

# Rippers



*The Night of Thoth*

# THE NIGHT OF THOTH

By

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# INTRODUCTION

This adventure for *Rippers* is designed for a party of four Heroic characters. Stronger parties should face more opposition during combat encounters to ensure a challenging scenario. Weaker parties should be given fewer opponents or weaker Wild Cards. The final battle with Oannes, a demon-god, is not intended to be an easy fight. Taking back the night on this occasion will require brains and solid tactics as well as brawn.

The Knowledge (History) skill is important to this adventure. If none of the Rippers have the skill (and shame on them, for Rippers is a setting in which such a skill can and should be extremely useful), then their dragoman (guide) should be given the skill at d6. Alternately, if warned of the use of the skill in advance, someone may wish to stat up one of the Lodge's NPC Rippers to accompany the party. He should be created as a scholar, not as a backup combat specialist with a single Knowledge skill.

## SAVAGE MELEE DAMAGE

Melee damage in *Savage Worlds* was updated with the release of *Savage Worlds: Explorer's Edition*.

In the original edition of *Savage Worlds*, as in *Rippers*, melee damage was Strength plus a number and, as a Trait roll, could be rerolled with a Benny.

In *Savage Worlds: Explorer's Edition* and newer products, including this adventure, damage is now Strength plus a die type. The second die type is limited to the character's Strength die. Both dice may Ace, but damage is no longer considered a Trait roll that can be rerolled with a Benny.

If you have converted your Rippers campaign to the new style of damage, you can use this adventure as it is written. To use this adventure with the original style of melee damage, simply use the following conversions:

<u>NEW STYLE</u>	<u>OLD STYLE</u>
Str + d4	Str +1
Str + d6	Str +2
Str + d8	Str +3
Str + d10	Str +4
Str + d12	Str +5

# PLOT OVERVIEW

Mankind is not an old species. Even adding in his ape man ancestors, he has been around for a brief tock of the cosmological clock. Long before mankind walked the earth, dinosaurs roamed the great forests, plains, and deserts. Between the age of the terrible lizards and the rise of talking ape descendants other species rose and fell. The serpent people are one such species, but they were not the only ones.

In the middle of the Atlantic, on an island now lost beneath the waves, arose a species of fish-men. Capable of survival on land or in water, they fled their island after a natural disaster and spread across the globe, building communities in the Americas, Africa, and even distant China and Australia. One major exodus led to an invasion of Egypt. Historians of the 19th century attribute these raids to a race of men known as the Sea People, who supposedly came from elsewhere along the Mediterranean coast.

Although virtually extinct in Egypt following another cataclysm, the legacy of the true Sea People lives on in myth and legend, and in ancient tombs long-forgotten by mankind. One such legend concerns their god, Oannes, a terrible fish-man hybrid, and his destiny to rule the earth in physical form. It is this (fictional) legend which forms the basis of the adventure.

An American expedition searching for Cleopatra's palace beneath the waters of Alexandria's eastern harbor has suffered a fatality. Professor Hutchinson, an archaeologist known to one of the heroes, was savaged by a sea demon, though local authorities have listed cause of death as a shark attack.

Once in Egypt, the Rippers discover three pieces of a golden pyramid, which slot together to reveal the location of the ancient tomb of Oannes. Along the way they encounter insane cultists, millennia-old mummies, a winged fiend, and get to travel across the blistering desert in a hot air balloon.

The final showdown occurs inside the tomb of the ancient god-demon, a tomb from which the fiend will soon awaken.

## ACT I: LAND OF THE PHAROHS

The heroes are in their Lodge when they learn of the death of a colleague of one of the characters. Hopefully wishing to investigate his death, the characters set sail for Alexandria in the distant Land of the Pharaohs.

## SCENE 1: DEATH IN ALEXANDRIA

While at the Lodge, the heroes discover a newspaper article concerning a professor of Egyptology known to one of the Rippers. The GM should determine which character knew the deceased and how. Perhaps the Ripper was a former student, had corresponded with him on historical matters, or had worked with him in the past on an excavation. The relationship, combined with the rather dubious cause of death, should be strong enough to prompt an investigation.

Give the players Handout 1 at this time.

The next ship to Alexandria leaves in a week, giving the heroes time to prepare. Costs for the voyage can be calculated using the quick system in the Rippers Companion or fixed at £5 for European Rippers and £10 for those living farther afield. The journey can be handled with mere reference or used by the GM to create an adventure of his own. Unfortunately, nothing of interest can be learned about the excavation in advance.

### ARRIVAL

The first sight of Alexandria that greets the seaborne Rippers is the white walls of the Ras el-Tin palace, a fortress that rises on a headland to the right of the ship, just above the modern lighthouse built on the site of the temple to Poseidon.

As the ship sails into the inner harbor to dock, numerous small boats representing every travel agency known to man surround the vessel. The air becomes vibrant with Arabic and English exhortations: "Take up a tour with our agency!" and "Stay at our hotel!" The view from on deck is like looking into a pit of lions at feeding time.

Once the ship docks the Rippers must pass through customs. In light of recent troubles in Egypt thanks to Imhotep's machinations, the customs checks are extremely thorough. Weapons may be brought into the country assuming the carrier has special permit. These permits can be purchased from the customs officials for £1 each.

As the characters clear the customs hut they are surrounded by a hoard of Arabs, all touting their hotel or business, and many hands grab at their luggage, attempting to sway the characters into coming with them. Unless the heroes act quickly they risk losing bits of their luggage to various hotels.

A decent hotel costs £0.20 per night, a poor one a mere £0.05, and an expensive one anywhere from £0.50 to £2.00.

Once in Alexandria the team has two main choices of where to begin the investigation—at the site of the excavation or at the museum.

## HIRING A DRAGOMAN

Getting around Alexandria, even with a map, is not easy. Many streets are full of hawkers trying to sell everything from olive oil and cheap souvenirs to priceless antiques; trying to get past them without being dragged into a shop is tricky.

The best plan is to hire a dragoman, a professional guide, who knows the streets of Alexandria better than he knows his own wife. These guides know how to navigate away from the crowded streets and know many interesting places and snippets of information. Of course, if a cousin or other relative happens to have a shop nearby then the Rippers may find themselves being lead there whether they have need of the shop's services or not. The vast majority of dragomen are honest and virtually all of them speak good English or French. If the team doesn't think to hire a dragoman, someone (such as a hotel clerk) mentions the idea to them.

A dragoman highly recommended by anyone the Rippers ask is Saleem Naziz. Naziz charges £0.50 per day, but he is the best in Alexandria. He is summarized below in case the referee ever needs to have him make a skill roll (unlikely in most normal circumstances).

### SALEEM NAZIZ, DRAGOMAN

Saleem's family has worked as guides to tourists for many generations. He takes his profession seriously and is scrupulously honest and forthright. He has traveled extensively within Egypt and is a veritable font of knowledge regarding his native lands.

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8

**Skills:** Fighting d6, Guts d6, Knowledge (Egypt) d12, Notice d6, Persuasion d8, Streetwise d10, Survival d6

**Charisma:** 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 6

**Hindrances:** Loyal

**Edges:** Connections (Many cousins)

**Gear:** Dagger (Str+d4)

## ACT 2:

## THE GRECO-ROMAN MUSEUM

The tiny Museum of Greco-Roman Antiquities is situated in Rosetta Street hall. It is open from 9:30 a.m. to midday, and then again from 3:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. daily. Admission tickets cost £2 and are purchased either from the Rippers' hotel or from a booth at the museum entrance.

The museum contains the best artifacts from the Greco-Roman occupation of Alexandria, although ancient Egyptian relics can also be found in some of the rooms. The director of the museum is Professor F. Breccia. He is an expert on Greco-Roman Alexandria and can be found in his office during opening hours.

Security within the museum is rather lax, consisting of a few security guards who pay little attention to the artifacts they are supposed to be watching. Characters could probably steal small items without too much bother if they are inclined. Rippers who are caught are taken away, charged, and sentenced to ten years imprisonment. There is no appeals system in Egypt.

### THE SEA PEOPLE

The heroes notice that in a small wooden cabinet along the corridor leading to the office there is a section of ancient Egyptian wall decorated with scenes of a battle. An army of Egyptian soldiers is being beaten by an army of bipedal figures wearing what looks like fish scales as armor.

The caption, which is written in Arabic, French, and English, proudly proclaims that the "Army of Rameses III defeats the invading Sea People." Adventurers making a successful Smarts roll quickly realize the truth is almost exactly the opposite judging by the artwork.

### SCENE 1: MEETING THE DIRECTOR

Professor Breccia is in his tiny office when the Rippers enter the museum, assuming they enter during business hours. If they seek him out they need to make a Persuasion roll to successfully gain admittance to his office.

Once they are inside the professor listens to their story with interest. He knew Professor Hutchinson very well and was shocked to hear of his death. If asked about the artifacts from the professor's dig he admits that the police brought them here for safety after they recovered his corpse. The items were taken to the storeroom to await examination by experts.

He also mentions the museum was sponsoring part of the professor's dig and that certain pieces were to be offered to the museum first. These were mainly large statues and sphinxes that the professor's team had located under the water on previous expeditions.

Rippers who question the professor about the Sea People discover they were a race who came from "the western ocean" and were amongst the first soldiers to wear what later became known as scale mail armor. They are always shown with this armor on, even in scenes that do not involve warfare. He knows very little else about them except that they were effectively wiped out during a natural cataclysm many millennia ago.



