

BEAST ENTZ PRESENTZ ...

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TORTURED SOULS!

No. 12

SCENARIOS FOR ROLE-PLAYING GAMES



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Floorplans**

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TORTURED SOULS! 12

OK, OK, so this editorial looks suspiciously like the one in the last issue, but we're rushing to get to the printers, and we know you want to hear about a great new product:

CDM3 "The Watchers of the Sacred Flame"

It's a Goodie! Lots and lots of bits in this one - a fully detailed 32 page scenario from the team that bring you this illustrious rag, 12 sheets of floorplans (wilderness as well as caverns and dungeons and a rather sweet tower) based on the Endless Plans system, a chunky DM's screen with summary tables and location maps, Players' Views, separate NPC stat sheets with spaces to alter hit points etc during play and of course the **Artifacts** - maps scrolls etc to give to the players as they are found during the actual adventure. We won't give the game away as to the theme of this one, but be warned - there's a pretty powerful item up for grabs!

What is the ZHALINDOR CAMPAIGN ?

The central modules in **TORTURED SOULS!** are colour-coded and designed to be pulled out and built into a separate collection. Although these modules can just be used as standard AD&D scenarios (either individually, or incorporated into an existing campaign), they may also be combined to replicate the **Zhalindor Campaign**, a challenging series for experienced players.

The **Zhalindor Campaign** is compatible with other AD&D games, but contains some special features that give it a flavour of its own.

TS!3 gives details of how to set up the Campaign, and explains the varying spell effects that occur according to geographical location. **TS!4** details the deities of the Campaign, and the differing abilities they give to their individual worshippers.

HAMMER & TONGS

AD&D/D&D module 3

THE BARROW

AD&D/D&D/RQ module 8

SHADOW OF THE KING

AD&D/Zhalindor module 13

NECROPOLIS II

AD&D/Expert module 29

Credits: Front Cover: Jon Baker, Floorplans: Brendan Hickling, Cover Colour: Jack, Maps: Psi, Scenario Art: Jon Baker, Tim Jeffs, Paul Ward.



BEAST ENTERPRISES

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Hammer & Tongs

AD&D/D&D scenario for 5-7 low-level characters



There you are, sitting round your favourite table in the bar and eagerly awaiting the first pint of the evening, when in rushes a gibbering figure, clothes awry and a look of crazed glee in his staring eyes. Noticing that he is one of the boffins from downstairs, you turn back to your ale and begin to discuss the latest development in state-of-the-art goblin skewering - those fellows who dabble too deeply in the great mysteries of technology and matters mechanical are always on the verge of lunacy and frequently emerge from their halls shouting incoherent nonsense about their latest discoveries.

"They're back! They're back!" Cavorting around the bar in a heedless manner, scattering drinks and drinkers, the moon-struck inventor appears to be far more lucid than is usual for his ilk: "Flee - blow up - burn everything - captured - broken - no hope!" Yes, definitely more lucid.

Pausing briefly to down a pint in one, he finally comes to a halt at your table; everyone else in the bar breathes a sigh of relief and quickly edges away. Now you're stuck with the loon and must listen to his theories and investigations, or suffer the humiliating tirade that will follow any attempt to quietly sneak off and leave him talking to the furniture.

"Ah yes, warriors, adventurers, great heroes no doubt!" He snorts his obvious derision and snatches another swift half before continuing: "You'll do; best that can be done at such short notice, but I'll have to do. I'll tell you what" (as he gulps back a brandy) "it's all about - yes, that I will."

A conspiratorial glance around the room, and then: "Gremlins it is. They're back. Thought we'd done for them, but here they are again. Caught the others, above the tool room, and locked them up they have. Now they're breaking things; just can't resist fiddling and tweaking and pulling. Anyhow, the furnace is overheating and there's too much pressure and the well's beginning to flood and it's going to explode and if it's not stopped the water'll get to the beds and then it'll blow and it'll bring everything down and we're doomed: we're all going to die!" He gives a sharp grin and sinks a double rum. "Can't be helped. Gotta be stopped. What you going to do, eh, eh, eh?" And down goes another pint.

You realize that your unsought guest may be a few short of a full deck, but that he speaks the truth and that this matter requires immediate resolution to avert a minor disaster for the delve. Before he becomes too inebriated to talk further (even as you confer he has swallowed yet another half), you demand more information.

"Gotta get in there and shtop the little devilsh, but not by the main entransh - tha's shut and carn be open. Nother way round back - gotta sneak in when're not looking. I'll show sho follow me. Jush gotta have anovver drinky firshst." You fail to reach him before he imbibes a quart of mead, chased with a glass of rum punch, but manage to hold him up as he staggers towards the exit, waving an empty glass and calling for more grog. Almost carrying the sozzled inventor, giving terse orders to your bemused audience and demanding that the elders and magicians be alerted, you trip and lurch towards the laboratories, looking for a hidden access vent.

At last the eructating drunkard signals a halt and leans on a small hatch that you have been past at least twice before. Rocking unsurely to and fro with an inane smirk on his face, he explains that the postern opens onto a shaft leading down to the laboratories and that this is the nearest entrance.

"You gotta climb down. Dunno where it cumsh out - under the floor I fink. Heating, ya know. Geoferminical. You just hold off them gremninsh and we'll get the oversh. Trapped, they are. Wivvout em to turn it off - bang, bang, all dead! But I'll show you the way. Hic!"

And with that he slides down the wall and slumps in a sotten heap on the floor. Briefly he opens one eye and gives you a lop-sided sheepish grin, as he whips out a hidden hip-flask and, momentarily brandishing it, empties the contents into his dribbling maw. Then he passes out cold.

There's no time to waste. You can't wait for another guide, nor for the magicians who disdain the work of the mechanics and so often have to patch up the results of their screwball experiments. As you gingerly enter the heating vent, a glum belch erupts behind you. "Bang, bang, all dead. Hic!"

DM'S INTRODUCTION

Hammer and Tongs is a light-hearted scenario for about half-a-dozen low-level characters, though only minor alterations of hit dice and damage would be needed for higher levels if required. It is assumed that the adventure will be used as a one-off, and you may need to change certain details if you wish to integrate it into a campaign, especially the lack of provision for PC MUs and the dearth of treasure to be found.

The scenario is set within the dwarven delve of Khernobl - a large colony with a leaning towards technological dabbings, an unfortunate regularity of fatal accidents, and an acute incidence of alcoholism. Nowhere are these tendencies more openly displayed than in the Tzevan'zn laboratories, founded by the great Orgg and his son Ob'rt, where dwarven engineers strive to power new-fangled contraptions by the effusions of hot water alone. On their introduction many of the populace were under a misapprehension that infusions were the matter in hand and wondered what was wrong with the humble kettle, but since those early days the Tzevan'zn clan have gone from strength to strength and now produce a wide variety of weird mechanisms, a few of which are actually quite useful.

However, it is a miserable fact of scientific life that when a machine is made more complex, the chance of the gremlins appearing increases exponentially. These small green scaly creatures with their incessantly probing fingers and blood-curdling giggles are wont to materialize in the midst of the most complicated and delicate part of a mechanical device at the most inopportune time and there wreak untold havoc. The Tzevan'zn clan currently suffers from a particularly severe attack of these meddlesome fiends and it is the task of the PC dwarves to enter the workshops, dispose of the intruders and liberate the engineers before the steam-driven equipment is irreparably damaged and explodes, destroying much of the delve in the process. Note that there is no set time before destruction; choose for yourself depending on how difficult you want the adventure to be (though give advance warnings in the form of rumblings, minor explosions and so on).

