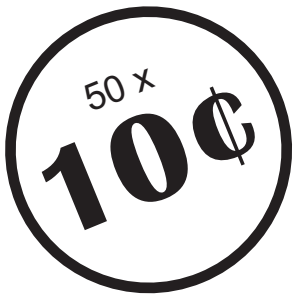


INNER- EARTH



STEVEN S. LONG

INNER- EARTH



A Hero Plus Adventure for

PULP HERO

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Everything Else: Stev... you get the picture

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YOUR SECRET LEAGUE OF HEROES ENCODED MESSAGE!

Attention Secret League Of Heroes members! Here's your secret message for this Hero Plus Adventure. Use your secret decoder ring to read it!

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INNER-EARTH



HERO PLUS ADVENTURES

Inner-Earth is one of Hero Games's *Hero Plus Adventures*, a series of short, no-frills, inexpensive adventures in PDF format (though this one is actually a mini-setting, not a scenario *per se*). Hero Plus Adventures are designed to provide roughly one game session's worth of entertainment, though they include suggestions on how to lengthen or expand the scenario if you want to. (Inner-Earth, as a mini-setting, actually serves more as the basis for a campaign or a story arc than as a one-shot adventure.) They're written with simplicity and ease of use in mind so you can run them with a minimum of preparation.

PRINTING

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When what was supposed to be a simple exploratory journey sweeps Our Heroes down an underground river, they discover a new world in a gigantic cavern far beneath the surface: *Inner-Earth*. Inhabited by creatures that long ago died out on the surface, ancient lost peoples and tribes that somehow found their way down there, insidious serpent-men, and a group of lost Nazi explorers whose intentions for the place are decidedly more sinister than the heroes', Inner-Earth contains wonders marvelous to behold... and perils deadlier than anything in the sunlit lands. Do the heroes have what it takes to survive the perils of a hollow world?

THE WORKINGS OF INNER-EARTH

Inner-Earth isn't literally another circular ball of rock inside Earth — it's actually a gigantic cavern, many miles below the surface, that stretches (in surface terms) from northern South America all the way to northern Europe and the Arctic. Primarily it consists of three large caverns connected by what's known as the Sunless Ocean — but of course there might be other parts of Inner-Earth not directly connected to this area, just waiting for your heroes to discover...

The caverns that make up the Inner-Earth are enormous — hundreds of miles long, and usually at least a mile from floor to ceiling — allowing for weather, plenty of room for travel, the expansion of civilizations, and so forth. Unless you run an entire campaign there, or a really long story arc, it's unlikely your heroes will explore all of it... which leaves plenty of room for a *Return To The Inner-Earth* adventure!

Geography

As shown on the accompanying map, Inner-Earth consists of four major caverns linked together: an eastern cavern containing two landmasses divided by what the inhabitants call the Jhusara Sea; the utterly dark Sunless Ocean; a southern "subcavern" off the Sunless Ocean that's considerably smaller than the other two land caverns; and the northern cavern. Each area is described in more detail below.

LIGHT

Inner-Earth of course doesn't receive direct light from the sun or moon. However, countless veins of pure quartz crystal, some of them quite large, honeycomb the rock between the ceiling of Inner-Earth and

the surface (where they usually emerge in out-of-the-way and unexplored locations, so no one knows about them). These crystals refract sunlight and moonlight down to Inner-Earth, even giving an approximation of sunrise and sunset as Earth turns and the area of greatest light crosses the caverns from east to west. However, while the ceiling crystals provide enough light for flora and fauna to thrive, this arrangement has several implications you and your heroes need to be aware of.

First, time passes at the same rate in Inner-Earth as on the surface: 60 minutes in an hour; 24 hours in a day; 365 days a year; and so forth.

Second, refracted sunlight isn't as bright as the full sunlight that reaches the surface — in effect, the Inner-Earth only gets to take advantage of a fraction of the sun's light. In other words, it often seems dim in the Inner-Earth as compared to the surface. The inhabitants are used to this; they don't even know it's unnatural. Visitors from the surface, on the other hand, suffer a -1 on Sight Group PER Roll penalties for the first two or three weeks they're in Inner-Earth as their eyes adjust. (This penalty does not apply to characters who have Nightvision.)

Third, refracted moonlight and starlight are even dimmer, and often non-existent. Nights in the Inner-Earth are almost pitch-black, without even the weak illumination of the moon most of the time. Characters, native or visitor, suffer the full -4 Sight Group PER Roll penalty for "dark night" (unless, of course, they have Nightvision).

Fourth, there are no veins of crystal in the surface oceans. Therefore, the parts of Inner-Earth that are under the oceans — primarily the aptly-named Sunless Ocean — are totally dark at all times regardless of whether it's day or night on the surface.

WEATHER AND CLIMATE

Water precipitates down to Inner-Earth through cracks in the rock between the surface oceans and the caverns, through the underground rivers that give access to the caverns, and so forth. Water filtering down usually forms into clouds high above the cavern floors, which in turn create rain when the conditions are right (though thunder is relatively rare; the various peoples of Inner-Earth often regard it as an important omen).

Despite the relative lack of light, most parts of Inner-Earth tend to be warm (even hot) and humid due to the fact that the area is enclosed, all the water entering the caverns, and general Pulp tradition. The northern cavern tends to be somewhat cooler and drier (at least in places), but the eastern cavern and southern sub-cavern often verge on (or into) the tropical.

Air precipitates down into the Inner-Earth through the various entrances and the like. It in turn flows out through a large “chimney” in the northeastern part of the northern cavern (which is why the Wind-Lands are so windy). The chimney emerges in the Arctic, where it remains undiscovered by man. Some air also seeps down the chimney, making that part of Inner-Earth cooler than the rest.

TERRAIN

Due to the climate, jungles, swamps, marshes, and grasslands dominate much of the terrain; temperate forests and plains are much rarer, though more common as one approaches mountainous areas. Mountains tend to cluster along the edges of the major caverns, though there are a few other low-lying ranges. There are even some volcanoes.

Inhabitants

Over the course of millennia, animals and people have found their way down to the Inner-Earth. Many have died when unpleasant fate or curiosity drew them deep into the Earth, but enough have survived to create thriving ecosystems and civilizations. And apparently there were some species already living in the Inner-Earth when surface-dwellers first arrived!

A PREHISTORIC ZOO

In most parts of the Inner-Earth, the plants and animals of yesteryear continue to survive. Dinosaurs and prehistoric flora live here in a delightful melange that mixes creatures from multiple geological epochs — explorers will find sabretooth tigers living alongside tyrannosaurs, pterodactyls, plesiosaurs, and dimetrodons. See pages 152-59 of *The HERO System Bestiary* for character sheets for various well-known dinosaurs, and the appendix to this Hero Plus Adventure for several more.

The southern subcavern tends to have fewer prehistoric creatures than the two larger caverns. Instead, its fauna (and flora) are similar to those of the East African plains and African jungles: lions, zebras, rhinos, leopards, gorillas, warthogs, antelope, and more.

FLORA

As with the fauna, much of the Inner-Earth's flora dates to prehistoric times. Perhaps the seeds were carried down by dinosaurs, or otherwise filtered down into the Inner-Earth during geological events. Other plant species, particularly domesticated ones, were introduced by the human(oid) inhabitants.

PEOPLE

An intriguing variety of sentient humanoids — not all of them human, just humanoid — inhabit the Inner-Earth.

In the eastern cavern two peoples live. On the southern side of the Jhusara Sea, mainly in the lands to either side of the Huei Atoyatl (the Great River), is Aztlan, a kingdom of Aztecs whose ancestors came to the Inner-Earth centuries ago. Their civilizations is both like and unlike that of the Aztecs who lived in what is now Mexico. On the northern side lives a

people the Aztecs call the Coatlichli, and who call themselves the *Ssujala* — a race of serpent-men, reptilian beings whose civilization was already old when the Aztecs arrived. Against them the men of Aztlan have often fought, and from them they learned the building of ships and the art of fighting on water.

In the southern sub-cavern, no people live at present. There are signs that a few people — perhaps African tribesmen, perhaps ancient Egyptians — once dwelt there, but they all died away long ago.

In the northern cavern, like the eastern, live two peoples. To the east are the Wind-Lands, where strong winds sweep ceaselessly over broad plains. On these plains live several tribes of Mongols. How their forefathers came to the Inner-Earth they do not remember, but they have made a life for themselves here that suits a warrior's soul. To the west, the land is often mountainous and forested, with many animals, and there live a large group of the ancestors of man: Neanderthals. Perhaps taking the example from their Mongol enemies they have formed a crude civilization, with chieftains and shamans ruling over extended tribes composed of clans. The Mongols claim that a race of demons they call the *Fedal* secretly rules over the *Belemei* (the “Dark-Browed Ones,” their name for the Neanderthals).

Last but not least, the characters aren't the only explorers from the surface world in the Inner-Earth right now. A Nazi exploratory/archaeological expedition got swept down into the caverns much like the heroes, and its members are now trying to (a) find a way to return to the surface, and (b) figure out how to turn the existence of the Inner-Earth to Germany's political and military advantage.

See the individual cavern and civilization descriptions below for more information, including character briefs for prominent persons.

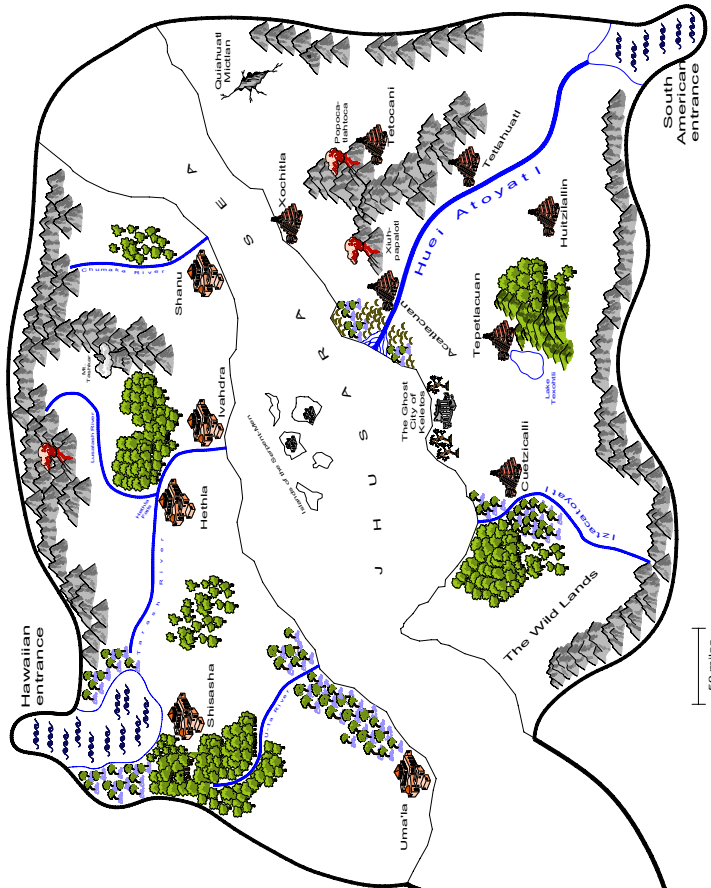
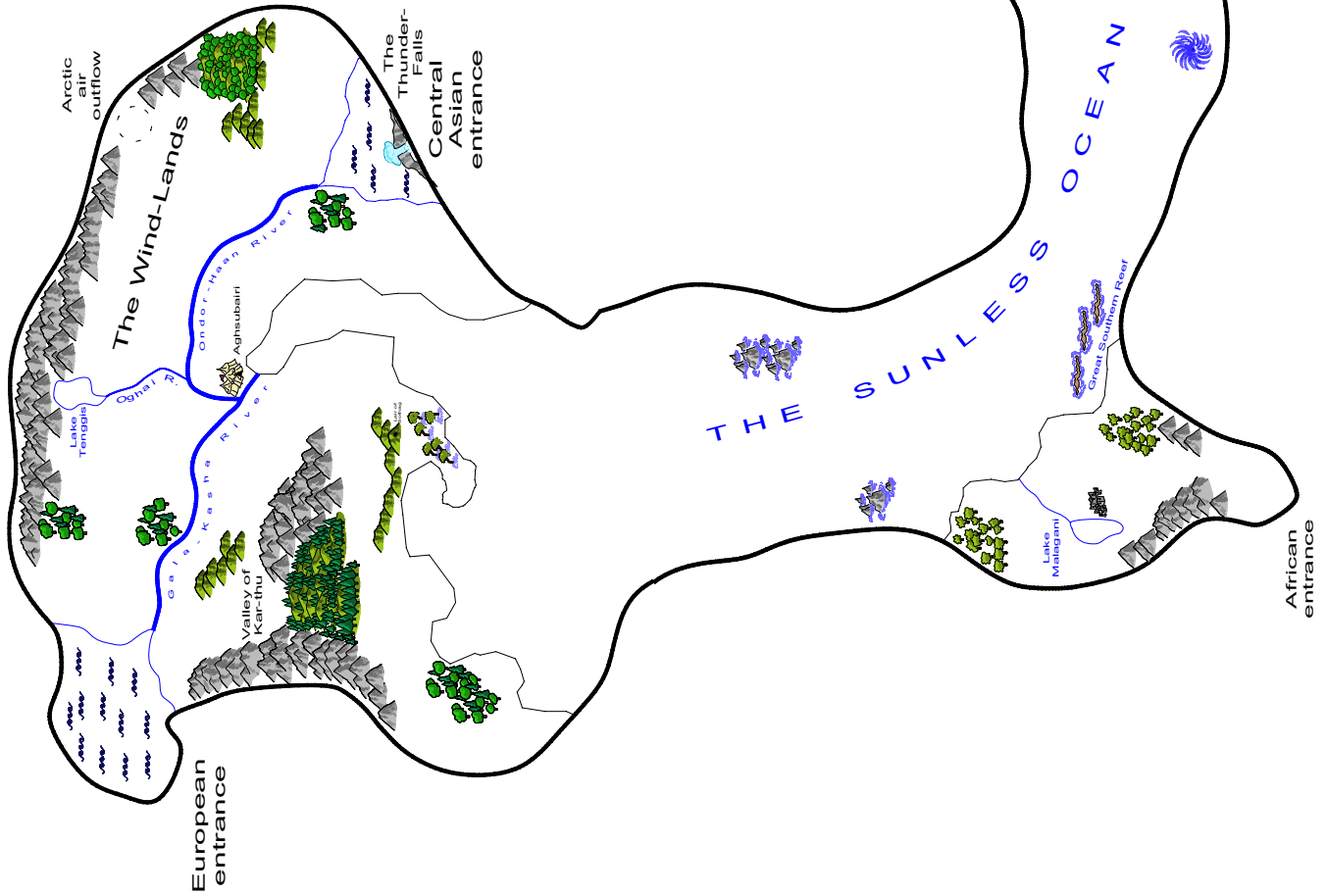
Communicating With The Natives

The Aztecs and Mongols both speak versions of their native surface tongues, altered by centuries of living in Inner-Earth. The Languages *Nahuatl* (Aztec) or *Mongolian* are considered to have 4 points of similarity with Inner-Earth Nahuatl and Inner-Earth Mongolian, respectively, so characters who know either surface language have half as many points in the Inner-Earth versions.

The serpent-men speak their own language, *Hlissara*. Characters may learn to speak it through exposure, but can't know it when they first enter the Inner-Earth. Characters with Universal Translator may understand it if they make their INT Rolls at -2.

The Neanderthals speak their own language, *Thal*. Characters may learn to speak it through exposure, but can't know it when they first enter the Inner-Earth. Characters with Universal Translator may understand it if they make their INT Rolls.

INNER-EARTH



THE EASTERN CAVERN



The enormous eastern cavern — over 500 miles long east to west, and about two-thirds that north-south — is home to two oft-warring civilizations. To the south of the Jhusara Sea is Aztlan, the land of a remnant of the once-great Aztec Empire; the lands to the north are inhabited by a race of strange serpent-men, the Ssujala. See the accompanying map for more information.

AZTLAN

Centuries ago, a group of Aztecs who fled from their city rather than be conquered by Tenochtitlán took refuge in a large cave. They discovered that the cave went deep into the earth. Driven by fear of their enemies and curiosity, they descended deeper and deeper... until at last they emerged in the Inner-Earth! Thinking they'd found Aztlan, the legendary home from which their ancestors had first come, they decided to remain there. A cave-in long ago collapsed the route they took down here, but they've been in Aztlan so long only a few of their tales and stories even hint at the existence of the surface world.

After they'd been in "Aztlan" a few decades, the expanding Aztecs encountered the Ssujala — the *Coatlichli*, as the Aztecs call them — when the serpent-men began raiding their cities and villages. Since then they've fought unceasingly against the Ssujala, sometimes losing battles and sometimes winning, but steadfast and determined to neither give nor ask quarter from their hated foe.

Culture

The culture of the Aztecs of Aztlan (or Aztlanecs) is in most respects similar to that of the Aztecs whom Cortez discovered and conquered in 1521. For example, they have no draft animals — they raise only smaller animals, such as chickens and pigs, and carry large burdens via ships or trained porters. However, life in the Inner-Earth has wrought a few changes.

RELIGION

First, they've adapted some elements of their religion, primarily the use of human sacrifice, to the necessities of the Inner-Earth. At first they continued their worship ceremonies and practices unchanged, but it soon became apparent that there weren't enough of them to make human sacrifice viable — they needed everyone they had to survive, hunt the strange giant lizards that roamed the land, and build a new society.

As a substitute, the priests decreed that the sacrifice of a *tepuzotlin* — a "sickle-lizard," a deinonychus (a velociraptor) — would take the place of human sacrifice. Today, it's regarded as a mark of courage and skill for a warrior to capture a tepuzotlin for sacrifice, and a good omen for his family.

SHIPBUILDING AND SAILING

Their early encounters with the Ssujala taught the Aztlanecs about ships and sailing. Today they're skilled mariners, using bireme-like vessels to sail to Ssujala lands to fight, and sometimes to the other end of the Sunless Ocean to trade. An *atl pochtecatl* ("sea merchant," or trader-captain) who can face the dangers of the night-dark waters and return with trade-goods is accounted a man of bravery, skill, and wealth.

WARFARE

Surface Aztec warfare was often *xochiyaoyotl* — "flowery war," fighting intended not to achieve actual military goals but to capture warriors for human sacrifice. The Aztecs of Inner-Earth have no need for such a practice anymore, and now have a foe — the Ssujala — whom they must kill or be killed by. The Aztlanecs do not play at war; they fight with great ferocity and deadliness using the *macahuil* (obsidian-edged war-club-sword) and *tlacochtli* (spear, often hurled great distances with an *atlatl*, or spear-thrower). They use the bow for hunting, but not fighting.

