

# THE MOUNTAINS OF DREAM

CARCOSA MODULE 8

by Geoffrey McKinney



**THE MOUNTAINS OF DREAM** contains a large-scale hex map, introductory information, geographical notes, and detailed encounters keyed to the map. This module presents a complete setting for **ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS**, intended for use by experienced Dungeon Masters. It can be used on its own, in conjunction with your own campaign world, or as the southeast quarter of a larger campaign area that includes **THE YUTHLUGATHAP SWAMPS**, **BARRENS OF CARCOSA**, and **JUNGLES OF THE K'NAANOTHOA**.

Luigi Castellani's cover art depicts a fighter, a magic-user, and a cleric of Cthuga during the enchanted tree in the midst of the inexplicable Garden of Snows (cf. hex 4818 within).

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### INTRODUCTION

*The Mountains of Dream* assumes that the Dungeon Master possesses the following three **ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS** volumes written by Gary Gygax:

**MONSTER MANUAL**

**PLAYERS HANDBOOK**

**DUNGEON MASTERS GUIDE**

The present book also makes use of the Cthulhu Mythos section of the early printings of **DEITIES & DEMIGODS** by James M. Ward with Robert J. Kuntz. While possession of this book is helpful, it is not necessary. Fortunately, the Cthulhu Mythos section of **DEITIES & DEMIGODS** has been available for free since at least 2002 here:

[http://www.angelfire.com/extreme/kengage/ct\\_hulhu/index.html](http://www.angelfire.com/extreme/kengage/ct_hulhu/index.html)

### MANKIND IN CARCOSA

Thirteen races of men exist in the lands of Carcosa: Black, Blue, Bone (transparent except for their skeletons), Brown, Dolm, Green, Jale, Orange, Purple, Red, Ulfire, White, and Yellow Men. (The Dungeon Master can easily disregard these outré colors and hues of skin if they do not correspond with his conception of the setting.)

The lands of Carcosa have two additional primary colors: ulfire and jale. "The sense impressions caused in [an observer] by these two additional primary colors can only be vaguely hinted at by analogy. Just as blue is delicate and mysterious, yellow clear and unsubtle, and red sanguine and passionate, so

he felt ulfire to be wild and painful, and jale dreamlike, feverish, and voluptuous." (David Lindsay, *A Voyage to Arcturus*, chapter 6: "Joiwind")

Dolm "stand[s] in the same relation to jale as green to red." It is "a compound of ulfire and blue". (David Lindsay, *A Voyage to Arcturus*, chapter 18: "Haunte")

Black, Brown, and White Men have dark brown to black hair and eyes. Bone Men have transparent hair and eyes. The other nine races of Men have black hair and eyes, with tints in direct light of the same color as their skin.

The thirteen races tend to regard each other with suspicion, and the Bone Men are especially shunned by others.

Jale Men are reputed to be the most adept at magic.

Unless otherwise noted, the human civilizations of the lands of Carcosa have the technology level reflected in the equipment lists in the **AD&D PLAYERS HANDBOOK**.

### THE SNAKE-MEN

For tens of millions of years the civilizations of the Snake-Men were mighty upon the lands of Carcosa. They delved deeply into the arcane mysteries and laid the foundations of the systematic practice of magic. Some say that from shambling man-apes the Snake-Men bred the various races of humans as slaves. At the height of their powers, the Snake-Men destroyed themselves by releasing ultratelluric forces impossible to control. The human races have since dabbled in the magic of the Snake-Men, achieving a mere fraction of the proficiency of their extinct masters.

## CARCOSA CAMPAIGN MAP HEX DESCRIPTIONS

This book includes a map of a small portion of the lands of Carcosa. As the distance between two parallel sides of a hex is 5 miles, the map covers an area approximately 85 miles north to south and 113 miles east to west (9,605 square miles). Only the most pronounced of features are drawn on the map. Most of the blank hexes are certainly not featureless land. Many hexes on the map are given points of interest. Of course, these encounters are only the merest fraction of what can be found in the lands represented on the map.

### HEX MAP

#### Geographic Features

**Bay of Seeing:** The origin of this name is lost in dim antiquity, though a number of sages theorize that it has something to do with the quenched light of the Elder Pharos (hex 4521). The silvery-blue bay is disquieting despite its tranquility, a place of unearthly lights. Kadatheron, the great city (hex 4720), has no rivals in its dominance of the bay.

**K'naanothoa Ocean:** This vast, abyssal ocean washing upon the lands of Carcosa conceals untold depths and terrors from the insignificant men who wander upon the dry land. The salty, slate-blue waters are cold. No lack of weird predators threaten any who sail or swim in the ocean.

**Leng:** The forbidden plateau of Leng has an elevation of nearly 18,000'. Its top is an arid, rocky desert, attainable only after climbing many hundreds of feet of sheer rock. No men dare reside on Leng, though age-old myth hints of a terrible lama and an unspeakable

lamasery upon the plateau. Some poets whisper that the great bones of the elder gods lie exposed to the sky on Leng.

**The Mountains of Dream:** These mountains have many pagodas and temples, a profusion of fragrant flowers, and wandering priests and lamas of the elder gods (inscrutable entities that are said to have weakened and/or imprisoned the Great Old Ones billions of years ago). Tree line is at 12,000'. Not including the 28,000' Mt. Kadath (hex 4320) and the two Colossi (hexes 3321 and 3721) the highest peaks reach an elevation of almost 20,000'. Ancient texts indicate that men first came here hundreds of thousands of years ago.

**The Primal Barrier:** Though not an actual geographic feature, the sheer scale of the Primal Barrier merits its inclusion in this list. It is a 20' thick, 50' high wall of basaltic stone that runs the length of the northern slopes of the Mountains of Dream. No one knows how far the Primal Barrier stretches, for both of its ends run for an undetermined distance into the ocean.

#### Hex Locations

**2719 A Tranquil Spot...:** Where the westernmost peak of the Mountains of Dream slopes down towards the ocean, the sands sparkle a royal blue. The serene hiss of the retreating waves over the azure beach at the meeting of the mountain and the sea makes this a meditative and even beautiful haven--surely a rarity in the lands of Carcosa. Unfortunately, in the wet sands lurks Buggahutith (AC 10; MV 3"/3" and 12" through wet sand; HD 3; hp 11; #AT 7; D 2-5 (x 6), 2-9; SA surprises 5 in 6; SD immune to surprise, invisible even when attacking; AL CE; XP 113), a Spawn of Shub-Niggurath. With the

basic shape of an octopus, suckers cover its glistening, sea-green skin. It attacks with seven tentacles and its beaked mouth. A foe struck by a single tentacle is merely slammed by it for 2-5 points of damage. A foe struck by more than one tentacle in a single round is grabbed (automatically doing 2-5 points of damage each round for each tentacle), and Buggahutith will pull him the next round to its beaked mouth. The Spawn will become visible if reduced to 1 hp or slain. Its four eyes resemble pale blue pearls (worth 100 g.p. each).

**3018 The Singing Stone:** About 20' up the side of the Primal Barrier that faces the mountains, the typical basaltic stones surround a translucent, cloudy white stone measuring 8' long by 4' high. This incongruous block is smooth as glass, and it feels cold and wet (though moisture cannot be seen or wiped from the stone). If a magic-user touches it, he will hear within his head unhuman harmonies from extragalactic spaces, intriguing and almost beautiful at first, but becoming increasingly discordant, causing him to lose consciousness for 3-18 minutes. When he awakens he must make a saving throw vs. wands or lose the ability to cast spells for 1-4 days.

**3122 Thalarion, the Great City:** Near the shores of the sea stands what once the men of the Mountains of Dream regarded as a rival to Kadatheron (hex 4720) herself. The marmoreal domes, spires, palaces, and temples of the elder gods glimmer with soft, unearthly tints. The fountains have fallen silent, and the fruit trees and flower gardens grow wild and untended. Over a thousand years ago an unspeakable curse fell upon the White Men of Thalarion, and some whisper the name of Nyarlathotep in relation to it. One night, as all lay asleep in their beds, an alien stillness and death

descended upon the city's thousands of inhabitants, from the Empress Kynaratholis to the humblest servant's child. To this day they all lie as they did the moment their doom sifted down upon them from the empty spaces between the stars. Though their skin looks fresh and supple, it feels hard and cold as marble. None has despoiled any of their properties or treasures, though the riches of Thalarion were nonesuch. Anything brought outside the bounds of the city will at midnight vanish and reappear where it originally lay. Further, all the possessions of the offender will also vanish to become part of Thalarion's enchanted hoards.