PLAYER CHARACTERS

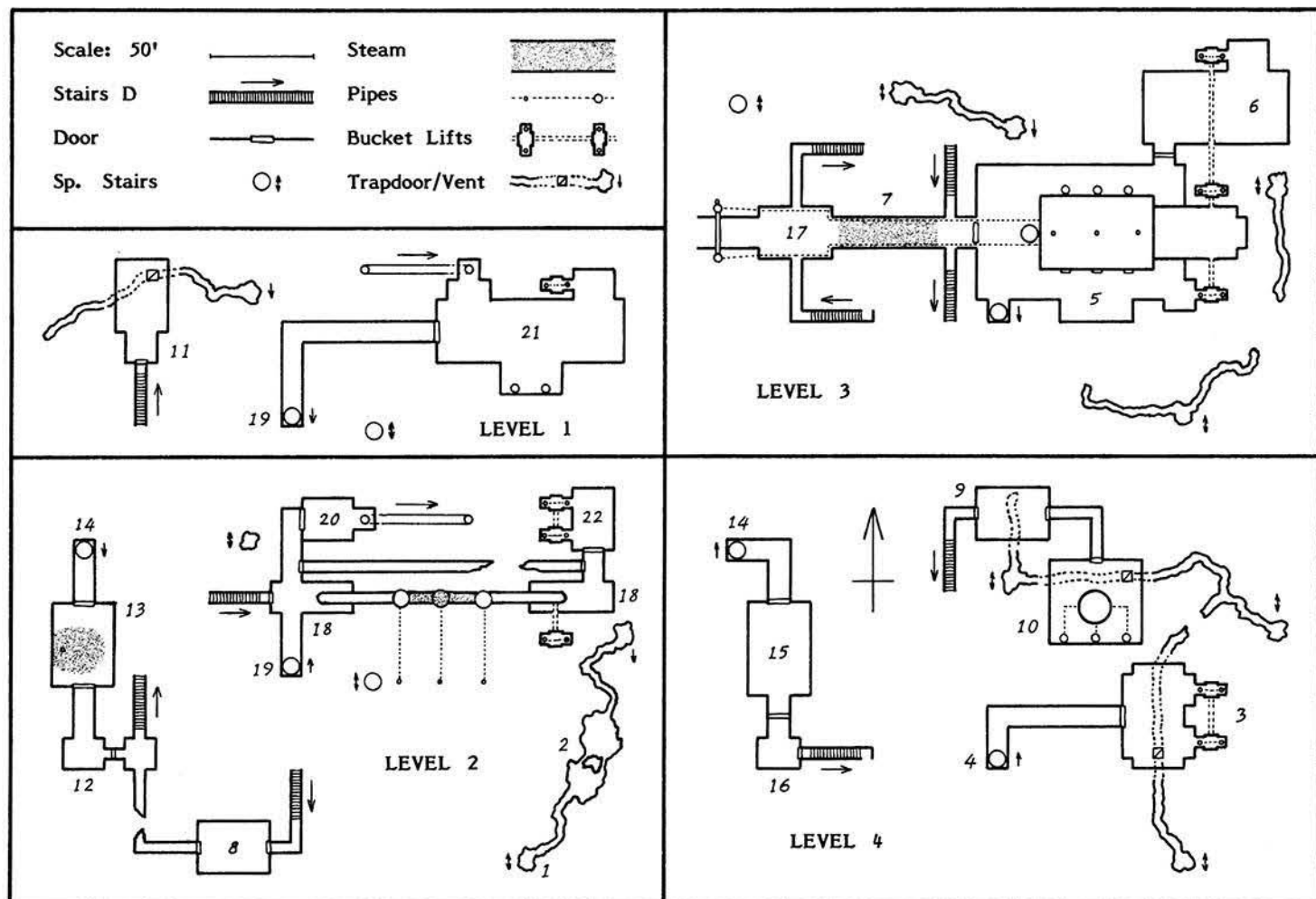
It is assumed that all the PCs are dwarves. In D&D you will have to allow dwarves to be thieves, or include some humans. No more than half should be thieves, with NO spell-casters. Magic should be minimal, but normal equipment is assumed.

TECHNOLOGY

Two technologies normally foreign to fantasy worlds are used in this scenario: steam and clockwork. Although essentially anachronistic, try to give descriptions a medieval feel even when they concern modern devices. If the players query the specifics of the machinery, fob them off by explaining that such an alien science is beyond the characters' ken and that the latter haven't the faintest idea what the devices do, let alone how to operate them. PCs tampering with machinery have a percentage chance equal to INT of achieving a desired effect, if this is possible. A roll over INT, but less than twice INT, will have no effect, any other score causing the opposite or some other damaging effect, as appropriate.

GREMLINS

It is these fey beings that limit fantasy worlds to medieval technology - the magical protections necessary to keep them at bay are so extreme as to ensure that spellcasting is more efficacious and less effort than mechanics; their statistics are: AC 6; HD 1/2; MV 150'/15"; AT 1; D 1-4; save as Elf1/MU1; morale 8; MR 10%; Int ave; AL C/CE; SZ S (2 1/2' tall). If two or more are subject to the same spell they may combine magic resistance scores (ie 10 will cause a spell to fail; this is only relevant to magical items for the PCs). Although these malevolent, mischievous beings do not understand the devices they wreck, they have an ineffable ability to interfere with precisely the right component to cause maximum damage. In D&D gremlins have the **curse** ability of sprites; in AD&D they may cast **push** and **shatter**, a group of five able to join in a **fumble** spell (all once per day). They may become **invisible**, taking one turn to do so (appearing as they attack). Damage will be 1/2 for non-magical attacks. Their sole purpose is to destroy all mechanical and technical devices and to kill and maim all who operate or defend such infernal contraptions.



KEY

General Notes: Passages are as high as they are wide; rooms are 10'-25' high. Doors are iron-bound and open as normal - locked doors open at -2. Stairs are stone, angled at a rate of 1:1. All constructions are relatively recent and sound, unless otherwise noted. The whole complex will be damp and warm from the machinery, with a pounding, rumbling, hissing noise echoing throughout. Space permits only basic details to be given, so flesh out descriptions where necessary. The maps are numbered in roughly the order the PCs will follow.

Gremlins: You are free to place the nuisances anywhere you want, though some recommended positions are given. As well as the set encounters, roll a d8 every turn: a 1 indicates a machinery malfunction nearby (determine the details as seems appropriate from the key and the PCs' location); an 8 shows that 2-12 gremlins have come upon the PCs - they are almost certain to attack from surprise (no upper limit is given for gremlins, but about two or three dozen wandering, plus those pre-located seems reasonable). Remember that in a scenario of this nature the action should be fairly fast and furious, with the gremlins given to causing all manner of infuriating mischief; they will make lightning attacks and move off when the PCs begin to retaliate; keep everything fairly humorous.

1. Geothermal Vent: The subterranean city of Khernobl draws much of its heat from natural sources within the earth, the vents filled with rising warm air leading to underfloor pipe systems to heat specific areas. It is into one of these the PCs must climb to enter the complex. They begin 100' above the point marked (another 100' above the final entry point). Ropes must be used (it is assumed they have these), although thieves may climb down with ease (AD&D treat as very rough). The arrows indicate whether the vent goes down only, or both up and down. Falling down a vent results in certain death.

2. Lizards' Lair: This pair of caves are joined by passages far too narrow for PCs (widening them would take hours). In them lair a number of lizards: D&D geckos; AD&D subterranean lizards (smaller than usual, having HD 3+1 and D 1-8). 2-5 will attack the PCs, either in the vent or in the caves. If the PCs roll encounters in any of the geothermal passages or vents it will be with 1-3 lizards, not gremlins - machinery failures may be ignored or treated as minor cave-ins causing 1-4 damage to 2-5 PCs (and partially blocking the passages).

3. Coal Store: To fire the great furnace of the Tzevan'zns, much coal is needed and it is stockpiled in this chamber. A 15' mound of the fuel is heaped in the north-east corner (to the ceiling) and the whole chamber is covered in a layer of sooty dust from 2" to 6" deep. Even careful movement causes choking clouds to rise, and sudden or energetic activity may debilitate PCs - save vs poison or all actions at -4 or -20% and take 1 point of damage per round (the dust will take one round to settle per round of activity). All combat will be at -2 due to poor visibility, though even invisible gremlins may be hit at -4 as they are outlined in the sooty shower.