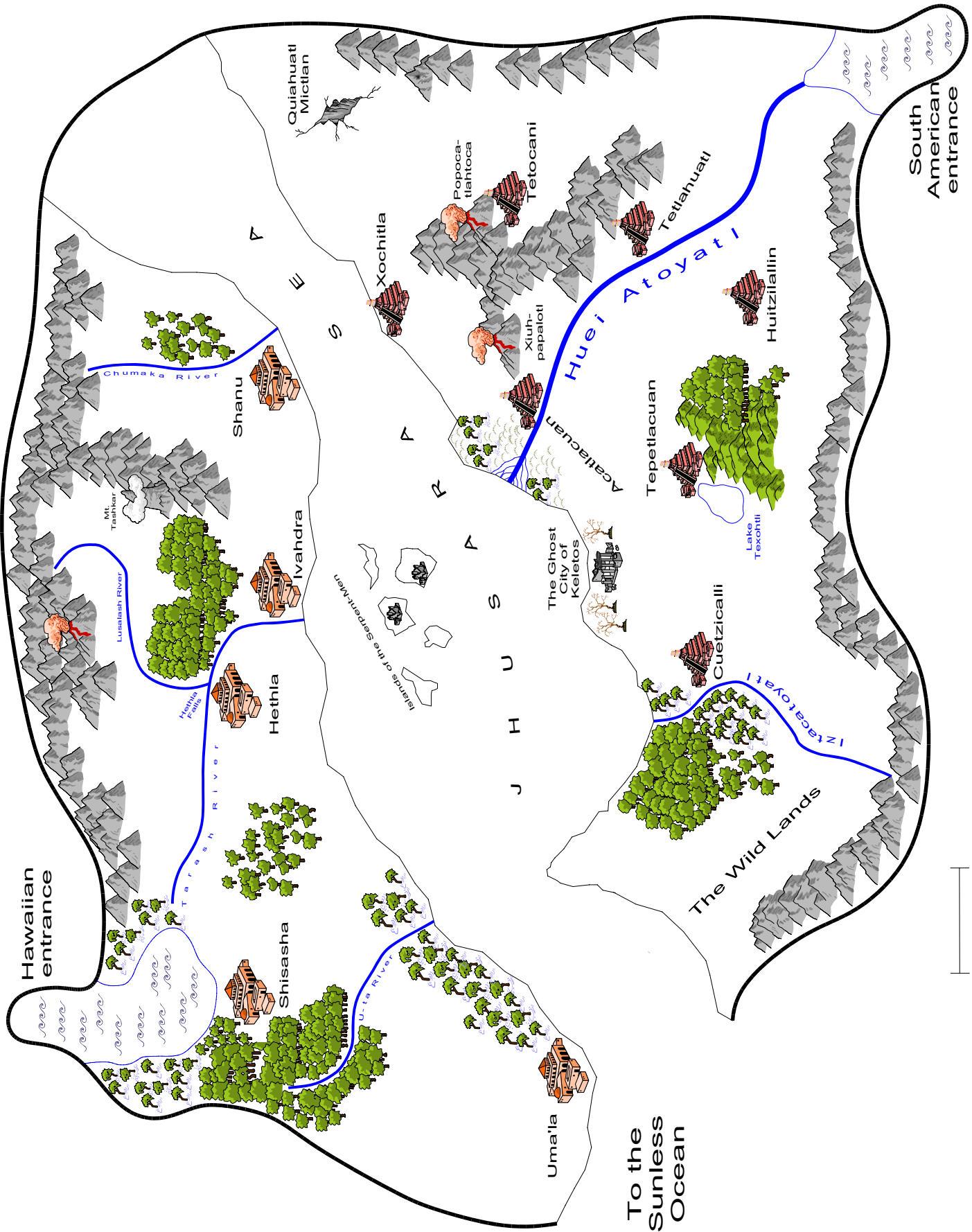
Places

Some of the important, intriguing, or dangerous places heroes may visit in Aztlan include:

CITIES

The Aztecs have built seven cities in Aztlan. For the most part they're similar, with a large step-pyramid temple at the center that dominates the city. A large plaza used for both major religious ceremonies and various public gatherings surrounds the temple. From there the city spreads out as far as need be, with one- and two-story buildings typically made of wood and mud brick; the ruler's home (which also functions as a sort of "city hall") is usually the biggest building in town after the temple (and often located not far from it). Surrounding the city proper is a belt of farmland worked by peasant clans.

Acatlacuan: The largest city of Aztlan, Acatlacuan is the *de facto* capital of Aztlan; its ruler, Netzahualtloctollin, is the *huei tlatoani*, or "high king," of all the chieftains of the land. Built on the edge of the delta swamps of the Huei Atoyatl, it's a well-irrigated city whose farms and orchards grow large,



lush crops; hunters and fishermen stalk the marshes for fowl, fish, and game. Its temple pyramid is the largest in Aztlan, and its ports can hold the many ships that sail up the main channel of the river to sell their cargo.

Cuetzicalli: The westernmost city of Aztlan, on the swift-rushing Iztacatoyatl River, Cuetzicalli was founded in accordance with a prophecy. A priest of Tepetlacuan had a vision in which Huitzilopochtli, god of war, commanded him to lead several clans to a place where he would find a “great skull” and build a city there. The priest and his followers found the skull — one like that of a tyrannosaur, but nearly twice as large — and built their temple on that very spot, enshrining the skull as a holy object. The Aztecs remain unclear as to why Huitzilopochtli had them found a city here, but they’re certain they’ll learn in time.

Huitzilallin: The “Place of the Blue-Green Hummingbird,” so named because the chieftain who founded it saw five such hummingbirds, considered it an omen, and built his city there. Since it’s not located on a major body of water and has relatively bad soil, Huitzilallin often has poorer farming than the other Aztlan cities, but if necessary can trade for food with gold its people mine in the mountains to the south.

Tepetlacuan: Located on the shores of Lake Texohtli and next to the range of forested hills east of the lake, Tepetlacuan enjoys a relatively cool climate and bounteous harvests. Its ruler, Ecatzin, is an ambitious man said to covet the position of *huei tlatoani*.

Tetlahuatl: This city’s name means “stone oak,” signifying the large pillar of natural rock in the city’s plaza. The Aztecs found it there, and regard it as having some sort of holy significance. Some of them claim that if you look closely, you can see faded glyphs or pictures on the stone, though who carved them and what they mean remain a mystery... if they even exist.

Tetocani: Built near the volcano Popocatehtoca (“Throne of Smoke”), Tetocani is one of Aztlan’s chief sources of the obsidian the Aztecs use to make so many of their weapons and tools. Its fields, enriched by volcanic ash, are very fertile. Every year the priests walk to the rim of the volcano to perform special ceremonies to appease Tezontlin, the god of the volcano, so that he won’t become angry and inflict fiery destruction upon them.

Xochitla: Xochitla (“garden”) is considered the most beautiful city in Aztlan. Built on a low cliffside, it offers a superb view of the ocean (and, for those willing to walk down some steep paths, excellent beaches). Hanging gardens and flowers seem to be everywhere throughout the city, so that its streets delight the eyes.

The Ghost City Of Keletos

On the central coast of Aztlan, surrounded by barren trees and rocky ground, stands a vast ruin — the Ghost City of Keletos. The Aztecs discovered it after they arrived in Aztlan. The serpent-men do not

claim it as a place of their own, saying it’s existed ever since they can remember and that the script they’ve found etched on some of the ruins remains unreadable. The Aztecs refuse to go there, considering it an abode of demons.

QUIAHUATL MICTLAN

In the far northeast of Aztlan a deep cleft splits the ground. The Aztecs call it *Quiahuatl Mictlan*, the Gateway to Hell, and regard it with superstitious dread. They say ghosts live in its depths and come out to haunt the living at night, and that no one who’s ever descended into its bottomless depths has ever returned.

THE WILD LANDS

The people of Aztlan have only a few villages west of the Iztacatoyatl. They call that area *Cuautlah* — the Wild Lands — because it’s so fierce and untamed. The swamps, patches of jungle, and plains of the Wild Lands are home to countless dinosaurs and other threats. But perhaps in its mountains, if the heroes can survive that far, are tunnels leading up to the surface....

People

Aztlan is home to thousands of people, many of them interesting or intriguing. Here’s more information on a few whom the heroes are likely to meet or interact with, and a character sheet for a “generic” Aztlan warrior.

NETZAHUALTLOCTOLLIN

| | | | | | | | |
|----|-----|----|------|----|-----|----|------|
| 10 | STR | 12 | DEX | 12 | CON | 10 | BODY |
| 15 | INT | 13 | EGO | 18 | PRE | 10 | COM |
| 4 | PD | 4 | ED | 3 | SPD | 4 | REC |
| 24 | END | 21 | STUN | | | | |

Abilities: +1 with All Combat; Bureaucrats 13-; High Society 13-; AK: Aztlan 13-; KS: Aztlan History And Lore 12-; KS: Aztlan Nobility And Politics 13-; Oratory 13-; Persuasion 13-; PS: Compose Poetry 11-; Stealth 11-; WF: Common Melee Weapons, Common Missile Weapons, Atlatl; Contacts (30 points’ worth among Aztlan nobility); Fringe Benefit: Huei Tlatoani Of Aztlan; Money: Wealthy

50+ Disadvantages: Age (40+); Hunted: Xilotzin (Less Pow, NCI, Kill/Usurp Throne); Hunted: the Ssujala (As Pow, Kill); Psychological Limitation: Duties Of Rulership; Social Limitation: Famous Ruler

Notes: Huei tlatoani, or high king, of Aztlan, Netzahualtloctollin has rules Acatlacuan (and thus, by extention, all the Aztecs of Inner-Earth) since the death of his father 18 years ago. Now in his early forties, he’s a somber, often stern man, rarely given to levity (or even smiling). He tends toward the conservative (since his people have a strong enemy in the Coatlichtli) and is slow to trust new ways or new people — though he’s a true friend when he becomes convinced an outsider doesn’t want to hurt the Aztlanees.

The father of seven children (four sons, three daughters including Pilla [see below], all grown), Net-

zahualtloctollin takes a keen interest in the doings and wellbeings of his progeny and grandchildren, though he tries not to let them know it. For recreation he writes poetry and discourses on philosophy; he enjoys discussing both topics with people he regards as his intellectual equals.

PILLA

| | | | | | | | |
|----|-----|----|------|----|-----|----|------|
| 8 | STR | 10 | DEX | 11 | CON | 9 | BODY |
| 13 | INT | 14 | EGO | 18 | PRE | 18 | COM |
| 3 | PD | 3 | ED | 2 | SPD | 4 | REC |
| 22 | END | 21 | STUN | | | | |

Abilities: Conversation 13-; High Society 13-; AK: Aztlan 11-; KS: Aztlan History And Lore 11-; KS: Aztlan Nobility And Politics 11-; Persuasion 13-; PS: Weaving 11-; Seduction 13-; Stealth 11-; Fringe Benefit: Princess Of Aztlan

25+ Disadvantages: Hunted: Xilotzin (As Pow, NCI, Take As Wife); Hunted: the Ssujala (As Pow, Capture/Kill); Social Limitation: Famous Princess

Notes: Netzahualtloctollin has many children, but the apple of his eye is his daughter Pilla. Now 18 and unmarried due to her father's indulgence and her stubborn refusal to marry anyone she does not love, she's become something of a scandal in Aztlan, but she doesn't care. She's determined to live life on her own terms, not however some doddering old fools think she should live it.

XILOTZIN

| | | | | | | | |
|----|-----|----|------|----|-----|----|------|
| 10 | STR | 14 | DEX | 15 | CON | 12 | BODY |
| 15 | INT | 18 | EGO | 20 | PRE | 10 | COM |
| 3 | PD | 3 | ED | 3 | SPD | 5 | REC |
| 30 | END | 25 | STUN | | | | |

Abilities: Psychic Powers or like abilities appropriate to your campaign; Conversation 13-; High Society 13-; AK: Aztlan 12-; KS: Aztlan History And Lore 12-; KS: Aztlan Nobility And Politics 11-; KS: Aztlan Theology 15-; Persuasion 13-; Stealth 12-; Fringe Benefits: High Priest Of Aztlan, Right To Marry; Money: Well Off

75+ Disadvantages: Psychological Limitation: Powerhungry And Greedy; Social Limitation: Famous Cleric; Social Limitation: Harmful Secret (in league with the serpent-men)

Notes: Xilotzin is the most powerful priest in Aztlan — the de facto leader of the large and often complex priesthood that oversees the temples and rites that are so important a part of Aztec daily life. Strongly orthodox, he favors a return to the old ways of human sacrifice, believing that if enough blood and hearts are given to the gods they will shower the Aztlaneacs with favor and power. But he knows that idea isn't at all popular with most priests and the nobility, so he doesn't push it.

TYPICAL AZTEC WARRIOR

| | | | | | | | |
|----|-----|----|------|----|-----|----|------|
| 15 | STR | 14 | DEX | 15 | CON | 13 | BODY |
| 10 | INT | 10 | EGO | 13 | PRE | 8 | COM |
| 5 | PD | 4 | ED | 3 | SPD | 6 | REC |
| 30 | END | 30 | STUN | | | | |

Abilities: KS: Aztlan History And Lore 11-; Stealth 12-; WF: Common Melee Weapons, Common Missile Weapons, Atlatl, 5 points' worth of Skills pertaining to hobbies, interests, and the like

25+ Disadvantages: Social Limitation: Subject To Orders

Notes: This character sheet represents the typical Aztlan warrior whom the characters might fight (or fight alongside). He carries a macahuitl (HA +3d6/HKA 1½d6, STR Min 13) and a spear (HKA 1d6, STR Min 10, 1" reach), wears armor of animal skins and specially-treated quilted cotton (DEF 3), and carries a round medium shield (+2 DCV).

To create an elite Aztlanec warrior — a member of the Eagle or Jaguar Knights, two orders of "knight-hood" — give this character a few Combat Skill Levels (and perhaps some Martial Arts), Tactics, and other improvements.

THE LANDS OF THE SERPENT-MEN

Across the Jhusara Sea from Aztlan lies a land that has no name — or at least, no name in any human tongue. There dwell the *Ssujala*, a fearsome race of serpent-men who enslave humans and are said to possess great mystic power. They intend one day to rule all of Inner-Earth... and in time perhaps the surface world as well.

Culture

Although they remain unknown to surface-dwellers, the *Ssujala* have lived in Inner-Earth for millennia, biding their time until they have the strength and power to return to the sunlit lands where they once lurked during the ancient days of the Turakian Age. During that time they've developed a rich, elaborate culture, albeit one alien in many ways to humans. They regard other races, particularly humans, as nothing more than slaves... or cattle.

CASTE

Among the *Ssujala*, class distinctions are prominent, rigid, and usually unwavering. A *Ssujala* born into a high class has the unquestioned right to abuse, give orders to, and in some cases even kill lesser-ranking serpent-men with impunity. While it's possible for a *Ssujala* to "lose class" and go tumbling down the social ranks for some great sin or crime, it's much rarer for a commoner to be elevated to the upper levels of society. This most often occurs when a noble *Ssujala* finds a lower-ranking woman so attractive and desirable that he marries her, thus raising her to his own level.

GLADIATORIAL COMBAT

While the Ssujala have countless ways to entertain themselves, for many of them the favorite is watching... or participating in... gladiatorial combat. Every city has a large arena for staging battles, with the one in Ivahdra being the largest, grandest, and most prestigious of all. Typically a battle pits a professional Ssujalan gladiator against slaves, criminals, prisoners of war, or beasts. Better battles, the ones the spectators most enjoy, have two (or more) gladiators fighting each other in a contest of brawn, wits, and skill. Betting on gladiatorial events is heavy.

MYSTICISM

The tales of the arcane powers of the serpent-men aren't just foolish rumors (unless, of course, your campaign features no mysticism at all). Although Ssujala sorcerers lack the power they wielded in ancient times, they remain able to cast certain spells and wield other arcane abilities. In game terms they have magics similar to the Psychic Powers on pages 279-86 of *Pulp Hero*, but they require occult trappings (Limitations) such as expendable Foci, Extra Time, Requires A Skill Roll, Ritual, and the like. The accompanying sidebar has a few more Ssujala spells.

Ssujala wizards usually wear distinctive skullcaps, and robes of a dull yellow (a color restricted by law to their use) marked with the symbol of their brotherhood, a five-branched rune whose true meaning is known only to them. Most of them are solitary, but a few work in groups of two to seven on a regular basis, and annual conclaves are held in major cities to share lore and fellowship. Circles needed for ritual castings assemble whenever and however the initiating sorcerer can manage it. Sorcerers have high rank within Ssujala society, and are usually feared by ordinary serpent-men.

POLITICS

Serpent-man society is organized into city-states, each nominally independent and in control of the surrounding region (which includes fields and pastures worked by human slaves). The ruler of each city state is the *Vaash-la*, which roughly translates as "priest-king." A *vaash-la* is the political leader, war chieftain, and high priest of his people; most bureaucrats, government officials, and military officers within a city-state are priests (or at least have some strong connection to the temple). Substantial "donations" to the temple (and thus ultimately to the *vaash-la* in most cases) are necessary for an individual Ssujala to transact significant business with the government (for example, to get the *vaash-la's* permission to finance and lead a trade expedition or a slave raid).

In theory, the *vaash-las* of the five major cities and some minor cities rule the Ssujala as a sort of oligarchic council. In truth, the *vaash-la* of Ivahdra is "first among equals" and in most situations the *de facto* "king of the serpent-men." As the religious, political, and financial center of the Ssujala lands, Ivahdra is so powerful that *Vaash-la Na'aru* (see below) can make the other priest-kings do whatever he wants most of the time. Only their united opposition on a matter in which they probably have the support of many priests and most of the people is likely to get him to change his mind.

RELIGION

The Ssujala of the Inner-Earth worship but a single god: Shaa-t 1, creator of the world, Slayer of the Demons of Da-kan, Bane of the Soft Ones, Giver of Victory. He's depicted as a six-armed serpent-man, most prominently in statues mounted on the tops of Ssujala temples. The upper two arms hold a bowl of fire above his head; the middle two hold upright spears, and the lower two reach forth to protect and help his people.

Temples

The typical Ssujala temple is a sort of circular pyramid constructed in such a way as to roughly resemble a coiled serpent. Priests ascend the temple by walking up the coils, much like traversing a twisting path around a mountain. At the top stands a statue of Shaa-t 1 (see above), and at the feet of the statue there's a sacrificial altar. Here the priests perform major rituals, including human sacrifice during particularly important or powerful ceremonies. The victim's throat is cut and his blood allowed to run off the altar and back down the pyramid. Centuries' worth of sacrifices have stained the "path" the priests walk to the top a dark, evil reddish-brown — not even the sometimes-fierce rains of Inner-Earth can wash the stones clean. Once a sacrifice's body has been drained of blood, it's fed to the temple's gigantic guardian serpents, who dwell in the vaults within to protect the temple's treasures.

