

RAGING SWAN PRESS
MONSTROUS LAIR #26:
SPHINX'S CAVE



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MONSTROUS LAIR #26: SPHINX'S CAVE

Monstrous Lair #26: Sphinx's Cave provides you—the busy, time crunched GM—with the details to effortlessly bring to life the sphinx caves in your campaign.

Are you a busy GM? Does session prep take too long? Do you never have time to work on the cool little details that can bring your adventures, dungeons and campaign to life? This short, focused compilation gives you, the time-crunched GM, the tools to effortlessly add verisimilitude and detail to your dungeons. Use the material herein either before or during play and bask in your players' adulation.

CREDITS

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USING THIS PRODUCT

Designed specifically for you, the busy GM, these tables can be used before or during the game to help breathe life into a sphinx's cave and are compatible with published modules or your own adventures. Adding depth and verisimilitude to your game helps the players' (hopefully willing) suspension of disbelief. The tables appear in the order you'll likely need them. Roll on the relevant table and use the result to spark your creativity. Reroll or modify any inappropriate results.

- **Outside the Lair:** Determine features outside the lair, using this table.
- **What's Going On?** The sphinx is probably not just sitting around waiting for intruders. Use this table, to determine what they are doing when the PCs arrive. Remember, the PCs' actions may render some of the entries moot—particularly if the scrag's are aware of intruders.
- **Major Features:** Use this table, to determine the area's major feature(s). This feature is so obvious, the PCs automatically notice it. Only reveal information in brackets if a PC discovers it in some way.
- **Minor Features:** Use this table, to determine the area's minor feature(s). The feature might be so obvious the PCs automatically spot it; alternatively, the PCs may have to make an easy skill check to notice the feature. Only reveal information in brackets if a PC discovers it in some way.
- **Scrag's Appearance:** Use this table, to generate notable sphinx's appearance and other characteristics.
- **Treasures & Trash:** Use these tables, to add interesting items to the sphinx's hoard. Assign a value to each treasure appropriate to your campaign. The tables assume you will place magic items, coins and other notable items and do not contain such entries.

The tables herein make two assumptions:

1. You have a map of the area, or will design one "on the fly".
2. You know what lurks in the area and have all their stat blocks.

SPHINX'S CAVE

Wise and majestic creatures, sphinxes can be terrible foes, if angered. They love puzzles and riddles and happily trade information for new or interesting intellectual challenges. They also love sharing riddles with their guests—but sometime eat those failings to answer properly.

1: OUTSIDE THE LAIR

D10

- 1 Broken statues of ancient, forgotten animal-headed gods line the pathway ahead.
 - 2 Brown scarab shells litter the edge of a dried up pool.
 - 3 Palm fronds have been used to brush away tracks yet huge paw prints are still visible in places
 - 4 A headless statue of a huge lion stands on a broken stone base. Carving around the base describe an ancient civilisation of long ago.
 - 5 Piled sand nearly blocks the entrance to an underground chamber; explorers must crawl over the sand to get in.
 - 6 "It lies, don't trust it" is scrawled in blood on the wall.
 - 7 A skeletal hand attached to a crushed arm emerges from under a fallen pillar and points to a nearby wall.
 - 8 Sandstone blocks are piled haphazardly next to the path.
 - 9 A defaced mural decorates part of the wall.
 - 10 Two pillars have fallen against each other to form a rough arch.
-

2: WHAT'S GOING ON?

D10

- 1 Curled up in a ball, the sphinx is sleeping soundly.
 - 2 Staring intently at a checkered board covered with stone playing pieces the sphinx is playing a game.
 - 3 The sphinx carefully rakes its claws through the sand forming long spiralling patterns on the floor.
 - 4 Grooming its huge wings the sphinx collects its loose feathers in a basket.
 - 5 The sphinx scrawls complicated symbols on the wall.
 - 6 Lying against a stone platform the sphinx is reading.
 - 7 The sphinx sits atop a pillar gazing far off into the distance; it seems to be deep in thought.
 - 8 The sphinx talks to itself in a one-sided conversation.
 - 9 The sphinx basks in the sunlight atop a tall pillar.
 - 10 The sphinx intently studies an ancient scroll.
-

3: MAJOR LAIR FEATURES

D10

- 1 A faceless statue of a woman lies in the sand.
 - 2 Pots of dried and rotten fruit lie partially buried in the sand; their stink fills the room.
 - 3 A huge shining golden glyph adorns one wall.
 - 4 Long winding trails of insects form patterns on the floor.
 - 5 Palm shrubs fight their way towards the light, next to a broken walled pool.
 - 6 Painted hieroglyphics describe a city long destroyed.
 - 7 Several sandstone steps have crumbled over time making climbing them difficult dangerous.
 - 8 A jackal-headed statue of a well-built man stands guard by a door.
 - 9 A stand of rusty hook bladed spears adorns the wall. The stand collapses if investigated without care.
 - 10 Stone slabs have been deliberately removed from the floor in an obscure pattern.
-

