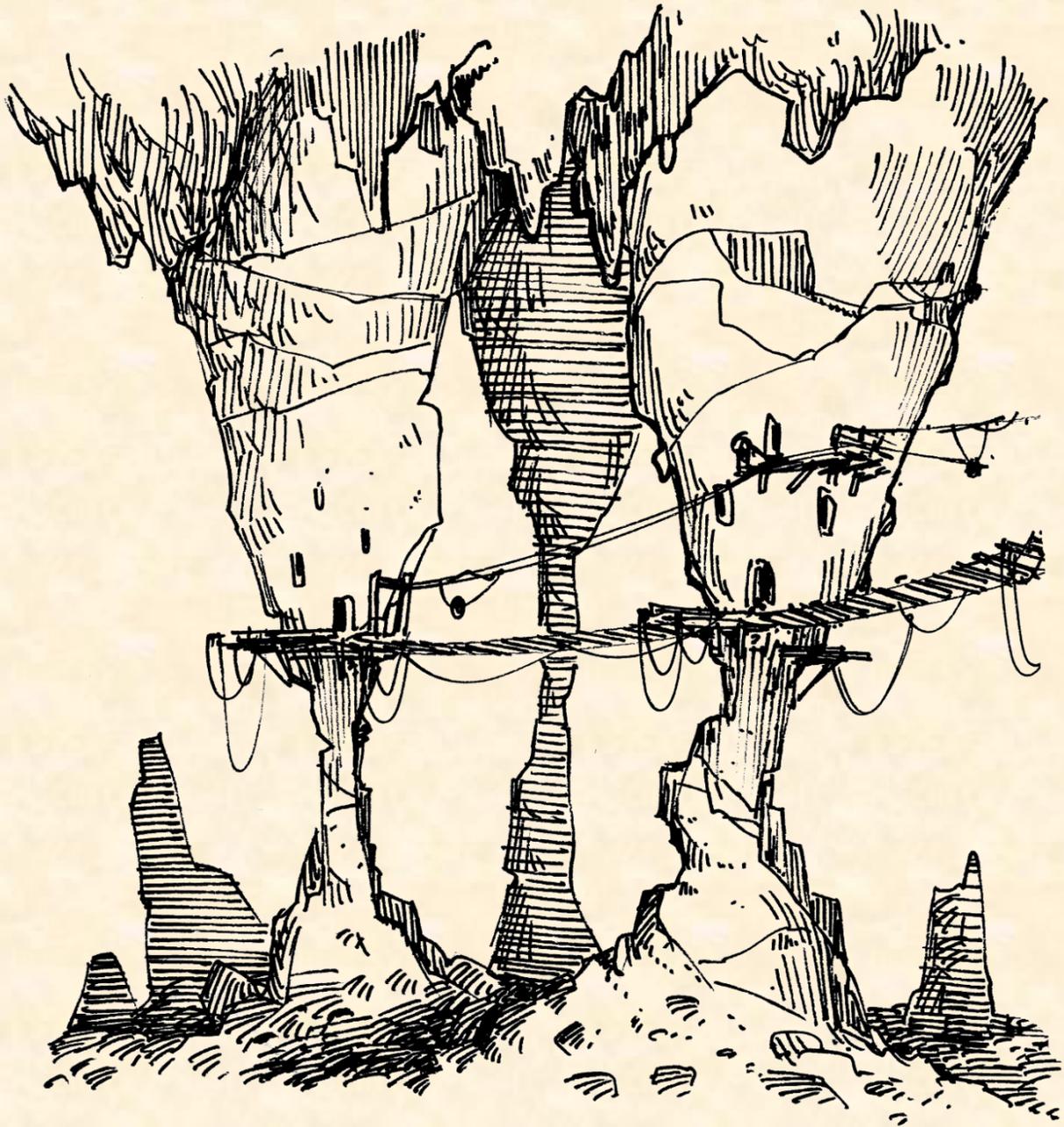

HANGING CITY OF NENCHAGI



Hanging City of Nenchagi

Rumours & Hooks

Rare texts refer to the *Mask of Distant Suns*, a magical artifact said to imbue the wearer with psychic powers of domination. The mask was last reported in the *Hanging City of Nenchagi*.