The Priesthood

The Ssujala don't have a formally-organized priesthood as most humans would conceive of it, but as in any other organization certain individuals become more powerful due to connections, politics, skill, influence-peddling, the respect of their fellows, sneakiness and treachery, or the like. The "high priests" of each of the city-states answer to their respective *vaash-las*, who as priest-kings rule temple as well as people, but the high priests handle day-to-day temple functions and oversee most aspects of the priesthood. Below their ranks, other priests are assigned specific duties based on their abilities, standing within the priesthood, and the needs of the people.

Ssujala priests wear distinctive black robes; few other serpent-men dress in black for that reason. They wear around their necks small amulet-statuettes resembling the statues of Shaa-t 1 that stand atop the temples. Most amulets are made out of a greenish-hued stone found in Ssujala lands, but wealthier or more powerful priests' amulets are often made of precious metals and gemstones.

SLAVERY

Slavery is common throughout Ssujala society — their society thrives and survives on it. They capture and enslave humans to work their fields, carry heavy loads, dig pits, clean houses, perform menial labor of all sorts, and do any other task a serpent-man doesn't want to. Slaves have no rights; in fact, any serpent-man can maim or kill any slave for any reason (or even no reason at all), and at most he owes the owner financial compensation.

The Ssujala want their slaves to breed — in fact, they often force them to under pain of torture. Chil-

SSUJALA SPELLS

Calling The Lesser Brethren: Summon up to 16 serpents built on up to 100 Character Points each, Expanded Class (any type of serpent; +¼), Loyal (+½) (70 Active Points); OAF Expendable Fragile (a serpent's fang smeared with blood, Easy to obtain; -¼), Concentration (½ DCV throughout casting; -½), Extra Time (1 Turn; -¼), Gestures (throughout casting; -½), Incantations (throughout casting; -½), Arrives Under Own Power (-½), Summoned Being Must Inhabit Locale (-½), Requires A Ssujala Sorcery Skill Roll (-½). Total cost: 11 points.

Curse Of Ill Luck: Major Transform 8d6 (person into person with Unluck 4d6, heals back through another application of this spell or a like spell), Area Of Effect (One Hex Accurate; +½), Mega-Scale (hex covers entire planet; +¼) (330 Active Points); OAF Expendable (special Inner-Earth root plants harvested in a special ceremony, Difficult to obtain; -¼), Concentration (0 DCV throughout casting; -1), Extra Time (1 Hour; -3), Gestures (throughout casting; -½), Incantations (throughout casting; -½), No Range (-½), Limited Target (sentient beings; -¼), Requires A Ssujala Sorcery Roll (no Active Point penalty; -0). Total cost: 41 points.

Curse Of Sickness: Drain CON and BODY 3d6, two Characteristics simultaneously (+½), Delayed Recover Rate (points return at the rate of 5 per Day; +½), Area Of Effect (One Hex Accurate; +½), Mega-Scale (hex covers entire

Continued from last page

planet; +1¼) (142 Active Points); OAF Expendable (fetish made during a special ceremony from hair of the race of the being to be affected, Difficult to obtain; -1¼), Concentration (0 DCV throughout casting; -1), Extra Time (1 Hour; -3), Gestures (throughout casting; -½), Incantations (throughout casting; -½), Requires A Ssujala Sorcery Roll (no Active Point penalty; -0). Total cost: 20 points.

Dominate The Mind: Mind Control 10d6, Telepathic (+¼) (62 Active Points); OAF (arcane crystal; -1), Concentration (0 DCV throughout casting; -1), Extra Time (1 Turn; -1¼), Gestures (throughout casting; -½), Incantations (throughout casting; -½), Requires A Ssujala Sorcery Roll (-½). Total cost: 11 points.

dren are taken from their parents and raised elsewhere as slaves themselves. Many generations of men in the Inner-Earth have known the feel of Ssujala chains and the taste of Ssujala whips all their lives.

TRADE

The Ssujala don't like to mingle with other races, and in many ways are self-sufficient. However, their lands don't contain everything they need (or want), forcing them to trade with other races at times. Their oxblood-colored trading ships visit Aztlan occasionally, but the frequent wars and conflicts between the two peoples often limit this contact to short, tense bargaining sessions. The serpent-men often prefer to trade with the south cavern peoples (when any exist) or the folk of the northern cavern (though their trade-goods are often limited). Trade expeditions to such places usually leave from the city of Uma'la.

WARFARE

The average Ssujala tends to be a little stronger and tougher than the average human, their scaly skin protects them as well as light armor, and they can inflict wounds with their small but powerful fangs. (See the Ssujala Package Deal, below, for more information.) Thus, by human standards serpent-men make mighty warriors. Ssujala soldiers usually go into battle wearing scale armor and carrying small round metal shields, scimitar-like curved swords, and wickedly-barbed spears; they also have archers, more heavily-armored warriors, and lighter-armored "marines" used to fighting on or from ships.

Places

Like other regions of Inner-Earth, the lands of the serpent-men contain many places of interest, distinction, and danger. Some of the more noteworthy include:

CITIES

Serpent-man cities are usually built of stone as much as possible; the Ssujala seem to dislike working with wood any more than they can help. Their buildings tend to be low and broad, rarely more than two stories tall at most, though decorative domes are common in larger/more opulent buildings, and some structures have short towers. Many buildings, including most residences, have an unroofed interior courtyard surrounded by a colonnade-like area; others have a large (often domed) common or entertainment room in the center.

Hethla

Located at the enormous waterfall of the same name formed where the Lusalash River joins the Tarash, Hethla is known as the "City of the Mists" due to the clouds of spray and vapor that so often waft over it. Humans find the climate extremely humid, muggy, and oppressive; most Ssujala enjoy it immensely, though it's hard on cloth, paper, leather, and other substances that can rot or corrode.

Ivahdra

The capital and religious center of the Ssujala lands, Ivahdra is also the biggest serpent-man city.

Many of its buildings are large and impressively decorated with mosaics, frescoes, carvings, and statuary; the temple to Shaa-t 1 in the very center of the city is the largest and tallest building in the Ssujala realm. Second only to it is the palace of the Vaash-la, made of the finest stone the Ssujala can obtain and built with all the skill they can muster. From it Naa'ru rules his people with a mix of power, craftiness, and influence-peddling.

Although it's not the trading center Uma'la is, Ivahdra has a large and bustling marketplace. Ssujala from all over the territory go there to buy and sell, and sometimes ships from Aztlan put in there during the uneasy periods of truce.

Shanu

A drab and colorless sort of place, Shanu has little to attract even other serpent-men, and many who live there would prefer to go elsewhere if they could. But as the Ssujala city closest to Aztlan, it's the usual launching-point for raids and invasions across the Jhusara Sea. Its coastal fortresses and bulwarks make it the most easily-defended city-state in the land.

Shisasha

The Ssujala city most likely to be visited first by PCs who enter Inner-Earth via the Hawaiian route (possibly after they've been captured by serpent-man soldiers and taken there in chains), Shisasha occupies a beautiful location overlooking a lake (also named Shisasha). The ruler, Cha'shara, is more moderate than most serpent-men, and something of a scholar in addition to being a mystic. He may even take a not-unfriendly interest in the PCs if they're brought to his city... but in the end, he's still Ssujala and will treat them as slaves or fodder for his experiments rather than equals.

Uma'la

The launching-point for trading expeditions across the Sunless Ocean, Uma'la is the wealthiest city-state of the Ssujala, and Ivahdra's constant rival for power and prestige. Its vaash-la, Horucar, is an enormous serpent-man — a former warrior well gone into decadence and fat from years of easy living, but still quite able to wield a blade to deadly effect if he has to.

MOUNT TASHKAR

The Ssujala, who greatly dislike the cold, spend little time in the mountains; their legends and histories describe only bad, evil things coming from them. They particularly dread Mt. Tashkar, the tallest peak in all of Inner-Earth, considering it roughly the same as Hell. It's the abode of ice demons, frost-ghosts, and the spirits of the evil or unshriven dead. They don't even like to let the mountain's shadow fall upon them, and they would never go anywhere near it (much less climb it).

THE ISLANDS OF THE SERPENT-MEN

In the midst of the Jhusara Sea is a small archipelago of islands. The Aztlanecs call them the Islands of the Serpent-Men, and in fact Ssujala ships prevent any other vessels from going close to them (never mind landing on them to explore the mysterious ruins there). However, the Ssujala rarely go to the islands themselves; they seem to regard them with a superstitious dread.

SSUJALA PACKAGE DEAL

Abilities

| Cost | Ability |
|------|---|
| 4 | +2 CON |
| 4 | +2 BODY |
| 4 | +2 EGO |
| 3 | +3 PRE |
| 10 | <i>Fangs:</i> HKA ½d6 |
| 2 | <i>Ssujala Skin:</i> Damage Resistance (2 PD/2 ED) |
| 5 | <i>Tail:</i> Extra Limb, Inherent (+¼); Limited Manipulation (-¼) |
| 1 | Swimming +1” |

Total Cost Of Package Abilities: 33

Disadvantages

| Value | Disadvantage |
|-------|--------------|
| None | |

Total Value Of Package Disadvantages: 0

People

Here's more information on some serpent-men your PCs might encounter during their time in Inner-Earth, including a Ssujala Package Deal and character sheets for "generic" warriors and assassins.

NAA'RU, VAASH-LA OF IVAHDRA

| | | | | | | | |
|----|-----|----|------|----|-----|----|------|
| 15 | STR | 16 | DEX | 17 | CON | 13 | BODY |
| 15 | INT | 14 | EGO | 20 | PRE | 10 | COM |
| 8 | PD | 6 | ED | 4 | SPD | 8 | REC |
| 34 | END | 30 | STUN | | | | |

Abilities: Standard Ssujala abilities (see Package Deal); +2 with All Combat; Bureaucratics 13-; Climbing 12-; Conversation 13-; High Society 13-; Interrogation 13-; KS: Aztlan 11-; KS: Ssujala History And Civilization 12-; KS: Ssujala Nobility 12-; KS: Ssujala Theology 12-; Martial Arts (Ssujala Swordfighting; use Kenjutsu); Oratory 13-; Persuasion 13-; Stealth 12-; Tactics 12-; WF: Common Melee Weapons, Common Missile Weapons, Off Hand; Contacts (Well-Connected and 20 points' worth of Contacts among the Ssujala nobility and priesthood); Fringe Benefits: Head Of The Church, Head Of State, Right To Marry; Money (Wealthy); Ambidexterity (no Off Hand penalty)

75+ Disadvantages: Hunted: Aztlan 11- (As Pow, Kill); Hunted: various enemies among the nobility and priesthood (Less Pow, NCI, Kill/Usurp Throne); Psychological Limitation: Ruthlessly Powerhungry; Psychological Limitation: Hates Non-Ssujala; Social Limitation: Famous

Notes: Naa'ru is Vaash-la of Ivahdra, which effectively makes him king of the serpent-men... and that's just how he likes it. Ever since he was old enough to realize what power was, he's wanted it. Although a high noble among the serpent-men, he wasn't in direct line for the throne — at least not until he began "removing" rivals and obstacles through clever manipulation, assassination, and

similar methods. Since finally attaining the rulership of Ivahdra ten years ago, he's held onto power with an iron grip; every attempt to eliminate or remove him has failed, leaving his enemies twitching on the impaling-spikes after long weeks of torture in his dungeons. His ambition now is to conquer Aztlan, but so far the doughy Aztecs have repelled his invading forces every time he's tried.

Naa'ru has a natural gift for many pursuits, including warfare. He's a skilled warrior trained in the Ssujala swordfighting style. He can use either hand equally well, so he often favors a two-sword fighting style instead of the sword-and-shield adopted by most of his soldiers. He's no coward, but neither is he foolishly obsessed with honor and machismo — if someone challenges him, the challenger has to defeat a lot of his warriors (perhaps including Ilarin; see below) before the vaash-la himself takes up the blade to defeat his presumptuous foe.

ILARIN

| | | | | | | | |
|----|-----|----|------|----|-----|----|------|
| 18 | STR | 18 | DEX | 18 | CON | 15 | BODY |
| 13 | INT | 12 | EGO | 15 | PRE | 10 | COM |
| 10 | PD | 8 | ED | 4 | SPD | 10 | REC |
| 36 | END | 40 | STUN | | | | |

Abilities: Standard Ssujala abilities (see Package Deal); Bureaucratics 12-; Climbing 13-; KS: Aztlan 11-; KS: Ssujala History And Civilization 11-; KS: Ssujala Nobility 8-; Martial Arts (Ssujala Swordfighting; use Kenjutsu); Navigation (Marine, Land) 12-; Persuasion 12-; Stealth 12-; Tactics 12-; WF: Common Melee Weapons, Common Missile Weapons; Fringe Benefit: General Of Ivahdra

75+ Disadvantages: Hunted: Aztlan 11- (As Pow, Kill); Hunted: Naa'ru (Mo Pow, NCI, Watching); Psychological Limitation: Proud, Can't Tolerate Insults Or Challenges Without Responding; Psychological Limitation: Hates Non-Ssujala; Social Limitation: Subject To Orders

Notes: Ilarin is the greatest living general of the serpent-men and Vaash-la Naa'ru's right-hand man in his efforts to maintain control of the Ssujala and conquer Aztlan. (Ilarin has no personal devotion to Naa'ru, but recognizes that the Vaash-la of Ivahdra is the most powerful Ssujala in the land, so he serves him loyally out of self-interest.) A former gladiatorial warrior, he parlayed a string of victories in the arena into a military position, then used his natural talents and fearlessness to ascend the ranks. Skilled at both land and naval warfare, he's eager for another try at conquering Aztlan.

TA'HISHRÉ

| | | | | | | | |
|----|-----|----|------|----|-----|----|------|
| 8 | STR | 12 | DEX | 12 | CON | 10 | BODY |
| 18 | INT | 15 | EGO | 13 | PRE | 8 | COM |
| 3 | PD | 3 | ED | 3 | SPD | 5 | REC |
| 24 | END | 20 | STUN | | | | |

Abilities: Standard Ssujala abilities (see Package Deal); Cloud Men's Minds and 32 more points' worth of spells and mystic abilities (see Mysticism, above); Conversation 12-; KS: Arcane And Occult Lore 14-; KS: Ssujala History And Civilization 13-; KS: Ssujala Sorcery 12-; Power: Ssujala Sorcery 20-;

75+ Disadvantages: Hunted: various Ssujala authorities (Mo Pow, NCI, Watching); Psychological Limitation: Curiosity, Must Examine/Question Everything; Social Limitation: social outcast

Notes: Known as Ta'hishré the Renegade, Ta'hishré the Apostate, and Ta'hishré the Unpleasant, this renowned serpent-man is a mystic of great skill and ability. Possessed of what Humans would call a scientific mind, he seeks to learn everything he can, and questions much of what his fellow serpent-men take as gospel. For example, he doesn't necessarily think of other races as slaves or food (in fact, he thinks some, including Humans, may know things worth learning), and he thinks Ssujala superstitions about mountains are foolish. He's a social outcast, rarely even spoken of in polite company — if it weren't for his powers and the assistance he's rendered to more than one vaash-la during his life, he'd likely have been killed as a troublemaker long ago.

TYPICAL SSUJALA WARRIOR

| | | | | | | | |
|----|-----|----|------|----|-----|----|------|
| 12 | STR | 12 | DEX | 13 | CON | 11 | BODY |
| 10 | INT | 10 | EGO | 13 | PRE | 8 | COM |
| 5 | PD | 4 | ED | 3 | SPD | 5 | REC |
| 26 | END | 24 | STUN | | | | |

Abilities: Standard Ssujala abilities (see Package Deal); +1 with Sword (or Spear, GM's choice); Stealth 11-; Tactics 8-; WF: Common Melee Weapons, Common Missile Weapons

50+ Disadvantages: Social Limitation: Subject To Orders

Notes: This character sheet represents the typical Ssujala warrior whom the characters might fight. He carries a scimitar-like sword (HKA 1d6+1, STR Min 10) and a spear (HKA 1d6, STR Min 10, 1" reach), wears scale mail (DEF 5), and has a round medium shield (+2 DCV).

TYPICAL SSUJALA ASSASSIN

| | | | | | | | |
|----|-----|----|------|----|-----|----|------|
| 13 | STR | 15 | DEX | 16 | CON | 13 | BODY |
| 13 | INT | 13 | EGO | 15 | PRE | 8 | COM |
| 6 | PD | 5 | ED | 4 | SPD | 6 | REC |
| 32 | END | 30 | STUN | | | | |

Abilities: Standard Ssujala abilities (see Package Deal); Acrobatics 12-; Breakfall 12-; Climbing 12-; Contortionist 12-; KS: Methods Of Assassination 14-; Lockpicking 12-; Martial Arts (16 points' worth; use Karate or Ninjutsu); PS: Brew Poison 11-; Security Systems 12-; Shadowing 12-; Stealth 14-; Streetwise 12-; WF: Common Melee Weapons, Common Missile Weapons, Garrote

50+ Disadvantages: Hunted: hirelings and followers of his current and former targets 11- (As Pow, Kill); Psychological Limitation: Code Of The Assassin

Notes: The Ssujala have a long and respected tradition of settling their differences with assassination. A class of highly-trained assassins (kswaga) has arisen to satisfy the need for hired killers. Skilled at weapons use, unarmed combat, poisoning, and many other disciplines, a Ssujala assassin can deal death in dozens of ways. Some are also adept at disguise and impersonation, making it even easier for them to get close to their victims. Rivalries often exist between assassins from different schools or who studied under different masters, adding yet another current of tension to an already-dangerous occupation.

THE NORTHERN CAVERN



The northern section of Inner-Earth has entrances from Europe and Central Asia. Like the Eastern Cavern it's home to two groups — tribes of Mongols on the plains to the east, and tribes of Neanderthal cave-men in the mountainous, forested lands to the west. Compared to the Ssujala and Aztecs these two groups have relatively little contact with each other. The Northern Cavern is split by two great rivers, the Ondor-Haan in the east and the Gala-Kasha in the west/center. The Ondor-Haan is often deep, but in places becomes shallow enough to be forded or narrow enough for bridges. The Gala-Kasha, on the other hand, is swift, broad, deep, and often cuts through gorges. In effect it forms a natural barrier that keeps the Neanderthal lands relatively safe from the Mongols. Only rarely do groups of Mongol warriors decide it's worth the effort to find a way to cross the Gala-Kasha and raid the lands of the *Belemei* (the "Dark-Browed Ones," their name for the Neanderthals)... especially since the Neanderthals seem to have relatively few valuables worth taking (aside from timber, which the Mongols covet because their own lands mostly contain small wooded copses).