### SCENE 2: A STOREHOUSE OF ARTIFACTS

If the characters wish to see Professor Hutchinson's artifacts, Professor Breccia leads them into the basement. At the bottom of the stairs is a dimly lit corridor that ends in a sturdy wooden door with two locks.

After a few seconds trying to find the right key, Professor Breccia opens the door and shows the adventurers into the museum's storeroom for artifacts that need studying, need conservation work, or for which there is no space upstairs. Much of the stuff in here is junk or badly damaged, some of it through years of neglect by the museum staff.

Ancient Greek, Roman, and Egyptian artifacts lie side by side gathering dust; statues, vases, and scrolls are piled willy-nilly wherever room can be found for them. There is no cataloguing system for these artifacts and Professor Breccia does not know where the items the Rippers are searching for are exactly. He is happy to let them browse so long as they do not break or steal anything.

### A MOST BIZARRE SKULL

Whilst browsing through the artifacts piled up in the museum basement the characters may make Notice rolls. Those who succeed spot a rather strange-looking fish skull

buried under some Greek statues of Poseidon. The skull is most definitely that of some sort of fish but is larger than a man's, and a successful Common Knowledge roll by someone with knowledge of natural history reveals it is of no recognizable species.

Professor Breccia, when he sees the heroes studying the skull, nods a few times and speaks to them.

*"A most strange find, indeed, that one. One of our research teams was sailing around the area a few miles to the west of the city, by a small island chain, when they spotted this washed up upon a beach. It is very large and must be from a prehistoric fish-monster. It is probably tens of thousands of years old at the very least, do you not think?"*

The skull is in fact that of a sea demon who lived near the island chain of which the curator speaks. Many decades ago there was a prosperous fishing village inhabited by sea demon/human hybrids on the site, but Oannes ordered it abandoned when Alexandria began to expand.

### TESTING THE SKULL

Professor Breccia is only too happy to let the Rippers borrow the skull to perform some tests. To him the skull is practically worthless and if these mad Westerners wish to spend money studying old fish bones then he is happy to let them — after all, he can then find out any useful information for free.

In order to test the skull the heroes need access to a scientific lab, like those found at the local university or the museum itself. For a nominal fee Professor Breccia willingly lets the labs out to the Rippers. He initially requests £2 per day but will settle for £0.50 if pushed hard.

To successfully determine anything about the skull the following skill checks must be made. Each roll is assumed to take one hour of time and may be repeated with no penalty. This represents the characters trying different tests to achieve results.

- A Common Knowledge roll determines the age of the creature cannot be calculated, as there are no references to work with. However, a hero can reasonably deduce that the skull was in the water for around thirty years. A long way off the "tens of thousands of years" Professor Breccia spoke of.
- A Knowledge (History) roll determines that the creature, although aquatic and undoubtedly fish-like, shows definite signs of having been bipedal and most definitely had forward facing eyes. Small bone-ridges along the "cheeks" indicate that it may have gills. With a raise, the hero realizes the placement of the opening for

the spinal column indicates the creature was probably bipedal.

- A Common Knowledge roll determines the creature was around seven feet long (or high) and had a brain size roughly equal to that of a human being. The teeth show it was probably carnivorous in nature, although it being omnivorous cannot be ruled out.

### SCENE 3: THE GOLDEN PYRAMID

After an hour or so of rummaging around, the Rippers finally find a small box labeled in English. The label reads, "Professor Hutchinson — Alexandria East Harbor Dig." The box is not locked nor has it acquired much dust.

Inside the box are several pieces of pottery, some tarnished but readable copper coins, a few pieces of statuary, and something wrapped in oiled leather. Anyone making a successful Knowledge (History) roll can determine that the finds date from around the time of Cleopatra VII (the best known of the Ptolemy dynasty), although further tests would be needed to confirm this.

Unwrapping the cloth reveals a lump of gold about the size of a child's hand. It is irregularly shaped, although the sides and angles are cut straight. There are no rounded corners or curves. The outer surfaces are dotted with hieroglyphs. A successful Smarts roll reveals it is part of a larger item, some sort of puzzle. At a guess it could be pyramidal in shape.

Professor Breccia can, if so asked, read the hieroglyphs on the characters' behalf. He looks the thing over, scratches his head a few times and then emphatically states, *"It cannot be read without some more words! It is just nonsense, single words that have no context. Maybe there is more here somewhere!"* Characters with knowledge of Egyptian hieroglyphs come to the same conclusion.

No matter how hard or how long the Rippers look, there are no more pieces of the golden puzzle to be found here.

### ACT 3:

### A DAY TRIP TO THE ISLAND

The island where the fish skull was found can be reached by boat from Alexandria in a little over three hours. A suitable vessel can be hired through their hotel for £0.50 for the day. If the Rippers decide to visit the harbor and hire their own vessel they are charged considerably more. Their dragoman has a cousin who will take them for £0.75 and he promises a comfortable journey.

Either way, the adventurers set sail for the island chain. The captain of the boat (however they hired it) in which they travel knows a little of the island. He tells them, *"It is cursed because the people who lived there turned away from Allah and returned to worshipping the old gods."* He does not know which old gods they worshipped, nor does he wish to find out.

After roughly three hours a small group of islands comes into view. The captain moors the boat as close to the beach as he can and says he is going to wait on board the boat. He wishes to be long gone from the island before nightfall and makes that very clear to the characters as they disembark.

## SCENE 1: A LONG-LOST SHRINE

Once safely ashore, the characters can begin to search the ruins of the fishing village. Have each of them make a Notice roll as they perform their investigation. A successful roll reveals a large piece of stone sticking out from the ground that looks as if it has been deliberately buried.

An hour of digging is required to remove the dirt and sand from around the object. Once cleared of debris the stone can be seen to be part of some kind of crude altar that looks extremely weathered. Some kind of carving adorns the sides of the altar.

A Common Knowledge roll at -2 or Knowledge (History) roll is required to give any sort of date to the altar. A successful roll determines it to be approximately four hundred years old. The carvings on the altar show men with the heads of fishes dancing around a gigantic man-fish figure. A successful Knowledge (Occult) roll allows the investigator to deduce that the altar is probably dedicated to Oannes, or maybe some other anthropomorphic fish deity, and is no doubt a leftover from more barbaric days. There is nothing else of interest to the character on the island.

The captain will not let the adventurers bring any items from the island onto his boat without some very heavy baksheesh. A small bribe in the order of £0.50 satisfies him.

# ACT 4: VISITING THE PROFESSOR'S DIG

Following the death of Professor Hutchinson, work on the dig has temporarily been halted. The few remaining Smithsonian workers are in a hostel near to the harbor front. Whilst work has stopped they spend their time writing

up their notes in preparation for the return to America. Temporary leadership of the expedition has fallen on the shoulders of William Franklin, an archaeology major in his final year. He is also staying at the hostel.

## SCENE 1: TALKING TO WILLIAM

When the characters arrive they find William copying inscriptions from small pieces of pottery found at the dig. He recognizes one of the characters from the professor's descriptions and is very glad to see him. Refreshments are soon made available.

William cannot be of much help, as he readily admits.

*"The professor was looking forward to this season's work as he was convinced that he had discovered the real location of Cleopatra's palace complex under the eastern harbor water. On the journey over he began to act a little strangely and looked tired, although he seemed even more eager to get to the site and start work."*

*"Once we arrived he set us to work straight away and he accompanied every diving team we sent down. After about... oh... three weeks or so, he began to act very strangely. He looked nervous and kept looking over his shoulder as if someone was following him."*

*"I was working on shore on that fateful day. The professor and three of the lads, Willy Watson, Kenneth Cristie, and Phillip Bartholomew, went out with the Arab pump men as normal. I don't know what happened but next thing I know the boat has raced home with the professor's corpse. Then the police came and told us to clear off."*

*"Since then we haven't been allowed to dig underwater so we spend our time writing up our notes."*

If asked to show the Rippers their finds, he only has a few bits of pottery and some almost unreadable coins to show them. He complains, *"The police took most of the interesting pieces to the museum for safekeeping. We haven't been allowed to study them. The professor sold a few minor pieces to Mr. Schuler a few weeks back. He might let you see them if you ask."*

William directs the team to Mr. Schuler's shop if they ask for directions. If not, their dragoman knows where it is.

## SCENE 2: DIVING FOR CLUES

The Rippers may decide to visit the bottom of the harbor for themselves and see what clues they can find. The Smithsonian dig team has several spare diving suits (enough for each of the characters) and the current acting team leader, William Franklin, is happy enough to let them borrow them.

Although the Smithsonian team is banned from diving, the Rippers, as tourists, are not.

A boat with five Arab rowers, who also work the air pumps, is made available and they row out to where the professor last dived into the water. The Arabs help the characters into the bulky diving suit and make sure all the hoses are connected properly.

The leader of the Arabs, Abdul, explains that the bottom of the harbor is very sandy and the water is extremely murky, even in the best of conditions. Walking about only kicks up the sand so he urges the adventurers to take slow, deliberate steps and not to move too fast.

If the Rippers ask for spear guns the Arabs laugh loudly whilst talking swiftly in Arabic amongst themselves. The leader explains there are no sharks in the Mediterranean, whatever the police say, so they will not need them. Talk of fish-men only causes the Arabs to laugh louder.

Once suited up, the characters enter the quiet, murky depths of the eastern harbor water.

### ANOTHER GOLDEN PYRAMID

After a half-hour or so of intensive searching around the bottom of the harbor have each character make a Notice roll with a -2 penalty. Keep making this roll every half-hour until someone succeeds or the party gives up.