4: MINOR LAIR FEATURES

D10

- 1 Scrawled in blood on the wall is a hint to one of the sphinx's riddles.
 - 2 A crumpled and dessicated body sits facing the wall, surrounded by tiny stones.
 - 3 Trampled palm fronds form a rough nest-like sleeping area behind a fallen pillar.
 - 4 A broken spear tip is wedged in a crack in the wall.
 - 5 Two waist high piles of scarab shells, one green the other blue, stand either side of the doorway.
 - 6 Several scrolls of poetry lie on a stone table; an empty ink-pot and quill stand next to them.
 - 7 A collection of leather-bound books crumble to dust as soon as they are touched.
 - 8 Faded writing decorates a wall; at its base a skeleton lies with a quill in its hands.
 - 9 A broken basket of palm fronds fills a corner; half written poems and riddles lie under fronds.
 - 10 Six copper cups stand on a flat stone; under one is a scarab shell (or perhaps a live scarab).
-

5: SPHINX APPEARANCE

D10

- 1 Golden bands form spiralling plaits in the sphinx's long, luxuriant hair.
 - 2 Sporting a square-cut hairstyle and heavy black make-up, the sphinx lounges on fat cushions of silk.
 - 3 A headband of polished copper keeps the long golden mane from the sphinx's face.
 - 4 The sphinx wears intricate armour of polished leather and bone.
 - 5 Spots of coloured paint and dye covers the sphinx's paws—several paintings decorate the walls.
 - 6 Striped like a tiger with a wild mane of red-brown hair, the sphinx looks more savage than others of its kind.
 - 7 Pure white skin and fur cover the sphinx giving it the appearance of a gigantic snow leopard.
 - 8 Thousands of iridescent blue sequins cover the naked sphinx's torso. When the sphinx moves, the sequins shimmer in the light.
 - 9 Heavy white tattoos cover the face of this black-skinned sphinx; its mane flows out behind it in thick dreadlocks.
 - 10 Its beard tightly wrapped in a bone tube this bookish-looking sphinx wears thick rimmed spectacles.
-

RIDDLES

I go up and down,
But never move.
What am I?

A staircase

When things go wrong,
What can you always count on?

Your fingers

The more of me you take,
The more you leave behind
What am I?

Footsteps

I can run but not walk.
Wherever I go, thought follows close behind.
What am I?

A nose

6: TREASURES

D10

- 1 A heavy golden hairbrush with stiff boar bristles holds hair from the sphinx's mane.
 - 2 A collection of bladed claws worn as fingernail decoration by priests and high-status worshippers.
 - 3 A large multicoloured fan made of sphinx feathers with a handle of ivory and gold.
 - 4 A gold necklace with polished cat's eye gems and alternate stripes of blue enamelling.
 - 5 A heavy wood carving detailing the stars and patterns of the moon; they do not match the stars above the lair.
 - 6 A fiery crown of gold set with rubies and a single diamond, designed to fit on the sphinx's brow.
 - 7 A wedge-shaped golden sword in a scabbard of hippo hide embellished with pearls and feathers.
 - 8 Coated with gold leaf, this beautiful carved pure white marble statue depicts the sphinx's mate.
 - 9 Fine scroll tubes of ivory and teak contain hundreds of riddles, poems and stories.
 - 10 Glazed jars sealed with the carved heads of animals contain the ashen remains of previous kings.
-

7: TRASH

D10

- 1 A long wooden post, splintered at one end, with numerous scratch-marks along its length.
 - 2 A large pouch of pungent and rotten herbs.
 - 3 A flat platter contains dozens of shed sphinx claws.
 - 4 Decaying in a dusky corner is a blanket weaved of sphinx hair holding rotting food.
 - 5 A precarious stack of terracotta pots containing spoilt milk and meat.
 - 6 A ripped and shredded lion's skin covered with spots of blood. The skin is missing its head; this was once a cloak worn by a renowned warrior.
 - 7 Large open urns of dried herbs and flowers used to scent the air inside the sphinx's home.
 - 8 A complex weave of string, shells and stones with no obvious purpose.
 - 9 Hundreds of broken pure white angel clam shells litter the area; their edges remain razor sharp.
 - 10 A tattered book written in an ancient, now unknown, language.
-

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