The Chaagi and Xochnomogu

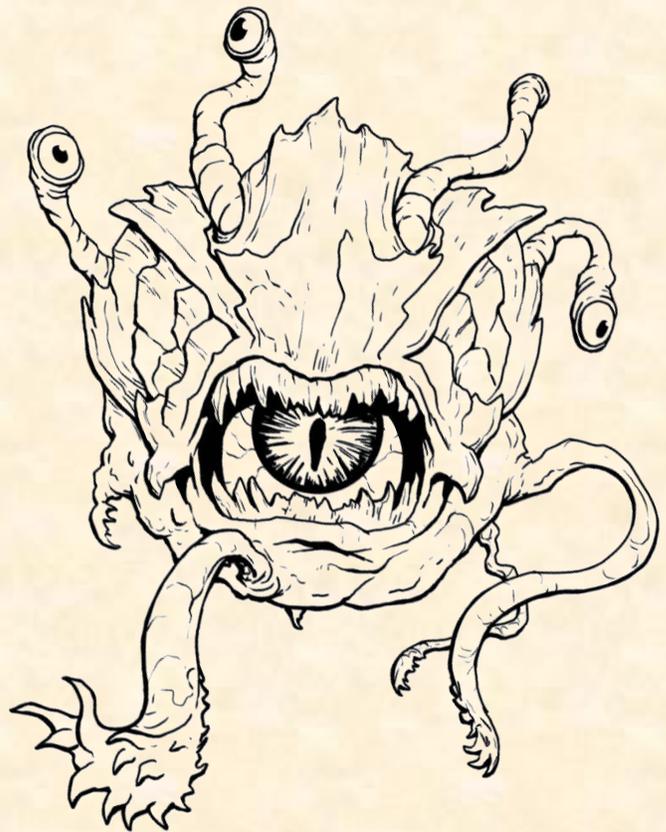
Deep below the *Argos Plateau*, hidden from moon and sky, lies a sprawling network of natural tunnels and caverns. Known to local thuels as *Nebechek*, or long night, the barbarians shun the unlit passages as a fool's maze; a place only the mad or desperate venture into.

But for adventurers seeking fame and fortune, there might be good reason to delve the perfect black. Referenced in crumbling tomes, the *Mask of Distant Suns* is said to originate from a foreign dimension or star system, granting the wearer potent powers of mind control. Silver sheened, inset with otherworldly crystals, the artifact was last seen in the *Hanging City of Nenchagi*.

Centuries earlier, the Chaagi withdrew to their subterranean "city" beneath the plateau, fleeing the devastation of the Cyclops wars. Unfortunately for the humans, their retreat soon became their prison, enslaved by an *Aberrant Terror* erringly conjured by the mask's magic.

Xochnomogu (or "*Eternal Eye*") is a 10 ft sack of floating, rubbery flesh, with a large central eye, snapping tentacles, and ray emitting stalks. More than a thousand years old, the ageless abomination became the Chaagi's "god", transforming them into cursed *Urgot*.

Alien and uncaring, Xochnomogu still rules Nenchagi, feasting on human sacrifices while it contemplates secrets unintelligible to humans. Devoid of urgency, the years mean nothing to Xochnomogu as it bides its time in the remote underworld.



As for the Chaagi, only a few hundred remain, whittled away by decades of human offerings and isolation. Marred by gangly, elongated limbs, clawed hands, and sunken skin, the urgot are wholly devoted to their unsleeping god.

The party might become involved in this adventure by (i) finding a tome referring to the mask's last location, or (ii) being hired by a wealthy archaeologist to find, and map, the subterranean city.

Underground Journey

Delving the winding depths of the underworld is not for the faint hearted. For the most part, the tunnels are low (approx 5 ft high, requiring bending down), cold, and eerily silent, but for the party's footfalls and crackling torches.

Encased in stone for days on end, a fine powdery dust clings to the PCs, smothering them with an earthy, claustrophobic smell. Light is fundamental and in short natural supply. In the absence of luminous moss/fungi (occasionally found), the utter blackness is oppressive and impenetrable. Adventurers will need significant light provisions (torches, lanterns, oil, etc) to complete their quest.

Travel to the "city" is abstracted below. The journey takes 5 days, assuming the party doesn't get lost. Every 12 hours (or other time period determined by the GM), check for *Navigation*, *Terrain & Conditions*, and *Random encounters*.