The character who succeeds and rolls the highest (in the event multiple characters succeed) spots something glinting dimly in the murky waters. A few brief moments of shifting the sand away from it, which incidentally makes visibility even worse, reveals an irregularly shaped golden object, the sides and angles of which are cut straight. There are no rounded corners or curves. The outer surfaces are dotted with hieroglyphs.

If the characters have already acquired one or more pieces of this item they immediately recognize it for what it is. A successful Common Knowledge roll allows the Ripper to

realize that it is part of a larger item, some sort of puzzle. At a guess it could be pyramidal in shape.

### MORE TRANSLATIONS

Professor Breccia of the Museum of Greco-Roman Antiquities can, if so asked, read these hieroglyphs on the

Rippers' behalf. He marvels at the two pieces as he fits them together and looks the thing over, scratches his head a few times, and then sighs heavily.

*"It makes a little more sense now," he says. "It says something about a tomb in the marsh to the west and the Night of Thoth, but there are still crucial words missing. You will need to find the other piece so I can translate the full text. When you find the missing piece the museum will happily take possession of such a glorious find when you come to hand it over to the Department of Antiquities."*

Characters making a successful Common Knowledge roll (at -2 for characters unfamiliar with Egypt) know that removing artifacts from Egypt without the proper paperwork is an offence punishable by up to twenty years imprisonment. A second Knowledge (Occult) roll deduces the Night of Thoth, the night when the same pattern of stars appears in the sky, occurs in exactly seven days.

### SCENE 3: FIRST CONTACT

Whilst diving through the murky water, draw a card for each Ripper in the water. Keep drawing cards until one draws a deuce or they all leave the water.

As the character who was dealt the deuce (or multiple characters if more than one came up) passes by

the remains of a toppled pillar half-buried in the sand, a sea-demon suddenly emerges from the gloom in full view of the Ripper. It stops a few feet short of him, stares for a moment and then darts back into the murky water, stirring





up clouds of sand and is very quickly lost to the character's sight. Describe the sea demon in vague and horrifying terms, describing its scaly skin, vaguely human face, humanoid appearance, and sharp teeth.

The Rippers must make a Guts check. Because of the eerie surroundings and the totally unexpected shock, there is a -2 penalty. Characters who fail must roll on the Fright Table.

If a hero panics, he immediately drops whatever he is carrying and flees toward the surface. Any sensible Ripper would also try to get to the surface as quickly as possible as well! A diver suffering a phobia shakes uncontrollably and does not wish to enter the water again. This feeling lasts for at least 24 hours, the shaking for only a few minutes.

Additional dives incur no further encounters with sea demons, although the pyramid, if not already found, may still be located.

## ACT 5: SCHULER'S ANTIQUE SHOP

Mr. Leo Schuler's shop is at 6 Rue Sherif Pasha and he specializes in old and rare books and antiques. He has all the correct licenses needed to buy and sell antiquities, although he is not allowed to export them. The shop is open between 8:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m., although it closes between noon and 2:00 p.m. for lunch and to allow Schuler to conduct business transactions. He has no knowledge of the Cabal.

When the team enters the shop he is dealing with a customer, a British gentleman, and he briefly speaks to the characters, saying, "I'll be with you in a minute, gentlemen." This gives the heroes a chance to browse.

The shop has dozens of shelves crammed full of old books written in Arabic, Latin, and Greek. Many are worth hundreds, if not thousands of dollars and really belong in museums. Amongst the antiques are statues of various Egyptian gods, Roman and Greek statuary, vases, golden scarabs, and other jewelry and various unguents said to be from the tombs of the pharaohs. Everything is an original and the average price for an item is £100. If the characters decide to go shopping the GM will have to play it by ear.

After a few minutes the business deal is completed and the British gentleman leaves the shop with a small parcel tucked under his arm. Schuler asks the Rippers how he can help them.

If they mention Professor Hutchinson by name Schuler looks quite sad and mutters, "Such a great waste. He was a brilliant archaeologist you know." He is more than happy

to show the team the few trinkets he acquired from the professor. None are particularly valuable. The collection consists of some coins, small statues of beautiful young women, a statue of Horus, and a small gold ring with a scarab emblem engraved on it. Schuler is willing to sell the entire lot for £200, although he settles for £50 if the characters haggle.

### A BIT OF KNOWLEDGE

Amongst the ancient tomes and scrolls that line the shelves of Schuler's shop are several which contain individual spells. Sorting these books out would take years and the rewards would not necessarily warrant the time expenditure. However, one scroll in particular stands out as it is lying on the counter facing towards the Rippers. Its title is in Latin (it dates from the time of the Roman occupation) and translates as "Dark Truths of the Egyptian People."

The scroll is extremely old, well worn, slightly discolored from the sun, and written entirely in Latin. It is five or six feet in length when completely unfolded. Skimming through the scroll takes six hours, assuming the cramped Latin handwriting can be translated.

Successfully reading through the scroll reveals the location of a temple supposedly inhabited by a fearsome monster and built by the Sea People. It also includes a legend (Handout 2). One part of the scroll is written on a section of its own but no reference is made to it anywhere else in the document (Player Handout 3).

Some of what the scroll reveals is known to historians. Characters making a successful Knowledge (History) roll, or Common Knowledge roll for characters with a background in historical research, remember that an army known only as the Sea People did invade ancient Egypt. Ancient historians claimed that they came from the great western sea beyond the Pillars of Hercules and spoke no language then known to man.

A second Knowledge (History) or Common Knowledge roll reveals that the great cataclysm would have probably taken place around the time that the volcanic island of Santorini violently erupted, spewing out great streams of fire and hot ash and sending forth tidal waves to much of the Mediterranean coastline, including Alexandria.

A successful Knowledge (Occult) roll brings the knowledge that Oannes is often depicted as being half-man and half-fish and was probably the model for the Carthaginian god Baal-Melkart.

The scroll is vitally important to the rest of the adventure and it is crucial that the Rippers acquire it. Whether they buy it outright or whether Mr. Schuler throws it in as an incentive for them to buy something else is irrelevant. Schuler sells it for £1 to interested characters.

# ACT 6: TAKING A BALLOON RIDE

If the investigators decide to travel to the ruined temple mentioned in the old journal, their dragoman happily tells them he knows of this site and can guide them there. He says that by camel it will take almost six days to get there and back, three days by boat and walking, and only a single day by balloon.

Luckily, he has a distant cousin who runs a balloon excursion business and who would undoubtedly love to aid the Rippers in their adventure. For the generous sum of £1 per day the characters can get themselves a balloon and enough provisions to last three days. Of course, the dragoman insists on coming with them to act as guide.

The weather on the day the team departs from Alexandria is fine and sunny with hardly a cloud in the sky. A small throng of tourists has gathered to wave goodbye to the Rippers—word has spread that they are “famous explorers off on a great voyage of discovery.”

A successful Piloting roll or Agility roll at -2 is required to safely lift off and clear the city. On a critical failure, the basket hits a building and takes damage to the value of £0.50, according to the owner anyway, which is payable on their return.

## SCENE 1: A QUAIN T NATIVE RITUAL

After approximately four hours of travel the dragoman tells the characters they are a little behind schedule due to the wind but should reach the site in the early evening. Each of the characters may make a Notice roll as they float gently across the huge expanse of the Egyptian desert.

Those who succeed see a small collection of tents and more permanent structures down below. Small patches of green, which stand out clearly against the yellow of the dry desert, indicate where the crops are grown that sustain the populace. It seems to be a small village and the locals are gathering for some sort of meeting.

A raise (or second successful Notice roll) reveals the villagers appear to be about to sacrifice a young boy, for they have tied him to a block of stone and are dancing about him maniacally. Questioning the dragoman reveals that the Egyptians do not perform any sacrifices as part of their religion as Allah forbids it.

## UNINVITED GUESTS

The characters may decide to stop the cultists' ritual. Their best courses of action are either to fly the balloon overhead and shoot the cultists, or to land the balloon and attack the cultists on firm ground.

If the heroes choose the former they may be dismayed after having fired a few shots to see the cultists flee into their abodes and then come back out armed with muskets. A pitched gun battle may damage the balloon, therefore hampering the team's travels quite severely, something the Rippers should consider. If they do not realize this themselves, have them make a Smarts roll to come to that conclusion.

In order to land the balloon quickly and safely, the pilot needs to make a successful Piloting or Agility (-2) roll. Success indicates the pilot may land in two rounds, a raise at the start of the next round. Failure allows a reroll as an action, but obviously causes a one round delay in landing. On a critical failure, the balloon crashes and everyone aboard suffers 2d6 damage from the impact (and causes £0.50 damage to the basket). Once down, the Rippers can drop the anchors and then deal with the cultists without risking the balloon.

The cultists themselves ignore the balloon unless the characters fire at them or land. The former is dealt with above and the latter causes the cultists to swarm towards the landing balloon, armed with long knives.

The cultists are fanatics and fight with no regard for their own lives. There are a total of thirty villagers, although only 11 of them are cultists. Once the cultists are defeated, the remaining villagers flee into the desert without food or water.



### EVIL PRIEST

**Attributes:** Agility d4, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6

**Skills:** Fighting d4, Faith d8, Guts d6, Intimidation d6, Knowledge (Satanism) d6

**Charisma:** +0; Pace: 6; Parry: 4; Toughness: 5

**Gear:** Cursed dagger (Str+d8, wounds can only heal naturally)

### Special Abilities:

• **Arcane Background (Miracles):** *Blast* (ball of hellfire), *bolt* (ray of black light), *obscure* (darkness) (30 Power Points).