**3219 The Baby Metal Monster:** In the stony mountains rise the ruins of a small, abandoned temple, its single story of pale, marble-like gray stone. The 60' diameter building has an arched entrance facing east. Within the spacious interior a clear spring bubbles up in an 8' diameter stone basin carved with bas-reliefs of purple worms. To the east of the basin runs a 2' wide ragged crack 20' long and seemingly bottomless. Between the spring and the west wall a collection of 1" silvery metallic shapes are arranged in concentric circles. Nineteen cubes for the outer circle, nineteen pyramids (tetrahedrons) form the middle circle, and six spheres form the inner circle. If touched or in any way disturbed, the metal shapes will whirl together into any collected shape the Dungeon Master desires. The resultant conglomeration will gesture menacingly and then return to its concentric circles upon the floor. If any is actually grasped, the same collective shape will form and attack (AC 2; MV 12"/24"/15"; HD 10; hp 44; #AT 2; D 1-10/1-10; SD immune to fire, cold, and normal weapons; AL LN; XP 2866). Only magic can harm the metallic monster. Each point of damage done to it destroys one of the

small shapes. If reduced to 30 small shapes, a blow from the thing does only 1-8 points of damage. If reduced to 20, it does 1-6 points of damage. If reduced to 10, it does 1-4 points of damage. The metal monster might become the companion of a LN, LG, or LE magic-user who tries to communicate with it in a peaceful manner. If the thing has a friendly reaction roll to such a magic-user, the latter will feel a non-verbal communicative link form between himself and the metallic entity. It will assent to any of the magic-user's requests save those that would cause its certain destruction. Thus it would enter into combat with a horrible monster, but it would not fly into a pool of lava. After 3-30 days (determined by the sum of a 4-sided, a 6-sided, and a 20-sided die) each of the shapes will with a flash of light instantly grow to 10' in diameter and whisk away at full speed to the domicile of their progenitors (beyond the eastern edge of the map included with this module).

### **3321 The Colossus of Mount Daikos:**

Surrounded by other mountains, the entirety of the 24,000' Mount Daikos has been carved into a vast statue thought to represent one of the elder gods. No one knows its age, but the black statue was already weathered and old when men first came to the Mountains of Dream (supposedly hundreds of thousands of years ago). In shape the colossus is a crouched humanoid figure of indeterminate gender (though some consider it masculine), and its legs and arms burgeon into a profusion of impossible geometric solids that dazzle the eyes and the mind if studied too closely. Cubes start to open into additional dimensions to accommodate their more than six faces, tetrahedrons have only two faces, spheres' arcs meet in acute angles of triangles with sides that cannot be counted, etc. Mapping or even drawing these trans-Euclidean solids is literally

impossible for the human mind, though perhaps the Great Race could eventually accomplish the task. The Colossus of Mount Daikos has upon its disquieting countenance an enigmatic expression transcending the human. Men refer to it as "deific", and such terms as awe, bliss, exaltation, and terror only dimly hint at its reality. What is certain is that its ineffable countenance never leaves the depths of a man who looks upon it. The colossus gazes directly east over the intervening peaks at the Colossus of Mount Drinen (hex 3721) twenty miles distant.

**3322 Ghost Eidolon:** Forlorn stone buildings and silent streets are testimony to a village that once was. Nothing whatsoever remains within any of the buildings, but the streets are white with the bones of men. Under the light of the sun, the village is otherwise unremarkable, but as the light dies insubstantial phantom shapes begin to glide within and without the empty dwellings. They appear as horribly distorted human shapes, as though wax figures melted in various stages and ways before resolidifying. Stark madness glows in their eyes and countenances, and each does not seem to notice any living thing nor any of the other phantoms. They engage only in pointless, inane wanderings and jerky limb movements. These once-human things in life looked upon an eidolon still near the northern edge of the village: a barely-perceptible, ghostly image of an aquatic molluskan entity. Anyone who gazes upon it must save vs. spells or run through the village in a frenzy. He will melt and die 2-8 minutes later, joining the former inhabitants in their ghostly existence.

### **3420 Xura of the Valley of the Moon**

Orange Man village

Population: 1,108 (able-bodied: 277)

Alignment: LN

Resources: Works of art

Leader: Pnath, Orange male LN F9 (High Lama of the Tranquil Pool)

Significant NPCs: Falona, Orange female LN 0-level (composer and musician)

Selarn, Orange male LN 0-level (sculptor)

Oriab, Orange male LN F8 (leader of the reconnaissance)

In the northern part of the hex a narrow and harrowing mountain trail leads down to a deep valley surrounded by the towering Mountains of Dream. Small streams flow into tranquil lotus pools and help moisten the temperate air of the valley. In humble though impeccably tasteful buildings of wood and stone dwells a seclusive people. Through the centuries small reconnaissance teams from Xura have fared abroad over the lands of Carcosa. Their reports have led the ancient Pnath (nearly 300 years old, thanks to the teas brewed from herbs endemic to the valley floor, which allow those who regularly consume them to triple their normal lifespan) to conclude that the lands' prospects are hopeless. He expects the warring inimical forces of the lands to annihilate virtually all life outside of the Valley of the Moon, and he sees Xura as the last and best haven for mankind and its achievements. The village possesses a wealth of visual art, and a great number of the villagers themselves are artists or men of science. When the expected destruction finally descends, Pnath hopes that Xura will be too small and hidden for anything to notice it. Afterwards the Orange Men of Xura could gradually spread upon the lifeless lands and build a harmonious civilization. Unfortunately, the otherwise mild Pnath cannot allow any who stumble upon the village to leave, as this could endanger their isolation. He deems that this is hardly a harsh doom, for Xura represents a veritable paradise in the cruel lands of Carcosa.

**3422 Luminous Subaquatic Forest:** About 50' out from the shore a ghostly, pale green light glows at night from beneath the waves. The luminescence emanates from a weird, aquatic forest 23' beneath the surface of the water, covering an area about 60' by 80'. Strange fronds, tubes, fans, and an abundance of flora compose this undersea garden. While green predominates, different types of plants glow different colors. From one type of tree hang globules of a turquoise color. Pressure greater than a handshake will burst them, releasing the refreshing liquid that allows those who drink of it to breathe underwater for 3 hours, and also grants the imbiber during this time to walk underwater as freely as upon dry land. Another type of fruit, bright green and similar to seedless plums 1" long, will heal 2-7 points of damage. A man can receive this healing up to 2-4 times per day. Eating more than that will sour his stomach (movement rate halved and -1 to attack rolls for 12-17 hours). Both of these kinds of fruit lose their virtue 48 hours after picking. Every time an evil character consumes either of these fruits, he has a 10% chance of becoming neutral. A neutral character has the same chance of becoming good.

### **3519 The Vanishing Lamasery**

Green Man citadel

Population: 98 (all 0-level lamas)

Alignment: LN

Leader: Teloth, Green male LN F2 (the Keeper of Knowledge)

On a stony tableland sits a large lamasery of scholar-lamas. They wear robes of a deep jale and spend their days and much of their nights in close study of their library's 16,000 volumes (mostly histories), dealing with eras from the war of the elder gods with the Old Ones down to events as recent as 2,000 years ago. The ancient high lama, Teloth, has ceased to consult the tomes for he has memorized them all. The

lamas welcome all seekers after knowledge, but they have little time for anything else. They never leave the lamasery, having a spring and fungus gardens to supply all their bodily needs. Every 1-100 days, the lamasery and all in it vanish, reappearing 1-100 days later. Those vanished do not experience time. For example, a lama might begin scribing a hieroglyph, and then vanish with the lamasery for 68 days, at the end of which time he reappears and finishes the hieroglyph. They do not even notice the resulting sudden shifting of the seasons, for their memories alter accordingly. Thus a lama awakening on a winter's day, then vanishing for 90 days, would remember upon reappearing that he awakened that morning in the spring. Visitors to the lamasery can be affected in the same way as the lamas. The lamasery will have a 50% chance of being present on any given visit (unless, of course, the Dungeon Master wishes to keep accurate track of its vanishings and reappearances).

