

What sages know: prince Hishep-Ratep was fearsome and wealthy, but he perished regardless on a campaign in a distant land, as foretold by the six prophets. As a follower of demon-god Ahriman, Hishep-Ratep was buried where he fell. With him was buried his legendary lifestone, a large diamond.

## THE DIAMOND OF HISHEP-RATEP

A small woodland clearing lies not five miles from a local settlement. It consists of an oval pool surrounded by seven large oaks, three on each side and one near the end of the pool. Near the opposite end stands the eroded statue of an ancient Persian warlord.

**1 THE POOL:** 35' x 15', 4' deep, lined with cracked white marble. A bloodstained altar rises in the middle of the pool. Slaying an animal into the pool during the full moon causes any who bathe in the blood to contract a form of lycanthropy that enables shape-shifting into the form of the sacrificed animal.

A local village uses the pool regularly in pagan initiations. They do not like intruders. Only the wise man of the village knows about the rite's connection to the full moon.

**2 THE STATUE:** White marble, 10' tall with 10' base, 5' wide. Weights 35 tons. The statue holds a large jewel seemingly worth ~10,000 sp, but actually made of worthless glass. "Here lies Hishep-Ratep I" is engraved on the base. The staircase to the tomb is blocked by the statue and covered with loose earth, requiring substantial digging and dealing with the statue to uncover.

**THE TOMB PROPER IS WATERLOGGED UNDER THE POOL; PAY ATTENTION TO THE ROOM DESCRIPTIONS!**

**3 THE ANTECHAMBER:** Almost completely filled with water; there's 8' of water in the 10' high room. Under the water there are funeral paraphernalia worth a total of 2d100 sp.

The single exit is covered with a heavy stone slab. Crowbars and combined Strength of 20+ are needed to open it. The corridor beyond is 10' long and completely underwater.

**4 THE TOMB:** There's only 1' of water on the floor. The walls are cracked in several places and roots burrow in from all sides. There are six stone coffins, cracked and with roots burrowing within. A muffled murmur can be heard from the coffins. At the end of the room a large statue of a sphinx is illuminated by eerie glow from below.

**THE COFFINS:** It takes 15+ combined Strength to lift a coffin lid. In each coffin lies a live man, babbling quietly, eyes wide open. Oak roots burrow into their heads and shoulders.

They wear old robes and necklaces of gold and silver. The necklaces are worth 200 sp each, but roots make removal awkward. The murmur of the oracles is barely a whisper and can't be understood without leaning closer.

The Oracles prophesy (see sidebar) at any who come within reach. The Oracles each have 1HD, 10 hp, AC 12, attack as normal men. Treat the attack as a wrestling roll; if successful they'll grab their victim and whisper their prophesies. The roots limit each oracle to within 10' of their coffin. It takes 8hp damage to sever the roots, AC 16. The oracles live one Turn after the roots have been severed.

If an oracle is directly questioned, they'll answer the question instead of prophesying 50% of the time. The answer will be correct 75% of the time.

**5 THE GREY ALIEN:** The second (middle) coffin on the left reveals a gray space alien. Instead of prophesying, it asks to be rescued and promises a reward. If carried outside alive, a great beam of light will whisk the alien and their rescuer away. The rescuer will be returned to Earth 1d6 months later with only vague memories of their journey. For the reward, check 50% chance for each of the following, or pick a single boon randomly if none are indicated:

- Enough xp to level
- An useful alien gadget
- Re-roll ability of choice (4d6 drop lowest)
- A body part replaced with alien equivalent

**6 THE GRAVE-HOLE:** In front of the Sphinx, a 20' deep pit entirely underwater. An eldrich glow originates in the murky water; the great diamond of Hishep-Ratep is barely visible at the bottom. The pit is riddled with roots of the great oak.

At the bottom are the diamond, the remains of Hishep-Ratep clutching it, and a great tangle of roots. It takes 3 Rounds to dive to the bottom; one to dive to the surface; one to climb out of the well. Prying the diamond loose takes one minute, but requires a successful Tinkering or Sleight of Hand check to not attract the Root-Thing while working. The Root-Thing attacks regardless when the diamond is moved.

**THE ROOT-THING:** 10 HD total, attacks as 5 HD monster, AC 16, 1 Attack: d6 dmg and 1d4 (1d6 underwater) each round to captured victims. The Root-Thing attacks only once

**PROPHESYING:** Roll for the prophesy. This is true Fate, so it will occur as soon as causally possible, and events will conspire over time to take the character to their Fate. Even if an event is caused by Fate, it is still resolved according to the rules; however, if a character escapes their fate, the prophesy will continue trying until it succeeds.

- 1 You'll be trampled to death by hooves.
- 2 Those slain by your hand return for revenge.
- 3 You'll be devoured by beasts in moonlight.
- 4 Your food will be poisoned.
- 5 Assassins will strike at you in a crowd.
- 6 You'll be slain by a treacherous healer.
- 7 You'll be ambushed alone in the dark.
- 8 You'll be slain in your sleep in a tavern.
- 9 You are already dead.
- 10 You'll find a treasure while marooned.
- 11 You'll be rewarded for killing a prince.
- 12 You'll fall to your death as your rope fails.
- 13 You'll be revered as a god by strange people.
- 14 The dead will reward you for your services.
- 15 You'll die when a cliff collapses.
- 16 You'll stumble while fleeing a dire enemy.
- 17 You'll drown.
- 18 A man for hire is a monster in disguise.
- 19 Opening a secret door causes collapse.
- 20 Magic spells will explode your gems.

per round, but continues to strangle and pull any caught victims. It can reach all the way to the antechamber by lifting it's mass out of the pit. It drags its victims 15' per round. Getting loose requires a wrestling roll or cutting the grabbing roots for 6 hp during a single round.

Any victim dragged to the bottom of the well will also be attacked by the skull of Hishep-Ratep. Treat it as 2 HD monster with AC 14. 1 attack, no damage but drains one level on a successful hit.

To permanently destroy the Root-thing (and the pool's magic), the largest oak must be uprooted and burned.

**THE DIAMOND:** worth 10,000 sp, glows a pale light. The jewel houses the soul of the ancient prince Hishep-Ratep (See *Magic Jar*) and it glows as long as the soul is inside. Hishep-Ratep will not try to occupy any of the PCs straight away, but will instead wait until they're in a more crowded area to possess someone else unnoticed.