• **Weakness (Magic):** Evil priests take +4 damage from magical attacks.

## CULTISTS (10)

**Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts d4, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

**Skills:** Fighting d8, Guts d6, Intimidation d6, Knowledge (Occult) d6, Shooting d8, Stealth d6, Throwing d6

**Charisma:** +0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 5

**Gear:** Cold iron knife (Str+d4), musket (Range: 10/20/40, Damage: 2d8+1, AP 1), shot & powder (5)

## THE CURSE OF THE PHAROHS

If the characters cause enough damage to kill or incapacitate the priest, with his last gasp he draws forth a whistle from his white robes and plays a maddeningly impossible tune on it. He then waves it at the Rippers and shouts something at them in Arabic before he collapses.

If they can translate the priest's ranting, the characters discover he has invoked a curse on them and has summoned something which translates as "the winged guardian of the pharaohs." The dragoman has heard of such things before but only as statues that guard the royal tombs from intruders.

Being a stereotypical superstitious Arab he is worried and looks nervous from now on.

The mad priest has actually summoned a winged fiend, which arrives in three hours' time. Because of the curse, the fiend does not need to be given orders by the priest and knows where to find the characters. Avoiding it is next to impossible.

## SCENE 2: "WE ARE UNDER ATTACK!"

Once the ceremony has been stopped and the cultists dealt with, the Rippers can continue with their journey. After some two-and-a-half hours of good progress make them roll their Notice skills. Those who succeed spot a small object in the distance moving towards them. It looks like a large bird. The object continues to get closer until, at about two hundred yards, the full extent of exactly what the creature is becomes horrifyingly apparent.

The winged fiend attacks the characters in the basket until it has been taken two wounds. At that point it flies to the



top of the balloon, out of sight of the heroes, and starts to shred the balloon. The adventurers soon catch on to what it is doing when they begin to rapidly lose height.

If the team manages to kill the winged fiend before it can shred the balloon it plummets to the ground, whereupon it dissolves, leaving no trace that it ever existed except for a vague outline in the sand which the wind soon obscures totally.

### BRACE FOR IMPACT!

With the balloon burst, the basket can remain airborne for no more than a few minutes. Someone must make a successful Notice roll in order to find a flat area to land. The winged fiend continues to hover nearby as it intends to finish the characters off once they land.

The pilot must make a Piloting or Agility (-2) roll as the basket hits the ground at some speed. If successful, each character takes 2d6 damage. On a raise the balloon crash causes no damage to the occupants. A failure inflicts 3d6 damage, and a critical failure a rather messy 4d6. A successful Agility roll halves the damage taken.

Once they are free of the wreckage, the winged fiend swoops in to attack them. This is a fight to the death!

### DESERT SURVIVAL THE HARD WAY

The Rippers are in serious trouble if the balloon has crashed. Although the team can reach the ruined temple in a matter of hours, it takes them several days to make the journey home, and they do not have the food or water to last that long. Without these two basic commodities survival chances are very poor indeed. Use the rules for Heat, Hunger, and Thirst.



### WINGED FIEND

**Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d10, Strength d6, Vigor d8

**Skills:** Fighting d6, Intimidation d6, Persuasion d6, Taunt d8, Throwing d6

**Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 7 (1)

#### Special Abilities:

- **Armor:** The scaly hide of a winged fiend provides them with Armor +1.

- **Claws:** Str+d4.

- **Flight:** Pace 6.

- **Weakness (Cold Iron):** Winged fiends take +4 damage from cold iron weapons.

- **Weakness (Holy Symbol):** These demons suffer a -2 penalty to Fighting attacks against anyone brandishing a holy symbol.

## SCENE 3: ARRIVAL AT THE TEMPLE

Assuming the winged fiend has been dealt with without too much damage to the balloon, the Rippers reach the site of the ruined temple three-quarters of an hour later. The area looks completely deserted and much of it is buried in sand. A smaller building stands at the rear of the temple. A pool of water stands in the middle of the site. There is plenty of good soft ground on which to land the balloon without requiring any roll.

The main temple, although Egyptian in design, was originally built by the Sea People and taken over by the Egyptians following the destruction of the invaders. Although much of the temple was redesigned, several parts are still from the original buildings.



The pool was once used as a ceremonial pool for bathing in before entering the temple. It actually connects to an underground water supply and is only dry during the long, hot summers. Characters drinking from the pool are in for a shock—the water is salty. The pool connects through a long, winding series of underground springs and rivers to the Mediterranean, although the team have no way of determining this or getting through the tunnels, which run for hundred of miles under the desert. These tunnels also connect to the great tomb detailed later. Several colonies of sea demons live within the tunnels.

## SCENE 4: EXPLORING THE TEMPLE

The temple itself is a dark and gloomy structure. The inner rooms are filled with pillars which serve to increase the amount of writing space as much as support the high ceiling

The etchings on the walls and pillars, written in the Egyptian hieroglyphic tongue, tell the story of how the Pharaoh Rameses III (1186–1155 BC) defeated the Sea People by commanding the gods to cause earthquakes and floods and then driving them from Egypt with his army. One large scene toward the end of the story depicts Rameses in his armor slaying a very large sea demon (actually a fairly accurate representation of Oannes). The Sea People are drawn in careful detail and seem to have scaly skin and big bulging eyes. Rippers viewing the entire story must make a Guts roll or suffer from Fear while at the site.

A blatant lie it all may be, but the story is well known to historians and Egyptologists. Any Ripper who makes a Knowledge (History) roll can recount the facts of the story, as given above.

Other pictures depict the god Osiris, god of the underworld and also of vegetation, to whom the temple was dedicated.

All the temple's valuables were removed long ago when the priests' defenses could no longer hold back the encroaching desert. The temple was officially abandoned some six decades after it was first liberated from the Sea People.

## YET ANOTHER GOLDEN TRIANGLE

If the characters choose to search the temple, have each make a Notice roll. The hero who succeeds and rolls the highest spots something glinting dimly from within a crack in a wall. After chipping away to enlarge the hole, the investigator sees the item to be an irregularly shaped golden object, the sides and angles of which are cut straight. There are no rounded corners or curves. The outer surfaces are dotted with hieroglyphs.

If the characters have already acquired one or more pieces of the item they immediately recognize it for what it is.

## TRANSLATING THE PYRAMID'S TEXT

Once back in civilization the Rippers can try to have the hieroglyphs deciphered. The following text explains what occurs if this is only the second piece of the golden pyramid that the investigators have found.

Professor Breccia of the Museum of Greco-Roman Antiquities can, if so asked, read these hieroglyphs on the investigators' behalf. He marvels at the pieces as he fits them together and looks the thing over, scratches his head a few times and then sighs heavily.

*"It makes a little more sense now," he says. "It says something about the awakening of a god and the stars being right and there are some partial directions but there are still crucial words missing. You will need to find the other piece so I can translate the full text. When you find the missing piece the museum will happily take possession of such a glorious find when you come to hand it over to the Department of Antiquities."*

## SCENE 5: A ROOM FULL OF STONES

Those investigators who check the smaller structure behind the main temple enter into a single, dark chamber with a stone floor. The walls of the chamber have been plastered but there are no drawings or hieroglyphs adorning them. In the far-left corner of the building is a heavy stone trapdoor that requires a Strength roll at -4. Up to three other characters can Cooperate on this task.

Under the trapdoor is a large, rough-cut chamber approximately twice the volume of the chamber in which the heroes currently stand. It is filled almost to the brim with pieces of bone, some of which look human. It is very easy for a Ripper to reach into the hole and grab some bones.

A successful Common Knowledge roll reveals the bones were probably placed in the chamber over a period of time. Those at the bottom are undoubtedly from the era in which the temple was constructed whilst those on top are from a much later period, maybe as little as fifty years ago in some cases.

Characters who make a successful Notice roll while digging through the bones find a skull in the bone pile very similar to the one in the Greco-Roman museum in Alexandria.

## SCENE 6: THE LIVING DESERT

Shortly after discovering the golden pyramid segment the Rippers hear a scream of horror from their dragoman, who has gone outside to check on the balloon. If the team goes to check on him they see him pointing at dozens of humanoid figures which are slowly approaching from all sides.

These are lesser mummies, whose tombs lie near the temple. They only wish to drive the Rippers away and do not necessarily wish to destroy them.

Characters who desperately try to get away should be given a fighting chance. Fudge a few die rolls, if necessary. Those who want to stay and take out all the mummies shouldn't be given any favors—there is always a time to run and a time to fight. Even if the initial waves of mummies are slain, more quickly burst through the sand. There is an effectively unlimited number.

The mummies begin 20" away from the basket. Getting the balloon ready for lift off requires a total of five actions. These can be from a single character (so it takes five rounds) or five different characters (taking one round in total). Obviously, the characters have to be in or adjacent to the basket to be of any use.

### SERVITOR MUMMIES (12 INITIALLY)

**Attributes:** Agility d4, Smarts d8, Spirit d10, Strength d12+2, Vigor d12

**Skills:** Fighting d8, Guts d10, Intimidation d8

**Pace:** 4; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 10

#### Special Abilities:

- **Fear:** Anyone seeing a servitor mummy must make a Guts roll.
- **Improved Arcane Resistance:** +4 Armor versus magic, and +4 to rolls made to resist magical effects.
- **Mummy Rot:** Anyone touched by a Servitor Mummy, whether he is damaged or not, must make a Vigor roll. Failure means the character has "mummy rot" and suffers an immediate wound.
- **Undead:** +2 Toughness; +2 to recover from being Shaken; Immune to poison, disease, and gas; No additional damage from called shots.
- **Shuffling Gait:** -2 pace; d4 running die.