### **3622 Parg**

Red Man village

Population: 620 (able-bodied: 155)

Alignment: N

Resources: Cabbage

Leader: Zin, Chief, Red male N 0-level

Significant NPCs: Tamash, Red male N 0-level  
(priest of the Gods of Parg)

Kra, Red male N 0-level (strongest man of the village [strength 18])

On the lower slope of a mountain that runs into the sea sits the little village of Parg, its small dwellings all built of undressed stone and roofed with thatch. The men of Parg might as well dwell upon a different planet than everyone else in the lands of Carcosa, for they have not so much as heard of the elder gods, the Old Ones, Spawn, Snake-Men, or any of the other things so characteristic of Carcosa.

Instead, these simple farmers and fishermen color every aspect of their existence with a pantheon of innumerable gods, generally of small significance. Examples include Id (the god of glowing coals), Bha (deity of stones speckled with moss), and Nung (god of pains in the left foot). The Pargians constantly utter short, one-sentence petitions to the appropriate gods whenever they do almost anything at all: start a fire, get dressed, bait a hook, repair a jar, etc. These mild men and women will be amused and bemused by visitors and their tales, considering them "touched in the head", and they will regard their ignorance of the Gods of Parg as incomprehensible. ("How can they do anything at all?") If met with violence, these peaceful yet sturdy people will defend themselves fearlessly with their tools (farm implements, fishing-spears, knives, walking-sticks, etc.), reciting hurried prayers to the gods of their various implements. There must be something to it, for the Pargians (unless somehow prevented from uttering their prayers) gain a +1 bonus every time the Dungeon Master rolls dice for them (initiative, attack rolls, damage rolls, saving throws, etc.).

### **3718 Grotto of Azathoth**

Green Man citadel

Population: 30 (all 0-level men-at-arms in chain mail, armed with pole arms and hand axes)

Alignment: CE

Leader: Kamur, Green male CN C9

On the lower northern slopes of the Mountains of Dream a yawning cave mouth leads 100' to a shrine of madness. A huge natural chamber 120' in diameter holds a shimmering, pearlescent dome 50' in diameter. Those in the chamber will hear or imagine a weird, faint piping on the edge of hearing. Half of the men-at-arms will brusquely inform intruders that only those come to worship Azathoth will

receive welcome, while all others must immediately depart upon pain of death. Those prepared to pay 11% of their carried wealth as a tithe (100 g.p./person minimum) can enter the inner sanctum through the pearlescent dome, while other worshipers must perform their devotions in the outer courts. Those stepping through the insubstantial though opaque dome have a 1% chance (cumulative) of changing alignment to chaotic evil. Within, the evil high priest of Azathoth, Kamur (AC 3 [plate mail]; MV 6"; C9; hp 39; #AT 1; D 2-7 [footman's mace]; AL CN; XP 1468) bows and performs rituals of adoration to the Cosmic Madness. A seven-pointed star of a silvery metal covers most of the smooth floor, and at each point a 6' tall censer burns strange incense. This odor gives Kamur a +2 bonus to all rolls (initiative, attack, saving throws, etc.) while under the dome, and a similar -2 penalty to any other men. Kamur's blue-olive vestments can appear purple in the shifting light of the dome. He labors under the delusion that he serves as Azathoth's principle and most valued servant on the planet, while in reality Azathoth does not even know of his existence. Though insane, Kamur is notably dangerous only in the final weeks of autumn, for on the winter solstice he offers as many human sacrifices as he can to Azathoth. A secret door in the center of the seven-pointed star conceals a chest holding 6,741 e.p. and 902 p.p.

### **3721 The Colossus of Mount Drinen:**

Surrounded by other mountains, the entirety of the 24,000' Mount Drinen has been carved into a vast statue thought to represent one of the elder gods. No one knows its age, but the black statue was already weathered and old when men first came to the Mountains of Dream (supposedly hundreds of thousands of years ago). In shape the colossus is a crouched humanoid figure of indeterminate gender

(though some consider it feminine), and its legs and arms spiral into impossible volutes, coils, and whorls necessitating more dimensions than three. Anyone gazing intently upon them will feel acute vertigo until he looks away. Mapping or even drawing these ultramundane whirlpools of stone is literally impossible for the human mind, though perhaps the Great Race could eventually accomplish the task. The Colossus of Mount Drinen has upon its disquieting countenance an enigmatic expression transcending the human. Men refer to it as "deific", and such terms as awe, bliss, exaltation, and terror only dimly hint at its reality. What is certain is that its ineffable countenance never leaves the depths of a man who looks upon it. The colossus gazes directly west over the intervening peaks at the Colossus of Mount Daikos (hex 3321) twenty miles distant.

**3818 Primordial Library of Ghaaihoo:** A low hut about 20' in diameter, made of a substance rather like that of a wasp's nest, stands on the rocky plain before the Mountains of Dream. Furtive, over-civilized, degenerate aesthetes occasionally descend from the mountains to this hut, for it contains a library of scrolls of elder lore scribed in the languages of the Great Race, Primordial Ones, Mi-Go, Deep Ones, and Snake-Men. The librarian is Ghaaihoo (AC 4; MV 12"//12"; HD 4; hp 15; #AT 1; D 2-16; SD +1 or better weapon to hit; MR 25%; INT high; AL CE; XP 210), a jale ooze about 6' in diameter and 2' thick, covered in dozens of glaring green eyes, and spawned from Shub-Niggurath. It can communicate telepathically (transcending language) with any intelligent being. The Librarian allows all and sundry to consult the scrolls, but it will fight to the death to prevent their damage or theft. Thousands of moldering scrolls fill the shelves built into the walls, each scroll a pastel-hued, specially-treated skin of a



giant, extinct amphibian. No cataloging or organization is evident, though Ghaaihoo can find any scroll or passage it desires without delay. A magic-user who knows at least one of the languages of the scrolls and who studies them for a total of 11-20 hours will increase his xp by 5%. (For example, a magic-user with 50,000 xp would gain 2,500 xp, bringing his total to 52,500 xp.) The magic-user can gain a similar bonus with a further 21-40 hours of study. An additional 5-20 hours of study will locate the 1st-level magic-user spell, *write*. The magic-user can gain no further magical benefits from the library. If he or a compatriot slays Ghaaihoo or steals or destroys any of the scrolls, a Byakhee (AC 9; MV 6"/24"; HD 10; hp 66; #AT 2; D 1-10/1-10; MR 20%; AL CE; XP 2874) will attack him with automatic surprise in 1-30 days and fight to the death.

### **3820 Lamasery of Vision**

Dolm Man citadel

Population: 17 (all 0-level lamas)

Alignment: LG

Leader: Inganok, Dolm male LG C2 (the elder gods)

Under the looming plateau of Leng, the Lamasery of Vision sits atop a 70' high upthrust rock. Since only expert climbers have a chance of ascending the sheer surfaces, the resident lamas have a platform and pulley that can hold up to 300 pounds. The heavy odor of two millennia of burnt incense suffuses the lamasery and everything within. The lamas wear large-hooded robes of deep purple with metallic, scarlet-colored sigils woven into the fabric. These sigils are non-linguistic, but they have deep, cryptic significance to the brotherhood. All the lamas are mysterious, abstracted, and indirect, their consciousness seemingly giving scant notice to their surroundings. About 18 hours per day they devote to a meditative dream-state, seeking

and wandering through dreamscapes of complex harmonies, the ultimate goal of which is the invocation of the elder gods and their return. These ritual exercises, the incense-laden air, and their herbal teas in combination have altered the lamas so as to need neither food nor sleep. Most never leave the lamasery, though four of their number will occasionally leave to acquire the exotic incense in hex 4222, and more often to bring up water and the peculiar herbs that grow in the mountains. Any male of any color can try to join the brotherhood, but only Dolm Men can certainly attain the mental states necessary. All others must have a wisdom score of 15 or more. After 6 months of striving to live as one of the lamas, those destined for attainment will begin to need ever less food and sleep, until such needs find extinction after a further 6 months. The lamas will allow unarmed men into the lamasery, and they will fight with knives if offered violence.