Navigation

At least one party member, the navigator, makes an Int (Wilderness Lore) check to ensure the party is heading towards the city, and doesn't become lost. If they do become lost, roll 1d12.

| WHILE YOU WERE LOST | |
|---------------------|---|
| 1d12 | Event |
| 1 | Roll on the <i>Terrain & Conditions</i> table. |
| 2 | The party loses another day whilst lost. Roll again. |
| 3 | A random encounter occurs. |
| 4 | 1d4 mules or other animals are lost, injured or fall ill (equal chance, not including ranger pets). |

| | |
|----|--|
| 5 | 1d2 hirelings or NPCs are lost, injured or fall ill (equal chance, not including important NPCs). |
| 6 | A random encounter occurs. |
| 7 | One PC loses/uses up a random mundane item or bundle of items (climbing gear, rope, torches, etc). |
| 8 | One PC suffers exhaustion, losing 1 point of Str, Dex or Con (equal chance). |
| 9 | A random encounter occurs. |
| 10 | 1d4 PCs' rations/water supplies are lost or used up (parasites, etc). |
| 11 | One player regales the group with a travel montage, a tale about their background, or other worldbuilding. |
| 12 | A random encounter occurs, then roll again. |

Terrain & Conditions

There is a 50% chance of a change in terrain and conditions. If a change occurs, roll 1d8:

| TERRAIN & CONDITIONS | |
|----------------------|--|
| 1d8 | Change |
| 1 | <i>Warm</i> and/or more <i>humid</i> (nearby hot springs, magma currents or rising crevasse thermals). Other living things will be attracted to the area, increasing the chance of random encounters by 20%. |
| 2 | <i>Slippery</i> . Similar but with greater rubble and scree scattered about. Making a double move in the area requires a Dex check to avoid falling prone part way through the movement. |
| 3 | Overall <i>similar</i> conditions, but the nearby passages are more or less frequently used by others (+/- 10% chance to random encounters, even chance). |

| | |
|---|--|
| 4 | <i>Gas.</i> Marked by pockets of harmful gas or fungi spores. A <i>Luck</i> (Con) save is required to avoid 1d2 Con loss (<i>Miner's Lung</i>) or 1d3 Int (<i>Scob Spore</i>). |
| 5 | <i>Wet</i> (dripping limewater, large puddles and rivulets, underground stream or river, subterranean moss forest). Other living creatures will be attracted, increasing the chance of random encounters by 20%, plus an additional 1d3 creatures. |
| 6 | <i>Colder.</i> This area is surrounded by particularly dense rock, insulating it from distant underground heat sources. Resting here is more difficult, imposing a -2 penalty on short rest recovery tests. |
| 7 | <i>Still.</i> These tunnels are especially still and quiet, lacking the barest hint of subterranean breezes. The echoes are incredible. Advantage on any hearing based Perception tests. |
| 8 | <i>Luminous.</i> This sector is high in luminous moss/fungi, light reflecting stone, crawling glow bugs, etc, allowing the PCs to see (dimly) up to 100 ft. PCs may harvest temporary light provisions (1d2 days worth, spoiling after 2d4 days; moss shrivels, glow bugs die, etc). |

Journey Encounters

Check for an encounter (30% base chance). If an encounter occurs, roll 1d8, plus 2 after the first 24 hours of travel.

1. A bubbling sound forewarns the party of the enormous 200 ft cavern (50 ft high) ahead of them. Hot, bubbling mud pools litter the area, regularly spraying scalding mud into the air (a hazy steam fills the cavern).

Crossing the cavern requires a *Luck* (Dex) check to avoid being randomly scalded for 3d6 damage (taking precautions,

such as moving past geysers just after they've gone off, grants adv). Living within the pools themselves are 3d6 heat resistant *Giant Mud Crabs*, hungry for soft flesh.

Giant Mud Crab, AC 17, HD 3, 2 x Claws 1d6+1, 19: the target is grabbed and automatically suffers claw damage at the start of its turn (action and Str contest to break free), S14 D10 C12 I3 P10 W8 Ch7, L6, Mv 30 ft inc up walls. Giant mud crabs are 4 ft wide, with strong claws and grey brown/green carapaces. They are immune to fire/heat damage.