- **Weakness (Fire):** Mummies take +4 damage from fire, and suffer a -2 penalty to Fighting attacks against anyone who brandishes a torch or other open flame.

## ACT 7:

### DECODING THE TRIANGLES

Once all three parts of the golden pyramid are assembled, the entire message encoded on them can be successfully deciphered. Professor Breccia of the Museum of Greco-Roman Antiquities can aid in this endeavor. The entire pyramid text is below.

*Far to the west, in the depths of the great marsh we call home, there lies a great river valley. At the end of this valley is a monument of stone carved in memory of the god who rules in absence. On the Night of Thoth, when the stars are right, the sun shall strike with its dying breath the unopenable portal and reveal the truth that lies within. The chains that hold the mighty One who is named Oannes shall shatter and he shall be released upon the undeserving world.*

After the Rippers have had time to read the deciphered text their dragoman says that he knows the general area described in the text and can take them there, although he wants more money to do so as it is "an accursed place, full of bad things."

## ACT 8: OTHER LINES OF INQUIRY

The local police, should they be contacted, are of little use. As far as they are concerned, the professor was killed by a shark. Although the shark has not yet been captured (and obviously never will be), the case has been officially closed. Talk of fish-men in the harbor results in mockery at first, and incarceration in an asylum if the heroes persist in discussing such nonsense.

Professor Hutchinson's body has already been shipped back to America, so no investigation can take place. However, the local equivalent of the coroner took photos. Any hero can make a Common Knowledge roll to deduce the fatal wounds are indeed bite wounds. Determining actual cause of death, or what inflicted the injuries, is impossible.

There is a local Ripper Lodge in Alexandria (In: 3; Me: 3; Re: 4; Fa: 4). It is affiliated with Frazer's Fighters. They are currently engaged in their own investigations and can offer little active support, though their Facilities are available for use.

## ACT 9: BACK TO THE DESERT

Once the team knows where they are heading, they need only arrange transportation there and buy some expedition equipment. It will take five days hard ride to reach the area, although they could be there a lot sooner with a balloon.

The balloon they borrowed earlier is available to them if they ask their dragoman to find them transportation. The charge has increased to £2 because of the dangerous terrain through which the balloon will be passing. If the winged demon tore the balloon, the dragoman's cousin has a spare he is willing to sell the Rippers for £5.

The characters should be encouraged to make a list of the equipment they wish to purchase for this expedition. Exact details do not need to be worked out, but items such as lanterns, rope and, of course, food and water should be listed. As long as the list contains no very heavy items or items that are illegal or hard to acquire in a short space of time (such as sticks of dynamite) the equipment on it should be available.

The balloon can be made ready in one hour, reasonable equipment requests in three.

The team should be allowed to make any other preparations they feel are necessary without too much bother (assuming

they are possible). Only their dragoman will accompany them on their expedition—any other characters the heroes have encountered are too busy with their own businesses. However, they can try to persuade the Cairo Lodge to spare them a group of men. This requires a Persuasion roll. Since the request must be sent by telegraph to ensure it is delivered speedily, only one character may attempt the roll. Each success and raise grants them 2 Novice Rippers. The dragoman is effectively a spare character in case a Ripper dies or is otherwise incapacitated.

## SCENE 1: FIRST IMPRESSIONS

The tomb in which Oannes is imprisoned until the Night of Thoth is located at the far end of a small, dead-end valley. The valley itself is two miles long and at points is no wider than one hundred yards across. Like much of the area the floor is not covered with sand, but with rocks, making walking awkward, although not especially hazardous. The cliffs along the side of the valley rise steeply to a height of 500 feet and climbing is dangerous under the best of conditions. Because of the narrowness of the valley it tends to trap heat and temperatures can reach heights of 160°F in the middle of summer.

The ancient builders constructed the tomb in the cliffs at the end of the valley and then placed a temple at the front so the human cultists could continue to honor Oannes even when the tomb was closed.

The front of the tomb consists of a low, flat portico with tightly spaced columns filling the expanse of the building. Each column is decorated with carvings and painted pictures depicting the might of Oannes. There are over two hundred columns in the shrine.

A broad, shallow stair leads to the roof of the shrine. Standing at the top of the stairs, the gigantic statues dwarf the first time viewer. There are six statues, each depicting Oannes in a different pose. Seeing them requires the viewer to make a Guts roll or suffer the effects of Fear until he leaves the valley (this means the penalty applies in the tomb).

Centered in the wall is a smaller alcove. Except on the Night of Thoth, it is a featureless socket in the rock and the entire passage behind the wall is solid rock.

## SCENE 2: THE NIGHT OF THOTH

As the sun sets over the western horizon and the constellation of Orion rises in the east, the dying beams of sunlight strike the face of the great tomb at the end of the valley. A single beam is centered exactly on the stone-blocked alcove. Suddenly, with no smoke, loud noises, or noisome

stenches, the alcove is filled with a deep red light that seems to come from within the rock itself. Although the light is not painful to look at, it is too bright to see through.

After a few seconds the sun sets completely below the horizon and the light fades. Where in the alcove there was once stone there is now only air, allowing passage into the tomb beyond.

Explorers who make a successful Notice roll see a faint pattern of stars in the sky over the tomb that has the definite shape of an ibis—the sacred bird of Thoth and one of his hieroglyphic symbols.

Of course, the tomb is not going to stay open forever and the stone in the alcove reappears at dawn the next morning. This gives the Rippers around eight hours to explore the tomb and thwart the foul machinations of the demon-god Oannes.

### SCENE 3: THE GREAT TOMB

The sea demons used the tomb as their main refuge after Santorini exploded violently, devastating their Mediterranean colonies. With their number drastically reduced the Egyptians rose up and overthrew them, forcing them into the now dry marshes.

The tomb was built as a sanctuary for Oannes (who had been magically trapped by the summoning magic going awry) and to allow the sea demons somewhere to re-populate the colony in safety. After several score years their numbers were strong and the tunnels were growing cramped. To make matters worse, the marsh outside the tomb was rapidly succumbing to the desert and was becoming too dry for them to survive in.

So the sea demons elected to travel deeper into the marshes in search of habitable areas. The tomb was sealed with great magics to protect the imprisoned Oannes. As the desert crept nearer and nearer, so the sea demons were pushed towards the centre of the marsh, and when that eventually dried they perished in the scorching desert sun. All that remains in the tomb are the dead, a few foul underworld creatures which have entered the tomb since the sea demons' departure, some leftover items that were overlooked, and Oannes. Somewhere in the endless expanses of desert lie the sun-scorched remains of the last sea demons to perish following the exodus.

As forecast, when the stars are right, as they were on the fateful night that Santorini explodes, the tomb will open and Oannes will walk the Earth once more, freed from his chains. For even though the sea demons abandoned the tomb, Oannes rests still within the chambers, awaiting the day when he will be freed from his magical shackles. That day has come.

The air inside the tomb is breathable, if a little musty. There is no source of lighting, so the explorers need to provide their own.

#### 1. SHRINE TO OANNES

Across from the door through which the team enters is a forest of pillars, each around twelve feet high and carved with the likeness of a fish-man. There are seventy-two pillars and atop them is a large flat platform. Two stone doors flank the pillars (see **Oannes' Prison** below, for more details on the doors).

What the Rippers cannot see from this room is that atop the platform stands an altar to Oannes. The altar is carved from large pieces of bone. Rippers making successful Common Knowledge roll at -2 recognize the bone as being from a species of whale found normally in the warmer waters around the Caribbean Sea.

Standing before the altar, like two silent sentinels, are two statues of seven-foot-tall fish-men. These actually represent Oannes. They are similar to Minions of Set and activate as detailed below.





## MINION OF OANNES (2)

**Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts d4 (A), Spirit d8, Strength d10, Vigor d8

**Skills:** Fighting d10, Guts d8, Intimidation d8, Notice d6, Stealth d4

**Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 10 (4)

**Gear:** Ancient polearm (Str+d10, Reach 1, 2-handed)

### Special Abilities:

- **Armor +4:** Minions of Oannes have stone bodies that resist most attacks.

- **Construct:** +2 to recover from being Shaken, no additional damage from called shots, not affected by disease and poison.

- **Improved Arcane Resistance:** +4 Armor versus magic, and +4 to rolls made to resist magical effects.

- **Improved Sweep:** A Minion of Oannes can attack all adjacent foes with no penalty.

- **Weakness (Explosives):** Minions of Oannes take +4 damage from explosions.

## 2. ORACLE ROOM

As the Rippers approach this small side room the light from their lanterns reflects from the oily skin of a giant fish-man which leers at them from the dark. Each character must make a single successful Guts roll or roll on the Fright Table. The creature is actually a stone statue of Oannes and is extremely life-like, although it is only ten feet high.