**3822 The Imprisoned Thing:** A 6" wide vertical crack runs 30' up the side of a cliff. Within bulges the white, bloated body of an imprisoned organism of indeterminate type. Over a billion years ago the elder gods imprisoned it here, and with the passage of geologic ages it has become an imbecilic mass of protoplasm. It feels soft and puffy. A strong dagger thrust into the thing's mass will release a stream of pale greenish ichor (about a gallon) before the wound seals itself several minutes later. Nomads regularly come here to collect ichor in great jars, for the thick fluid burns as well as does lantern oil. On any given visit, 4-16 nomads (typically 0-level) have a 5% chance of being present. They will be wary of strangers but not aggressive. The odorless fluid has a pungent taste, and a quart of it will supply all of a man's nutritional needs for one day. Each quart a man drinks, however, has a

1% (cumulative) chance of turning him chaotic evil. For practical purposes, the supply of ichor is limitless.

### **3918 Kaman-Thah**

Blue Man village

Population: 1,140 (able-bodied: 285)

Alignment: LN

Resources: Silk

Leader: Ilek-Vad, Prince of Radiance, Blue male LN F6

Significant NPCs: Akariel, Blue male LN F3 (High Priest of the Nuclear Radiance)

Thok, Blue male LN F4 (commander of the guard)

Xari, Blue female LN F9 (blind mystic warrior)

The basalt fortress-village of Kaman-Thah stands 17,000' high on a mountaintop overlooking the Primal Barrier and the parlous lands to the north. Sky blue, orange, and bold yellow pennons fly from its towers and walls.

The guards will open the gates to any peaceable group that includes at least one Blue Man, but those without any Blue Men will have their intentions questioned before the gate (perhaps) opens. The men of Kaman-Thah hold to a strange heresy: Azathoth is not an Old One, but is rather an elder god of intolerable radiance fatal to any being that approaches. In fact, the esoteric lore of Akariel and the priests reveals that the elder gods are actually semi-entities whose existence is contingent upon Azathoth. (The priesthood puts it thus: "The elders gods are the glow of the flame, which is Azathoth.") One of the few initiates of this inner doctrine is the mystic warrior, Xari, whose straight black hair reaches nearly to her ankles. She attacks without penalty twice each round with a tulwar in each hand. The beauty and wonder of her martial prowess is only deepened by knowledge of her congenital blindness. Xari "sees" all existence as blinding sheets of luminance in which CE, CN,

CG, NE, and LE entities appear as dark "holes" in the illimitable radiance. She therefore has the normal penalties for fighting blind against LN, LG, N, or NG opponents, but she has a +2 attack bonus against other alignments.

**3920 The Bones of the Gods:** On the forbidden plateau of Leng a vast desert stretches in all directions. In a valley amongst the sandy hills, huge ribs tower into the sky. Vast white domes reveal themselves as skulls partially claimed by the drifting sands. Long bones of arms and legs lie scattered. An examination of the skeletal remains will allow one to deduce that the twelve mighty humanoid entities in life must have stood at least 600' tall. A hush blankets the valley of bones, with only the eternal winds holding back the silence of the void. No force save the concerted might of the Great Old Ones could damage or so much as move even the least of the bones. Any lawful good man here will feel contemplative and yet melancholy, for poets whisper that the bones are the relics of the dead elder gods. Chaotic evil men will feel afflicted and will want to leave immediately. Other alignments will feel nothing.

**4018 Spire of the Mi-Go:** Less than a mile north of the Mountains of Dream, a natural stone spire averaging 20' in diameter reaches 300' into the sky. While the rough, craggy surface of the spire would aid a climber, its dizzying height ensures that a fall would most likely prove fatal. Great colonies of Mi-Go travel to and fro between the moon and their cavernous lair near the spire's top. At any given time 3-12 of the Mi-Go will be present within. The first time the PCs approach the spire, 7 Mi-Go (AC 4; MV 15"/30"; HD 5; hp 22, 19, 37, 21, 17, 15, 18; #AT 2; D 1-8/1-8; SD immune to cold, dark, and vacuum; AL CE; XP 350, 335, 425, 345, 325, 315, 330) will reside there. The Mi-Go have a 75% chance of

attacking any party that comes within 150' of the spire, unless the party outnumbers the Mi-Go at least two-to-one (in which case the chance of attack drops to 5%). They keep in their lair various types of lunar fungi. The white fungus is deadly poison (save or die if ingested). Green fungus causes psychedelic hallucinations of vast continents of outré fungoid forests (lasting 1-6 hours, during which time no combat or unaided movement is possible [save vs. poison to halve this duration]). Blue fungus and gray fungus taste oddly sweet and unpleasant, but they have no ill effects. Dolm fungus will make a human immune to the effects of the vacuum and radiations of outer space for 2-12 days. Since their speed in a vacuum is hypersonic, the Mi-Go can reach the moon in 3 days. Perhaps the PCs might wish to explore the moon...

**4021 The Flaming Fountain of Life:** A 10' diameter natural passageway winds its way into the mountain for about half a mile before a bottomless chasm 60' wide interrupts its course. An artificial bridge of stone, 3' wide and with no sides, stretches across to the continuation of the passage. Unpredictable strong gusts of wind occasionally blow up from the abyss. Anyone crossing the bridge has a 2-8% chance of being caught in such a gust, in which case he must save vs. poison or fall to his certain doom. Across the fissure the corridor continues for another 270' to end in a series of three caves. The first (measuring about 20' by 20' by 20' high) has a 2' wide opening into the second cave of similar size, which also has a narrow opening into the third cave (30' by 50' by 30' high). Here fine white sand carpets the ground, and a rose-colored light glows from another deep chasm in the farthest 20' of the cavern. A lip of stone extends 10' out above the abyss, its bottom lost in the rosy light. About every five minutes a great

column of rainbow-colored fire erupts from the depths with a deep roar and a crashing as of thunder, to fall quiescent after 40 seconds. Anyone in the cave will notice that the heat from the flames is significantly less than one would expect. The recurrent flame will engulf anyone standing on the stone lip, bestowing perfect health (except for the natural decline of age) upon those of good or neutral alignment. Any disease, insanity, poison, wounds, level loss, maiming, mutation, etc. will find its end, replaced by exuberant well-being. An evil being will suffer 4-24 points of damage (save vs. spells for half damage). The fires will also restore life and health to a good-aligned man who died within the last fortnight.

**4118 Caves of the Old Ones:** In the plain is the black and forboding opening to the Caves of the Old Ones: a 30' long rent in the earth which after tortuous twistings opens into a gallery with eight tunnels leading out from it. Above each tunnel entrance is inscribed in the language of the Primordial Ones a name of one of the Great Old Ones. At the termination of each of the eight long, twisting passages is a cave with the following symbol inside of it:

AZATHOTH (an 8' diameter seven-pointed star made of blue-olive stone inlaid into the smooth floor)

CTHUGA (a 3' high and 6' wide brazen brazier, holding flaming coals that never get consumed while in the brazier)

CTHULHU (a 9' tall statue of Cthulhu made of a soapy, greenish-black stone with iridescent flecks and striations)

HASTUR (a 12' tall statue of Hastur made of a light blue stone)

ITHAQUA (a 6' tall, 4' wide slab of light gray rock with a mosaic of a humanoid snow cloud with two burning eyes)

NYARLATHOTEP (an 8' long, 4' tall faceless sphinx made of polished obsidian)

SHUB-NIGGURATH (a life-sized statue of a goat made of black granite standing upon a gray pedestal)

YOG-SOTHOTH (an 8' diameter Primordial One rune for the letter Y made of black-green stone inlaid into the smooth floor)

Anyone not a cleric or cultist of the Old Ones who nevertheless enters one of the eight Caves of the Old Ones will take 1-8 points of damage per round, unavoidable and no saving throw allowed. The damage will cease when the blasphemer leaves that cave.