2. Large webs begin cluttering passages. Whilst many are old and patchy, as the party proceeds they become increasingly thick and resilient. A single particularly old *Giant Spider* lairs here, living on large worms or making forays to the surface (as *Giant Spider*, LFG p.125, but 6 HD, Bite 1d8+1 + poison, *Luck* 10. *Boss Monster* with 45 hp).
3. Scattered fungi, growing in size until large enough to fill passageways completely (requiring cutting through), lead to a colossal underground forest, 500 ft across. The breadth of fungi here is immense, from tiny 2 inch *Red Cap* mushrooms to immense black and gold *Yellow Curtain* treesrooms, tendrils clinging to the 100 ft ceiling.

Cultivating the forest are alienesque fungi pods with sucking, feeler like limbs lurching about. The pods are quasi sentient and aware that a human corpse makes for a fertile spawning vessel.

Fungi Pod, AC 11, HD 4, Tendril 1d10, 19: puff of toxic spores causing 1d4 Dex loss (*Luck* (Con) save for half), S12 D10 C17 I3 P12 W16 Ch4, L7, Mv 30 ft inc up walls and ceilings. Fungi Pods are 4 ft tall balled masses of toadstool, bowl and branch fungi, with elongated tendrils dragging them forward. A PC reduced to zero hp must be recovered in one round, or the body is lost (infested with toxic fungi spores, which grow to maturity in 2d4 weeks).

Careful searching of the forest might reveal the exceedingly rare *Morrigan's Bloom* (Perc (Apothecary) check, if trained may harvest 2d4 doses, a powder tincture that grants the user a *Haste* effect for 1d4 rounds, at the end of which they lose 1d2 Will).

4. This series of winding passages grows increasingly narrow, until the way onward is barely a foot wide. Characters in bulky armour or otherwise heavily encumbered will have to remove their gear and pull it behind them to squeeze through. The slim corridor continues in this way for several hours, making travel very uncomfortable (Con check or 1 Str loss due to severe cramps).
5. Whilst navigating a fissure like corridor, there is a 50% chance of 3d6 *Rock Burrowing Annelids* bursting from the walls/ceiling/floor, drawn to the party's movement vibrations. PCs fighting in cramped conditions may only use small weapons, and suffer a penalty on attack rolls (-2 or disad, depending on the weapon).

Rock Burrowing Annelid, AC 10, HD 1, Acidic body slap 1d6, 19: target's weapon or armour damaged per *Injuries & Setbacks* table, S5 D6 C10

I2 P15 W16 Ch4, L4, Mv 20 ft or burrow 5 ft. Rock burrowing annelids are 5 ft long, 4 ft thick sinuous worms, with circular sucker maws, covered in highly potent acid (strips rock, steel, flesh, etc). They subside on smaller burrowing creatures but prefer to gorge on juicy mammals when possible.

6. The arched entry to this 50 ft cavern is adorned with simple dwarven runes (Int (General Lore) check reveals themes of protection and remembrance).

Inside are a series of simple tombs and cairns, seemingly quickly erected, yet sturdy enough to bear the ages. Engravings spouting virtues of dwarven grit, fearsome temperament and impressive beardiness can be found on most of the tombs ("*As fullsome in beard as in courage*", "*As fiery in life as she wert in death*", "*No stone unturned, no skorn unhewed*", etc).

If searched, most of the tombs contain something of value (total 1 x Carry Loot, LFG p.136). One tomb in particular ("*Toegrün Craghammer, quick to charge, slow to retreat. Rest in pieces my young friend.*") contains a blemish free steel warhammer; "*Khezek-Nor, or "Biding Wrath"* is magical. If attuned to, the user causes +5 damage on hammer crits. Any further attunements over time (if any) are at the GM's discretion. Such a user invariably grows a rampant beard of quarrelsome tangles (grows to 6 inches by the end of the day even if shaved off, including females).

7. As the party approaches this massive chamber, the floor becomes damp, and loud dipping noises can be heard from ahead. The massive 600 ft cavern

beyond (100 ft roof) is mostly taken up with a subterranean lake. The waters are jet black and still, but for regular drops falling from a multitude of ancient stalactites overhead.

The lake is too deep (30 ft) to wade across, but can be swum (if in heavy armour/encumbered, requires a Con check to avoid 1 Con loss due to exertion).

In the middle of the lake is a patch of perfect darkness; a floating 15 ft miasma of utter black that somehow seems to absorb torchlight. Anyone touching the water there feels a gentle pull. Anyone entering it is sucked into a *Veil* portal and instantly transported to the *Black Lake* (Midlands p.286, Area 5).