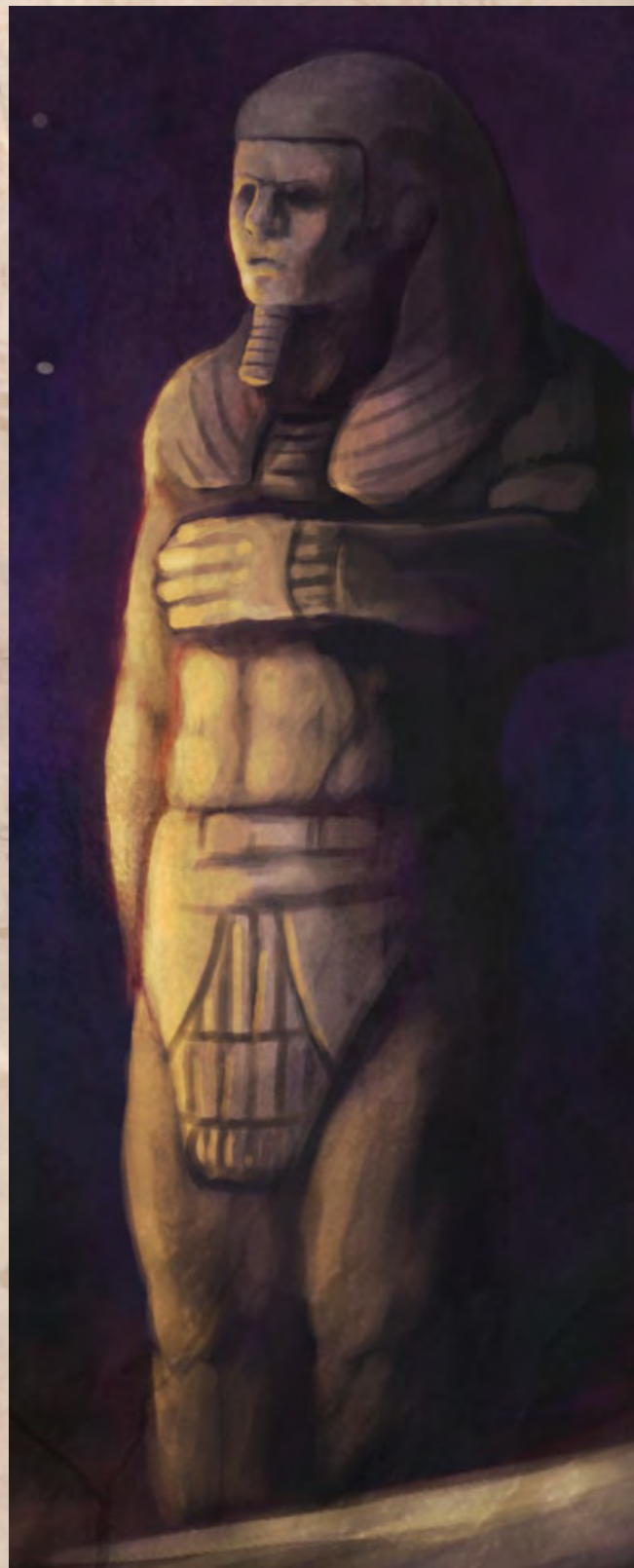
The walls of the chamber are covered with a script that closely resembles Egyptian hieroglyphs but with noticeable differences. A Language (Egyptian hieroglyph) roll must be made to decipher the text. Once deciphered, the text is revealed as a ritual spell.

The statue acted as an oracle for the sea demons, who would leave offerings here for their living god in return for blessings or receiving dreams on how to overcome a problem they faced. If the heroes should leave an offering for Oannes then nothing untoward happens. Desecrating the statue or walls in any way awakens the minions of Oannes in Room 1.

## 3. OANNES' PRISON

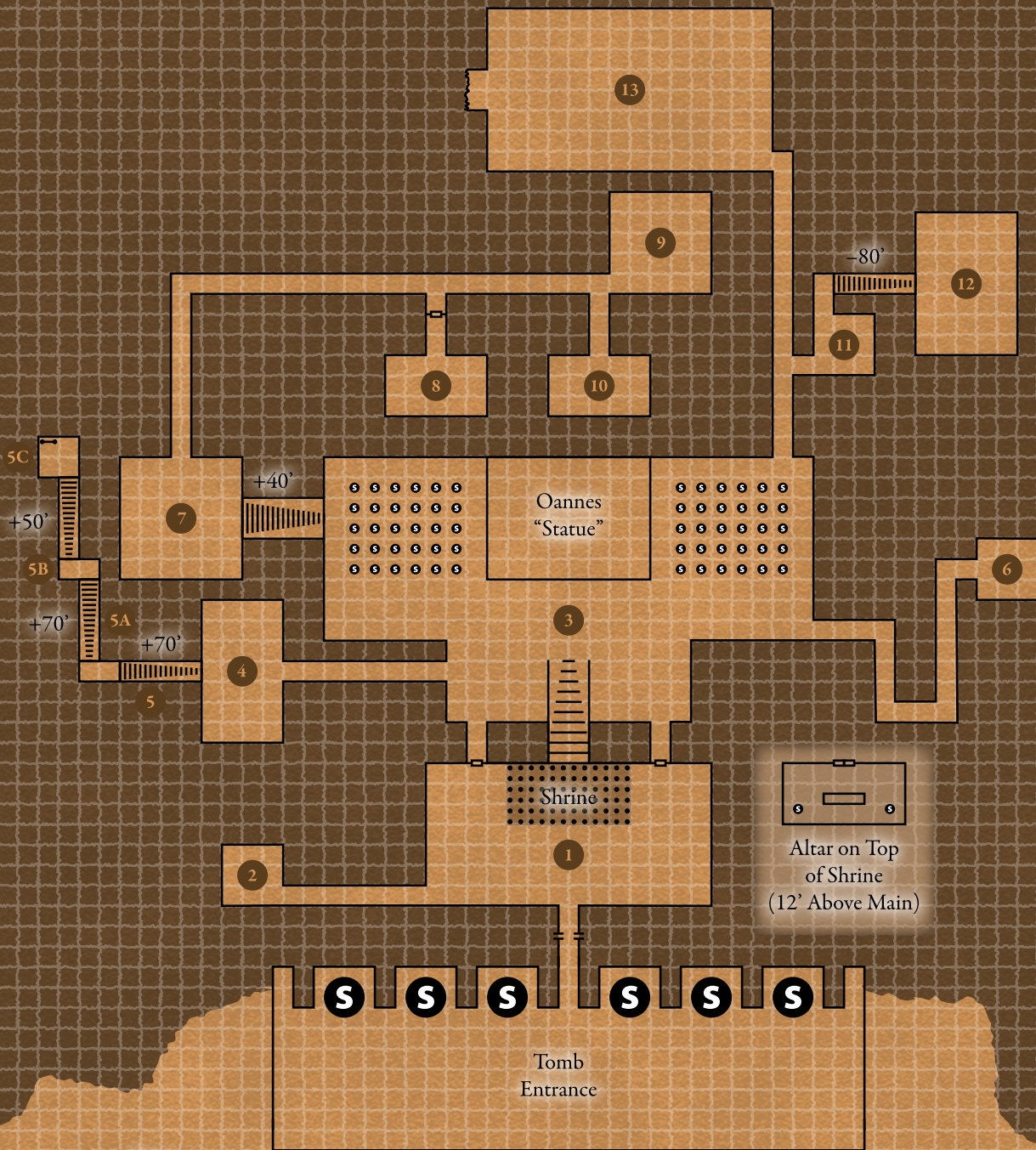
The two doors that lead to this chamber from the Shrine (Room 1) have a grid carved onto them consisting of sixteen perfect squares. The squares actually depress into the door and represent a lock. To crack the code, the characters need to consult the bizarre fragment from the diary purchased in Schuler's shop (Handout 3). The answer can be found by reading every fourth word starting with "from" after the semi-colon (Handout 3: GM's Version).

Every time the heroes enter the wrong code the ground shakes a little, getting progressively worse each time. Each lock is identical, but they are effectively joined together. Thus, experimenting heroes do not have twice the chances to crack the code. On the tenth incorrect go, an old one,



# The Shrine and Tomb of Oannes

11"



- S** Statue
- Ladder
- Door
- ||| Stairs

summoned by the magic contained within the lock, bursts through the floor of the shrine and attempts to devour all present. Only one old one is ever summoned, no matter how inept the heroes.

Once the code has been successfully entered both doors retract into the ceiling and lock in place. They do not shut again until dawn the next day.

Seated upon a throne of beaten gold is a 30-foot-high stone statue of a fish-man creature, undoubtedly a representation of the Sea Peoples' foul god Oannes. The statue is grotesquely life-like. Seeing the figure requires a Guts roll to avoid Fear (effects are cumulative with other failed rolls).

The figure is in fact the magically imprisoned Oannes, whose frozen appearance gives him the look of a statue. His skin, although cool to the touch like stone, also feels unmistakably clammy, like a fish's scales. Touching the statue and voicing this belief requires another Guts roll. Until he awakens the magic protects him from any mundane weapon (including dynamite).

Stood on both sides of the statue are rows and rows of wooden statues of sea demons. Each is full size and is well carved, although not in enough detail to scare the explorers. A total of sixty statues are here. These were left as symbolic guardians and cannot harm the intruders.

The walls are richly decorated with scenes depicting the glory of Oannes. Whilst not bizarre or alien enough to cause any fear, they are unsettling in their content and investigators who view them shudder uncontrollably for a brief second.

The magic imprisoning Oannes in this tomb shatters on this night, as foretold in the legend. Exactly when Oannes is released is up to the GM, but the Rippers should have been given a chance to explore some of the complex before he awakes. When he finally gets free, go to the scene **The God Awakens** below.