#### **4123 Camorin**

Yellow Man city

Population: 392 (able-bodied: 98)

Alignment: LG

Resources: Perfumes

Leader: Naraxa, High Priestess of the Fiery Bronze Serpent, Yellow female LG C5 (elder gods)

The city of Camorin is builded entirely of the black onyx brought long ago from the quarries of Thraa (hex 4320). Once a city of thousands, the glossy black stone buildings house merely a twentieth of its former population, and the waters of the sea encroach over the streets and plazas of the southern third of the city. When the dressed stone that had covered the bottomless abyss in Thraa's onyx quarry was incorporated into Camorin's buildings over a thousand years ago, a curse of heavy malaise fell upon the Camorinians. They thereafter conceived very few children and ceased building, abandoning unfinished structures in all quarters of the city. Half a century ago, a young dancing girl named Naraxa halted her people's decline. She had crept curiously into a long-forgotten secret shrine within the grand

temple of the elder gods. Within, coiled about the top of a pole of meteoric metal, a glowing-hot bronze serpent lit the darkness. (Touching the serpent will cause 3-12 points of damage, and the victim must save vs. poison at -7 or die.) Naraxa ceased aging, and ever since has performed a ritual with the Camorinians on the night of each full moon. Her handmaids spend hours applying dyes to her skin in the outline of scales. Thus prepared, she dances unclothed a writhing and sinuous dance, drawing hundreds of snakes of various sizes and colors to slither amongst the people. In an ecstasy Naraxa kisses the serpents as they coil about her limbs and torso, which sight causes all the Camorinians to fall upon the ground and writhe amongst the serpents in an intoxication of bliss. With the sun they arise, sated. These rituals have ensured enough childbirths to keep the population from further decline. The Camorinians will regard visitors with apathy unless they interfere with the monthly ritual or attempt to steal or damage the fiery bronze serpent. They will meet such enormities with furious violence.

**4222 "Where Blossomed Many an Incense-Bearing Tree":** A grove of dozens of species of incense-bearing trees covers the lower eastern slope of Mount Cydathria. Known and valued throughout the Mountains of Dream, these trees endemic to this woodland grow flowery blossoms of delicate colors rather than leaves or needles. In the midst of the blossoms grow small spheres or cones of natural incense, perfuming the air with rarefied odors. Twenty-nine different types of incense grow here, some year-round, others only in season. The rarest of them all, *gzung-byos* incense cones, grow only a single night about a month after the autumn equinox, bringing many gatherers to the grove a week or so before the guessed night, so as to not miss the annual bounty. The men of the

mountains regard the various types of incense, the trees, and the entire grove as sacred to the elder gods. Therefore, with rare exceptions, only priests, hierophants, lamas, holy men, and the like come here to harvest incense. At any given time, 2-200 such men will wander amongst the trees. Should anyone commit the unthinkable outrage of desecrating the forest, some of the holy men present will attempt to put a stop to it, while others will flee to raise substantial forces to annihilate the blasphemers.

**4318 Ahunafhgyaa, Spawn of Shub-Niggurath:** On the northern side of the Primal Barrier a profusion of natural rock formations covering 4 square miles intermittently reduces one's field of vision from miles to yards. Within a narrow, triangular cave lairs Ahunafhgyaa (AC 10; MV 15"; HD 2; hp 13; #AT 1; D 2-9; SA poisonous bite [save or die], surprises 1-4; SD immune to poison; INT average; AL CE; XP 107 ), a Spawn of Shub-Niggurath that appears as a 7' long, angular and twisted red ant with a single eye, teeth like a crocodile's, and suckers covering its entire hide. Ahunafhgyaa can climb the rock formations as swiftly and surely as it can scramble upon the ground. Nomads of the region have learned the secret to placating this Spawn: copper. Any group of travelers which leaves 3-30 c.p. per person (the exact amount dependent upon Ahunafhgyaa's whims) can pass unmolested through the ant-thing's territory. Other treasures or precious metals other than copper avail not. Some men worship Ahunafhgyaa and place pale saffron-colored flowers before its cave. The Spawn cares not for these blossoms and does not drag them into its lair where it has the 22,133 c.p. left over the years in exchange for safe passage.

**4319 Kadath in the Cold Waste:** The stark and imposing Mt. Kadath reaches a height of 28,000', over 4,000' higher than any other peak in the Mountains of Dream. Virtually all of the inhabitants of the mountains know the mythical connection between Kadath and the elder gods: Over a billion years ago the heights of Mt. Kadath served as the last abode of the elder gods on the planet. Even though the gods had departed long before man's advent, men have not dared to climb above Kadath's tree line (about 12,000') for fear of the gods, for even in their absence things they touched remain unalterably perilous. Legend tells of a man, Nir, who millennia ago dared where all others would not. He disappeared into the clouds wreathing Kadath's perpetually icy heights, vanishing from the ken of man. Some claim his screams broke the stillness of the night, but most discount that. Even to this day no man has followed in Nir's footsteps, though many live that can guide others to the supposed place of Nir's first forbidden steps above tree line. In fact, a little higher than 20,000' up the mountain, Nir's petrified skeleton lies in a small cave, its finger pointing towards a wall inscribed with unknown runes. Even magical aid can merely give an approximate translation of only two of the hundreds of intricate runes:

"Empty your mind in holy dread,  
For the transgeometric spaces..."

Should anyone claim to have ascended Mt. Kadath's heights, others will think him a madman, a liar, or both. The men of Thraa (hex 4320), dwelling ever in the sight of Kadath, will not dare to accompany any so impious as to intend climbing to the forbidden heights. Cosmic radiations so bathe the mountain above 20,000' that any who go that high must,

after every 24 hours spent at those elevations, save vs. poison or die.

#### **4320 Thraa**

Purple Man village

Population: 892 (able-bodied: 223)

Alignment: LN

Resources: Minerals

Leader: Ngranek, Glory of the Frozen

Lightning, Purple male LN F8

Significant NPCs: Hatheg, Purple male LN F7

(guide knowledgeable of Mount Kadath)

Zobna, Purple male LN F4 (quarry-master)

Liranian, Purple male LG F2 (poet)

The strong men of Thraa mine the unparalleled mineral wealth in this area. The active quarries of many hues of marble and of glistening white alabaster supply the architectural needs of the great city of Kadatheron (hex 4720). A long-established road winds the 20 miles from Thraa to the city, and Kadatheronians pulling great blocks on carts is a common sight. The black onyx quarry, however, has been abandoned for over a thousand years. Once the source of the black stone of the city of Camorin (hex 4123), the porters ceased to arrive from the southwest, and that ancient road has become choked with foliage and fallen into disrepair. This occurred soon after the quarrymen unexpectedly broke through into a yawning, black abyss. Dropped torches revealed nothing save limitless darkness, and only a sound as of a distant rushing wind can be heard by those who approach the opening. The Thraaians dread the abyss, and they felt little sorrow when Camorin no longer needed the quarry's onyx. All in the village shun the hewn shelves and pits of black stone. Mount Kadath dominates Thraa's northern horizon, and most of the villagers will refuse to go to the mountain out of holy awe. For 300 g.p., Hatheg will guide those interested to the spot where

Nir went above Kadath's tree line (cf. hex 4319). Most of the busy men of Thraa have little time to spare for wandering adventurers.

