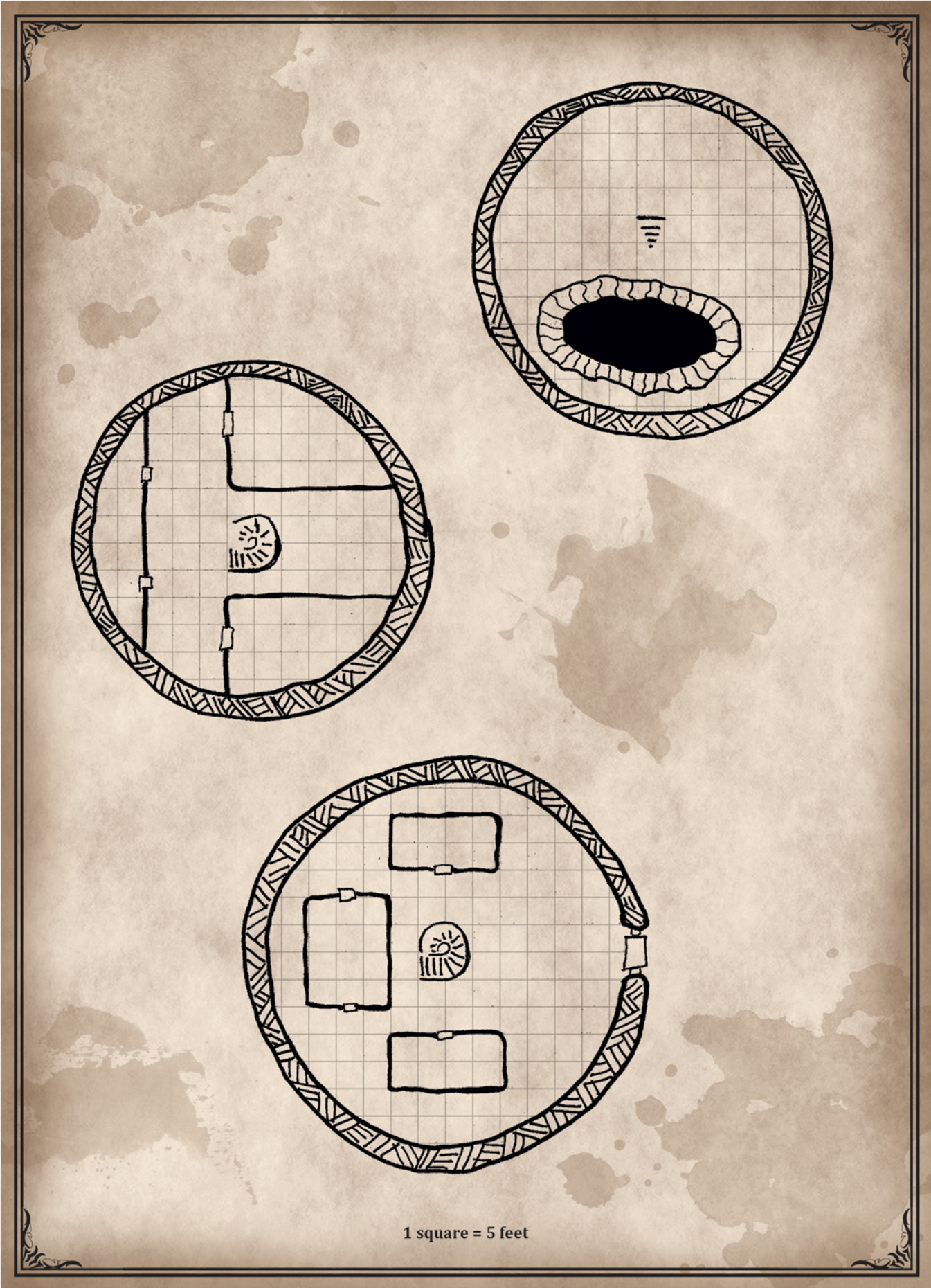


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APPENDIX B: BONUS MAPS





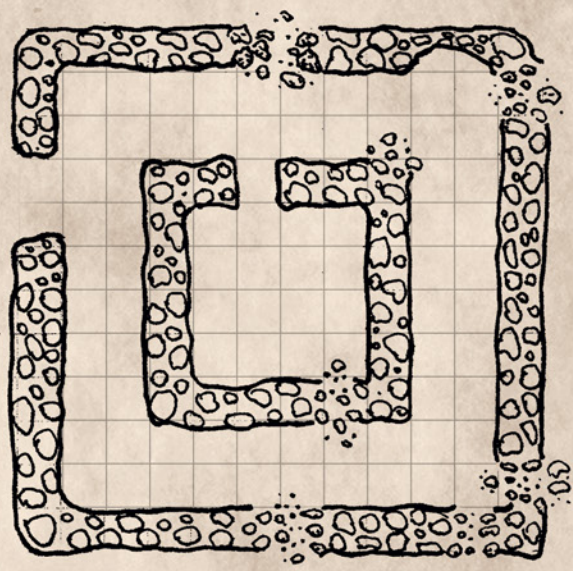
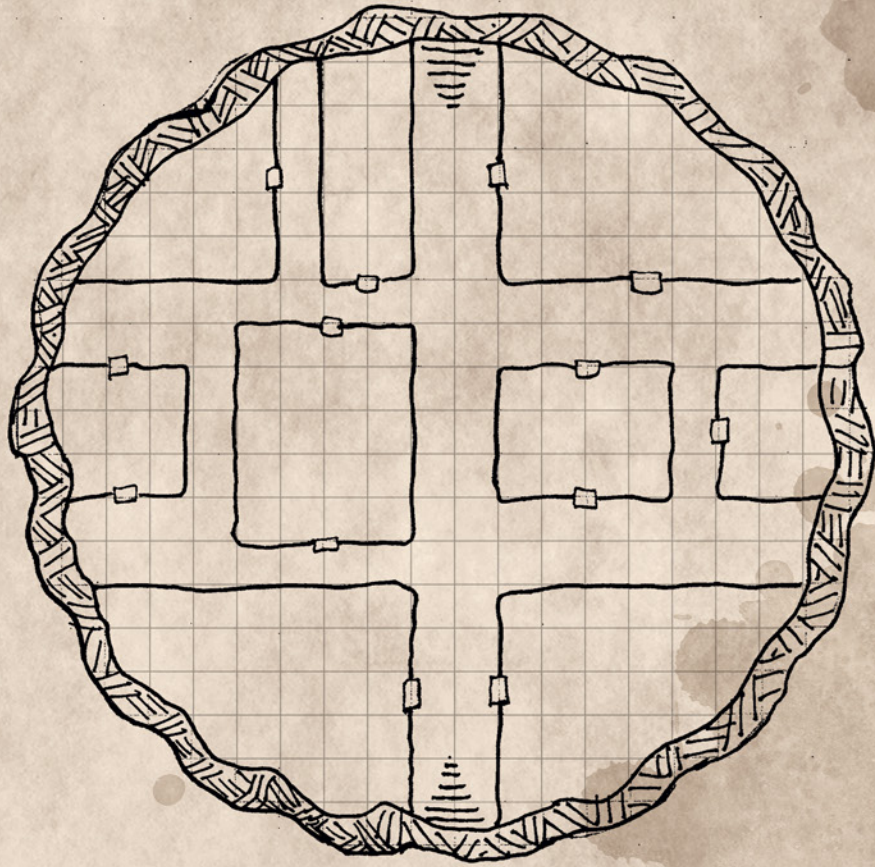
1 square = 5 feet



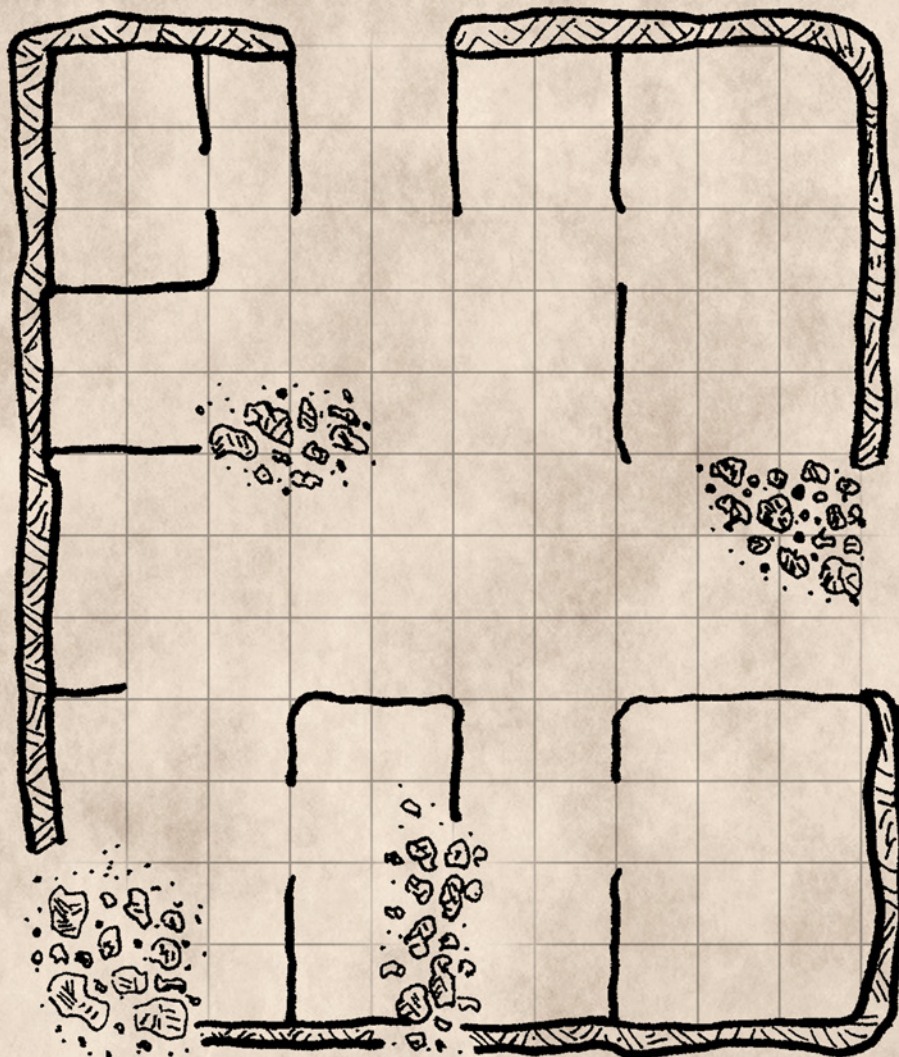
1 square = 5 feet



1 square = 5 feet



1 square = 5 feet



1 square = 5 feet

THANK YOU!

Again, thank you for purchasing *Encounters in the Savage Jungles*! I hope you find the encounters as creative and entertaining as I did. There are several, if not all, that I plan to use while running my home group through *Tomb of Annihilation*.

If you are one Twitter, please follow the writers! It's a great way to learn when we release a new product;