8. Stuck to the ceiling and walls of this area are large splotches of dark green slime, caked in a layer of fine dust. The colony of 2d6 *Green Slime* (LFG p.112) has been dormant for years. They awaken 2d4 rounds after the party approaches within 120 ft.
9. A 200 ft chamber lined with twisting pillars from floor to ceiling. Spread about the floor are the carcasses of plague worms, rock scorpions and one or two urgot (*Chaagi*), covered in a hard semi opaque residue. 2d6 *Tentacle Crawlers* use the chamber as a lair, excreting their foul carcass preserving saliva over victims.

Tentacle Crawlers, AC 13, HD 3, 2 x Choke/Claw 1d6+2, 19: special, S15 D10 C12 I2 P11 W10 Ch6, L4, Mv 30 ft or burrow 5 ft. Tentacle crawlers are subterranean omnivores, and generally only

hostile if their lair is attacked. On a Nat 19, one of the creature's face tendrils injects 1d3 crawler larvae (about half an inch long) into the target (using a needle like proboscis concealed in the tendril and leech like anesthesia). If undetected (Perc (Det) check at disad, or Int (Apoth) check), the victim vomits up foot long infant crawlers (1 hp) in 1d4 days (causing 3d6 damage and a Will check to resist a minor madness).



10. A relatively small chamber contains a 3 metre vein of silver ore (worth 2d4 x 100 gp if extracted, taking some hours with the right tools). Careful study of the vein reveals that parts of it appear to have been chipped away (on a Perc (Detection) great success, it looks more like tiny bite marks). 3d4 *Xornlings* (p.130) are nearby, using their chameleonic abilities to hide from the party. If the PCs have large stores of gold or any gems, the xornlings follow them, hoping for a chance to sneak into their

packs (perhaps when the party sleep, or if they discard their bags to mine the ore vein).

The Hanging City

Once home to more than 2,000 Chaagi, the population has dwindled over the years to 3d20 + 150 residents. Much of the “city” is abandoned, the people scattered across its many levels, forming small circles of sub-tribes. No matter the clan however, all of the Chaagi worship the undying *Xochnomogu*.

Xochnomogu AC 17, HD 12, 2 x Tentacles 2d4, plus 1d4+1 eye rays, 19: central eye 40 ft long 20 ft wide cone psychic blast (*Luck* (Will) save or *Confused*), S14 D12 C14 I16 P16 W19 Ch1, L12, Mv 30 ft flying. *Xochnomogu* is an *Aberrant Terror* with the usual benefits (LFG p.98), *Minor Exploit Protection*, *Reroll Pool* (LFG p.95) and *Off Turn Attacks* (one random eye ray). At will *Telepathy* (does not speak). Its eye ray attacks are (i) *Disintegrate*, (ii) *Charm Monster*, (iii) *Blindness*, (iv) *Magic Missile*, (v) *Frighten*, (vi) *Sleep*, (vii) *Flesh to Stone*, (viii) *Telekinesis* (each eye stalk projects two different coloured rays).

Urgot, AC 11, HD 1+4, Club/Claw etc 1d6+1, 19: the target is cursed and loses 1 point of *Luck*, S13 D13 C16 I7 P9 W12 Ch6, L5, Mv 30 ft. Moan once/day, all creatures within 20 ft suffer a minor madness (*Luck* (Will) save resists). The *urgot* see better than humans in the dark, but still require light to see in complete darkness.

The *urgot* generally go about their daily life either half naked or in coarse robes weaved of fungi plant fibres, some quite colourful. The “priests” wear bleached white robes, spotted with black eye designs, and deep hoods.

The city itself can be broadly separated into five enormous subcaverns as indicated below. Unless otherwise indicated, the caverns are mostly cloaked in darkness, with occasional luminous moss or mushroom oil torches/slow burning “lantern” bowls.

Sneaking about the caverns is entirely possible, in the sense that most spaces are unoccupied. Bright light sources give away PCs or resident *urgot* from a distance, but creeping about with phospherant moss, shuttered lanterns, or dim glow stones allows greater stealth.