THE MONGOLS

The eastern region of the northern cavern is mostly plains and steppe-like lands, only lightly forested at best — in other words, a perfect home for the tribes of Mongols who live there. The Mongols have lived in the Inner-Earth for so long that they have no recollection of how they got there, what the surface is like, or even that the surface exists. As far as they (and their tales and legends) are concerned, they've always lived in the Inner-Earth, hunting dinosaurs and competing and fighting among themselves.

Culture

The Mongols live in large tribes, each ruled by a *khan*, or chieftain. A khan's word is law for his people; anyone who doesn't like it is free to challenge him for the position in hand-to-hand combat. Most khans are mighty warriors, but in some tribes the khan is an elder or wise man who appoints a "war chieftain" to lead his soldiers. At times a khan becomes so powerful that he rules multiple tribes as a *kha-khan*.

Most Mongol tribes in the Inner-Earth are semi-nomadic, with a territory they claim sovereignty over and travel through during the year. They herd sheep, goats, and horses, moving from one pastureland to another as needed. Some tribesmen, such as farmers

and smiths, establish more permanent homes and have people who need their services come to them; older Mongols unable to withstand the rigors of travel also settle down (preferably near a woods, river, or other source of food).

Some tribes get along well, linked by marriage, trade, or mutual interests. Others tend to fight with or raid one another frequently — after all, why worry about raising your own livestock or crops when you can just steal someone else's? And all tribes periodically come together with other tribes for a *naghadum*, or festival/competition. The women gossip, trade, and arrange marriages, the craftsmen and entertainers ply their trades, and the warriors compete at horse-riding, wrestling, archery, and swordplay. Usually *naghadums* are a time of celebration and comradeship, but more than one feud has arisen from a quarrel or misunderstanding that began at a festival.

KHANS

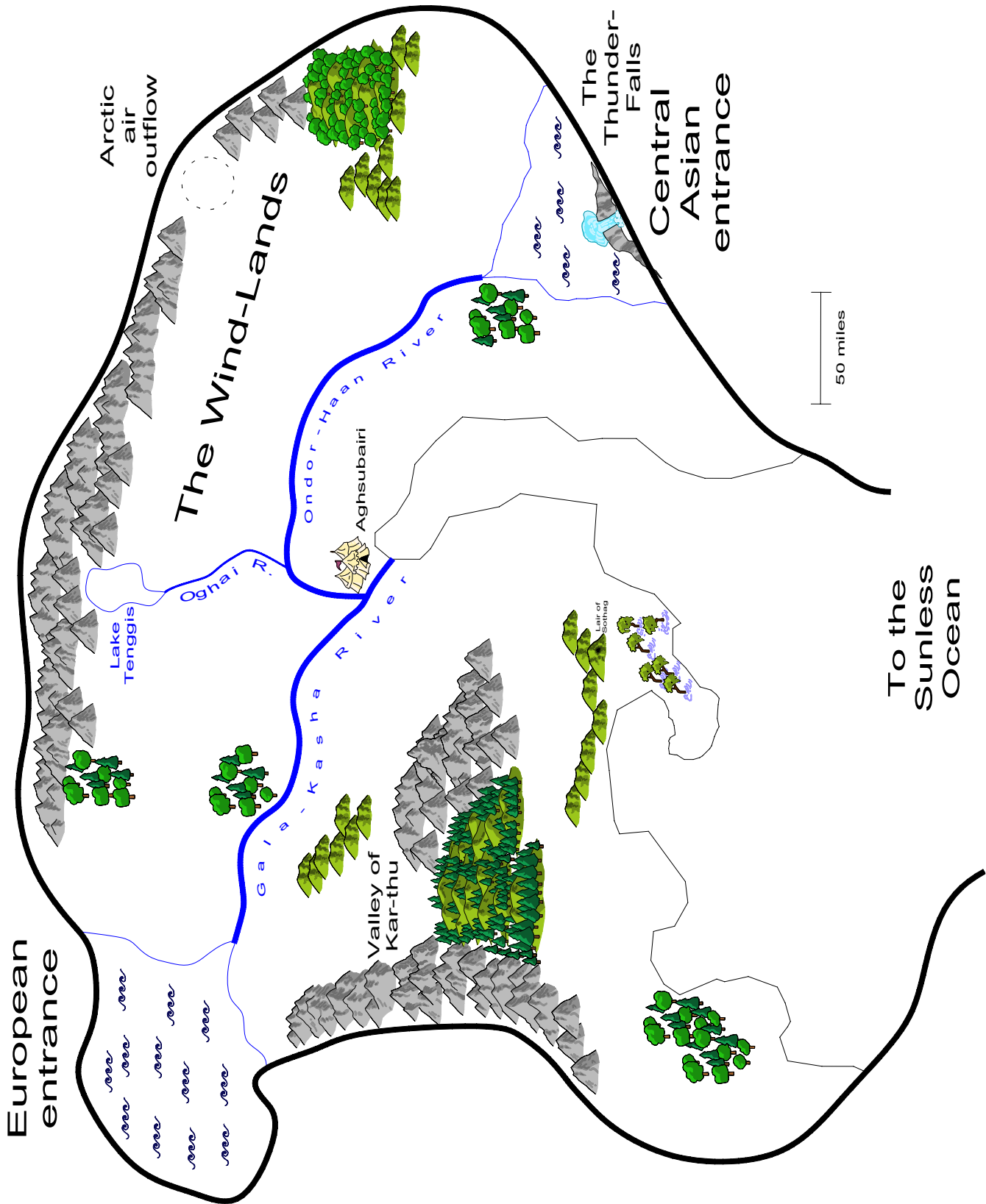
Besides Hulugai Khan and Qara Jasray (see below), some of the other important Mongol Khans include:

Belgutai Sedenbal: A young man full of fire and vigor, Belgutai has three wives and somehow seems able to keep them all happy. An expert archer, he loves to go hunting in the forests and mountains to help keep his tribe supplied with food. Although perhaps more proud than is good for him, he's smart enough to know when there's a way to solve his problems that doesn't involve fighting.

Burilgi Three-Fingers: Despite having only three fingers on his right hand due to a war-wound received when he was a young man, Burilgi is a deadly swordsman renowned for being able to hack the heads off his opponents with a single, powerful blow. His tribe mostly lives in the area south and west of the Thunder-Falls and is known for the swiftness and ferocity of its raids.

Juchin Bira: A doughty old warrior who's seen many battles, Juchin is covered with scars, including one that pulls his left eye partly shut so that it looks like he's always scowling. Full of aches and pains from his injuries and age, he'd like to step aside from the chieftainship of his tribe, but he hasn't found anyone strong and wise enough for him to give the position to without causing tribal infighting.

Kassar Davaa: Khan of a tribe whose territory is along part of the Gala-Kasha River, Kassar Davaa has a well-deserved reputation for cleverness and craftiness — and, some would say, treachery. The Odysseus of Inner-Earth, he prefers to trick or out-



think his opponents rather than just fight them. Observant and suspicious, he doesn't take well to outsiders until they prove themselves trustworthy... and even then he keeps a close eye on them.

RELIGION

The Mongols of the Inner-Earth have developed a simple religion mixing features of monotheism and animism. Their main deity is *Burqan*, the God of Gods, the creator and ruler of all the world. Burqan's countless children are *sakhi*: spirits and godlings that inhabit nearly everything: trees, hills, rocks, weapons, houses. Some living things — particularly horses — are regarded as spirits incarnate; others are simply beasts. A Mongol desiring success in an endeavor offers up a prayer, and perhaps a small burnt sacrifice, to the appropriate spirits. There is no priesthood *per se*, but some tribes have “wise men” or “shamans” who help the tribe interact with Burqan and his children.

WARFARE

The Mongol tribes frequently fight with or raid each other, and when they can find a way to cross the Gala-Kasha River sometimes also like to raid and fight the Neanderthals. They're cavalymen, fighting from horseback with short bows and curved swords. They make their steel weapons from iron ore obtained in the mountains to the north.

In combat, each Mongol tries to obtain as much *aldar*, or “personal glory,” for himself as possible. He does this by defeating enemies and taking from them a trophy, such as a braid of hair, a weapon, or a piece of jewelry. As a result, their style of fighting emphasizes personal battles and challenges rather than massed formations or group tactics.

Places

The Mongol territory, particularly the eastern half, is known as the *Wind-Lands* because of the strong winds that seem to sweep across them constantly, usually to the northeast. The Mongols often consider times of stillness and calm, when the winds don't blow, as unlucky.

The only large permanent settlement the Mongols have established is Aghsubairi, a trading-town where the Ondor-Haan River meets the Gala-Kasha not far from the coast. Here ships of the serpent-men and Aztlanecs dock to trade for the furs, herbs, and craftworks of the Mongols. Many older Mongols “retire” to Aghsubairi, and among the warriors the term “town Mongol” signifies someone who's too weak or civilized to fight.

LAKE TENGGIS

In the far north of the Mongol lands is a large, clear, bitterly cold lake, Tenggis. According to Mongol lore a powerful *sakh*, or guardian godling-spirit, inhabits Tenggis. By tradition no battles may be fought, or any blood shed, within a thousand paces of its shore, or bad luck will befall whoever started the fight.

People

Here's more information on some Mongols your PCs might encounter during their time in Inner-Earth, including a character sheet for a “generic” Mongol warrior.

| HULUGAI KHAN | | | | | | | |
|--------------|-----|----|------|----|-----|----|------|
| 15 | STR | 15 | DEX | 15 | CON | 15 | BODY |
| 15 | INT | 15 | EGO | 20 | PRE | 12 | COM |
| 6 | PD | 4 | ED | 4 | SPD | 7 | REC |
| 30 | END | 31 | STUN | | | | |

Abilities: +2 with All Combat; Conversation 13-; Navigation (Land) 12-; Oratory 13-; Persuasion 13-; Riding 12-; Stealth 12-; Survival (Temperate/Subtropical) 12-; Tactics 12-; Tracking 12-; Trading 13-; TF: Riding Animals; WF: Common Melee Weapons, Bows; Fringe Benefit: Kha-Khan of several Mongol tribes

75+ Disadvantages: Social Limitation: Burdens Of Chieftainship

Notes: Hulugai is the kha-khan of several tribes whose territory lies west of the Oghai River (and thus whom heroes entering the Inner-Earth from the European entrance might meet soon after making their way to land). Despite being nearly 40, he remains stronger, tougher, and a more devious fighter than most of the warriors serving him, and he's proven his wisdom time and time again. Although he's a warrior and knows that sometimes one must fight, he prefers to avoid battle in favor of negotiation or trade when possible. Although suspicious of outsiders, including Mongols from other tribes, he's a good judge of character and quick to warm to friendly visitors who don't seem to pose any threat to him and his.

| QARA JASRAY | | | | | | | |
|-------------|-----|----|------|----|-----|----|------|
| 13 | STR | 18 | DEX | 15 | CON | 14 | BODY |
| 13 | INT | 14 | EGO | 20 | PRE | 16 | COM |
| 5 | PD | 5 | ED | 4 | SPD | 6 | REC |
| 30 | END | 30 | STUN | | | | |

Abilities: +4 with All Combat; Climbing 12-; Martial Arts (Swordfighting, see FH 91); Navigation (Land) 12-; Persuasion 13-; Riding 13-; Stealth 13-; Survival (Temperate/Subtropical) 12-; Tactics 12-; TF: Riding Animals; WF: Common Melee Weapons, Bows; Fringe Benefit: Khan of a Mongol tribe

75+ Disadvantages: Psychological Limitation: Determined To Prove Herself The Equal Or Superior Of Any Man; Social Limitation: Burdens Of Chieftainship

Notes: It's rare that a woman ascend to a position of power and authority in Mongol society, but Qara Jasray is no ordinary woman. Intelligent, strong-willed, beautiful, and determined to bow to no one, she quickly earned a reputation as a troublemaker when she was growing up. But she proved to have a natural talent for warrior's work, and before her twentieth winter she'd slain the khan of her tribe and taken his place. Though the warriors at first grumbled about obeying a woman, she soon

showed them that not only could she defeat any of them in trial by combat, but she could lead them to victory in raids and battles against other tribes. Having now ruled for nearly 10 years, she's well-loved by her people. Having not yet met a man she considered worthy of her attentions, she has not married.

TYPICAL MONGOL WARRIOR

| | | | | | | | |
|----|-----|----|------|----|-----|----|------|
| 15 | STR | 14 | DEX | 14 | CON | 12 | BODY |
| 10 | INT | 10 | EGO | 13 | PRE | 8 | COM |
| 5 | PD | 4 | ED | 3 | SPD | 6 | REC |
| 28 | END | 27 | STUN | | | | |

Abilities: +1 with Bows; Navigation (Land) 8-; Riding 12-; Stealth 12-; Survival (Temperate/Subtropical) 11-; TF: Riding Animals; WF: Common Melee Weapons, Bows;

75+ Disadvantages: Social Limitation: Subject To Orders

Notes: This character sheet represents a typical Mongol warrior. He's usually on horseback and carries a scimitar-like sword (HKA 1d6+1, STR Min 11), a spear (HKA 1d6+1, STR Min 10, 1" reach), and a light bow (RKA 1d6+1, STR Min 10, 20 arrows).

THE NEANDERTHALS

The least organized of the peoples of the Inner-Earth are the Neanderthals who inhabit the mountainous regions of the northern cavern that lie west of the Gala-Kasha River. They live in small tribes and extended families in caves in the mountains and forests, hunt dinosaurs and other animals, and fight with other tribes for women or territory. Chieftains and shamans rule some "clans" composed of a number of families and tribes, and at times these clans unite to war with the Mongols when the latter dare to cross the river. Like their ancestors on the surface, they use stone tools and other primitive technology, though a few have "magical" metal weapons taken from defeated Mongols or obtained through trade.

By modern human standards, the Neanderthals are not pretty to look at, with their thick browridges, flat and elongated heads, broad noses, barrel chests, and limb bones that aren't proportioned the same as those of *Homo sapiens*. But despite their brutish looks and primitive technology, they're not stupid or animalistic. Heroes who underestimate them, or treat the Neanderthals as if they were idiots, should quickly be taught a lesson in just how clever their prehistoric foes can be!

Culture

The Neanderthals belong to what's known to paleoanthropologists as the *Mousterian* culture. This means they use flaked stone tools and weapons, and know that the flakes they knock off a stone core are often as useful (or more so) than the tool they make from the core itself. They can make hand-axes (sharpened stones used for cutting tasks; HKA ½d6, STR Min 6), wooden-shafted spears with sharp stone heads (HKA 1d6-1, STR Min 10), and various task-specific slicers, choppers, and cutters. Their spears aren't made

for throwing; for that they have sharpened wooden javelin-like weapons (RKA ½d6, STR Min 6).

The Neanderthals make simple cave paintings using ochre and other natural paints and pigments they can find and manufacture. The paintings are typically made by shamans, who wield primitive magics (or so they claim...) to help the tribe and protect it from harm. A tribe's shaman is also its religious leader, presiding over such simple observances as they have and making sure that all tribal taboos are obeyed. They bury their dead, sometimes with a few grave goods, but there's little in the way of a burial ceremony — they lay the corpse in a dug hole and then cover it with dirt or stones.

The Neanderthals speak a language known as *Thal*, described on page 5. Compared to modern human speech it seems ungainly and crude, but it lets them communicate just fine.

Although they may seem simplistic, the Neanderthals are clever hunters and fierce fighters. They're strongly territorial, used to defending their lands against others of their kind as well as occasional Mongol raids. If they perceive someone as a threat — and that doesn't take much — they'll attack without quarter (and often without much regard for their own personal safety).

TRIBES

Some of the Neanderthal tribes of Inner-Earth include:

Bear Skull Tribe

This tribe worships the skull of an enormous cave bear as the manifestation of its bear-god. Each warrior of the tribe wears a necklace of bear claws, one claw for each kill he's made in battle. Fierce and aggressive, the Bear Skull tribe often raids other tribes for food, women, or other resources, and has few friends... even in its own clan.

Deep Cave Tribe

This tribe lives in the mountains north and west of the Valley of Kar-thu in a particularly large and defensible cave complex. Although Deep Cave usually has lots of food and other resources (including springs inside the caves), it rarely gets raided because it can so easily protect itself.

Fire People Tribe

The Fire People tribe worships fire as "pieces of the sun" and always keeps a large bonfire lit in its cave compound. Its shamans have the duty to keep the fire alight; they perform fire-sacrifices to bring good luck and success in hunting and battle to the tribe. The shamans, and some "sacred warriors," go into battle using lit heavy torches as clubs.

Flint Hill Tribe

In the wooded hills a little ways south and east of the Valley of Kar-thu there's a large hill made mostly of flint, and this tribe controls it. Although there are other sources of flint in the Inner-Earth, this flint is among the best, so the Flint Hill tribe can trade it for other things it needs. After fending off numerous raids, the tribe's warriors have become skilled, dangerous fighters.

North Hills Tribe

This is the largest tribe in the range of hills northeast of the Valley of Kar-thu. Its chief, Go-kanna, is old and weak, so the shaman Thoagash really rules the tribe. He's said to want to rule his entire clan, and perhaps eventually many clans.

Places

Much of the Neanderthals' territory is mountainous or hilly, and often forested as well. The people prefer to live in caves when possible, sometimes digging artificial ones into hillsides. Some live in small fishing village-like groups on the coast, or similar communities on the plains.

THE VALLEY OF KAR-THU

The mountains and hills of the central western lands form a large valley that the Neanderthals call *Kar-thu*, meaning "Place of Fear" in Thal. It's home to many large, ferocious dinosaurs — the sort the Neanderthals often don't have to cope with, because such monsters don't like living in mountainous areas.

The Neanderthals don't like entering the Valley at all; some are absolutely terrified of it. Only the bravest warriors and hunters dare to go down there in search of food or valuables. Anyone who goes into the Valley and returns with proof he was there (such as a dinosaur carcass) earns great prestige and esteem in the Neanderthals' eyes.

SOTHAG'S LAIR

The hills and swamps to the south are the territory of a fearsome beast the Neanderthals call *Sothag* — "Eater of All" in their language. Few of them have ever glimpsed Sothag, but they know he exists from the enormous tracks they've seen and the evidence of his kills. Their descriptions tend to suggest that Sothag is some sort of gigantic, long-limbed tyrannosaur, but their stories are so obviously exaggerated, and vary so much from tribe to tribe, that he's probably just a long-dead allosaur who's become a terror through generations of campfire stories. But if the heroes can find proof he exists (like some of the aforementioned tracks), it should become obvious to them that staying far away from him is the healthiest course of action.