#### **4418 Gallery of Madness**

Multiracial citadel

Population: 16 (9 Yellow Men, 3 Ulfire Men, 2 White Men, and 1 Jale Man, all 0-level)

Alignment: CN

Leader: Ottojtiya, Yellow male CN MU2

An 8' high crack, barely wide enough to admit a man, runs through a rocky scarp at the northern foothills of the Mountains of Dream. Those who follow the claustrophobic, twisting way for its entire 60' length will come to a gallery of madness. Here Ottojtiya the Master Painter oversees his 15 disciples in the arts of painting and all manner of pigments. The dome-shaped natural stone gallery has a diameter of over 200' and rises to a height of 70'. Canvases of doubtful origin hang from glued corners upon the walls. They horridly depict the Old Ones (particularly Cthulhu, Azathoth, Cthuga, Ithaqua, Hastur, Nyarlathotep, and Yog-Sothoth) and their inhuman servitors rending obeisance. The painted human figures cringe, cower, and find themselves sacrificed. The 27 completed paintings could bring up to 100 g.p. each from the right buyer. The masterpiece, however, lies upon the cavern floor depicted in colored grains of sand. Over the years Ottojtiya has directed his disciples with their long, rigid wires in the placements of even the least grains. Roughly 25' in diameter and perhaps three-fourths complete, this blasphemy of insanity and of obsessive human creation depicts Shub-Niggurath spawning its grotesque progeny in its caverns beneath Mount Voomith'adreth. Relentlessly depraved in its artistic genius of both conception and execution, the blasphemy threatens upon its completion to rip through space itself and

bring Shub-Niggurath here from its aeons-old lair hundreds of miles away to the northwest. In essence, Ottojtiya has channeled all of his magical delvings and potencies into one single, years-long spell of conjuration. The Master Painter and his disciples are unaware of this. They create the thing out of compulsive need. When complete in 2-8 years, it will have a 50% chance of conjuring Shub-Niggurath into this cave. If this occurs, the biologic center of the lands of Carcosa will thereby shift and cause massive and cataclysmic changes to the land for miles around. In any case, when the masterpiece is completed, Ottojtiya will slay himself in utter despair of any further purpose, and his disciples will wander away. The inhabitants of the gallery will give scant notice to any intruders, considering them insignificant. If any paintings are damaged or threatened, the inhabitants will attack with daggers and short swords. If the blasphemous depiction of Shub-Niggurath suffers damage, Ottojtiya and his men will attack as berserkers and fight till slain.

#### **4423 The Lamasery of Disillusion**

Black Man citadel

Population: 61 (one F2, four F1, fifty-five 0-level lamas)

Alignment: LN

Leader: Atal, Black male LN F4

About 200' from the ocean squat four hemispherical buildings of light blue marble, the largest 50' in diameter and the others with diameters of 20'. The grave, unsmiling lamas here have shaved heads, wear simple sky-blue robes, and go unshod. All have made a vow to never look upon the sea, regardless of its siren call, for it represents to them the seductive, inconstant flux of illusion that masks stern reality. These lamas have dedicated their lives to the recognition of external, objective fact, and in so doing they discovered that they

thereby also seek the extinguishing of the ego, for their laborious studies have emphasized that humanity on the planet is an insignificant atom of today, with great and varied intelligences stretched out behind them for billions of years. The elder gods, the lamas have concluded, most probably are unaware of the very existence of mankind, and they hold that most men consider the gods benign only because they warred against the malevolent Old Ones. More likely it is that the elder gods, as simply another group of inhuman intelligences, would be at best unconcerned with mankind. In any case, the eons-long absence of the gods shows the vanity of regarding them with hope. Instead, the lamas learn to regard reality unblinking and unafraid, dispassionate even in the face of imminent extinction. Obviously, threats have no effect whatsoever upon the lamas. They allow any peaceful man to study their thousands of scrolls and codices kept in their large building. While they never allow any text out of the library, they permit others to copy them. These works of science, history, mathematics, and logic are written in the tongues of men, Snake-Men, Primordial Ones, the Great Race, and others. Lamas can assist in translating any of the texts. No other sort of assistance will they offer, as they regard anything other than meditation (often burning incense gathered from the forest in hex 4222 as an aid), contemplation, and study as empty pursuits. A male of any race may live here for three years, at the end of which he can swear the vows and become a lama.

**4520 The Pharos:** The first men to reach the Bay of Seeing, the air particles still charged with the vanished light of the Elder Pharos (hex 4521), became afflicted of mind with the inhuman aesthetics of the Elder Pharos. Being architects of such mastery that those coming

after them were mere epigones, they painstakingly spent decades constructing the (younger) Pharos near the shore. It reaches 279' high and is 20' in diameter at its base. It is seemingly constructed of a single piece of incredibly dense, marble-like stone of an unspeakably subtle hue that makes all other colors seem garish. Its hue appears somewhat different in sunlight, moonlight, or in starlight. The light that glows from its 24.5' top (made of a cloudy, almost opalescent, crystal) shares the same color as the stone of the Pharos. Its beauty is such that most men avoid it, as it dims by comparison other delights, sometimes leading to melancholy and even occasionally to madness and death. The light of the Pharos ceases at unpredictable intervals, at which time Kadatheron (hex 4720) chooses by lot a male of at least 20 years of age as the new Keeper of the Pharos. The royal guard escorts him, naked and bound in silver chains adorned with blue flowers, to the Pharos. There they press him against the outer wall, and he disappears through it, his flowery chains falling to the ground. Within minutes the light of the Pharos rekindles until such time as yet another new Keeper is required, which has taken as little as two months and as long as 47 years. One choosing of a Keeper centuries ago included females in the sortition, and the lot fell to a young woman. After she merged into the Pharos, its light and even the Pharos itself seemed inexpressibly more piercing and disturbing than ever before. Men both feared and were drawn to the Pharos for the next 19 years, leaving Kadatheron with great numbers of the disconsolate, the mad, and the suicidal. Never since have females been included in the lots.

**4521 The Elder Pharos:** A billion years ago the Primordial Ones made the Elder Pharos of a gray-green stone unlike any found in the

Mountains of Dream. It stands near the shore, 280' tall and 20' in diameter at its base. Smooth and impervious to any force that has thus far been brought to bear upon it (i. e., nearly anything short of an attack by the Old Ones), it has no apertures to its legendary inner chambers. Its top 25' consists of a cloudy but translucent dolm crystalline substance as impervious as the rest of the Elder Pharos. From this over the eons shone forth a light that was not light, giving other than illumination to all things within the bay. This weird, prehuman radiance ceased as the first men to dimly see its indirect emanation from afar approached the summits of the mountains blocking it from their direct view. A terrible and unrecounted fate befell these men, and whispers suggest this fate also touches man's future. More than this of the Elder Pharos is unknown to even the most searching of sages.

**4619 Tear of the Elder God:** Nothing can ripple the perpetually undisturbed surface of a tarn about 35' across and 5' at its deepest. Maidens journey here from all reaches of the Mountains of Dream so that on clear, moonlit nights they might wade naked in the serene blue waters. They believe the small lake to be a tear fallen from the eye of one of the elder gods, granting blessings of beauty, grace, and fruitfulness.

**4719 People of the Blind Fish**

Albino village

Population: 112 (able-bodied: 28)

Alignment: LN

Resources: None

Leader: None

Cool, damp air wafts out of a 1' opening amongst several large stones. Peering within reveals only darkness. One man-hour of work will remove enough stones to enable a man to crawl through the opening into a natural 3'



diameter shaft plunging down at a 50° to 60° angle. The stone is damp but rough, permitting safe descent. After about 900' of twists and turns, the shaft opens upon a vast cavern 200' across with the floor 80' below. Dozens of cave mouths at various heights dot the cavern's walls. More than 10,000 years ago according to their own oral traditions, the People of the Blind Fish made this cave system their home. With the passage of hundreds of generations, the men who came here lost the pigment in their skin, hair, and eyes, the latter losing their sight. They creep naked through the caves, eating the similarly blind and white fish, crayfish, crickets, etc. Their technology level is nil. These albinos speak a strange form of the common language with a bizarre vocabulary that includes vanishingly few referents to things of the surface world but with a profusion of nouns relevant to these dark depths. The People of the Blind Fish worship the elder gods in a unique cult that conceives of the greatest of the gods as somehow similar to and connected with the caves' blind, white fish. The people cannot so much as conceive of an outside world and will certainly never willingly visit it. They meet violence with savage bites and claws (1-4 hp damage per round), and they have only half the usual penalty for attacking while blind.