Recessed into the east wall are two mechanisms driven by the engine above that clank and rattle away, filling the chamber with their noise. Each is basically a series of very large buckets connected to a long loop of chain that is revolving around a central axle - the south loop is driven directly by the steam engine, the north loop remotely by a spindle fixed at the base of the south loop. The north loop carries coal from the face far below to this store, the south allowing it to then be transferred to the boiler room as required. A PC may sit in a bucket and ride to the level above, requiring a roll under DEX to dismount safely; if he fails he must make another roll, success indicating 2-8 damage as he tumbles to the floor in an ungainly heap, a second failure meaning 4-24 damage as he goes over the top and gets crushed, seizing up the machine in the process - extricating him will take 2-20 rounds causing 1 damage per round (this means that the north bucket loop is of no use for the PCs as it only goes down).

The trapdoor hidden beneath the coal dust (obvious to PCs in the passage below) can be easily opened. The PC opening it, and anyone within 10' if in the passage, must make a save vs poison as above; those in the passage not expecting the dust save at -4, the area being soot-filled for 2-7 rounds after.

4. Spiral Staircase: The 50' staircase spirals clockwise to the boiler room. 35' up a blockage of wood and jagged metal shards has been stuck across the stairs - it will take 3-6 rounds to remove, 7-12 to do so quietly. Waiting halfway up are a dozen invisible gremlins (more if the PCs have been noisy below); they will attack and then retreat behind the barrier, lobbing bits of metal and defending as AC 0.

5. Boiler Room: A constant clanking, whirring, hissing and roaring will prevent all but shouted conversations. The 25' high chamber is dominated by the vast boiler at its centre: on the south are three large doors opening onto the furnace to stoke the fires and supply fuel; on top are three pipes rising into the ceiling; on the north a trio of pipes enter through the floor and lead into the boiler; at the west is a huge chimney, with a door on the outside; and at the east a contraption the like of which the PCs have never before seen from which an inordinate amount of noise issues. The recess to the south is stacked high with coal, and more fuel lies beside the bucket loop from room 3 in the south-east corner. The whole room is filled with smoke, steam and gremlins.

The gremlins will not expect PCs to use the bucket lift as a means of ingress and may be surprised by such an approach - falling out or getting stuck will negate this surprise. The entrance is guarded by six gremlins dangling from pipes that leave the top of the boiler and travel along the ceiling to the main gates. About a score are shovelling coal into the open furnace doors, another half-dozen stoking the flames with long pokers and a handful are merely throwing lumps of rock and metal at each other or scampering about, tampering with all the valves, dials, stopcocks and levers with which the machinery is covered. Although the PCs are unfamiliar with the steam-engine, the ominous rumblings emanating from its bowels will warn them that all is not well - indeed, the pressure is rapidly building up and even if no more fuel is added, it will soon explode. The trapped engineers are the only dwarves with the expertise to release the pressure.

If the PCs do try to operate the machinery, their chances of success are slim. Playing with the turbine will cause them to be covered with scalding steam, as will fiddling with the pipes up through the ceiling or to the door; if unlucky, the turbine will also explode, scattering cogs, gears and shards of metal over the whole area and maybe bringing down some of the roof (this will seize up all mechanical devices run from the turbine and cause massive damage to any nearby PC). The pipes through the floor will flood the chamber. Opening the door to the chimney will fill the room with choking smoke; a PC may not climb the chimney without first being burnt and then suffocating. Note that all of these have gauges, dials and valves in abundance, none with any obvious functions. A PC attempt to flood the furnace will cause too much steam to be produced and is more likely to precipitate an explosion.

6. Tool Room: A long spindle from the turbine crosses this room at ceiling height, eventually ending at the bucket loop on the far side that drops from above (ie the open side has descending buckets passing through; any attempt to ascend it will cause it to jam and the PC will be squashed as before); the PCs may hear muffled dwarven cries for help from above. Running by a system of gears, pulleys and chains from this spindle are mechanical drills, saw, lathes, etc bolted to a number of sturdy benches. Spread over the floor, on shelves and in boxes are all manner of tools, metal shavings, lumps of cut or twisted iron and copper, half-finished items of an unfathomable nature and half-consumed meals left in a hurry. A couple of dozen gremlins are in here, pulling its contents apart and hurling them at each other. If the PCs enter, the gremlins will bombard them with jagged metal fragments and attempt to drag them onto the saws and lathes that are still operable. Any PC hit by a gremlin will have to save under DEX on a d20 -1 per attacker or fall into the machinery; 50% of the time this will smash the item but the PC will take d8 damage (as will gremlins) and may be trapped or entangled.

7. Broken Pipes: The pipes running along the ceiling of the corridor are broken and scalding steam is spurting out in a 50' long area. PCs will notice this is very hot - crossing will cause 3d12 damage! A PC who runs through must make a d20 roll under DEX; success indicates only 2d12 damage but a failure means he has fallen and will take double damage.

8. Clockworks Laboratory: Work benches line the walls and spread over them are a multitude of fine tools, instruments and mechanisms - cases, shelves, pigeon-holes and a plethora of labels indicate that some order was once imposed on this room, but a dozen demented gremlins have ensured that this is no longer the case. In the centre of the room they have erected a device that spirals and twirls, flinging cogs and wires and thin metal plates about the chamber - its original function is now impossible to guess, but it serves as a toy to amuse them as they leap out of the way of the missiles (a couple pinned to shelves indicate less dextrous manoeuvres). However, where the nimble gremlins duck and weave to avoid a spinning razor-edged gear or hurtling shower of needles, PCs will be less successful and will suffer the equivalent of d6 attacks per round as if by a gremlin, each attack inflicting only 1 point of damage - these will be in addition to normal gremlin attacks, of course. If the PCs can distract their opponents for one turn the machine will wind down or run out of ammunition; it takes a gremlin 2 rounds to load 1 round's worth of ammo, and four gremlins 2 rounds to rewind it.

As well as this manic whirling contraption, the PCs may find other clockwork toys still functional. There are seven tiny clockwork mice (only two keys) that may be wound and used to confuse gremlins or divert their attention - roll under INT on a d20 to operate successfully (or break in the attempt). In a corner is a small chest in which is a jack-in-the-box; a couple of witty gremlins have replaced the rattle which it did have on the end with a sword and then locked it; opening it will inflict 2-12 damage on whoever is in front (though a save under DEX may allow a dodge for half damage). If it is re-armed and moved, gremlins coming across it will not fail to tamper with it (probably to their permanent detriment).

9. Alchemists' Laboratory: As the PCs descend to this level they will notice a most unpleasant odour reminiscent of some foul rotting substance, and a couple of inches of warm water lapping at their ankles. The gremlins have left this area but managed to lock the east door behind them. Inside the room is rather a mess: tables and benches are on their sides and all around them lie broken porcelain and glass flasks, alembics and crucibles, iron tripods, and crystal prisms. The floor is awash with chemicals and powders, mixed with warm water. Unfortunately an experiment taking animal souls from their bodies to store them in rocks has been disrupted, and the furious spirits have mingled with chemicals to form a diabolical creature. It appears akin to a water elemental caught up with grains of multi-coloured sand; statistics: AC 6; HD 8; MV 120'/12" on this level only; AT 1; D 2-8; SD sharp weapons do 1 point of damage, blunt weapons ½ damage - magical weapons do double damage; save as F12; morale 12; Int low; AL C/CE; SZ M. Any hit it causes will inflict an additional 2-5 burning damage from various chemicals unless a save vs poison is made. It can also breathe a cloud of poison gas once per turn - this will fill the room and cause the effects of a **slow** spell (save -4, effects cumulative).

Among the wreckage, the PCs may be able to find some of the following liquids: a **potion of extra-healing** (sweet blue); a **potion of levitation** (odourless yellow); a **potion of poison** (noxious black and viscous); and three identical flasks each containing a red fluid that ignites on contact with the air, causing double the damage of oil with an area effect of 10'.