People

Here's more information on some Neanderthals your PCs might encounter during their time in the Inner-Earth, including a character sheet for a "generic" Neanderthal warrior.

| KOGAR | | | | | | | |
|-------|-----|----|------|----|-----|----|------|
| 20 | STR | 14 | DEX | 18 | CON | 15 | BODY |
| 10 | INT | 10 | EGO | 15 | PRE | 7 | COM |
| 6 | PD | 4 | ED | 4 | SPD | 8 | REC |
| 36 | END | 34 | STUN | | | | |

Abilities: +1 to PER Rolls with all Sense Groups; +1 HTH; Climbing 12-; AK: Neanderthal Lands 11-; AK: Valley Of Kar-Thu 8-; PS: Clan Leader 13-; PS: Flint Knapping 11-; Stealth 12-; Survival (Temperate) 11-; Tactics 11-; Tracking 11-; WF: Neanderthal

Weapons; Fringe Benefit (Neanderthal clan leader)

75+ Disadvantages: Psychological Limitation: Feels Responsible For Protecting His Clan Subjects; Psychological Limitation: Superstitious; Rivalry (various clansmen or rivals who think they should be chieftain); Social Limitation: Burdens Of Chieftainship

Notes: Kogar is the chief of a large clan of Neanderthals who live on the northern edge of the region of wooded hills between the two large mountain ranges. In his youth he was a daring hunter and warrior who went to the Valley of Kar-Thu many times, often returning with food for his tribe. In time his strength, valor, and wits earned him the chieftainship when he defeated the prior chieftain, a domineering, wily old man named Othog.

Kogar's been chieftain for many years, and he's learned to distrust change. He tends to be suspicious of strangers, fearful of new ways, and reluctant to do things any differently than they've been done before — after all, they work that way, so why switch to another method? But he's no fool, and won't reject something... or someone... new to his clan just because it's strange and different.

Kogar wields a "magical" Mongol sword he took from the body of a raider he slew. He also carries a distinctive club with a large rock bound into the Y-shaped fork at its end by dinosaur sinew. As chieftain, he gets to wear an unusually-shaped piece of turquoise on a leather thong around his neck as a symbol of his position.

| RAN-HAR OF THE BONES | | | | | | | |
|----------------------|-----|----|------|----|-----|----|------|
| 10 | STR | 15 | DEX | 14 | CON | 12 | BODY |
| 13 | INT | 14 | EGO | 15 | PRE | 8 | COM |
| 4 | PD | 4 | ED | 3 | SPD | 5 | REC |
| 28 | END | 24 | STUN | | | | |

Abilities: Psychic Powers (Aura Vision, Dowsing, Foresight, Sensitive); Conversation 12-; Deduction 12-; KS: Clan Religion 15-; Oratory 12-; Paramedics 12-; Persuasion 12-; PS: Shaman 14-; Stealth 12-; Survival (Temperate) 12-; WF: Flint Knife; Fringe Benefit (clan shaman)

75+ Disadvantages: Psychological Limitation: Must Serve The Religious/Mystical Needs Of The Clan; Psychological Limitation: Superstitious; Social Limitation: Burdens Of Shamanship

Notes: Ran-Har is a shaman of a Neanderthal clan (whether it's the clan Kogar rules or some other clan is up to you). Old — 32! — and scrawny, he's remarkable spry for his advanced age and a storehouse of clan lore and history. As the clan shaman, he's responsible for conducting religious rituals, placating the spirits, protecting the tribes from hostile forces, and combatting enemy shamans. He takes these duties very seriously, and is beloved for both his powers and his wisdom.

Ran-Har is generally friendly and open, willing to talk with anyone about anything — he likes to think he knows something about everything, and thus always has a "helpful" opinion to offer. He becomes stern, even harsh, if someone endangers the tribe or does something that could bring evil spirits down upon his people.

Ran-Har comes by his nickname because he always wears his special bone necklace (which rattles as he walks, and to which he occasionally adds new bones) and a bag of divination bones (he throws them onto a flat surface and reads the pattern they form to use his Foresight; the bag's an OAF for the ability). He'll often trade for unusual or oddly-shaped bones; they seem to fascinate him.

NEANDERTHAL WARRIOR

| | | | | | | | |
|----|-----|----|------|----|-----|----|------|
| 13 | STR | 13 | DEX | 15 | CON | 14 | BODY |
| 8 | INT | 8 | EGO | 10 | PRE | 6 | COM |
| 4 | PD | 4 | ED | 3 | SPD | 6 | REC |
| 30 | END | 30 | STUN | | | | |

Abilities: Climbing 12-; AK: Neanderthal Lands 11-; PS: Tribal Hunter/Warrior 13-; PS: Flint Knapping 11-; Stealth 12-; Survival (Temperate) 11-; Tracking 8-; WF: Neanderthal Weapons

75+ Disadvantages: Social Limitation: Subject To Orders (of tribe or clan chiefs)

Notes: This character sheet represents a typical Neanderthal warrior. He usually carries a flint-tipped spear (HKA 1d6-1, STR Min 10), a club (4d6 Normal Damage, STR Min 10), and a flint hand-axe or chopping tool of some sort.

OTHER LANDS



While your Pulp heroes are likely to spend most of their time in the Inner-Earth in either the eastern or northern cavern (or both!), there are other parts of known Inner-Earth that they might explore.

THE SOUTHERN CAVERN

Hanging off the south side of the Sunless Ocean like a fruit waiting to be plucked, the southern cavern is little known to the inhabitants of other parts of Inner-Earth. As of 1935, it does not seem to have any native civilizations. There are signs that people once lived there — a few remnants of villages here and there; the large, unnamed ruins of a stone city on the shores of Lake Malagani; a few other small stone structures elsewhere — but today the land is inhabited only by beasts.

The flora and fauna of the southern cavern seem mainly African in nature. The land is mostly East African-like savannah, though there are patches of jungle and swamp here and there. Lions, elephants, pythons, zebras, rhinos, leopards, giraffes, and ostriches flourish, along with many lesser animals. Some dinosaurs, mainly small herbivores preyed on by the great cats, live here as well. Player characters looking for more-familiar surroundings may find a few days' "safari" here worthwhile, and of course the hunting's good.

THE SUNLESS OCEAN

Connecting the three land caverns of Inner-Earth is an enormous, water-filled cavern called the Sunless Ocean. It's mostly under the Pacific Ocean and so receives no sunlight at all. It's pitch-black, lit only by the illumination brought into it by human sailors. The fish and other animals who live in its dark waters tend to be blind and albinos, provide their own light via biolumi-

nescence like the anglerfish, or have dolphin-like sonar.

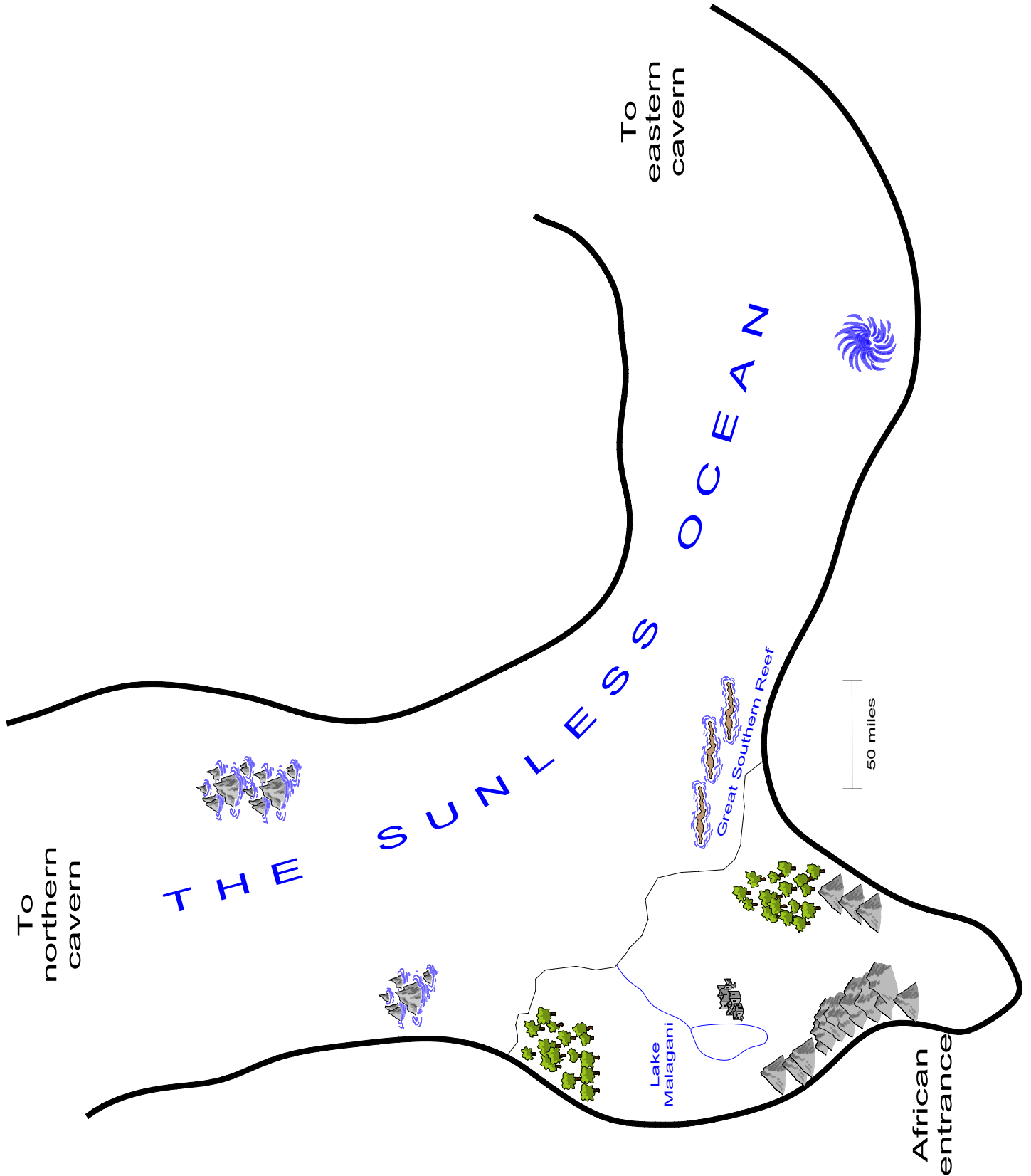
Some of the creatures who live in the Sunless Ocean are gigantic, a threat to man and ship alike: megalodons, plesiosaurs, mosasaurs, ichthyosaurs, deinosaurs, and more. Some seem to have grown even larger than they did in the surface oceans. It's not uncommon for sailors to hear the stentorian roars of the great beasts as they breach the surface beyond the reach of a ship's lights, or even to hear (or see) two of these titans clash in lethal battle. And more than one unwary Aztlanec or serpent-man sailor has been plucked from the deck and eaten by a greedy plesiosaur.

Nor are sea creatures the only threats. At several places in the Sunless Ocean whirlpools or rocky shoals threaten entire ships. Mariners try to steer clear of them, but in the absence of landmarks and sunlight it's often hard to navigate a straight line through the night-dark cavern (characters suffer a -2 to all Navigation rolls) — most ships stick to the cavern walls if possible, but of course must steer out into the middle of the sea to get around various hazards. As one approaches the southern coast of the southern cavern, there's a large reef that can rip apart a ship's hull as if it were paper. Despite this, many ships make for the reefs in search of exotic fish species prized as food, pearls, and other valuables.

THE SHIPS OF INNER-EARTH

Because there's relatively little wind in the Sunless Ocean, ships that traverse it are usually bireme- or trireme-like vessels that can be rowed as well as sailed. Most have a crew of around 200 all told, plus a generous hold for transporting cargo. Usually some of the crew are soldiers to protect the ship and its personnel, and it's not uncommon for a ship to have a catapult, ballista, or other large weapon mounted on the deck. See *The Ultimate Vehicle* and *The HERO System Vehicle Sourcebook* for character sheets for various ships you can adapt for use in Inner-Earth.

GAMEMASTERING INNER-EARTH



THE NAZI EXPEDITION



Your player characters aren't the only ones who've found their way to the Inner-Earth. A Nazi exploratory expedition was trapped down here some time ago (possibly months, depending on the needs of your campaign). When they got here, how they arrived, how much of their equipment and supplies they still have, what they've been doing, and where they are now is up to you.

Having now been trapped in the Inner-Earth for a while, the Germans are eager to find a way out... and equally eager to bring news of the place to their masters in the SS. They're well aware of the strategic military value of Inner-Earth (not to mention its vast scientific value) and want to make sure Germany alone controls the place.

ERNST HEILBRUCK

| Val | Char | Cost | Roll | Notes |
|-----|------|------|------|--|
| 18 | STR | 8 | 13- | Lift 300 kg; 3½d6 [4] |
| 18 | DEX | 24 | 13- | OCV: 6/DCV: 6 |
| 18 | CON | 16 | 13- | |
| 15 | BODY | 10 | 12- | |
| 15 | INT | 5 | 12- | PER Roll 12- |
| 18 | EGO | 16 | 13- | ECV: 6 |
| 20 | PRE | 10 | 13- | PRE Attack: 4d6 |
| 10 | COM | 0 | 11- | |
| 6 | PD | 2 | | Total: 11 PD (5 rPD) |
| 6 | ED | 2 | | Total: 11 ED (5 rED) |
| 4 | SPD | 12 | | Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12 |
| 8 | REC | 0 | | |
| 36 | END | 0 | | |
| 40 | STUN | 7 | | Total Characteristics Cost: 112 |

Movement: Running: 7"/14"

Cost Powers END

| | OCV | DCV | Damage/Effect |
|---|--|-----|------------------------------------|
| <i>Martial Arts: Cinematic Brawling</i> | | | |
| 4 | Block | +2 | +2 Block, Abort |
| 4 | Disarm | -1 | +1 Disarm, 38 STR to Disarm |
| 5 | Hoist 'n' Heave | -2 | -2 Grab Two Limbs, 48 STR to Throw |
| 4 | Kidney Blow | -2 | +0 HKA 1d6 (2d6 with STR) |
| 4 | Low Blow | -1 | +1 3d6 NND(3) |
| 4 | Punch | +0 | +2 7½d6 Strike |
| 5 | Roundhouse | -2 | +1 9½d6 Strike |
| 3 | Throw | +0 | +1 5½d6 +v/5; Target Falls |
| 8 | +2 Damage Classes (already added in) | | |
| 15 | <i>Cinematic Safety:</i> Armor (5 PD/5 ED) 0 | | |
| 2 | <i>Fast:</i> Running +1" (7" total) 1 | | |

Perks

- 1 Fringe Benefit: Passport
- 5 Military Rank: SS-Hauptsturmführer
- 6 Money: Wealthy
- 4 Reputation: adventuring Nazi archaeologist (around the world) 11-, +2/+2d6

Skills

- 10 +1 Overall
- 3 Climbing 13-
- 3 Combat Driving 13-
- 3 Concealment 12-
- 2 Cryptography 12-; Translation Only (-½)
- 3 Deduction 12-
- 1 Forgery (Art Objects) 8-
- 3 Lockpicking 12-
- 3 Mechanics 12-
- 2 Navigation (Land) 12-
- 2 PS: Expeditioneering 11-
- 2 PS: Writer 11-
- 3 Riding 13-
- 3 Security Systems 12-
- 3 Stealth 13-
- 3 Streetwise 13-
- 6 Survival (Deserts, Temperate/Subtropical, Tropical) 12-
- 3 Trading 13-
- 5 TF: Common Motorized Ground Vehicles, Riding Animals, Two-Wheeled Motorized Ground Vehicles
- 4 WF: Common Melee Weapons, Small Arms
- 3 Linguist
- 1 1) Akkadian (fluent conversation; German is Native)
- 1 2) Arabic (fluent conversation)
- 1 3) Cantonese Chinese (fluent conversation)
- 1 4) Egyptian Hieroglyphics (fluent conversation)
- 1 5) English (fluent conversation)
- 1 6) French (fluent conversation)
- 1 7) Greek (fluent conversation)
- 1 8) Hindustani (fluent conversation)
- 1 9) Japanese (fluent conversation)
- 1 10) Latin (fluent conversation)
- 1 11) Mandarin Chinese (fluent conversation)
- 1 12) Russian (fluent conversation)
- 1 13) Sanskrit (fluent conversation)
- 1 14) Swahili (fluent conversation)
- 1 15) Tibetan (fluent conversation)
- 1 16) Turkish (fluent conversation)
- 3 Scholar
- 2 1) KS: Arcane And Occult Lore 12-
- 2 2) KS: The Archaeology World 12-
- 2 3) KS: Art And Antiquities Market 12-

- 2 4) KS: Art History 12-
- 2 5) KS: History 12-
- 2 6) KS: Nazi Doctrine And Philosophy 12-
- 2 7) KS: The SS 12-
- 3 Scientist
- 5 1) SS: Anthropology 15-
- 5 2) SS: Archaeology 15-
- 2 3) SS: Geology 12-
- 2 4) SS: Paleoanthropology 12-
- 3 Traveler
- 3 1) AK: Africa 13-
- 3 2) AK: Central Asia 13-
- 3 3) AK: China 13-
- 2 4) AK: Europe 12-
- 2 5) AK: India 12-
- 2 6) AK: The Mediterranean 12-
- 2 7) AK: Mexico And Central America 12-
- 2 8) AK: The Near East 12-
- 2 9) AK: Russia 12-
- 2 10) AK: South America 12-

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 220

Total Cost: 332

75+ Disadvantages

- 15 Hunted: the SS 11- (Mo Pow, NCI, Watching)
- 10 Hunted: one of those meddling “heroes” 8- (As Pow, Thwart)
- 15 Psychological Limitation: Dedicated Nazi (Common, Strong)
- 10 Psychological Limitation: Fascinated By The Past And Its Relics (Common, Moderate)
- 5 Rivalry: Professional (with “adventuring archaeologists,” like Valentine Keene and Carolina Caldwell)
- 20 Social Limitation: Subject To Orders (Frequently, Major)
- 182 Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 332

Background/History: Ernst Heilbruck’s name has been known around the world since 1929, when as a 25 year-old archaeologist he was the only member of a German expedition into the Amazon rainforest to return alive. His book about his adventures and the expedition’s ultimately unsuccessful quest to find a lost city described in colonial-era manuscripts, *Into The Green World*, became a best-seller in both Europe and America. The money he earned from the book (and the film rights) made him wealthy enough to finance expeditions of his

own to Africa and Central Asia in conjunction with various German universities.

In 1933 Heilbruck, a loyal member of the Nazi Party since 1929, joined the ranks of the SS. His groundbreaking expedition to Siberia later that year (including, rumor has it, the recovery of some strange and as-yet unidentified relics) brought him another bestseller, more fame, and promotion to the rank of *Hauptsturmführer* (Head Storm Leader) in the SS (roughly equivalent to an Army captain). In early 1935 SS leader Reichsführer Heinrich Himmler granted him the funding to establish a new program, the Heilbruck Research Institute, under the auspices of the Ahnenerbe (Ancestral Heritage organization). Since then he’s continue to travel the world on behalf of Nazi Germany, seeking archaeological relics, anthropological data, and scientific, historical proof of Aryan superiority.