(1) Mushroom Farm

This enormous cavern is 1,000 yards wide with a 200 ft ceiling. Crude stone buildings ring the boundary of a huge mushroom plantation. The fungi are a rainbow of colours, from muted browns to golden yellows, growing to as high as 8 ft, all of them edible (although some might need distilling, cooking or other treatments in order to remove certain toxicities).

5d10+20 *urgot* are present farming the mushrooms at any one time. Searching the stone huts is unlikely to return much other than farming tools, baskets of preserved foodstuffs, and workers clothes (greeny grey tabards with many pockets).

(2) Worship Cavern

500 ft wide, entry to the worship cavern is via crude stone steps cut into the walls, descending to the cavern floor 100 ft below. Scattered stalagmites provide limited ground cover. In the centre of the room is a raised 30 ft high dais of igneous rock.

Unless already encountered or drawn away elsewhere, *Xochnomogu* is here, meditating

above the *Mask of Distant Suns*. In addition to the aberrant terror, 2d6+5 Chaagi cultists are present, intoning sacred litanies to their demigod. One of them, *Ochnimyru*, is an *Urgozer*.

Ochnimyru, Urgozer, AC 11, HD 3+3, Dagger 1d4+2, 19: uncontrolled magic, roll on the *Dark & Dangerous Magic* table, S10 D14 C16 I14 P14 W14 Ch9, L7, Mv 30 ft. May choose from the following spells twice per combat: *Sleep*, *Speak with Dead*, *Hideous Laughter*, *Magic Missile* (as 3rd level).

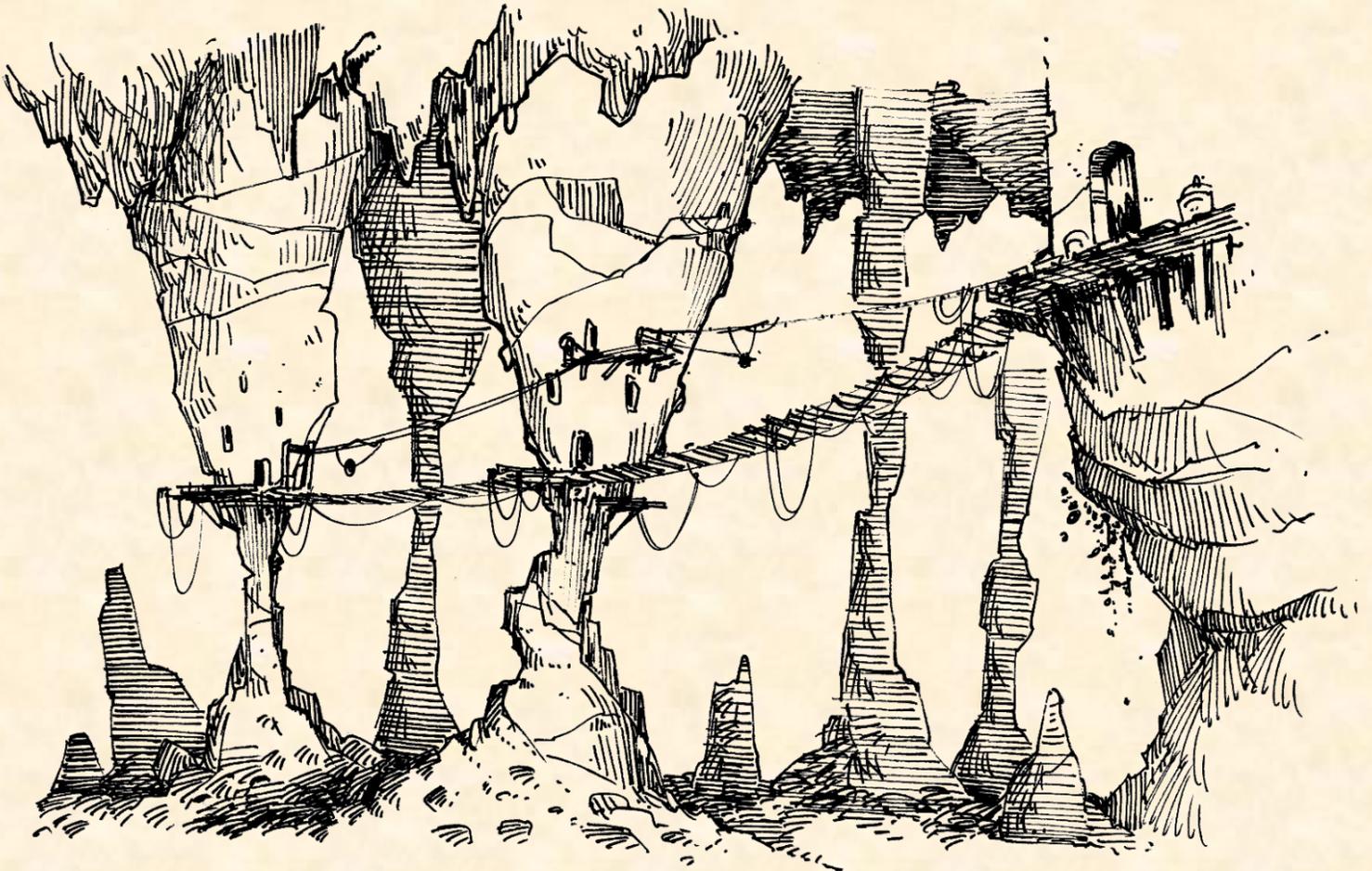
The Mask has four levels of attunement, granting the following effects. Whether the mask is magical, a device of high technology, or something else entirely is a matter for the GM.