10. Well-Head: Opening the door may cause PCs to roll under DEX or be knocked off their feet by a wave of warm water. The water is about 1' deep and beginning to rise rapidly via the widening crack in the object resembling an inverted iron cauldron in the middle of the room. From this three pipes rise to the ceiling and thence to the boiler in room 5. The water tank sits atop a well that is sunk into a hot spring, from which the water naturally rises, pre-heated; it then continues at a carefully gauged rate to supply the boiler. The gremlins have smashed the valves to ensure a plentiful supply of water for boiling, thereby causing a breach in the pressure tank; the breach is slowly widening, increasing the rate of flooding (though this poses no immediate danger). A trapdoor opens into a geothermal heating passage - it can be found as if a secret door and opened easily. If the PCs are not careful about closing the trapdoor, water will quickly leak into the vents and thence to the hot lava below thereby causing boiling geysers to shoot up through the vents.

11. Master Laboratory: The PCs may reach this chamber after clambering through various geothermal vents and passages; at least one encounter with lizards is recommended in this time - the chamber is entered via a trapdoor (obvious from below, secret from above). This is the laboratory of the masters: Orgg and Ob'rt Tzevan'zn work here to perfect their theories and to reach new heights of craftsmanship. Currently it is in something more of a disarray than is usual for even these messy inventors: papers and ink are everywhere, manuals have been shredded, and wooden and metal models lie in fragments on the tables. The walls of the south part of the room are covered by cupboards and bookcases (the door is behind such a case and must be found as if secret); from one cupboard is emanating a cry akin to a piglet having its tail surgically removed. Investigation will reveal a gremlin shut into the cupboard by its fellows and left here when they departed; it will instantly attack in a frenzy regardless of overwhelming odds. If captured and subdued some facts may be ground out of it: it knows the dwarven engineers are still alive, bound hand and foot in a room that has a bucket lift in it (it can give no more accurate location); it knows that some of the labs have been trapped (though not which or how); and it can reveal that gremlins appear from a land that is flat, green and glowing in an attempt to render all worlds like their's. These disclosures will not be easily forthcoming nor will it hesitate to lie and mislead where possible. If taken along it will disrupt, steal, annoy and injure as often as it can.

12. Antechamber: The east door is locked and trapped; find at normal chances, remove at -15%. Upon opening, a board in which several shards of glass have been embedded will swing down and hit the opener: treat as 2-5 attacks by a 3rd level fighter with a dagger; save under DEX for half damage.

13. Steam Laboratory: Copper pipes and tubes run around the walls and dangle from the ceiling, iron pressure vessels and small furnaces lie on the tables, and shattered remnants of delicate instruments are strewn all over. From the floor by the west wall protrudes a large pipe, currently shrouded in a thick mist of scalding steam which shoots out from several cracks; this covers a 20' area, leaving only a 5' passage to the east between steam and wall - anyone entering the steam suffers damage as in 7. Hidden within this is a strange being, steam-powered, but guided by a demonic sentience that was magically installed (considered an admission of failure and cheating by many of the engineers). This is attached by jointed, flexible copper tubing to the pipe and driven by the steam from the boiler. It will advance to the edge of the steam to attack PCs as they attempt to pass, its piston-arms striking with knobbed clubs, and then retreat as PCs do so. Its statistics are AC 0 (see below); HD 12 but attacks as 6; MV 120'/12" but cannot move further than 30' from the pipe; AT 4 (2 per round with each arm); D 2-12 each hit; SD if hit by non-magical weapons the PC must roll OVER damage scored on a d20 or the weapon shatters on the metallic skin; save as F8; morale 12; Int non; AL N; SZ M. This machine will be very difficult to destroy in combat; the copper tube joining it to the pipe is more vulnerable and if smashed it will run out of steam in 2-5 rounds - treat the pipe as AC 0 (it is small and hidden by the cloud), but with only 2 HD. PCs will have to use missiles to avoid being scalded.

14. Spiral Staircase: This is blocked and guarded like that at 4. Being below PCs, hidden gremlins only count as AC 3.

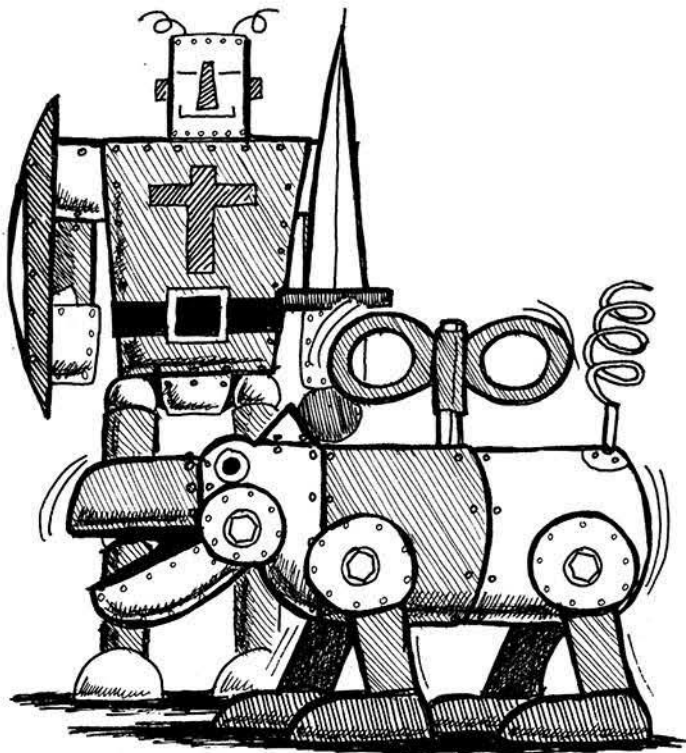
15. Clockwork Laboratory: The state of this room is similar to that of 8, the other clockwork lab, but here the dwarves were working on large projects and the remains are therefore proportionally bigger. The gremlins fleeing from the stairs will join with the half-dozen here to set various clockwork mechanisms off as the PCs enter, and then scarpers out of the south door. The multitude of mechanisms will randomly clank around the room, but the cumulative affect will be to launch 3-6 attacks on the PCs each round; in addition all manner of smaller toys will distract and annoy the PCs without causing them damage. The statistics of the attackers are: AC 2; HD 3-6; MV 120'/12"; AT 1; D 2-5 to 2-12; save as F4; morale 12; Int non; AL N; SZ S or M. PCs will be at -2 to hit, etc due to the disturbances of wind-up mice, bats, owls, spiders and so on. There are twelve of the big clockwork opponents, appearing as metallic dogs, grotesque dwarf models, goblins designed for mechanized target practice and so forth.

16. Antechamber: The gremlins will lock both sets of doors. The north door is trapped (find as usual, remove at -10%) so the opener is showered with myriad tiny slivers of glass and metal; these will cause damage equal to the PC's AC (save vs DEX for half), causing a similar amount of damage each turn, unless the PC undresses and clears his armour of them. The gremlins will wait at the turn of the stairs to 17 and throw rocks and metal shards at the PCs or attempt to ambush them.

17. Main Gates: Running along the ceiling on either side of this room are steam-filled pipes leading to huge pistons for lifting the gates - the escaped dwarf (now drunk) shut these behind him and the gremlins have broken the system needed to open them again. The massive iron gates cannot be manually lifted and it will take hours to batter them down. A dozen gremlins cavort about this chamber, swinging from pipes and twiddling stopcocks - they may be joined by those from 14.

18. Steam-Hammer: As the PCs approach the area they will be able to hear a thunderous hammering accompanying the general hissing and clanging sound; communication will be impossible and the faint-hearted will veritably quake in their boots so awesome is the noise. It is produced by three great steam-driven hammers that crash down onto a clanking conveyer belt powered remotely from the turbine below. The belt moves at a slow walking pace from west to east (and back underneath); PCs may clamber on at the west end and travel along it, but any attempt to go under from either end will jam it, causing damage as for the bucket loops. Travelling via the belt is, however, most inadvisable, as all three hammers may well get to crush the PC. The east and west will cause 10-100 points of damage each (save under DEX for half); the middle one is leaking and at low pressure, hence only causing 3-36 points (save as above) but a second save under DEX is needed or the PC slips on the wet surface (from the escaping steam) and is hit twice - it will be obvious to PCs that these hammers are powerful enough to flatten them before they come too close.