Personality/Motivation: Heilbruck is a man with two passions — passions that sometimes war with each other. On the one hand, he’s a loyal member of the Nazi Party who believes strongly in the Nazi ideals of German military, cultural, and racial superiority. On the other, he’s fascinated by the history and peoples of the world, its relics and artifacts, and nearly everything to do with archaeology and anthropology. His work for the SS and Ahnenerbe allows him to combine these passions by searching for historical evidence of German superiority, but at times the scientist in him clashes with the Party member. When his finds help the Reich and support its doctrines, all is well. When they do not, he must decide whether to bury the information, distort it, or report it correctly — an agonizing decision that he puts off as long as he can (if necessary by launching another expedition before he’s really had time to prepare the findings of the last one). He prefers to be in the field conducting his research (and sometimes contending with rivals like Steven “Carolina” Caldwell), where such questions don’t press upon him so hard.

Quote: “When will you learn, Dr. Caldwell, that Science is but one more tool with which Aryan superiority will be proven?”

Powers/Tactics: Ernst Heilbruck is a highly-experienced field anthropologist and archaeologist. He’s traveled all over the world, survived in some of the most desolate wildernesses on the planet, and come out on top in barroom brawls in dives from Shanghai to Rio. While he rarely looks for a fight, as an SS officer he doesn’t back down from one, either.

SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT

| Weapon | OCV | RMod | Dam | STUN | Shots | STR Min | Notes |
|------------|-----|------|-------|-------|-------|---------|----------------------|
| Luger P-08 | +1 | +0 | 1d6+1 | 1d6-1 | 8 | 8 | Carries 1 extra clip |
| Machete | +0 | — | 1d6 | 1d6-1 | — | 8 | |
| Knife | +0 | +0 | 1d6-1 | 1d6-1 | — | 6 | Can Be Thrown |

Armor
None

Gear: Notebook and pencil; compass; magnifying glass; archaeologist’s tools

Clothing: See Appearance

ERNST HEILBRUCK PLOT SEEDS

The classic Ernst Heilbruck plot #1: The PCs learn Heilbruck's leading an expedition to someplace unusual. He must be on to something! They'd better get there first and beat him to the punch! (Alternately, *he* learns *they* are on the track of a major find and sets out to discover it first.)

The classic Ernst Heilbruck plot #2: The PCs and Heilbruck and his expedition meet in the field. They're both in desperate straits. Despite their mutual dislike and distrust, they've got to work together to survive and find what they're both looking for. (Alternately, they may agree to work together in advance to undertake a difficult expedition, with Heilbruck looking for an opportunity to betray the PCs and the PCs trying to detect and thwart his treachery.)

While on an expedition, the PCs stop to spend the night in a peasant's hut... and find Ernst Heilbruck lying on the bed! He's badly injured — so badly that he's barely conscious and will probably die if they can't get him to modern medical care somehow. If they have any doubts about saving his life (and they shouldn't, as Pulp heroes), he starts raving in his delirium about whatever lost city or artifact they're currently looking for... and based on what he's saying, he clearly knows something the heroes *really* need to learn if they're going to succeed

Fiercely competitive, he'll drive himself and his underlings almost to the point of death to beat out a rival or prove the accuracy of his theories.

Campaign Use: In archaeology, exploration, and Globetrotting Adventure stories, Ernst Heilbruck is a perfect adversary for the PCs. While they have to respect his experience, learning, and accomplishments in his chosen field, they can gladly loathe him for his Nazi beliefs and desire to pervert science to prove National Socialist doctrine.

To make Heilbruck a tougher opponent, give him some Combat Skill Levels with his Cinematic Brawling or firearms and/or more Extra DCs for his Martial Arts. You could also increase his STR to 20. To weaken him, reduce his STR to 15, remove his Extra DCs, and get rid of his Overall Skill Level.

As a Hunter, Heilbruck is tenacious and determined. His goal isn't to kill or injure the PCs, but to get whatever they're after before they do (or take it from them). If possible, he researches his target in advance, looking for weaknesses he can exploit. Once he's ready, he'll go after them, sticking to them like glue until he gets what he wants.

Appearance: Ernst Heilbruck had no trouble meeting the "appearance" qualifications for the SS. At 6'0" tall, with blonde hair, blue eyes, and a strong chin, he embodies Himmler's Aryan ideal to a T. He prefers sturdy field clothes appropriate to the environment and climate when on an expedition; in Germany he proudly wears his SS uniform.

THE REST OF THE EXPEDITION

Serving under Heilbruck are four German scientists, most of them about his age or a little younger, all members of the SS.

STEFAN LESKER

| | | | | | | | |
|----|-----|----|------|----|-----|----|------|
| 10 | STR | 12 | DEX | 13 | CON | 12 | BODY |
| 13 | INT | 12 | EGO | 13 | PRE | 10 | COM |
| 4 | PD | 3 | ED | 2 | SPD | 5 | REC |
| 26 | END | 24 | STUN | | | | |

Abilities: Climbing 11-; Stealth 11-; Survival (Temperate/Subtropical, Tropical) 12-; Systems Operation 8-; WF: Small Arms; Scientist and SS: Biology 11-, SS: Chemistry 11-, SS: Herpetology 12-, SS: Zoology 12-; Fringe Benefit: Passport; Military Rank (in SS)

75+ Disadvantages: Hunted: the SS (Watched); Social Limitation: Subject To Orders

Notes: Stefan Lesker is the expedition's zoologist, charged with observing animals in the wild, collecting specimens of unusual, rare, or previously undiscovered beasts, and the like. His particular interest is herpetology (the study of reptiles), so he's been captivated by the Inner-Earth's dinosaurs (not to mention its copious snakes). Of all the German scientists, he's the least enamored of Nazi ideals (and the lowest-ranking in the SS) and the only one who doesn't really mind being trapped here. He's more worried about how he'll get his samples out

once they do find a way to return to the surface.

MAXIMILIAN "MAX" PELZER

| | | | | | | | |
|----|-----|----|------|----|-----|----|------|
| 12 | STR | 14 | DEX | 14 | CON | 13 | BODY |
| 14 | INT | 10 | EGO | 13 | PRE | 8 | COM |
| 5 | PD | 3 | ED | 3 | SPD | 5 | REC |
| 28 | END | 30 | STUN | | | | |

Abilities: +2 with Firearms; Can Handle His Booze; Climbing 12-; Mechanics 8-; Persuasion 12-; Survival (Temperate/Subtropical, Tropical) 12-; WF: Small Arms; Scientist and SS: Biology 11-, SS: Botany 12-, SS: Chemistry 11-, SS: Dendrology 12-, SS: Zoology 11-; Fringe Benefit: Passport; Military Rank (in SS)

75+ Disadvantages: Hunted: the SS (Watched); Psychological Limitation: Loyal Nazi; Social Limitation: Subject To Orders

Notes: A large, genial, bald-headed fellow with a booming voice and a hearty laugh, Max Pelzer is the expedition's botanist and an old friend of Heilbruck's. Compared to his fellows he's open and friendly, always willing to share a campfire and exchange news and information with other explorers of similar attitude. Like Lesker, he's been happily collecting specimens from the Inner-Earth's jungles, plains, and thickets; he thinks that his finds will make him famous, particularly if (as he expects) some of the plants he's found revolutionize agrostology (the study of grasses).

Ironically, despite the fact that he doesn't have to hunt his specimens like Lesker does, Pelzer is the best shot in the group aside from Heilbruck.

DIETER TISCHLER

| | | | | | | | |
|----|-----|----|------|----|-----|----|------|
| 10 | STR | 10 | DEX | 12 | CON | 10 | BODY |
| 18 | INT | 13 | EGO | 13 | PRE | 8 | COM |
| 4 | PD | 3 | ED | 3 | SPD | 4 | REC |
| 24 | END | 21 | STUN | | | | |

Abilities: Conversation 12-; High Society 12-; KS: Nazi Racial Doctrine 13-; Persuasion 12-; Survival (Temperate/Subtropical, Tropical) 12-; WF: Small Arms; Scientist and SS: Anthropology 12-; SS: Biology 11-, SS: Ethnology 12-, SS: Ethnography 12-; SS: Zoology 11-; Contacts (15 points' worth in Germany's upper crust); Fringe Benefit: Passport; Military Rank (in SS)

75+ Disadvantages: Hunted: the SS (Watched); Psychological Limitation: Loyal Nazi; Social Limitation: Subject To Orders

Notes: The son of a wealthy Bavarian industrialist, Dieter Tischler embraced Nazi doctrine as he grew up (his father was an early Party member) and joined the SS as soon as he could. Believing deeply in Nazi theories of Aryan racial supremacy, he set out to prove them by becoming an ethnologist. Armed with calipers and other devices with which to take anthropometric measurements, plaster to make facial casts, and other tools of his trade, he's been taking advantage of his time in Inner-Earth to study "primitive" peoples in their "unsullied" state. He'd dearly love to study the Neanderthals more closely... and to obtain some of their skulls and skeletons.

FRIEDRICH WOLLENHAUPT

| | | | | | | | |
|----|-----|----|------|----|-----|----|------|
| 10 | STR | 13 | DEX | 12 | CON | 10 | BODY |
| 13 | INT | 10 | EGO | 13 | PRE | 10 | COM |
| 4 | PD | 4 | ED | 2 | SPD | 4 | REC |
| 24 | END | 21 | STUN | | | | |

Abilities: Bureaucratics 12-; KS: German Medical Community 12-; Persuasion 12-; PS: Photography 12-; Scientist and SS: Biology 12-, SS: Chemistry 11-; SS: Medicine 12-, SS: Surgery 12-; Fringe Benefits: License To Practice Medicine; Passport; Military Rank (in SS)

75+ Disadvantages: Hunted: the SS (Watched); Psychological Limitation: Loyal Nazi; Social Limitation: Subject To Orders

Notes: Wollenhaupt, at age 36 the oldest member of Heilbruck's team, pulls double duty as expedition photographer and doctor. Trained as a physician, photography was his hobby until he began

taking pictures of patients to assemble a database for ethnological research. His work brought him to the attention of the SS, which he joined in 1933, and eventually led to his being assigned to work for Heilbruck. He dislikes being in the field and frequently complains about the food, the heat, the insects, the labor, and just about anything else. None of the other Germans really like him... but they do their best to tolerate and even placate him, because he's the one with the medical skills and has saved each of their lives and limbs many times.

GAMEMASTERING INNER-EARTH



Here are a few suggestions, guidelines, and tips for running scenarios, story arcs, and even entire campaigns in the Inner-Earth.

INTO INNER-EARTH

When planning a game involving Inner-Earth — whether it's a single scenario, a story arc, or an entire (mini-)campaign — there are several issues you should consider.

POINT OF ENTRY

First, where will the PCs enter the Inner-Earth? Marked on the map are six entrances: South America; Hawaii; Central Asia; Europe; Africa; and the Arctic air outflow. (Of course, you can create any additional entrances you want, or remove existing ones.) Each of them is described in greater detail below. The one your heroes use determines which race they're likely to meet first: the European entrance leads to the Neanderthals or the Mongols; the Central Asian entrance to the Mongols; the South American entrance to the Aztecs; the Hawaiian entrance to the serpent-men; and the African entrance to no one (and the necessity of a sea voyage).

In dramatic terms, the easiest way to decide where the heroes enter is how you want to structure your story. If you want them to encounter an evil foe that takes them captive, thus requiring them to escape and then meet and ally with another race, the Hawaiian entrance is your best bet — the Ssujala fill the role of “evil enemy” nicely, and the Aztecs aren't too difficult to reach. If you want the heroes to get involved in long-term politicking among tribes, the Neanderthals or Mongols both work well, so the PCs should enter from

Europe or Asia. If you want the possibility of romance between a hero and a “native princess,” use the Central Asian (for Qara Jasray) or South American (for Pilla of the Aztecs) entrances.

You should also consider whether you want the heroes to travel throughout Inner-Earth. Each of the three caverns is fairly self-contained and offers the heroes the raw materials with which to build rafts or ships (assuming they have the Skills and tools to do so, and to use what they build). But only one — the eastern — has ships already built and seafaring cultures able to use them readily. So if you want the heroes to see all of Inner-Earth, starting them off in the eastern cavern is the way to go.

Included with the entrance descriptions below are brief paragraphs describing a trip down each entrance and what your heroes see when they arrive in Inner-Earth via that route. Feel free to read those paragraphs out loud to your players if you like... but be sure to make any necessary changes to suit the nature and style of your PCs. And if you want to roleplay the journey down, or at least the beginning of it, go right ahead. Who knows what marvels... and dangers... your heroes might encounter on their descent into the depths of the earth?

South American Entrance

In the Amazon Jungle there's a large river that everyone assumes is a tributary of the Amazon... though no explorer's ever found where the two join together. In fact, this river goes underground and eventually sweeps down to the Inner-Earth.

Here's a brief description of the trip down this entrance, along with what your heroes will see when they arrive in the Inner-Earth:

The last few hours have passed by in a blur of adrenaline and action! Since the river swept you underground and sped up, you've been struggling as hard as you can to keep your boats upright and intact, barely able to spare a moment's thought about *where* the river might be taking you...

...but now you've arrived. Finally the river's leveled out and slowed down... and fed into a lake on the edge of a sunlit underground land! The sunlight's dimmer than you'd expect — and from the looks of the rock walls towering off to the north and west, you'd guess you're in a gargantuan underground cavern of some sort. How there could be sunlight here you can't imagine, but it's definitely sunlight, though unusually dim. The air's hot and humid, not unlike the South American jungle you began the day's journey in. In the distance you can see a shoreline. Unfortunately you can't get back up the plummeting river, so you'll have to find another way home....

Hawaiian Entrance

By descending into the crater of an extinct Hawaiian volcano, and then downward for miles through a series of caverns, one can reach Inner-Earth in the northwest region of the eastern cavern. Water dripping down through the caverns makes the journey a tough one, especially for the last quarter of the trip when the water essentially forms an underground river.

Here's a brief description of the trip down this entrance, along with what your heroes will see when they arrive in the Inner-Earth:

The last hour or so has been a blur of speed, water, and bruises. Days ago you set out on this journey, climbing down into the heart of an extinct Hawaiian volcano. The openings in the caldera soon gave way to tunnels and caverns... which kept going and going. Unable to resist the thrill of exploring strange new places no man had ever seen, you kept on, descending further and further from the surface.

Over the past day or so, trickles of water became underground streams, and then the streams an underground river pouring swiftly downward. You roped yourselves together so no one would get lost, and that proved to be a wise precaution the first few times someone slipped. But the last time — when two of you went into the water at once — the current was so strong it dragged the rest of you along. For an hour you were rushed downstream, unable to get a grip on the smooth, water-worn rocks. But now you find yourself floating in what seems to be a lake... in some sort of sunlit land! The sunlight's dimmer than you'd expect — and from the looks of the rock walls towering off to the south and east, you'd guess you're in a gargantuan underground cavern of some sort. How there could be sunlight (even dim sunlight) here you can't imagine, but that's definitely what it is. The air is hot and humid, not unlike the Hawaiian climate you began your expedition in. In the distance you can see a shoreline, part of which looks swampy. Unfortunately you can't get back out the way you came in, so you'll have to find another way home....

African Entrance

Somewhere in Africa there's a rift valley, and at the very bottom of the valley is an entrance to caverns and tunnels that lead down, down, down to the Inner-Earth. The natives believe the rift valley to be an abode of monsters and gateway to the underworld; they won't go there voluntarily.

Here's a brief description of the trip down this entrance, along with what your heroes will see when they arrive in the Inner-Earth:

Days ago you set out on this journey, climbing down to the very bottom of the African rift valley. The openings there soon gave way to tunnels and caverns... which kept going and going. Unable to resist the thrill of exploring strange new places no man had ever seen, you kept on, descending further and further from the surface. You knew it was dangerous — the cave-in that almost killed your entire party a few hours ago is proof of that — but you couldn't resist continuing onward and downward. Now, after many tiring days, you've emerged into... Africa! Or at least it sort of looks like Africa. The sunlight's dimmer than you'd expect, not all of the fauna looks quite right, and the climate's a little more humid than the East Africa you know. But the biggest clue that you're not in the Dark Continent anymore is the rock walls towering off to the north, which lead you to guess that you're in a gargantuan underground cavern of some sort. How there could be sunlight (albeit dim sunlight) in here you can't imagine, but it's definitely sunlight.

Unfortunately you can't get back out the way you came in — that cave-in blocked the tunnels for good, you think — so you'll have to find another way home....

Central Asian Entrance

Near Lake Baikal there's a large river that goes underground. Everyone assumes it feeds into the lake, but in fact it plunges deep below it to emerge in the Inner-Earth as the Thunder-Falls, a vast waterfall 4,900 feet (1,500 meters, or 750") tall — by far the largest in the world, if only surface scientists knew of it.

Here's a brief description of the trip down this entrance, along with what your heroes will see when they arrive in the Inner-Earth:

All you know is that you're lucky to be alive. Your exploratory trip down the underground river was going fine, and you were amazed to discover that the river apparently didn't feed into Lake Baikal at all. It just kept going down and down in a series of rapids, each more dangerous than the one before it. That last stretch of rapids was too much. Your boats were smashed, and you thought you were all going to die as the current battered you against the walls and underground rocks.

Now you've awakened to find yourself and your comrades floating in a lake amidst the wreckage of your boats and supplies! The thunderous roar of a truly gigantic waterfall to the southeast fills your ears. If you fell down that, it's a miracle any of you survived — that cascade dwarfs Victoria Falls! The sunlight's dimmer than you'd expect — and from the looks of the rock wall the fall plunges through, you'd guess you're in a gargantuan underground cavern of some sort. How there could be sunlight (even dim sunlight) in here you can't imagine, but it's definitely sunlight.

The air's hot and humid in here, much warmer than the region where you started your expedition. In the distance you can see a shoreline. There's no way you can get back up the waterfall, so you'll have to find another way home....

European Entrance

High in the Alps are entrances to caverns that eventually lead down to the Inner-Earth. As with the Hawaiian entrance, water follows these tunnels down, eventually creating underground rivers.

Here's a brief description of the trip down this entrance, along with what your heroes will see when they arrive in the Inner-Earth:

The last hour or so has been a blur of speed, water, and bruises. Days ago you set out on this journey, climbing down through caverns and tunnels in the Alps... which kept going and going. Unable to resist the thrill of exploring strange new places no man had ever seen, you kept on, descending further and further from the surface.

Over the past day or so, trickles of water became underground streams, and then the streams an underground river pouring swiftly downward. You roped yourselves together so no one would get lost, and that proved to be a wise precaution the first few times someone slipped. But the last time — when two of you went into the water at once — the current was so strong it dragged the rest of you along. For an hour you were rushed downstream, unable to get a grip on the smooth, water-worn rocks. But now you find yourself floating in a sort of lake... in some sort of sunlit land! The sunlight's dimmer than you'd expect — and from the looks of the rock walls towering off to the south and east, you'd guess you're in a gargantuan underground cavern of some sort. How there could be sunlight (even dim sunlight) in here you can't imagine, but it's definitely sunlight. The air's hot and humid, a far cry from the alpine climate you began your expedition in. In the distance you can see a shoreline. Unfortunately you can't get out the way you came in, so you'll have to find another way home....