#### OLD ONE

**Attributes:** Agility d10, Smarts d6, Spirit d10, Strength d12+2, Vigor d10

**Skills:** Fighting d10, Intimidation d10, Swimming d12

**Pace:** 4; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 12

#### Special Abilities:

- **Aquatic:** Old Ones can breathe water, and have an underwater Pace equal to their Swimming skill.
- **Fear -2:** Anyone who sees an Old One must make a Guts roll at -2.
- **Size +5:** Old Ones are elephant-sized.
- **Shapeless Mass:** Old Ones have no discernable head or vitals, so cannot be targeted by called shots to those areas.

- **Tentacles:** Old Ones can attack each and every creature within its mass for Str damage. Its tentacles are even capable of penetrating Heavy Armor.

- **Weakness (Magic):** Old Ones take +4 damage from magical attacks.

## 4. DECORATIVE ROOM

This room's walls are covered in one long and continuous painting that starts to the left of the doorway and runs right around to the right side. It depicts a giant fish-man hybrid creature devouring Egyptian soldiers by the handful. If the picture is an accurate representation, the creature is over twenty feet tall.

The creature is Oannes and the scene commemorates his defeating the Egyptian army when the sea demons first settled in Egypt some 4000 years ago.

Rippers making a successful Notice roll spot a door in the west wall barely evident beneath the painting. There is no opening mechanism, but the door can be forced with a successful Strength roll. Conservation-minded Rippers realize doing so will significantly lessen the painting's historical value.

## 5. THE LABYRINTHINE STAIR

This long and narrow staircase leads up towards the top of the cliff. The passageway is only three feet wide and three feet high so Rippers have to either crawl or monkey-walk up them. The sea demons trapped the stairs shortly before they left to deter intruders or tomb-robbers.

### 5A. COLLAPSING STAIR

This stair is designed to collapse when anyone walks on it. The activation stair is situated eight steps above it, so heroes walking up the stairs are quite safe. When the stair is trodden on it collapses. The unfortunate Ripper who activated the trap must make an Agility roll at -2 or lose his footing and tumble down the stairs for 2d6 damage. The trap cannot reset itself.

### 5B. SCARAB PIT

The small landing is also trapped. The entire area is a false floor, the release bolts to which activate when an intruder steps on the platform. Anyone who steps onto the false floor when the trap has been activated falls twelve feet into a pit (2d6 damage) filled with flesh eating scarab beetles. The trap cannot reset itself.

## FLESH EATING BEETLE SWARM

**Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts d4 (A), Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d10

**Skills:** Notice d6

**Pace:** 10; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 8 (1)

**Special Abilities:**

- **Armor +1:** Carapace.
- **Bite:** Beetle swarms inflict hundreds of tiny bites every round to their victims, hitting automatically and causing 2d4 damage to everyone in the template (victims in completely sealed suits are immune).
- **Split:** Beetle swarms are clever enough to split into two smaller swarms (Small Burst Templates) should their foes split up. The Toughness of these smaller swarms is lowered by -2 (to 6 each).
- **Swarm:** Parry +2; Because the swarm is composed of scores, hundreds, or thousands of creatures, cutting and piercing weapons do no real damage. Area-effect weapons work normally, and a character can stomp to inflict his damage in Strength each round.

## 5C. THE LADDER

A ladder leads to a door set in the ceiling. The door opens to the desert and was once covered by mere inches of sand and rock. Any Ripper that opens the door now must make a successful Agility roll or suffer Fatigue from bumps and bruises because of the falling rocks and earth that have accumulated over the centuries. Thirty minutes of cautious digging produces another exit from the temple.

## 6. THE CRACKED ROOM

The walls, floor, and ceiling of this chamber are riddled with deep cracks and holes, each no wider than a man's finger. The Rippers cannot see down the holes. Those who make a successful Common Knowledge roll know that these cracks and holes were made sometime back in antiquity.

The holes, in fact, lead down into labyrinthine underground tunnels where many ancient horrors make their home. Heroes who blast away the rock discover a shaft leading into these measureless caverns. Exploring the caverns is possible, but requires the GM to devise a suitable adventure.

## 7. THE ROOM OF FUTURE PROPHECIES

Within this chamber are three extremely large paintings that cover the entire walls on which they are drawn. The sea demons recorded certain facts relevant to their existence and the world around them.

Painting one shows an island sinking into, or possibly rising from, a large expanse of water. Above the island is a

representation of the night sky and familiar star patterns are easily visible. Rippers making a successful Common Knowledge roll at -2 determine that the star formations point to a date around 4500 years ago.

Painting two shows a sun disc with rays emanating from it that end in hands coming down from a black hole in the sky. All around the sun disc lie the prone bodies of people. It is hard to tell if the bodies are dead or merely lying down. The people depicted in the scene do not look particularly Egyptian.

A Ripper making a Common Knowledge roll identifies the people as South American Indians, perhaps proto-Aztecs, whose existence could not have been known in this part of the world when this tomb was built.

A successful Knowledge (History) or Knowledge (Occult) roll reveals that the sun disc is a representation of the Aten, a nameless and faceless god who ruled without other gods and who was worshipped by the renegade Pharaoh Akhenaten.

Painting three shows a black-skinned pharaoh set upon a golden throne flanked by two inscribed pillars. There are no hieroglyphs stating who the pharaoh is. Rippers who make their Knowledge (Occult) rolls know that an old Egyptian legend says, *"An evil pharaoh with soul as black as night was overthrown by the people and the pharaoh's name was stricken from the records and monuments of the land. The pharaoh did not die but instead sleeps an endless sleep, waiting to be resurrected by his evil minions."* The figure is in fact Imhotep, who was already ancient by the time the tomb was built. The pillars closely resemble the pillars of Atlantis from the main Rippers setting book.

## 8. THE TREASURY

When the sea demons abandoned the tomb they took all their valuables with them. However, a few small items were overlooked in the confusion and they lie around the floor of the old treasury, in which the characters now stand. For every five minutes of searching through the remains of chests and caskets have each character make a Notice roll.

With success, the hero finds some small trinket, such as a gold coin, a ring, or maybe a necklace. Allow a total of five items to be found before the treasury has been finally emptied. A character who makes a successful Knowledge (History) roll can determine the items date to different eras of ancient Egypt, but none are later than the reign of Rameses II. Each item is worth £1d10x5 to a collector.

On a raise, the hero turns over a chest which has a false floor panel. Inside is a large golden stylized wadjet eye (the Eye of Horus). Not only is it worth a large sum of money (£100), but it can also be used as a protective amulet. Whoever wears it gains +1 Toughness. An inscription in hieroglyphs on the back reads, "The Eye of Horus Which

Keeps the Foul Serpents in the Underworld.” The sea demons stole the casket from an Egyptian tomb.

### 9. THE LIBRARY

When the tomb was in operational use as a home to Oannes and his sea demon followers, this room housed the library. Upon stone shelves sat hundreds, if not thousands, of papyrus scrolls covering all manner of topics. However, the sealing in the tomb was not perfect (and several other gaps to the outside air have been made) and they have crumbled away.

### 10. THE MAP ROOM

This small chamber has inscribed on its longest wall a detailed map of the entire world. The map is in accurate detail, showing major mountain ranges, rivers, and valleys, is drawn from a northern hemisphere view, and seems to be centered on Egypt.

Characters making a successful Common Knowledge quickly realize something is wrong with the drawing of Antarctica. It is shown with valleys and mountains and seems to be free of ice. There are also strange marks in some of the valleys (these were the towns of the Samat, the old enemy of the Sea People).

The map also contains five large red stones, which are placed on Australia, Egypt, China, Israel, and Antarctica. The stones are big enough to make an accurate guess impossible as to exactly where in the country they are supposed to represent. These can be used by GMs to create other adventures or may serve simply as red herrings, pointing to sea demon colonies now long defunct.

### 11. ANTE-CHAMBER

Lying in the middle of the floor of this chamber are two naturally mummified sea demons. Their skin is hard and sunken and their bodily fluids have long since evaporated. They are also extremely fragile and moving them causes large chunks to crumble away to dust. There is no way the Rippers can return them to civilization intact. They can be photographed without causing them any damage.

The two sea demons elected to stay behind with Oannes during the exodus and managed to crawl here before they died of thirst.

### 12. MUMMY CHAMBER

At the bottom of the stairs stand a dozen gilded sarcophagi belonging to sea demon high priests who inhabited the tomb. When they died, they were mummified in the Egyptian style.

Any investigator who opens a sarcophagus is instantly attacked by a non-Wild Card royal mummy (regardless of which one he opens first). The next round, two more mummies join the fray. The other sarcophagi are empty.

### ROYAL MUMMIES (3)

**Attributes:** Agility d4, Smarts d10, Spirit d12, Strength d12+4, Vigor d12+2

**Skills:** Fighting d10, Guts d12, Knowledge (Occult) d8, Intimidation d10, Spellcasting d10

**Pace:** 4; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 11

**Gear:** Bronze sword (Str+d8)

#### Special Abilities:

- **Arcane Background (Magic):** *Barrier* (creates a wall of sand), *bolt* (swarm of scarab beetles), *deflection* (shield of swirling wind and sand), *elemental manipulation: earth* (animate statues), *fear* (unearthly cry), *obscure* (small sandstorm). (30 Power Points.)

- **Crushing Grasp:** Str+d6. On a raise, the Royal Mummy automatically grapples its opponent.

- **Improved Arcane Resistance:** +4 Armor versus magic, and +4 to rolls made to resist magical effects.