There will be no gremlins at the west end unless they have been chased up from below; at the east end there are a score guarding the captors in 22 and they may fire missile weapons at the PCs along the conveyer belt. At this end, gremlins have smashed most of the controls to the hammers and belt so that they will eventually pound themselves apart. They will fight gallantly to the death in a last-ditch defiance should the PCs have reached this far and rescued the engineers.



T. JEFFS.

19. Spiral Staircase: A group of half a dozen gremlins plus any who have been routed from below guard the staircase with their usual barricade (at AC 0 behind this as they are above the PCs again). Here, however, they have stored some rather nasty clockwork devices stolen from one of the labs; seeming to be a kind of blender or shredder, but with the blades on the outside, the gremlins will wind them up and hurl them at oncoming PCs. They will bounce down the spiral with blades thrashing maniacally and cause 2-8 damage to any PC in their path; if the PCs have keys to the clockwork mice from 8 they may rewind them and return them - doing so here will merely cause them to fall on their own heads (in open spaces damage will only be 2-5 and only 1-3 opponents may be hit by them).

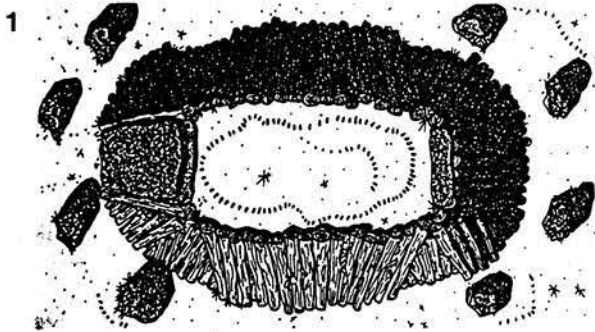
20. Store Room: Many large lumps of metal and numerous odds and ends of armour, weapons, tools etc are stored here. All are rusted, broken or otherwise useless and await crushing by the steam-hammers though barricades or ad hoc weapons may be made with them. At the east end is a hole in the ceiling - it leads via an angled shaft to 21. The shaft climbs at a rate of 1:1 and may easily be ascended by thieves (with no roll), other PCs needing rope unless in leather armour (then they must make a roll to fall as if a 1st level thief).

21. Sorting Room: A great variety of metal remnants lie all around the room, some already sorted into piles of those for crushing by the hammers and those to be sent straight on for use in the tool room or smelting in the furnaces. There are some normal dwarven metal-working implements in the room (eg braziers, anvils, hammers) employed both to break up lumps of metal and to train apprentices before they are sent on to the more delicate and innovative work performed downstairs. In the ceiling of the south recess are two large holes that open into shafts up to the armouries hundreds of feet above; from the latter pieces of unwanted metal are slung down for the boffins. These are currently shut by large iron hatches and metal girders and braces have been placed underneath to keep them closed. In the floor of the north-west recess a hole opens onto the shaft down to 20 - this is also closed by a hatch and will need a combined STR of 20 from two PCs to open it. The north-east alcove shows the upper part of a bucket loop driven by the turbine; over the clanking the PCs may just hear the feeble cries of the trapped dwarves in 22. Descent via this lift will be under the same conditions as described in 3, but with no chance of entrapment underneath.

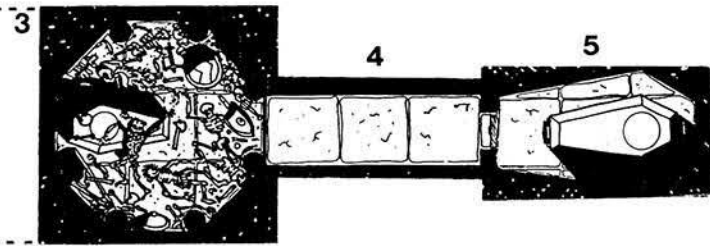
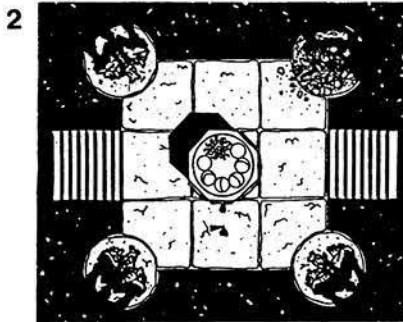
Twenty gremlin guards form the final defence before the PCs are able to reach the captive dwarven engineers. They will fight valiantly, using the scrap stored here as weaponry (to give them D 1-6) or missiles, and may even scoop up burning coals with suitable implements and hurl them at the PCs. If all is obviously lost, and if they have suffered casualties of over 75%, those remaining will dive into the buckets and escape downstairs. Here they hope to slaughter the dwarven technologists in a last bid to outwit the PCs and cause the destruction of this whole area - note that in D&D only those able to make morale checks may take this action, the others scattering and fleeing as best they can (at your option).

22. Store Room: This chamber is that in which the dwarven scientists of the Tzevan'zn clan are imprisoned. The room has a locked door and two bucket lifts: one descends from 21 and the other descends to 6 (to carry the crushed and sorted metal fragments to the tool room); due to their rotations, a PC may only use the former to enter, and the latter to exit. Bound hand and foot with chain and rope are the dozen rather sorry-looking boffins who were in the complex at the time of the gremlin attack. If gremlins have escaped from 21, there will be one less per round of slaughtering. Even if the PCs release these dwarves the scenario is not quite over, for in order to save the delve the PCs must escort the inventors to the boiler room and there protect them for at least a turn, assuming that there is still time to prevent an explosion (a decision you should have already made). Their wards will be little use to them, acting as if mere 1st level types, with no armour and weapons (unless supplied) and very poor morale as soon as they are physically threatened. If you desire to be particularly rotten, you could establish a minimum number of surviving boffins to enable the pressure to be relieved from the boiler - any remaining gremlins will be going flat out to disable them and achieve their prime objective, which is to render Khernobl to flat, green and glowing rubble.

The BARROW



TRAPS: The damage done by the various traps (and by the statues in room 2) is given only as a certain number of dice and varies according to the state of the moon. In the week that the moon is most full damage should be rolled on 8 sided dice, on the weeks when it is waxing or waning use 6 sided dice and on the week when it is hardly visible use 4 sided. If you do not know the state of the moon at the time that the party arrive in the area throw a D4: 1 = new moon, 2 = waxing, 3 = full moon, 4 = waning.



DM'S INTRODUCTION

The **Barrow** is a scenario designed for use with AD&D or D&D (for characters of around 4th level, with no magic-users above 4th) or with RQ (50%-80% ability). If more powerful characters are used you should ensure that some sense of balance and challenge is maintained by raising the damage caused by the traps and increasing the numbers, abilities or attack modes of their foes.

The scenario is designed to be compatible with the boxed set **The Watchers of the Sacred Flame** (set 3 in the Complete Dungeon Master series from Integrated Games) or with set 4 in the series **The Feathered Priests**. It can also be used on its own, in which case it is probably best if it can be inserted as a wilderness diversion while the party are en route to another objective. The descriptions given below assume that the scenario will be used in conjunction with the Complete Dungeon Master series; if you are intending to use the scenario independently you should ensure that no details are in contradiction to your usual campaign setting (in particular you may wish to change references to the Henninga to a similar barbarian group that your players will be familiar with).

Although this scenario does not contain the **Players' Views and Artifacts** normally found in Integrated Games modules, floorplans of the complex have been included (see back cover) and as far as possible the format and statistics follow the pattern to be found in Integrated Games modules. Thus basic area descriptions have been given in *Italic Script* (you should use your own skills to add additional atmospheric detail); items of particular importance to the scenario have been boxed so that they can be swiftly located during play. General notes on traps are given above and statistics for the encounters are grouped on page 10 for convenience (there are spaces for any changes that occur during play). Some information will only be required for certain rules systems and can be ignored for others.

There is no set **Players' Introduction** given. It is assumed that the players will come across the village nearby in the course of their wilderness travels and the scenario will develop from there. When the party arrive in the village they will be directed to the "Three Horsemen" - this is the only building of any note (serving as tavern, meeting place and trading post), other buildings are purely domiciles.