Arctic Air Outflow

The vast "chimney" in the Arctic through which Inner-Earth's air flows out provides a way to get in... if one is an expert mountaineer willing to fight hard winds every inch of the way down. In other words, absent Weird Science it's almost certainly not a route the heroes can use. But it might be one that they can use to get *out*.

Other Ways In

If none of the ways listed above are quite what you're looking for, some other possibilities include:

—while exploring a cave complex, the PCs are caught in a collapse/cave-in that sweeps them all the way down into the Inner-Earth

—the PCs are on the surface when an earthquake strikes, opening a fissure in the Earth that they fall into, gradually tumbling all the way down into the Inner-Earth

—a Weird Science device malfunctions and somehow teleports or carries all the PCs into the Inner-Earth

WHERE ARE WE?

Except for Africa, all five of the main entrances to the Inner-Earth start the characters off in bodies of water — lakes. The shore is miles away, so they're either going to have to swim a *long* way or build some impromptu watercraft from their salvaged supplies. If necessary, create a few small, rocky islands near where they enter so they have a place to rest and build.

As the heroes near the shoreline, describe the unusual flora and fauna (don't forget to mention how dim the light is compared to the surface, how the air feels, and so on). As soon as it's appropriate, arrange an encounter to demonstrate how strange the place is — in short, to show the heroes that they're not in Kansas anymore. The easiest way to do this is a dinosaur. Depending on how involved you want this to be, a tyrannosaurus or ceratosaurus could immediately fixate on them as a tasty snack, they could see a herd of ornithomimus off in the distance, or a comically friendly brontosaurus could stick its head down through the trees and brush to see what they are.

After that initial encounter, you can get the heroes involved in the meat of the story by arranging an encounter with the local populace. This doesn't have to take place immediately; you might let the heroes spend a few days exploring, scavenging supplies, and hunting for dinosaur meat ("tastes like chicken!") before the action begins. With most of the peoples of the Inner-Earth, an initial encounter is likely to be tense and suspicious, but not necessarily violent or hostile unless the heroes start a fight. But with the Ssujala, things probably go badly from the very beginning, since the serpent-men see humans as slaves or sacrifices.

SUPPLIES

However the PCs come to Inner-Earth, as described above it's likely to be a precipitous arrival. That means you need to address the question of what supplies the heroes have with them.

Assuming your heroes were on some sort of exploratory expedition when they stumbled into Inner-Earth, they were probably equipped with plenty of food, water, ammunition, scientific equipment, medicine, and other gear. So the question is: how much of that useful stuff made it down to the Inner-Earth with them?

The more supplies you give the heroes — particularly ammunition — the more independent they can be, and the less help they're likely to need from potential native allies. Food and water are pretty commonplace in the Inner-Earth (though not necessarily up to the standards of fare the heroes are used to), but there's no way to replenish supplies of ammunition at all. Given enough ammo, the heroes can probably take over large areas of the Inner-Earth without too much trouble (especially among the more suspicious races like the Aztecs and Neanderthals). On the other hand, give them too little and they might be too easily overwhelmed by the natives. Try to strike the right balance based on your feel for the way your players prefer to play and the ways their characters are likely to interact with the natives.

MASTER OF THE NEANDERTHALS?

If you've read or run Hero Plus Adventure #4, *The Dordogne Zodiac*, you know about the strangely advanced relics created by certain Neanderthals. Those Neanderthals worshipped foul gods under the direction of the Kigg rhamelu, an enigmatic race that served those gods and held the Neanderthals in bondage. As explained in that adventure, "[w]hen the world turned colder and the great glaciers returned, the Kigg rhamelu retreated into the warm depths of the Earth," leaving most of their Neanderthal followers on their surface to continue worshipping the gods (which those Neanderthals' descendants do to this day, as explained in the adventure).

If you're using that story as an element in your campaign, then Inner-Earth is the realm to which the Kigg rhamelu fled, taking with them some of their Neanderthal servants. They live in the deepest of the Neanderthal caves, rarely emerging into the light of day. They rule their followers with an iron grip — if the Kigg rhamelu are in charge, there's no fighting between Neanderthal tribes! All the tribes are united in their worship of the foul gods and their servitude to the toad-like Kigg rhamelu. The Mongols think the Kigg rhamelu are demons and call them the *Fedal*. (Even if you don't use the Kigg rhamelu, the Mongols still believe in the *Fedal*.)

THE NAZI MENACE

If you want to use the Nazi expedition described on pages 22-25, where are its members when the heroes arrive in the Inner-Earth? (The descriptions above assume they've been there for at least a little while — a week or more — before the heroes arrive, but that's really up to you. They could arrive at the same time, or later, if you want.) If you want the heroes to encounter them immediately (which would be most appropriate for a single scenario or a short story arc), put them in proximity to the heroes, and perhaps even have them already allied with a group you want the heroes to oppose (or rescue the Germans from). For longer Inner-Earth campaigns, it often works best to save the Nazis for later — just as the heroes think they've gotten used to things in the Inner-Earth, more surface-dwellers show up to complicate the situation!

Expanding Inner-Earth

Depending on your desires and preferences and the course of events in your campaign, you may want to make Inner-Earth larger than depicted in this Hero Plus Adventure. Adding more caverns is a fairly simple matter, all you have to decide is:

- where they're located in relation to the other caverns
- what effect these other caverns have on the existing ones (and their inhabitants), if any
- what people or races (if any) and animals and plants live in them

Other parts of Inner-Earth don't necessarily even have to be connected to the caverns described here. There might be entire other cavern complexes waiting for the heroes to discover and explore!

ROLEPLAYING THE RACES

Each of the four races — Ssujala, Aztecs, Neanderthals, and Mongols — that the PCs may encounter during their travels through Inner-Earth presents the possibility for fascinating roleplaying and intriguing encounters.

THE AZTECS

Your heroes might initially recoil from the Aztecs because they associate them with human sacrifice, ritual cannibalism, and other such practices. But the Aztlaneacs have given up those customs, so hopefully it won't take long for the heroes to realize that the Aztlaneacs are probably their most likely and best allies in the Inner-Earth.

Because they're essentially a people at war, the Aztecs will probably be suspicious of the heroes at first — not necessarily hostile or violent, just wary. They'll keep a close eye on them and won't let them wander around unescorted. Give the PCs a chance to prove their heroism and noble natures so the Aztecs will come to trust them.

THE SSUJALA

As a people, the Ssujala are evil through and through — definitely enemies for the heroes. They'll try to capture the PCs for use as slaves, sacrifices, or possibly even food, and if they can't capture them will try to kill them because of the threat they present. But the PCs might meet individual serpent-men, such as Ta'hishré, with whom they could peacefully interact. They're not going to start any sort of revolution in Ssujala society, but having a friend there who can help them may mean the difference between life and death, or freedom and enslavement.

THE MONGOLS

You can easily adjust the Mongols to suit the needs of your story. If you want harsh, brutal, barbaric, aggressive villains, then that's what the Mongols are — personifications of medieval European fears and countless literary stereotypes. If you prefer a more developed, even honorable culture the PCs could empathize or ally with, you can present the Mongols as "civilized barbarians" with a code of warrior ethics and an admiration for anyone who can keep up with them.

THE NEANDERTHALS

Depending on your preferences, your campaign, and the nature and actions of your PCs, you can play the Neanderthals in any of several ways. First, they could be brutish savages who react to the PCs with suspicion, fear, hatred, and anger. They'll attack the PCs at each and every opportunity with the intention of wiping them out... or perhaps even eating them. Second, you could portray them as noble savages of honest, simple means and traditions. Their barbarian honor and warrior spirit will respond to and be inspired by the heroic nature, conduct, and outlook of the PCs, turning them into hearty allies and boon (if seemingly crude) companions for the heroes while they're in the Northern Cavern. Or you could mix and match them, treating some tribes as hostile and "evil," and others as honorable and at least potentially friendly.

THE GM'S VAULT

This section contains additional and/or secret information about the Inner-Earth that's for the GM's eyes alone. *If you're playing in, or plan to play in, a campaign based on the Inner-Earth setting, do not read this section!!*

The GM's Vault is organized by page number. If the Vault doesn't comment on some part of the main text, it's usually safe to take what's written there as accurate (or as left for each GM's individual interpretation). As always, you're free to change anything in this Hero Plus Adventure to suit your own preferences or campaign.

PAGE 9 — THE TETLAHUATL PILLAR

There are in fact glyphs on the "Stone Oak" of Tetlahuatl, which was once a pillar erected by a long-lost civilization (perhaps one of a previous age). They tell the story of the founding of a kingdom, its rise to power, and its eventual downfall due to the "power of

the snakes that walk as men.” (If you like, additional glyphs may provide tantalizing clues regarding a special weapon for use against these serpent-men, who are almost certainly the Ssujala.)

PAGE 9 — THE GHOST CITY OF KELETOS

The ruins of Keletos were built by an alien civilization that visited Earth well over a hundred thousand years ago (the Malvans? the Elder Worm?). Depending on what you want to do in your campaign, they could be just an intellectual and historical curiosity... or they could contain a gateway that transports your heroes to strange new worlds for some Pulp Science Fiction adventure! See Hero Plus Adventures #2, *Solar Smith And The Sky-Pirates Of Arcturus!*, for inspiration.

PAGE 9 — QUIAHUATL MICTLAN

Paradoxically, maybe the “Gateway to Hell” offers the heroes a way out of Inner-Earth. If they descend into its depths, perhaps they can find tunnels that lead down, then levels off to join up with other tunnels that eventually go up to the surface. Or maybe Quiahuatl Mictlan leads to more large caverns to explore — a sort of Inner-Inner-Earth, if you will.

PAGE 10 — XILOTZIN

Xilotzin craves wealth and power. For a long time he’s believed that he, not Netzahualtloctollin, should rule Aztlan — and what’s more, he wants Pilla as his queen. A few years ago he secretly joined forces with the Ssujala, agreeing to work for them in exchange for being made ruler of Aztlan when they overthrow it... and for receiving Pilla to do with as he sees fit. Ever since he’s been revealing secrets to the serpent-men, working subtly to weaken Aztlan’s defenses, and doing his best to worm his way closer and closer to the throne... and Pilla.

PAGE 10 — THE SSUJALA

Unbeknownst to the Ssujala, they can no longer survive outside the Inner-Earth: the air of the caverns contains certain chemicals that don’t affect humans but which have become vital to the serpent-men. A Ssujala who leaves Inner-Earth and heads toward the surface will soon sicken and die if he doesn’t return home.

PAGE 12 — THE ISLANDS OF THE SERPENT-MEN

The mystery of these islands is one left for you to explain as you see fit. They may be serpent-man ruins so old that even the Ssujala have forgotten what they were, though they consider them sacred for some reason. Or they might be strange relics of the Turanian Age that have survived the eons after becoming trapped underground — perhaps a temple-complex of Th n, or the crypts of some of Kal-Turak’s chief servants....

PAGE 19 — THOAGASH

A twisted, powerhungry little man, Thoagash has great ambition and would, as hinted, like to rule many more tribes — perhaps even all the Neanderthals. Clever and full of guile, he works toward his goal through flattery, manipulation of superstition, blackmail, and similar devious means.

PAGE 19 — THE VALLEY OF KAR-THU

Dinosaurs aren’t the only horrors in the Valley. A species of enormous spiders — half as large as a man, sometimes even bigger — dwell there. They feed on smaller dinosaurs and consider humans tasty prey. Use the character sheet on page 91 of *The HERO System Bestiary*, adjusted downward in size as discussed in the text, for them.

PAGE 19 — SOTHAG

Sothag is a deinosaursuchus-like lizard-serpent that can rear up on its hind legs and walk about like a tyrannosaurus — though it’s far larger, more powerful, and more vicious than any tyrannosaurus. Use the Deinosaursuchus character sheet on page 33, but increase its size and related abilities as necessary.

PAGE 20 — THE SOUTHERN CAVERN

If you want, all sorts of strange dangers and opportunities for adventure may lurk in the southern cavern. Could degenerate tribes of cannibals, or some sort of wicked version of Tarzan, live in the jungles? Why did the former civilizations fall, and what terrors... and treasures... might lurk in the ruins? Is it possible Lake Malagani or one of the mountain ranges contains a way back to the surface?

APPENDIX: DINOSAURS!



As mentioned on page 5, Inner-Earth is a land filled with survivors of the Age of Dinosaurs, so it's likely your heroes will encounter plenty of the scaly beasts during their time there. The dinosaurs on pages 152-59 of *The HERO System Bestiary* should suffice for the vast majority of most gaming groups' dinosaur needs, but in case you'd like a little more variety in your thunder lizards, here are a few more.

BALUCHITHERIUM

| Val | Char | Cost | Roll | Notes |
|-----|------|------|---|------------------------|
| 50 | STR | 40 | 19- | Lift 25 tons; 10d6 [5] |
| 12 | DEX | 6 | 11- | OCV: 4/DCV: 4 |
| 35 | CON | 50 | 16- | |
| 35 | BODY | 50 | 16- | |
| 8 | INT | -2 | 11- | PER Roll 11- |
| 5 | EGO | -10 | 10- | ECV: 2 |
| 30 | PRE | 20 | 15- | PRE Attack: 6d6 |
| 8 | COM | -1 | 11- | |
| 14 | PD | 4 | Total: 14 PD (3 rPD) | |
| 10 | ED | 3 | Total: 10 ED (3 rED) | |
| 2 | SPD | 0 | Phases: 6, 12 | |
| 17 | REC | 0 | | |
| 70 | END | 0 | | |
| 78 | STUN | 0 | Total Characteristics Cost: 160 (+106 with NCM) | |

Movement: Running: 12"/24"
 Leaping: 0"/0"

| Cost | Powers | END |
|------|---|-----|
| 3 | <i>Tough Skin:</i> Damage Resistance (3 PD/3 ED) | 0 |
| 32 | <i>Heavy:</i> Knockback Resistance -16" | 0 |
| 12 | <i>Long Legs:</i> Running +6" | 1 |
| 3 | <i>Baluchitherium's Senses:</i> +1 PER with all Sense Groups except Sight Group | 0 |
| 2 | <i>Baluchitherium's Nose:</i> +1 PER with Smell/Taste Group | 0 |

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 52

Total Cost: 212

75+ Disadvantages

- 15 Physical Limitation: Animal Intelligence (Frequently, Greatly Impairing)
- 10 Physical Limitation: Enormous (approximately 9m long, 5.5m tall at the shoulder, and up to 33 tons in weight; -4 DCV, +4 to PER Rolls to perceive) (Frequently, Slightly Impairing)
- 10 Physical Limitation: Limited Manipulation (Frequently, Slightly Impairing)

10 Physical Limitation: Reduced Leap, cannot leap (Infrequently, Slightly Impairing)

92 Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 212

Ecology: More properly known in modern times as Indricotherium, the Baluchitherium was a relative of the modern rhinoceros, though it had no horn on its head. It was a vegetarian, using its downward-pointing upper tusks, forward-pointing lower tusks, flexible upper lip, and size to eat leaves off of trees much like a giraffe. It lived during the Oligocene.

Personality/Motivation: Normal animal motivations.

Powers/Tactics: The baluchitherium seems to have lacked significant natural weaponry, so if unable to run from an attacker, would probably have used its size and strength to smash, bash, and stomp. (However, given its size, it probably had few, if any, natural enemies.)

Appearance: The baluchitherium is the largest land mammal known to have lived. It was nine meters (4.5", or 30 feet) long, with a skull two meters (1", or about six feet) long, stood about 5.5 meters (2.5", or about 18 feet) at the shoulder, and weighed 20-33 tons, making it approximately 1.1 times as large and four times as heavy as the largest modern elephant.

| CERATOSAURUS | | | | |
|--------------|------|------|---|------------------------|
| Val | Char | Cost | Roll | Notes |
| 35 | STR | 25 | 16- | Lift 3,200 kg; 7d6 [3] |
| 15 | DEX | 15 | 12- | OCV: 5/DCV: 5 |
| 28 | CON | 36 | 15- | |
| 25 | BODY | 30 | 14- | |
| 8 | INT | -2 | 11- | PER Roll 11- |
| 5 | EGO | -10 | 10- | ECV: 2 |
| 25 | PRE | 15 | 14- | PRE Attack: 5d6 |
| 8 | COM | -1 | 11- | |
| 12 | PD | 5 | Total: 12 PD (3 rPD) | |
| 10 | ED | 4 | Total: 10 ED (3 rED) | |
| 3 | SPD | 5 | Phases: 4, 8, 12 | |
| 13 | REC | 0 | | |
| 56 | END | 0 | | |
| 57 | STUN | 0 | Total Characteristics Cost: 122 (+52 with NCM) | |

Movement: Running: 10"/20"
 Leaping: 0"/0"
 Swmming: 0"/0"

| Cost | Powers | END |
|------|--|-----|
| 30 | <i>Jaws:</i> HKA 2d6 (4d6 with STR) | 3 |
| 10 | <i>Forelimb Claws:</i> HKA ½d6 (1d6+1 with STR) | 1 |
| 3 | <i>Snout Horn:</i> HA +1d6; Hand-To-Hand Attack (-½) | 1 |
| 3 | <i>Tough Skin:</i> Damage Resistance (3 PD/3 ED) | 0 |
| 12 | <i>Heavy:</i> Knockback Resistance -6" | 0 |
| 8 | <i>Big Body And Long Legs:</i> Running +4" (10" total) | 1 |
| -2 | <i>Can't Swim:</i> Swimming -2" | |
| 6 | <i>Dinosaur Senses:</i> +2 PER with all Sense Groups | 0 |
| 6 | <i>Tail:</i> Extra Limb, Inherent (+¼) | 0 |

Skills

4 +2 OCV with Jaws

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 80

Total Cost: 202

75+ Disadvantages

- 15 Physical Limitation: Animal Intelligence (Frequently, Greatly Impairing)
- 5 Physical Limitation: Large (up to 3m long/tall; -2 DCV, +2 to PER Rolls to perceive) (Infrequently, Slightly Impairing)
- 7 Physical Limitation: Reduced Leap, cannot leap (Infrequently, Slightly Impairing)
- 15 Physical Limitation: Very Limited Manipulation (Frequently, Greatly Impairing)
- 85 Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 202

Ecology: A predator of the late Jurassic Period, Ceratosaurus may have worked in packs or other large groups to hunt and kill large prey.

Personality/Motivation: Normal animal motivations.