- **Shuffling Gait:** -2 Pace; d4 running die.

- **Undead:** +2 Toughness; +2 to recover from being Shaken; No wound penalties; Immune to poison, disease, and gas; No additional damage from called shots.

- **Weakness (Fire):** Mummies take +4 damage from fire, and suffer a -2 penalty to Fighting attacks against anyone who brandishes a torch or other open flame.

### 13. BOAT CHAMBER

Dominating this chamber is a full sized boat, built in the classical Egyptian design. The vessel is painted in bright colors and is completely seaworthy, as any Ripper who makes a successful Boating or Common Knowledge (-2) roll can tell.

Against the wall, pointed to by the bow of the vessel, stand two colossal statues of human-fish hybrid creatures that stand almost thirty feet tall. The statues represent Oannes.

Between the statues is a large opening in the wall, measuring ten feet across and twenty feet high. The opening is perfectly cut and stairs can be seen descending into the inky darkness below. A wind blows from below up into the chamber causing the heroes' lanterns to flicker. Those who succeed on a Notice roll can hear what sounds like rushing water. Those who roll a raise can also hear the roar of some unknown subterranean beast. Those that hear the beast must make a Guts roll to avoid Fear.

These stairs lead into places that no sane human would dare to travel and they link up eventually with strange underworld realms unseen by man. They also lead to

an underground river that eventually links up with the Mediterranean. Traveling these tunnels, which are inhabited by numerous and nameless horrors, is beyond the scope of this adventure and almost guaranteed to be the death of all the Rippers.

When it became clear that the tomb colony was doomed to failure, the sea demons attempted to tunnel down to the underground river they knew existed. They were driven back by the foul creatures that dwell in the natural tunnels and gave up trying to find the river. Of course, the doorway they carved allows access both ways.

### SCENE 3: THE GOD AWAKENS!

At some point during the exploration of the tomb the magic chaining Oannes fades, releasing him from a four-thousand-year slumber. Wherever the Rippers are in the tomb, they feel the walls and floor vibrate heavily for a few moments. Then everything stops and a deathly silence hangs over the tomb—moments later, a loud, bloodcurdling roar echoes through the tomb, its source unknown. Hearing so alien a sound in such claustrophobic conditions causes the heroes to make Guts rolls to avoid Fear.

Oannes has been released in the main shrine, but the only passageway he can take is the one to the outside world. Unfortunately, he tries to widen one of the other passageways first and begins to smash the walls, sending vibrations throughout the entire tomb. He keeps this up for several minutes before giving up and going outside.

If the Rippers rush straight to the shrine, they see Oannes in his full horror and must make appropriate Guts rolls. Should they delay in investigating, when they arrive they see the shrine covered in pieces of fallen masonry and notice that the large statue of the fish-man god Oannes is missing. The horrifying implications of this are enough for the characters to make a Guts roll to avoid the effects of Terror.

Unless Oannes is stopped, he marches through the desert toward the temple the characters visited earlier in their investigations. Along the way he destroys three villages and devours their populations. Four thousand years of hunger need to be sated, after all. Once at the temple he enters the pool and travels along the tunnels to the Mediterranean Sea, emerging roughly one month later.

Rippers who willingly shy away from destroying him and eventually return to civilization soon find out about the massacred villages.



**OANNES, DEMON-GOD**

**Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts d10, Spirit d12, Strength d12+10, Vigor d10

**Skills:** Fighting d10, Intimidation d12, Notice d8, Stealth d4, Swimming d12+2

**Pace:** 10; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 19(4)

**Special Abilities:**

- **Aquatic:** Pace 13.
- **Armor +4:** Thick scales.
- **Bite/Claws:** Str+d6. The claws have Reach 2.
- **Fear (-4):** Anyone seeing the creature must make a Guts roll at -4.
- **Fearless:** Immune to Fear and Intimidation.
- **Hardy:** If Shaken, further Shaken results have no effect.
- **Huge:** Attacks against Oannes by man-size creatures are made at +4.
- **Improved Arcane Resistance:** +4 Armor versus magic, and +4 to rolls made to resist opposed arcane rolls.
- **Improved Frenzy:** Oannes can make two Fighting rolls each round at no penalty.
- **Improved Sweep:** Oannes can attack all adjacent foes with a single Fighting roll at no penalty.
- **Regeneration (Fast):** Oannes makes a natural healing roll every round.
- **Size +8:** Oannes stands over 30' tall and is very bulky.
- **Weakness (Cold Iron):** Oannes takes +4 damage from cold iron weapons.
- **Weakness (Holy Symbol):** Oannes suffers a -2 penalty to Fighting attacks against anyone brandishing a holy symbol.

### REWARDS & REALITY CHECK

Award each survivor 3 Experience Points for thwarting the awakening of the demon-god.

The Sea Peoples were actually one or more Middle Eastern peoples who plagued Egypt, especially during the 19th and 20th Dynasties. Rameses III scored several major victories over them, effectively ending their attacks against his country.

The Greco-Roman Museum was actually founded in 1892 and originally comprised five rooms inside a larger building on Rosetta Street. It expanded to include six more rooms in 1895, before expanding further in later decades to reach its modern size.

Oannes is the name of a Babylonian or Sumerian deity who had the torso of a man but the lower half of a fish (making him an early representation of a mermaid). Rather than being an evil mythical figure, he is supposed to have taught mankind wisdom and science.

# HANDOUT 1

## THE WEEKLY TRUMPET

A DESPATCH OF THE HIGHEST QUALITY, CONTAINING THE TRUEST INFORMATION FROM THE GLOBE • THREPEPENCE

# DEATH IN ALEXANDRIA

## THE CURSE OF THE PHARAOHS STRIKES • PROFESSOR KILLED BY SHARK

OUR Egyptian correspondent reports the death of Professor Clarence Hutchinson of the Smithsonian Museum. Professor Hutchinson had been pioneering a revolutionary new branch of antiquarianism using diving suits to excavate ancient ruins in the harbor of Alexandria.

According to a Smithsonian spokesman, the excavation, sponsored in part by the newly opened Alexandria Greco-Roman Museum, was centered around ruins of an underwater palace or temple which might be that of the famous Egyptian queen Cleopatra. Work had been progressing for several months and was helping to build a strong bond between the American government and their Egyptian counterparts.

Eyewitnesses report Professor Hutchinson entered the

water three days ago with the intent to decipher script found on an intact column. He had been underwater for an hour when his air pump men reported seeing bubbles rise from the dark, gloomy depths. Seconds later, the water, in a grisly copy of the Biblical story of Moses, turned red with blood.

A colleague quickly donned his diving suit and entered the water, but it was too late. Professor Hutchinson was already dead, torn to pieces by some fiend of the deep. A spokesman for the Alexandrian police told reporters that although rare, it was not unknown for sharks to enter the Mediterranean. The official cause of death is shark attack. Work on the excavation has been temporarily suspended while local fishermen hunt for the shark.

### LOCAL PIES FOUND UNHEALTHFUL

**"I'LL NEVER EAT PASTIES AGAIN" SAYS INVESTIGATOR**

A local baker has been found using unapproved meats in their other-wise popular meat pies. The discovery was based on a sliver of hoof or bone that has been tested and found to be of an animal other than that approved by the Royal Board of Consumption for use in human foodstuffs.

### FRENCH FIND INVISIBLE DEATH RAY

**AUTHORITIES UNBELIEVABLE CLAIM: MEDICINAL USE**

French authorities continue to claim that invisible rays capable of penetrating a man through-and-through have a medicinal purpose and are not being developed as the unholy weapon of war they clearly are.

Lord Watersfield, Minister of War, pronounces the

## HANDOUT 2

Back in the time of great Rameses III, the land of Egypt was invaded by a race known only as the Sea People. The Sea People, a cruel race, brought with them their dark, barbaric gods and raised many temples.

On one of the most holy days of the ancient Egyptian calendar, the invaders performed a ceremony to bring their chief god, Oannes, to earth, so he could rule over them in flesh. Thoth, the Egyptian god of wisdom who was present at creation, was offended and destroyed the Sea People in a great cataclysm. The sky darkened, the sea rose over the land, and a pillar of fire was visible in the northern sky for many weeks.

Ever since then, the Egyptians have known that event as the Night of Thoth, for the stars shifted formation to form the pattern of an ibis, one of the sacred animals of Thoth.

The tale goes on that the Sea People were not all wiped out but fled into part of the desert, which back in those ancient days was a vast, salty marsh. It is said that when the stars are right, as they were on the Night of Thoth, the doorway to a vast and unknown tomb constructed deep in the marsh will open and, the will be ritual completed, allowing the god to manifest.



# HANDOUT 3

From the dark blue bottom of the sea left my brothers many. Three traveled far north along paths long lost two fell ill gave up and died. Press onward my brothers. Two fled the disaster along the sandy shore one met great death up a high mountain. Press onward my sisters. Four fled distant south along with their followers two stayed as gods up until their end. Press onward my kin.

Plan of Ressleryn Chapel



# HANDOUT 3: EM'S VERSION

From the dark blue bottom  
of the sea left my brothers  
many. Three traveled far  
north along paths long lost  
two fell ill gave up and died.  
Press onward my brothers.  
Two fled the disaster along  
the sandy shore one met  
great death up a high  
mountain. Press onward my  
sisters. Four fled distant  
south along with their  
followers two stayed  
as gods up until their end.  
Press onward my kin.

When the puzzle this clue relates to is found (p. 15), the team must press buttons 3-2; 2-1; 4-2 in that order.