BACKGROUND

Although the Barrow was used by the Henninga as the final resting place of one of their warrior-priests, it was not actually constructed by them, and the Henninga that first desecrated it and then put it to their own use are not directly connected with any band that the party may seek. The original builders of the Barrow had a system of magic that was largely based on worship of the moon and the free flowing of blood. Their principle spell-casters were women and it was said that their power rose and fell monthly in conjunction with the phases of the moon (see **Traps** above). They constructed the Barrow, and the various defences that are contained therein, as a final resting place for one of their more important Priestesses.

The Barrow remained unviolated for several decades, until it attracted the attention of a Henninga warband returning to their homelands. One of the principal Warrior-Priests had been slain during the journey and his men had decided to return to their homelands among the wooded hills of Orsted to bury him with full honours. However by the time that they discovered the Barrow the body was becoming a rather unbearably noisome burden; they therefore decided that the Barrow would suffice as a suitable resting place. In true Henninga style they rapidly ransacked it, caring little for the appalling toll inflicted by the traps and statues. They removed the treasure and the body that they had found (not actually that of the Priestess - see room 3) and replaced it with their Priest and his ceremonial axe. Before they left the remaining Priests were able to alter the enchantment on the statues so that Henninga Priests would be safe from attack if they visited.

Although the departing Henninga did not reset the spear traps or cover the entrance that they had ripped open, the statues proved sufficient to keep out intruders until a small group of horsemen chanced upon the Barrow about 150 years later and ransacked it in their turn. They decided to take up residence in a nearby village as they had suffered the loss of a compatriot and were tired of the dangers of adventuring. They then hit upon the scheme of resetting the traps and luring unwary adventurers to the barrow - they would then return later to rob the bodies. They have been carrying out this scheme for several years, and the money obtained in this fashion proves a useful addition to the income from the tavern that they run.

THE THREE HORSEMEN

The tavern that the party will be directed to is run by a trio of ex-adventurers that are also generally known as the Three Horsemen. They all share a love of horses and riding - they seem to talk of little else apart from occasional references to alcohol, music or women. The other villagers are a little suspicious of these later arrivals, but grateful for the extra trade that they seem to bring to the area. The tavern is a favourite meeting place for other roving groups of horsemen from miles around. When the villagers hear the approach of these noisy bands they often abandon the tavern and run to lock up their daughters. However despite their suspicion of the wild appearance, alleged debauched lifestyle and reckless nature of these horsemen (they often hold noisy races in front of the tavern when inebriated), the villagers have to admit that there is usually very little trouble from the visiting bands.

The ground floor of the tavern has two large rooms, one is a bar area and the other a general stores that appears to specialize in used arms, armour and general adventuring gear at reasonable prices. The second floor is used as storage for the large casks of beer (there is no cellar) and as living space for the Three Horsemen. There is also a set of stables and a smithy in the yard at the back, and a small shack with bunk beds and a stove that the players can rent for 1 copper piece per person per night (they will be provided with rough but clean linen, but must gather or buy their own firewood).

The Three Horsemen all wear heavily padded leather armour at all times and stomp around in stout riding boots. The backs of their armour have strange runes painted on them; if the players are able to translate these they will find them to be mystical sayings or religious instructions of some sort. Some examples (roughly translated) are: "Metallic steed - destined to come last", "Travel swiftly, travel in an unrestrained fashion" and "Too swift to continue living, not old enough to cease". They often carry helmets, but scorn the use of shields as they are unsuitable for use from horseback. All three are excellent horsemen and can fight from horseback with no penalties. They also have feathered cloaks which they made for use in the Barrow (see room 2) in case one of them accidentally touches the altar, but they keep these hidden from the other villagers.

If the party arrive at the tavern on horseback they will be made particularly welcome and be given their first round of drinks free while the horsemen gather round to examine their steeds. Dann is an expert on all horses bred within a distance of 300-500 miles, and will be able to give an account of the ancestry of any horses obtained locally (this could be embarrassing if the party have stolen horses).

Note that Bahzille has an interest in all legends of the Henninga and will tell the party this if they mention the nature of their journey. He will point to an extremely ornate Henninga axe blade that hangs over the bar and tell the party that it is rumoured to come from a local barrow (this is in fact true, Bahzille removed it himself when the Horsemen first explored the Barrow, but he will not tell the party this). The party should recognize the blade as being of obvious Henninga form, although it is covered in silver and intricately engraved (if they have extensive knowledge of the Henninga they will recognize it as a ceremonial burial axe left in the tombs of senior priests).

If the party express an interest in the barrow (and even if they don't the conversation will eventually turn to it during the course of the evening) the Horsemen will warn that it is a place of great evil. They will claim that there are hideous undead beings lurking there and that many passing adventurers have gone to investigate it and never returned. One of the local farmers will add that he was once passing it just after dawn and saw several human shapes covered in feathers rising out of the mound itself. All the locals will warn the party about the dangers of the Barrow. If they seem intent on investigating it (as the Horsemen really wish them to) Bahzille will say that it is rumoured that it is only safe to do so on the night of a full moon, but will be at a loss to explain why this should be so.

Bahzille Bad-Back

Bahzille generally acts as the spokesman for the group. He has long hair (usually tied back) and is clean shaven (although his hairy ankles and lack of stature give rise to rumours of halfling ancestry). He is said to own five horses and to never sell or put down one of his own horses (giving them to friends or allowing old horses to spend their last years in the back yard). His favourite horse is a roan mare that he calls "The Monzar". This horse is of the Motog-Uzzi breed, coming from a land far to the south and fetching high prices locally. Although The Monzar appears deceptively small and lightly built, Bahzille claims she has a fiery temperament and sure-footedness equalled only by the horses bred by the Dukes and Verdas of the south and that all of the Motog-Uzzi breed are swift as eagles. He has an eagle embroidered on his dyed wool riding scarf and the players may mistake this for a Henninga symbol.

Bahzille currently has a back injury which affects his movement on foot and combat ability. However, despite the fact that the players may overhear several local women wistfully declare that it ruins his riding ability, the party will not be able to discern any adverse effect on the way he handles his steed. Bahzille frequently rides off at short notice to a larger settlement far to the south-east. He always maintains that this is on business on behalf of the trio, but the villagers often point to his obvious exhaustion on his return as evidence of some other, more clandestine, activity.

Dann of the Night

Dann is slim and good looking and obviously has some elven blood in him. His long hair is always tied back or tied in a series of narrow plaits with pieces of dyed wool, and he often wears outlandishly colourful clothes. Like Bahzille he is said to own several horses, but will only ride those bred locally, disdaining breeds from foreign parts. His current favourite is a powerful stallion of the Beezar breed. He refers to this noisy mount as his "Golden Star" (although it actually has a black coat); the distinctive sound made by the thunder of Golden Star's hooves is known to all the villagers who often say that the horse takes but one stride for each tree it passes. Unknown to the other villagers Dann has the use of some magic spells. He is also a student of martial arts - you may wish to give him some unarmed combat bonuses or exotic weaponry.

Ward the Hairy

Ward is powerfully built and has a shock of long hair and a bushy beard; most of the villagers have never seen him out of his riding clothes. He is currently in a bad mood as his steed has been stolen. He will enquire of the players if they know the whereabouts of Harli, son of David, as he may be interested in buying one of the powerful horses bred by that man. Ward is also something of an artist and will offer to do ink sketches on scraps of parchment of the party, their steeds or any monsters they have vanquished, charging only a few silver pieces.



BAHZILLE: Move 8 [6], Defence 20% [10%]
 [Reduced due to his back injury] STR 14 [13], DEX 17 [16], CON 12 [11], SIZ 10, INT 14, WIS 10, CHA 15.
AD&D/D&D: Lvl 6 fighter [hits as 4th], hp 29, AC 7 (AD&D: 5 as DEX bonus, also attacks at +1), Longsword (1D8), Hunting Xbow (1D4), Dagger (1D4), may attack with sword (-1 to hit) and dagger (-3) at same time.
RQ: Weapons: as below, Skills: Hide in Cover 65%, Ride 95%, Move Quietly 60%, Spot Hidden 55%, Pick Lock 55%, Listen 45%, Track 75%, Hide Item 40%, Oratory 80%, Climb 65% [10%], Jump 40% [10%], Evaluate Treasure 65%.