1. The user may invoke *Telepathy* three times per day.
2. The user may invoke *Suggestion* once every 1d4 days.
3. The user may invoke *Charm Monster* once every 1d4 days.
4. The user may invoke *Telekinesis* once every week.

A character attuned to the mask has disadvantage on checks to resist madness.

(3) Abandoned Complex

One particularly large cavern, approximately 800 yards across, has been abandoned by the Chaagi. The interior of assorted huts and hanging caves



are in a derelict state, and great fissures and cracks litter the ground. Few Chaagi live here for any extended period, except perhaps a for few exiles, including the wily *Nunbusu* (3 HD, Int 14, Dex 15, advantage on stealth related checks).

The complex has been taken over by a colony of slow moving *Bore Ooze*; shiny, slick looking 2 ft undulating putrescenes of white colouration. The bore ooze is somewhat akin to a leech, sucking the blood from victims until it turns scarlet then drops off in a sluggish torpor. Generally speaking, *bore ooze* are not deadly, but many are infected with *Scumpox* (foul smelling boils which pop to ooze thick white puss; causes 1d4 Dex loss over 1 week, a *Luck* (Con) check resists).

Bore Ooze AC 10, HD 1, Blood drain 1d3, 19: the ooze splits into two (full HD), S6 D6 C14 I2 P10 W15 Ch1, L4, Mv 20 ft inc walls, ceiling etc. Bore ooze are immune to weapon damage but suffer double damage from fire. They drop off a victim after causing a total of 3 damage. There is a 50% a particular Bore ooze carries *Scumpox* disease.