Powers/Tactics: While small compared to Tyrannosaurus, Ceratosaurus is nothing for heroes to laugh at. Its jaws are more than large enough to kill a human, and it attacks aggressively (sometimes, as noted above, in groups!).

Appearance: Ceratosaurus is about 3" (20 feet) tall/long. Its large jaws contain sharp, curved teeth, and its feet have three clawed toes. It has two short "arms" with four clawed fingers on each paw. There's a short horn on its snout, running from its neck, down its back, and all the way down its tail is a row of small bony plates that may have helped it control its temperature.

CORYTHOSAURUS

| Val | Char | Cost | Roll | Notes |
|-----|------|------|------|---|
| 25 | STR | 15 | 14- | Lift 800 kg; 5d6 [2] |
| 13 | DEX | 9 | 12- | OCV: 4/DCV: 4 |
| 25 | CON | 30 | 14- | |
| 25 | BODY | 30 | 14- | |
| 8 | INT | -2 | 11- | PER Roll 11- |
| 5 | EGO | -10 | 10- | ECV: 2 |
| 18 | PRE | 8 | 13- | PRE Attack: 3½d6 |
| 8 | COM | -1 | 11- | |
| 8 | PD | 3 | | Total: 8 PD (2 rPD) |
| 6 | ED | 1 | | Total: 6 ED (2 rED) |
| 3 | SPD | 7 | | Phases: 4, 8, 12 |
| 10 | REC | 0 | | |
| 50 | END | 0 | | |
| 51 | STUN | 0 | | Total Characteristics Cost: 90 (+33 with NCM) |

Movement: Running: 14"/28"
Swimming: 4"/8"

| Cost | Powers | END |
|------|---|-----|
| 15 | <i>Bite:</i> HKA 1d6 (2d6 with STR) | 1 |
| 2 | <i>Leathery Skin:</i> Damage Resistance (2 PD/2 ED) | 0 |
| 12 | <i>Heavy:</i> Knockback Resistance -6" | 0 |
| 16 | <i>Long Legs:</i> Running +8" (14" total) | 2 |
| 2 | <i>Webbed Feet And Hands:</i> Swimming +2" (4" total) | 1 |
| 3 | <i>Acute Sense Of Smell:</i> +1 to PER Rolls with Smell/Taste Group | 0 |
| 6 | <i>Tail:</i> Extra Limb, Inherent (+¼) | 0 |

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 56

Total Cost: 146

75+ Disadvantages

| | |
|----|--|
| 15 | Physical Limitation: Animal Intelligence (Frequently, Greatly Impairing) |
| 10 | Physical Limitation: Enormous (approximately 9m long and up to 4 tons in weight; -4 DCV, +4 to PER Rolls to perceive) (Frequently, Slightly Impairing) |
| 5 | Physical Limitation: Reduced Leap, can only leap 1" (Infrequently, Slightly Impairing) |
| 15 | Physical Limitation: Very Limited Manipulation (Frequently, Greatly Impairing) |
| 26 | Experience Points |

Total Disadvantage Points: 146

Ecology: One of the most common of the duck-billed dinosaurs, Corythosaurus ("helmet lizard") occupied the lands that would one day be western North America. It was first discovered by Barnum Brown in 1912 in Alberta, Canada. It lived in herds that browsed through the forests and grasslands. It may also have lived in swamps. When predators such as Tyrannosaurus Rex attacked, Corythosaurus could run away on its two large hind legs, and may have been prone to retreating to the water.

Like other lambeosaurine duckbills, Corythosaurus has a large, hollow crest on the top of its head made of expanded nasal bones. The exact purpose of this crest remains uncertain. Initially (including during the Pulp era) it was thought that Corythosaurus was semi-aquatic and that the crest acted as

a sort of "snorkel" or air reservoir so it could remain underwater for long periods of time. Later discoveries showed that Corythosaurus was well-adapted to life on land. Other possible explanations for the crest are that it acted as a cooling system for the body, enhanced the dinosaur's olfactory senses, or was a sort of "vocal resonator" allowing Corythosaurus to make a wide variety of loud, distinctive cries and calls. (The latter two theories seem to be favored in the modern day, and are both reflected in this character sheet.)

Personality/Motivation: Normal animal motivations.

Powers/Tactics: If forced to fight, Corythosaurus uses its jaw, which contains hundreds of small, sharp teeth, to bite. But it prefers to flee from danger if possible. In an Inner-Earth campaign, it would likely be hunted by Humans for its meat.

Appearance: Corythosaurus was approximately nine meters long and weighed about four tons. It stood on its two large hind legs, using its smaller "arms" and long, heavy tail to balance itself. Its snout had a duck-billed shape. On top of its head was a prominent crest; the size, shape, and perhaps even the color of the crest varied with age and gender.

| DEINOSUCHUS | | | | |
|-------------|------|------|------|--|
| Val | Char | Cost | Roll | Notes |
| 30 | STR | 20 | 15- | Lift 1,600 kg; 6d6 [3] |
| 14 | DEX | 12 | 12- | OCV: 5/DCV: 5 |
| 30 | CON | 40 | 15- | |
| 25 | BODY | 30 | 14- | |
| 8 | INT | -2 | 11- | PER Roll 11- |
| 5 | EGO | -10 | 10- | ECV: 2 |
| 30 | PRE | 20 | 15- | PRE Attack: 6d6 |
| 4 | COM | -3 | 10- | |
| 12 | PD | 6 | | Total: 18 PD (6 rPD) |
| 10 | ED | 4 | | Total: 16 ED (6 rED) |
| 3 | SPD | 6 | | Phases: 4, 8, 12 |
| 12 | REC | 0 | | |
| 60 | END | 0 | | |
| 55 | STUN | 0 | | Total Characteristics Cost: 123 (+56 with NCM) |

Movement: Running: 3"/6"
 Leaping: 1"/2"
 Swimming: 8"/16"

| Cost | Powers | END |
|------|--|-----|
| 20 | <i>Bite:</i> HKA 2d6 (4d6 with STR); Restrainable (-½) | 3 |
| 10 | <i>Tail Bash:</i> HA +4d6; Hand-To-Hand Attack (-½), Only With Extra Limb (-½) | 0 |
| 18 | <i>Scaly Skin:</i> Armor (6 PD/6 ED) | 0 |
| 18 | <i>Heavy:</i> Knockback Resistance -9" | 0 |
| 6 | <i>Strong Swimmer:</i> Swimming +6" (8" total) | 1 |
| -6 | <i>Short Legs:</i> Running -3" (3" total) | |
| 1 | <i>Burst Of Speed:</i> Running +3" (6" total); Increased Endurance Cost (x8 END; -3½) | 8 |
| 1 | <i>Lunge:</i> Leaping +1" (2" forward, 1" up- ward); Only To Lunge At Things Near The Water (-1) | 1 |
| 6 | <i>Crocodylian Senses:</i> +2 PER with all Sense Groups | 0 |
| 5 | <i>Crocodylian Eyes:</i> Nightvision | 0 |
| 6 | <i>Tail:</i> Extra Limb, Inherent (+¼) Talents | 0 |
| 3 | Environmental Movement: Aquatic Move- ment (no penalties in water) | |

Skills

| | |
|---|---------------------------------|
| 6 | +3 OCV with Bite |
| 6 | +3 OCV with Grab |
| 2 | Concealment 11-; Self Only (-½) |
| 3 | Stealth 12- |

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 105

Total Cost: 228

75+ Disadvantages

| | |
|----|--|
| 15 | Physical Limitation: Animal Intelligence (Frequently, Greatly Impairing) |
| 15 | Physical Limitation: Cold-Blooded (Fre- quently, Greatly Impairing) |
| 10 | Physical Limitation: Huge (up to 16m long; -6 DCV, +6 to PER Rolls to perceive) (Fre- quently, Slightly Impairing) |
| 5 | Physical Limitation: Reduced Leap, can only leap 1" (Infrequently, Slightly Impairing) |
| 15 | Physical Limitation: Very Limited Manipula- tion (Frequently, Greatly Impairing) |

93 Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 228

Description: Deinosuchus ("terrible crocodile") is a gigantic prehistoric crocodile that may have been up to 15 meters (50 feet) long — its skull was as long as a man is tall! (By comparison, the record for a modern-day crocodile is about 8 meters, or 28 feet.) It's also known as Phobosuchus, or "horror crocodile." It lived in what would become Texas at the end of the Cretaceous Period.

This character sheet assumes that Deinosuchus functioned in much the same way as modern crocodiles (see pages 149-50 of *The HERO System Bestiary* for more information). However, some paleontologists believe it may have been a short-bodied, long-legged land predator. Resolution of the dispute awaits the discovery of more fossil evidence.

GIGANTOPITHECUS

| Val | Char | Cost | Roll | Notes |
|-----|------|------|------|--|
| 35 | STR | 25 | 14- | Lift 3,200 kg; 7d6 [3] |
| 15 | DEX | 15 | 12- | OCV: 5/DCV: 5 |
| 25 | CON | 30 | 14- | |
| 24 | BODY | 28 | 14- | |
| 8 | INT | -2 | 11- | PER Roll 11- |
| 5 | EGO | -10 | 10- | ECV: 2 |
| 25 | PRE | 15 | 14- | PRE Attack: 5d6 |
| 8 | COM | -1 | 11- | |
| 8 | PD | 1 | | Total: 8 PD (1 rPD) |
| 6 | ED | 1 | | Total: 6 ED (1 rED) |
| 3 | SPD | 5 | | Phases: 4, 8, 12 |
| 12 | REC | 0 | | |
| 50 | END | 0 | | |
| 55 | STUN | 0 | | |
| | | | | Total Characteristics Cost: 107 (+38 with NCM) |

| Movement: | Running: | 5"/10" |
|-----------|-----------|--------|
| | Leaping: | 5"/10" |
| | Swimming: | 0"/0" |

| Cost | Powers | END |
|------|---|-----|
| 7 | <i>Arm Swing:</i> HA +2d6; Hand-To-Hand Attack (-½) | 1 |
| 10 | <i>Bite:</i> HKA 1d6-1 (1d6+1 with STR); Reduced Penetration (-¼) | 1 |
| 4 | <i>Roar:</i> +10 PRE; Only For Fear-Based Presence Attacks (-1), Incantations (must roar; -¼) | 0 |
| 1 | <i>Thick Skin:</i> Armor (1 PD/1 ED) | 0 |
| 6 | <i>Heavy:</i> Knockback Resistance -3" | 0 |
| 3 | <i>Ape Senses:</i> +1 PER with all Sense Groups | 0 |
| -2 | <i>Slow:</i> Running -1" (5" total) | |
| -2 | <i>Poor Swimmer:</i> Swimming -2" (0" total) | |
| 4 | <i>Reach:</i> Stretching 1"; Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½); Always Direct (-¼), No Noncombat Stretching (-¼), No Velocity Damage (-¼) | 0 |

Skills

| | |
|---|-----------------------|
| 4 | +2 OCV with Arm Swing |
|---|-----------------------|

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 35

Total Cost: 142

75+ Disadvantages

| | |
|----|---|
| 5 | Physical Limitation: Large (up to 3m long/tall; -2 DCV, +2 to PER Rolls to perceive) (Infrequently, Slightly Impairing) |
| 10 | Physical Limitation: Near-Human Intelligence (Frequently, Slightly Impairing) |
| 10 | Physical Limitation: Limited Manipulation (Frequently, Slightly Impairing) |
| 42 | Experience Points |

Total Disadvantage Points: 142

OPTIONS

Cost Power

| | |
|-----|---|
| +10 | <i>Carnivorous Gigantopithecus:</i> Increase HKA to 1d6+1 (2½d6 with STR) and remove Reduced Penetration (-¼) |
|-----|---|

Description: Gigantopithecus is an enormous gorilla-like ape; it stands 3 meters (10 feet) tall (as compared to 1.5-1.75 meters, or 5-6 feet, for

modern gorillas). It probably lived mostly on the ground and ate vegetation, roots, and small animals; it has a relatively short jaw and small teeth. The Carnivorous option assumes the beast has large fangs and a taste for flesh — but even without that, the sight of a ten foot-tall gorilla defending its territory from them should be enough to frighten most Pulp heroes!

Gigantopithecus was first discovered in the 1930s, when a paleontologist saw four of its enormous fossilized teeth on sale in a Hong Kong pharmacy. Complete lower jaws weren't found until the 1950s. Some people have speculated that it survived to the modern day in some isolated places — including the Himalayas (where it's known as the yeti) and the Pacific Northwest (where it's called "Bigfoot" and "sasquatch").

This character sheet assumes that Gigantopithecus functioned in much the same way as modern gorilla (see page 165 of *The HERO System Bestiary* for more information).

| MEGALODON | | | | |
|-----------|------|------|------|--|
| Val | Char | Cost | Roll | Notes |
| 40 | STR | 30 | 17- | Lift 6,400 kg; 8d6 [4] |
| 14 | DEX | 12 | 12- | OCV: 5/DCV: 5 |
| 30 | CON | 40 | 15- | |
| 30 | BODY | 40 | 15- | |
| 8 | INT | -2 | 11- | PER Roll 11- |
| 5 | EGO | -10 | 10- | ECV: 2 |
| 35 | PRE | 25 | 16- | PRE Attack: 7d6 |
| 6 | COM | -2 | 10- | |
| 12 | PD | 6 | | Total: 12 PD (3 rPD) |
| 8 | ED | 3 | | Total: 8 ED (3 rED) |
| 3 | SPD | 6 | | Phases: 4, 8, 12 |
| 14 | REC | 0 | | |
| 60 | END | 0 | | |
| 65 | STUN | 0 | | Total Characteristics Cost: 148 (+79 with NCM) |

Movement: Running: 0"/0"
Leaping: 8"/16"
Swimming: 20"/40"

| Cost | Powers | END |
|------|---|-----|
| 35 | <i>Jaws:</i> HKA 2d6+1 (4½d6 with STR) | 3 |
| 8 | <i>Dermal Denticles:</i> HKA 1 point, Continuous (+1), Damage Shield (+½), Inherent (+¼), Persistent (+½), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½); Always On (-½), Activation Roll 14- (-½), No STR Bonus (-½) | 0 |
| 3 | <i>Tough Skin:</i> Damage Resistance (3 PD/3 ED) | 0 |
| 18 | <i>Heavy:</i> Knockback Resistance -9" | 0 |
| 18 | <i>Shark's Body:</i> Swimming +18" (20" total) | 2 |
| -12 | <i>Only Swims:</i> Running -6" (0" total) | |
| 6 | <i>Shark's Senses:</i> +2 PER with all Sense Groups | 0 |
| 5 | <i>Shark's Eyes:</i> Increased Arc Of Perception (240 Degrees) for Sight Group | 0 |
| 6 | <i>Shark's Nose:</i> +3 PER with Smell/Taste Group | 0 |
| 15 | <i>Shark's Nose:</i> Targeting and Tracking for Normal Smell | 0 |
| 17 | <i>Electrosense:</i> Detect Bioelectrical Fields 11-, Sense, Targeting | 0 |
| 35 | <i>Lateral Line Sense:</i> Detect Physical Vibrations 11- (Touch Group), Discriminatory, Analyze, Range, Targeting | 0 |

Skills

6 +3 OCV with Jaws
3 Stealth 12-

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 163
Total Cost: 311

75+ Disadvantages

35 Enraged: berserk when smells blood (Common), go 11-, recover 8-
15 Physical Limitation: Animal Intelligence (Frequently, Greatly Impairing)
10 Physical Limitation: Huge (up to 16m long; -6 DCV, +6 to PER Rolls to perceive) (Frequently, Slightly Impairing)
15 Physical Limitation: Very Limited Manipulation (Frequently, Greatly Impairing)

15 Psychological Limitation: Voracious Appetite (Common, Strong)
20 Reputation: Man-eater, 14- (Extreme)
10 Susceptibility: to not moving in water, takes 1d6 per Turn (Uncommon)
116 Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 311

Description: This huge prehistoric shark could reach lengths of up to 15 meters (50 feet), nearly twice the size of the largest great white shark. Some estimates claim it could have been up to twice that size! Its massive jaws are filled with seven inch-long teeth, and a single bite can easily cut a human being in two.

This character sheet assumes that Megalodon functioned in much the same way as modern great white sharks. See pages 175-76 of *The HERO System Bestiary* for more information.

ORNITHOMIMUS

| Val | Char | Cost | Roll | Notes |
|-----|------|------|------|---------------------------------------|
| 20 | STR | 10 | 13- | Lift 400 kg; 4d6 [2] |
| 16 | DEX | 18 | 12- | OCV: 5/DCV: 5 |
| 18 | CON | 16 | 13- | |
| 15 | BODY | 10 | 12- | |
| 8 | INT | -2 | 11- | PER Roll 11- |
| 5 | EGO | -10 | 10- | ECV: 2 |
| 10 | PRE | 0 | 11- | PRE Attack: 2d6 |
| 8 | COM | -1 | 11- | |
| 6 | PD | 2 | | Total: 6 PD (1 rPD) |
| 5 | ED | 1 | | Total: 5 ED (1 rED) |
| 3 | SPD | 4 | | Phases: 4, 8, 12 |
| 8 | REC | 0 | | |
| 36 | END | 0 | | |
| 34 | STUN | 0 | | Total Characteristics Cost: 48 |

Movement: Running: 13"/26"

| Cost | Powers | END |
|------|--|-----|
| 1 | <i>Tough Skin:</i> Damage Resistance (1 PD/1 ED) | 0 |
| 6 | <i>Heavy:</i> Knockback Resistance -3" | 0 |
| 14 | <i>Swift Runner:</i> Running +7" (13" total) | 1 |

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 21

Total Cost: 69

75+ Disadvantages

- 15 Physical Limitation: Animal Intelligence (Frequently, Greatly Impairing)
- 5 Physical Limitation: Large (up to about 3.5m long; -2 DCV, +2 to PER Rolls to perceive) (Infrequently, Slightly Impairing)
- 15 Physical Limitation: Very Limited Manipulation (Frequently, Greatly Impairing)

Total Disadvantage Points: 110

Ecology: Ornithomimus ("bird mimic") lived in what would become North America during the Late Cretaceous Period. It was probably an omnivore, eating leaves, plants, small lizards and other animals, roots, and perhaps even other dinosaurs' eggs.

Personality/Motivation: Normal animal motivations.

Powers/Tactics: Ornithomimus has no natural weaponry to speak of — if threatened, it runs away at a top speed of about 30 miles per hour. Like *Corythosaurus*, in an Inner-Earth campaign it's probably hunted as a food animal by humans.

Appearance: Ornithomimus is about 3.5 meters (1.75", or 11.5 feet) long from tail to snout. It has two large hind legs, two much smaller forelimbs used to grasp food, a long neck that curves upward in a sort of S-shape so its head and large eyes are held high for a good view, and a tail that sticks out behind for balance as it walks and runs. It had no teeth and a beak-like jaw.