DANN: Move 9, Defence 15%
 STR 14, DEX 15, CON 14, SIZ 12, INT 15, WIS 10, CHA 12.
AD&D: L 4/4 1/2 Elf F/MU, hp 17, AC 6 (DEX), 2 shortswords (1D6 each, attacks at -2, -4), Shortbow 1D6, Dagger 1D4, Spells: Charm P., D. Magic, Spider Climb, Levitate, Web.
D&D: L 4 Elf, AC 7, otherwise as AD&D (but no sp. climb)
RQ: Weapons: as below, Skills: C. Disease 40%, Ride 95%, Move Quietly 65%, Listen 60%, Track 65%, Climb 50%, Jump 45%, Hide in Cover 45%, Spot Hidden 45%, Mapping 50%, Spells: Healing 6, Light, Bladesharp 2, M. Missile 2.

WARD: Move 8, Defence 10%
 STR 17, DEX 13, CON 16, SIZ 14, INT 13, WIS 15, CHA 16.
AD&D/D&D: Lvl 5 Fighter, hp 25, AC 7, Battleaxe (1D8), Hand Axe (1D6), Heavy Crossbow (AD&D 1D4+1, D&D 1D6).
RQ: Weapons: as below, Skills: Ride 95%, Climb 35%, Jump 35%, Hide in Cover 40%, Spot Hidden 40%, Spot Trap 75%, Set/Disarm Trap 65%, Move Quietly 30%, Listen 30%

STATUES: Move 4, Def. 5%, STR 22, DEX 4, SIZ 12, POW 10.
 The statues can see in the dark and see invisible items. Every third combat round they breathe a small cloud - the character immediately in front of them must save vs spells (RQ: roll under CON on 3D6) or act as if **slowed** (RQ: as a Binding spell). They are impervious to spells that attack the mind (sleep, charm, illusions etc.).
AD&D/D&D: HD 6 (attack as if 2HD), AC 2, hp 30, always attack last in any round with two fists each doing 2 dice of damage (see Traps). AD&D: MR of 20%.
RQ: Attacks as below (see Traps for damage).

Name	Weapon	SR	Att	Damage	Par	HP
Bahz.	Bast. Swd.	4	[40%]	1D10+1	[25%]	20
Bahz.	Dagger	7	[35%]	1D4+2	[25%]	12
Bahz.	Light Xbow	-	[35%]	2D4+2	-	6
Dann	RHS.Sword	7	50%	1D6+1	40%	20
Dann	LHS.Sword	7	35%	1D6+1	50%	20
Dann	Dagger	8	45%	1D4+2	40%	12
Dann	S.Bow	-	55%	1D6+1	-	6
Ward	Battle Axe	7	50%	1D8+2+1D4	30%	15
Ward	Hand Axe	8	40%	1D6+1+1D4	30%	15
Ward	H. Xbow	-	45%	2D6+2	-	10
Statue	Right Fist	11	25%	2Dice	25%	As Arm
Statue	Left Fist	11	25%	2Dice	25%	As Arm

Name	Bahzille	Dann	Ward
RQ HP	11	14	17
R. Leg	3/4	3/5	3/6
L. Leg	3/4	3/5	3/6
Abd.	3/4	3/5	3/6
Chest	3/5	3/6	3/7
R.Arm	3/3	3/4	3/5
L.Arm	3/3	3/4	3/5
Head	5/4	4/5	4/6
POW	14	11	16
Statue	1	2	3
HP	30	30	30
R. Leg	6/10	6/10	6/10
L. Leg	6/10	6/10	6/10
Abd.	6/10	6/10	6/10
Chest	6/11	6/11	6/11
R.Arm	6/9	6/9	6/9
L.Arm	6/9	6/9	6/9
Head	6/10	6/10	6/10
POW	10	10	10

1. The Mound:

You should determine the actual location of the Barrow as applicable for your chosen use of this scenario. If you are using the scenario with CDM3 or CDM4 the Barrow is located in open grasslands a few miles to the north of the village; if you have a set of **Endless Plans 8** (Forests) or the floor-plans from CDM3 you may wish to have the barrow in a forest clearing. The location of the Barrow is well known to the locals, who shun the area believing that some evil undead force lurks therein.

As the party approach it will be obvious that they have come across some sort of barrow or burial mound. An oval mound has four slender standing stones positioned at each end. Tree trunks and branches are arranged around the sides of the mound and there is a large stone slab with an engraved circle positioned at the south end. A sense of foreboding hangs over the area.

The standing stones are harmless although they will respond positively to any form of **detect magic** spell or ability. If the players inspect them more closely they will find that they are covered in old carvings. Most are weathered beyond recognition - those still visible appear to be wave shapes, circles or moons and much symbolism associated with horses (a frequent pattern being a set of hoof-marks leading into some waves). They still have a rather limited power of preservation within the oval described by their position (hence the tree branches appear quite fresh although they were cut centuries ago and there may now be no trees for many miles around). However, following the desecration of the Barrow by the Henninga, the stones have lost their ability to preserve the contents of the mound.

If the party approach the mound at night the circle on the entrance slab will be glowing a very pale blue. This is extremely faint and only particularly sharp-eyed characters (such as elves) will spot this unless they are peering closely at the circle. Unless it is a full moon only part of the circle will glow - the area being a crescent shape corresponding to the current condition of the moon. If a female character with some form of spell-casting ability places the blood-soaked palm of her left hand on the circle the slab will rise slowly and silently upward (as if hinged at its upper edge) and remain open until the following dawn - it is, of course, extremely unlikely that the players will discover this by chance!

The first character to touch the stone slab (unless as noted above) will receive a magical shock doing 2 dice of damage (AD&D/D&D: allow a saving throw vs spells for half damage RQ: the character will take half damage if he can roll under POW on 3D6 - damage comes off total hp not from any location). Once the trap has gone off it will be safe for any character to touch the slab, but the trap is 'repowered' at midnight on the next night of a full moon (the night when the moon is fullest or the night immediately before or after). The slab can be slid to one side by exerting a total STR of 30+ points, revealing a set of steps descending into darkness.

There is a second slab, identical in all respects to that described above, buried under a few inches of soil about 10 yards to the south of the mound (it used to cover a southern entrance to the Barrow - see below). It is unlikely that the players will find it unless you decide that its presence will be revealed by a detection spell. It has a glowing circle and can administer damage as described above.

If the players examine the branches at the south end of the mound they will notice that they appear somewhat different (an elf or ranger or any character with some sort of forestry or woodcraft skill will know that they were cut from a different species of tree). Anyone with the appropriate ability who makes a successful tracking roll will notice that there are faint traces of humanoid tracks leading to and from the south end of the mound. A closer examination will reveal that these branches in fact are nailed together to form a sort of trapdoor - lifting it (STR 10+ required) reveals a set of stairs leading down into the mound.

2. Main Vault:

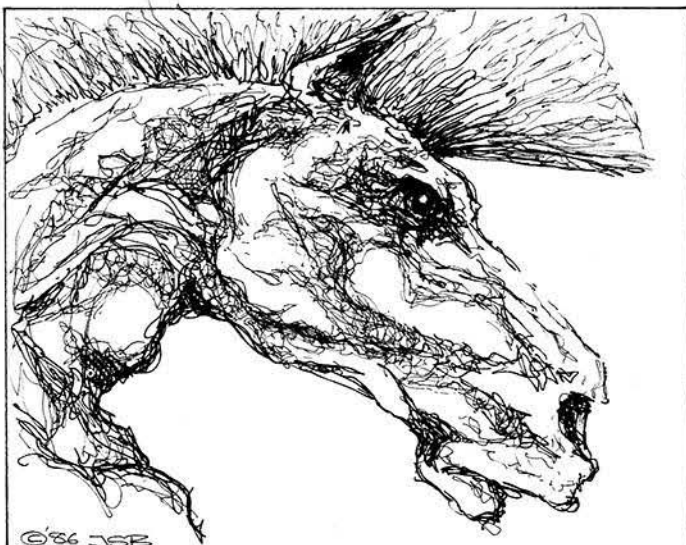
As the party descend the steep steps that they have found (and assuming that they have a light source or some form of ability to see in the dark) a vaulted room comes into view. It is about 6' high along each wall, rising to 12' high in the centre. In the centre of the room is a large 4' high octagonal slab - apparently an altar of some sort. There is an alcove in each corner of the room, and vaguely humanoid shapes can be seen in three of these alcoves. At the opposite end of the room is another set of stairs going upwards.