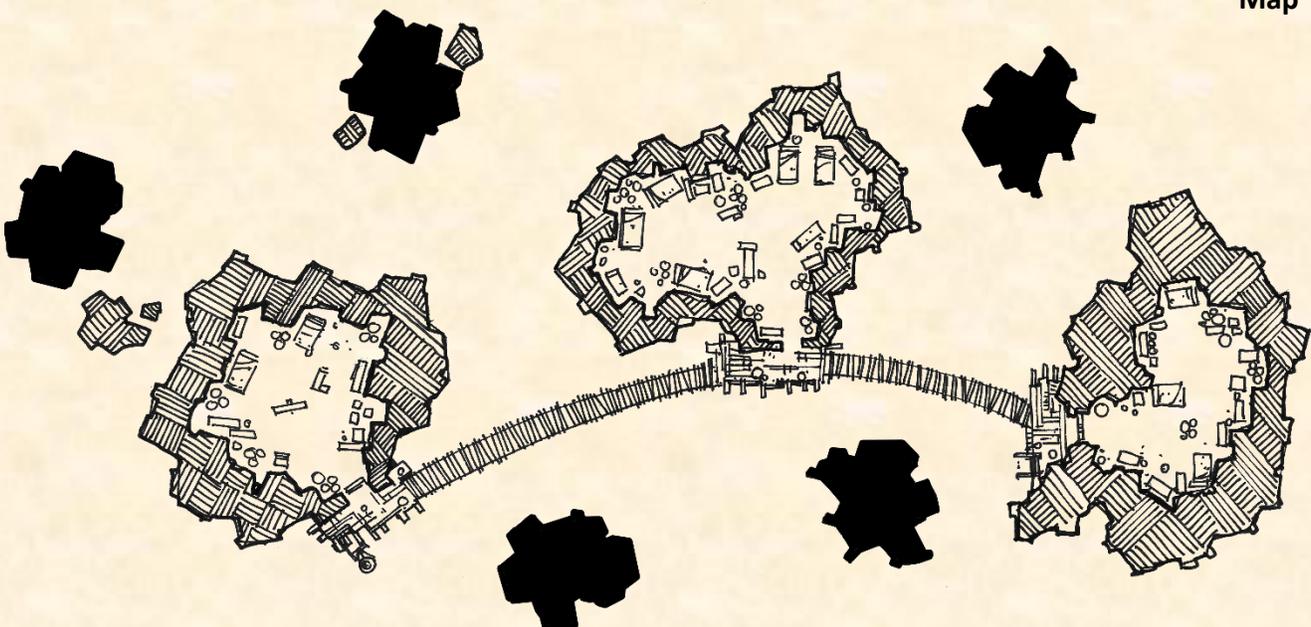
(4) Hanging Caves

This 1,500 foot cavern has a 250 ft ceiling supported by huge rock columns, excavated by the Chaagi to form hanging caves. More than a hundred pillars include homes of approx 30 - 50 ft wide with 5 ft ceilings and open archways/windows. Many have rope and wood (hardened fungi material) bridges connecting them, forming a criss crossing network 100 ft off the ground. Mushroom oil braziers and torches are more common in this cavern than any of the others, but large swathes of darkness and shadow remain.

2d20 + 80 urgot are present here when the PCs arrive (sleeping, eating, socialising, etc). Of those who are awake, approx half will be inebriated with *Mokmo*, a mind altering snuff dust that causes euphoria and *Slowness* for 1d4 hours.

Looting huts produces (roll 1d8): (i) 1 x Carry Loot (twice only), (ii) mushroom oil flask, (iii) fungi foodstuff, (iv) robes/cloaks/ceremonial garb, (v) random weapon, (vi)–(viii) nothing of consequence (just furniture, bedding, etc).

Map



(5) Underground River

A powerful underground river supplies the Chaagi with water, and often acts as their garbage disposal, carrying waste downstream to wherever the river leads. The river shore is never empty, with at least 3d6+20 Chaagi here gathering water in pots, washing clothes, bathing, socialising etc. Parts of the white sand river banks are stained red; from time to time sacrifices are made here, particularly exiles, whose bodies are dumped and swept away.

Random City Encounters

There is a 40% chance of a random encounter every hour spent within the "city" caverns. If an encounter occurs, roll 1d8:

1. 3d6 *Urgot* lugging sacks of mushroom harvest, their legs stained with dark soil from the knee down.
2. 1d4+2 *urgot* children, watching from nearby shadows. One of them lets out a squeak of fear, tipping off the group's location.
3. An old, drunken *urgot* with oversized eyes, sleeping off a fermented fungi binge. *Yun'nupp* is groggy if woken. He speaks only Chaagi, and will betray the party at the first opportunity.
4. 1d4 *Plague Worms* (Midlands p.106) burrow up from the surface, hungry to feast on the party. If pressed hard, they attempt to retreat into their burrow holes. If any escape, they return 4d6 minutes later with 3d6 reinforcements.
5. A serious tremor rocks the complex, causing large shards of rock to drop from above. All PCs must make a *Luck* (Dex)

save to avoid 4d6 damage, and a roll on the *Injuries & Setbacks* table.

6. The party stumbles upon an exceedingly rare adamantine vein, hidden behind a recently collapsed wall. If harvested (takes 1d4 hours with the right tools) it is worth 2d4 x 200 gp, enough to make a single weapon.
7. 3d6 *Urgot warriors* with chitin armour, shields and steel weapons, returning from a week long border patrol (as *Urgot* but AC 15, sword 1d8+2, Will 13, shield may negate one attack).
8. From or in a remote, shadowed area, 3d6 *Flying Lizards* (as *Vampire Bat* LFG p100, but scaled and spined) dive bomb the party for their life giving blood.



Aftermath

Whether or not the mask is retrieved, if *Xochnomogu* lives, its encounter with the party galvanizes it into action. It sends cultists to the surface, scouting for slaves and breeding stock.

CREDITS

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