#### **4720 Kadatheron**

Ulfire Man city

Population: 8,620 (able-bodied: 2,155)

Alignment: LN

Resources: Market

Leader: Akurion LXXVIII, Emperor of the Mountains of Dream, Ulfire male LN F9

Significant NPCs: Shang, Ulfire male LG MU6 (advisor of Akurion)

Sarkis, Ulfire male LG C4 (pontiff of the elder gods)

Zar, Ulfire male LN F7 (commander of the Fragrant Legions)

Aira, Ulfire female LG C8 (Mirror of the Elder Gods)

Aran, Ulfire male LN F1 (poet and singer)

Rokol, Ulfire male CE MU4 (warlock of secret Azathoth cult)

Named for Mount Kadath dominating the western horizon twenty miles away, Kadatheron's innumerable pillars of soft and delicate hues rise as high as 200', ever touched by the unsettling light of the Pharos (hex 4520) ten miles to the west. From his opalescent palace, the Emperor Akurion LXXVIII holds nominal overlordship over the entirety of the Mountains of Dream. It is a rare man indeed who does not own to Akurion's sovereignty, but the faraway emperor has little immediate authority in his dominions. Kadatheron is practically a city-state in all but name. The Fragrant Legions have not marched more than 20 miles from the city since time out of mind. The city itself is builded of marbles of many shades and of glittering white alabaster, all brought from the quarries of Thraa (hex 4320). The architecture exudes a graceful femininity, almost as though Kadatheron's buildings wait only for a gentle breeze to waft them away. The murmur of plashing fountains softens the hum of the city's activity, and sonorous chanting and exotic odors of incense drift from the dozens of temples of the elder gods that adorn every quarter. Though a place of harmonious beauty and architectural sublimity, the ever-present light of the Pharos lends a disquieting undertone to the atmosphere of Kadatheron. (See hex 4520 for the uncanny ritual that Kadatheron practices to ensure that the Pharos ever has a Keeper.) An oral tradition of long but untraceable provenance foretells the ineluctable doom of the city, in a manner completely unknown. The miraculous displays of Aira (who is not a

member of either the religious or civic authorities) have caused consternation amongst the city's hierarchs and lamas. The great city stands along the Bay of Seeing, where merchant ships sail from far over the eastern horizon, each ship's oddly multiracial crew speaking with an outlandish accent and displaying uncouth manners. Such men the authorities restrict to the harbors. In secret caverns below the city, Rokol leads a blasphemous cult in worship of Azathoth. The dozen or so cultists maintain strict secrecy amongst themselves, the breach of which earns death from a poisoned cup, for their discovery would ensure their executions under Kadatheron's inexorable law.

Any random encounter in this hex is 25% likely to be with a patrol from the city, typically consisting of a commander (F6), two sub-commanders (fighters from 2nd to 5th level), four 1st-level fighters, and 13 to 24 soldiers (0-level). Most wear chain mail and carry shields, and their arms vary widely.

**4818 The Garden of Snows:** On the lower foothills of the Mountains of Dream stretches an irregularly-shaped garden covering about 1 square mile. All of its growing things--flowers, vines, ferns, shrubbery, fruit trees, etc.--are the white of unsullied snow. Even the strongest of gales does not stir the flora, which in fact is petrified and unbreakable short of an attack by an Old One. Any human touching the flora or taking a step into the garden will subjectively experience an exquisite vision of a naked woman of impossible beauty. Her alabastrine skin, large eyes, and nearly waist-length hair are of indescribable, unearthly hues as of lunar rainbows. She will communicate with the visionary telepathically, communicating to him the nature of the garden. As she gestures to it, the visionary will discern that the hundreds of

fruits hanging from the branches of a central tree are in fact polished, uncut gems of diverse colors. Any man can enter the garden to pick any one gem-fruit (which will later appraise at 2,000-12,000 g.p.). Then he must roll 2d6. If he rolls 6 or lower, he will be transformed (no saving throw) to a gem-fruit on the tree. If he rolls 7 or higher, he can freely leave the garden with his single gem-fruit. An individual can attempt this as often as he likes. A person can elect to attempt to take the gem-fruit which was an erstwhile companion out of the garden where it will return to human form, though this would-be rescuer has the same chance (a roll of 6 or lower on 2d6) of himself turning into a gem-fruit. If anyone tries to take more than a single gem-fruit in a single trek into the garden, he will automatically and with no saving throw become a gem-fruit. All of this is freely revealed by the goddess-like woman. After she imparts her information to an individual, he will never see her again (save perhaps in dreams).

**4819 Purity in the Earth:** In the rocky heights above timberline clerics of the elder gods serenely gather jade (nephrite) from its sole known source in all the lands of Carcosa. The exposed veins of the precious mineral subtly shimmer in all the colors of the complex spectra of Carcosa, including such hues of indeterminate shades as have no names. The nephrite's most common color is various tones of green, while the second most prized hue is an exquisite ulfire. By far the rarest and most sought after variety, though, is a delicate, almost white, roseate pink with swirled dapples of a deeper tint. This color of stone, known as imperial nephrite, has from time immemorial been the exclusive purview of the Emperor of Kadatheron. The imperial throne has also decreed that only the holy hands of clerics of the elder gods may take from the

earth the pure stone said to be the dream-stuff of the gods. On any given day, 101-200 levels of clerics of the elder gods ritualistically excavate the jade. The penalty for crime here (unblessed mining of the nephrite, theft, attacking the clerics, etc.) is death with no delay. The clerics receive reverent pilgrims, however, with benedictions. Any cleric of the Old Ones who dares to touch any jade at the quarry must save vs. spell at -2 or die. (The save is at -3 for ulfire jade and at -5 for imperial nephrite.) A successful save indicates 4-24 points of damage, but then that cleric can thereafter handle that particular piece of nephrite with no penalty.

**4919 Guardian of the Shrine:** In an outcropping of rock an opening 4' high and 2' wide gives entrance to a smooth-walled, circular cave 20' across and 15' high. A dozen rich, tan candles bathe the interior with a warm, yellow light. These candles never burn-out. An intricately-painted image fills the wall opposite the entrance, depicting a fierce, semi-humanoid being with a midnight blue leonine/daemonic head with large, burning eyes and fanged mouth. A halo of fire surrounds its head, and stylized rays of light radiate from its martially posed body that wears swirling robes of scarlet, saffron, and orange. The figure holds a double-headed halberd in two hands, and each of its other two hands holds a scimitar. Those of LG, LN, or NG alignment will feel serenity, confidence, and a gentle impulse to sit and meditate upon the elder gods. CE, CN, CG, NE, and LE beings will quail within themselves and feel hostility emanate from the entire cave. Those of N alignment will feel nothing. If anyone causes mischief within the cave, the painted image will roar into overwhelming life (AC 3; MV 18"; HD 16; hp 96; #AT 4; D 1-10/1-10/1-8/1-8; SA fireburst; SD immune to normal weapons,

fire, poison, and mind-affecting powers; MR 70%; AL LG; XP 12,520) and attack with automatic surprise. Up to three times per day it can radiate in all directions beams of fiery light in a 20' radius that cause 16-96 points of damage (save vs. breath weapon for half damage). The shrine guardian will attack only those who cause mischief and those who attack it. Any LG, LN, or NG beings not in combat with the guardian will be immune to its firebursts, while N beings not in combat with it will suffer only 8-48 points of damage (or 4-24 points of damage if save is made). After all trouble-makers lie dead or have fled the cave, the guardian will return to painted form. If slain, the guardian will vanish, the painting will not reappear, and the candles will begin to naturally burn to nothing. If anyone tries to assault the cave from without, the guardian's magic will close the narrow opening, sealing the cave for a fortnight behind 10' of solid granite.

#### **5018 Cathuria**

Jale Man village

Population: 1,068 (able-bodied: 267)

Alignment: LG

Resources: Silk

Leader: Thapnen, the Priest-King, Jale male LG C10 (elder gods)

Significant NPCs: Tanarian, Jale male LN F7 (commander of the warriors)

Hsan, Jale male LG C3 (temple hierophant)

Kiran, Jale male LN F4 (Thapnen's factotum)

High in the mountains with the sea for its eastern horizon rises a marmoreal temple with delicate spires reaching 100' above the village of wood and paper houses surrounding it. The villagers breed worms that make silk and also serve as the staple food. Many insects also seek the worms for food, but the hundreds of species of non-venomous spiders that inhabit Cathuria do a more than adequate job of

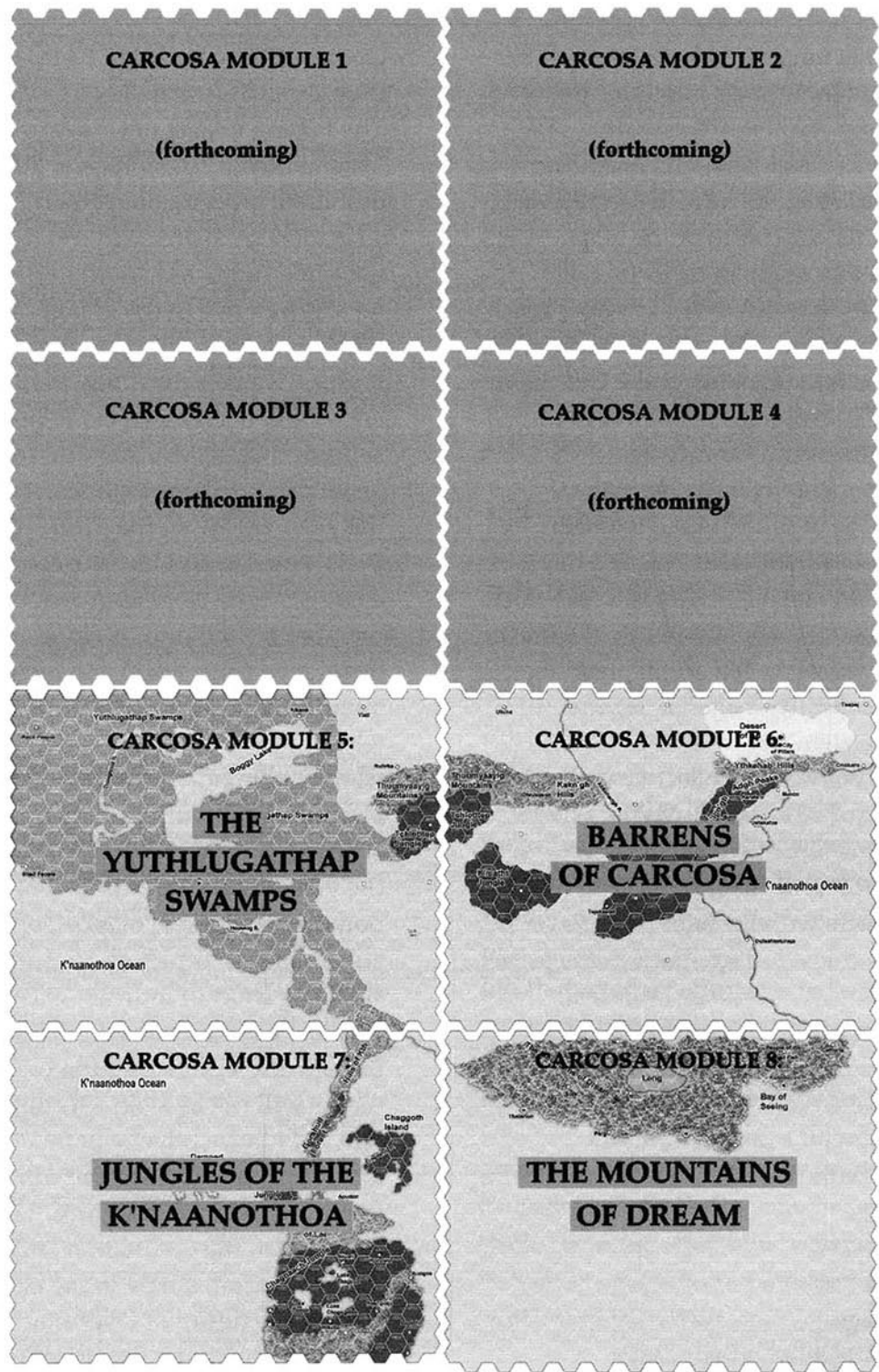
protecting the worms (which the spiders do not eat). In fact, one of the first things visitors will notice about Cathuria are the shrouds of spiderwebs blanketing the trees and stretched between buildings. The people revere the spider, and its symbology pervades their existence. Cathurians wear long silk robes or dresses of subtle colors. The martial forces wear over their armor pale violet tabards figured with the pattern of spiderwebs. Thapnen rules from the pastel yellow temple of the elder gods, housing within its inner sanctum a marble idol of a giant spider. Thapnen generously allows his people the benefits of his clerical powers. Cathurians give a reserved but genuine welcome to outsiders, but they will execute anyone who breaks their cardinal law: "In Cathuria no man may kill a spider."

**5118 Q'ythpnak, Spawn of Shub-Niggurath:**

In a shallow cave in the mountain's slope 800' above the sea dwells Q'ythpnak (AC 10; MV 21"/9"; HD 2; hp 9; #AT 1; D 2-7; INT high; AL LN; XP 38), a Spawn of Shub-Niggurath. It is a jale-colored ooze 8' long, 5' wide, and 8" thick which can seep through cracks as small as 1". Millennia ago it came to the Mountains of Dream through extensive subterranean passageways. Q'ythpnak's long contemplations and meditations have actually made it lean towards lawful good. Though it stays aloof from the conflict between the servants of the Old Ones and their foes, the Spawn has concluded that the dissolution of the Old Ones and their cult would probably be preferable than otherwise. Q'ythpnak will fight only in self-defense, and it prefers to use its speed and/or its plasticity to flee. It attacks with a psychic stab that affects 1 target (up to 90' distant) per round, not needing an attack roll and not affording a saving throw. The slime can communicate telepathically with any

intelligent entity. While most of Q'ythpnak's conversation will consist of nearly interminable philosophic musings, it will admit to fascination with the tales it has heard of the strange village of Cathuria (hex 5018). Q'ythpnak will offer a polished piece of moss green jade (worth 600 g.p.) that it keeps deep in a crack in its cave to any who will travel to Cathuria, study its ways, and return to the Spawn and render his account.

**5119 Abyss of Luminous Mists:** At the bottom of a rocky valley a 12' wide crack in the ground stretches nearly 200'. Shifting, billowing, luminous mists of all the colors of the rainbow fill the rift up to about 4' of the opening. Anything dropped into the mists does not make a sound when it hits the bottom, assuming it hits a bottom at all. Near the midpoint of the western side of the abyss a 5' wide stairway chiseled into the rock disappears into the glowing hues below. It terminates after 444 steps on a 5' by 5' landing. Those engulfed by the mists cannot see more than 8' away, and they feel a sense of well-being (which banishes all effects of fatigue as well). A hole 1" in diameter and 8" deep is near the edge of the landing. About 30' below the landing a 5' diameter cave mouth opens into a 10' by 10' natural cave with hundreds of pointed, hexagonal quartz crystals growing from the ceiling, floors, and walls. The crystals (whether colorless, purple, pink, rosy, yellow, golden brown, black, milky white, or rainbow) are worth 1 g.p. each if they are removed without damaging them. Assume 800 crystals are present and that 2-20% will suffer damage if removed. Gathering the lot will take 10-15 man-hours, and the weirdly echoing blows from doing so will necessitate a random encounter check every 2 hours or fraction thereof.



## CARCOSA

Each of the eight Carcosa modules serves as a complete sword and sorcery setting for the play of AD&D, and they can also be combined as pictured above to form a larger campaign area.

## THE WILDERNESS

This forthcoming series of sixteen modules will detail a quintessential fantasy campaign world for the AD&D game. Each module can be used on its own, or they may be joined into a larger setting.



1 hex = 5 miles

Cartography by Dion Williams (aka Burning ~ Torso)