Both sets of stairs are trapped, with a series of spears in the side walls being propelled outwards when a weight of more than ten pounds is placed on the bottom step. This trap is partly magical and partly mechanical and so can be detected by either means (the concealed spear heads will also be spotted by anyone who specified that they were carefully examining the side walls during the descent and who made the appropriate roll). Spotting the trap will not necessarily reveal the trigger mechanism and provides no means of disarming it (the mechanism is contained within the stonework and is not accessible). The trap is activated unless the players specify that they miss the bottom step.

As the leading character reaches the bottom of the steps there is a click and the passage is suddenly bristling with spears that have sprung from the side walls.

If the leading character specified extreme caution or was previously aware of the trap he can attempt to roll under DEX on 3D6 to jump to safety (into the room) - there is otherwise no saving throw. If a second character was following closely behind he will also be caught by the trap (and may not jump away). Anyone caught by the trap will be hit by D4-1 spears (ie on a roll of 1 he escapes unharmed). Each spear does 1 die +2 points of damage (the type of die is specified by the phase of the moon - see Traps - as they are magically propelled). AD&D/D&D: the player must roll his AC or higher on a D8 to avoid damage (roll separately for each spear, an AC of 9 or 10 will always be hit) RQ: roll for location, armour deducts from damage as usual. Once sprung, the spears can be broken off or pushed back into the wall. The trap will be reset at midnight at the next full moon if the spears have been replaced.

As the party enter the room further the stone slab can be examined more closely - a series of engravings on the top with inlaid red stones appear to depict phases of the moon. The figures in the alcoves can also be seen more clearly and seem to be statues carved from a red stone. They represent powerfully-built ape-like beings, some 5' high; they have horses heads and tails and hooves where their hands and feet should be. The remaining alcove contains red rubble, presumably the remains of another similar statue.



If the players examine the room further they may notice a strong iron spike driven into the altar, a similar spike in the floor and a heavy bronze ring in the ceiling in the middle of the room (the ring has been here since the Barrow was constructed, but the spikes were added by the Three Horsemen to help them lift the altar). If a rope is tied to the spike in the altar and passed through the ring it is possible to lift up one side of the slab by exerting a total STR of 25+ (if the slab was lifted directly - eg by driving in additional spikes and using these as handles - a total STR of 35+ would be required). Lifting the slab will reveal a 5' diameter circular hole in the floor - the nauseous smell of rotting flesh rises from this hole. Once the slab has been lifted it can be tied in place by attaching the rope from the ring to the spike in the floor. Another rope can then be tied to the floor spike and lowered through the hole under the altar to permit access to the room below.

Touching any of the red stone parts of the altar is safe, but touching any other part of the altar causes the three remaining statues to activate and move to attack (see below) - this includes the bottom of the altar, so great care must be taken when entering or leaving the room below. The person who touched the altar will also find that their appropriate limb is magically bound to the altar - they can neither use this limb nor flee from the room. If the character touched the altar with anything not made of iron (eg a glove, boot, bronze sword etc) the item will be bound to the altar and the character to the item, so he will still be bound fast. If a character touches the altar with something made of iron, or something not attached to him (eg he throws or fires something at the altar) it will not get stuck and the statues will not activate. If the players defeat the statues (determine combat/spell-casting penalties for anyone attached to the altar as you see fit) anyone bound to the altar will be released the following dawn.

To his horror, the character that touched the altar discovers that he is stuck fast. At the same time there is a movement from three of the alcoves - the eyes of the statues are glowing bright red and they lumber menacingly into the room with wisps of green vapour drifting from their flared nostrils.

The statues attack anyone in the room not wearing a feathered cloak and continue until either they or all their foes are destroyed (at which time they return to their alcoves). Note that the statues teleport back to their alcoves (and become inanimate again) at the end of any combat round in which they are reduced to 12 hit points or less (the only way of completely destroying them is therefore to reduce them from more than 12 points to 0 or less in a single combat round). The only other way of deactivating them is to press the red stone part of the altar that most closely resembles the moon's current condition (eg if the moon is currently full or almost full the complete red disc must be pressed) at which point they instantly return to their alcoves. Once the statues have returned to their alcoves they will not reactivate until after the following midnight - they will have regenerated all lost hit points unless they were completely destroyed. The statues cannot be damaged while they are inanimate.

When the Horsemen entered this room (they were known as the Four Horsemen until their encounter with the statues) they were all attacked apart from Bahzille; they were forced to flee the Barrow in order to escape and left one of their number stuck to the altar to be ripped apart by the statues. At this time Bahzille was modelling himself on the Henninga Priests from the legends that he was interested in and was wearing a feathered cloak. As they had found a few Henninga weapons in the room Bahzille was able to correctly deduce that the statues had been instructed by the Henninga to attack anyone not wearing a feathered cloak. The remaining horsemen returned after they had made such cloaks and found that they were safe from the statues (they therefore believe that the Barrow was originally constructed by the Henninga). They do not, however, know the method of deactivating the statues using the altar as described above.

3. Bogus Treasure Room:

When the Barrow was originally constructed this room was made to look like the burial chamber/treasure room. The real Priestess was buried in room 5, while a slave girl was despatched and left here together with some minor treasures (long since gone) in a successful attempt to fool grave-robbers. When the Henninga desecrated the Barrow and located the simple wooden coffin they carried off the body of the slave girl (which had been kept perfectly preserved by the magical properties of the standing stones above) for their own foul purposes, leaving that of their Priest in the coffin in its place.

When the Three Horsemen found this room they flung the body of the Henninga priest into a corner of the room, deciding that a coffin in the bottom of a supposedly haunted barrow would make a safe hiding place for their ill-gotten gains. They now throw all the dead bodies in here - the room is crowded with the remains. The room therefore contains all manner of adventuring gear from the Horsemen's victims, and they restock their shop from here at intervals.

The room below the altar is octagonally shaped with a pillar in each corner curving in to form a partially domed ceiling (there is a 5' diameter hole in the middle of the ceiling). The floor of the room seems almost completely covered with bodies - most of them are only skeletons although some are clearly more recent with rotting flesh still attached. There is a fair amount of adventuring equipment scattered around the room - arms, armour, backpacks, coils of rope and so on - indicating that the party are not the first to attempt to plunder the barrow. A large wooden coffin is also visible.

The players will be able to retrieve most common adventuring items and weapons if they wish, but note that The Horsemen have taken any particularly fine or valuable weapons or magical items with them. There is a Henninga feathered cloak on one of the bodies (the Priest that was left here) and the players may recognize this. You may wish to give players poking around in the bodies a chance of contracting some form of disease. If the players inspect the pillars they will find that they are covered in carved wave shapes and each has a single large circle or moon in the centre.

The north wall is a single stone panel that will slide into the floor if the moons on each of the two northernmost pillars are simultaneously pressed. This panel is not magical and is not a trap and cannot be detected for as such - it has not been found since the completion of the Barrow. The coffin is protected by a magical spell that Dann found on a scroll on one of the bodies. When it is opened there will be an explosion and anyone within 5' will take 1D4+4 points of damage (AD&D/D&D: saving throw vs. magic for half damage RQ: armour does not protect, roll under POW on 3D6 for half damage, damage comes off total hit points). The chest contains 583 copper pieces, 437 silver pieces, a pair of silver statuettes of bears worth 120 gold pieces each and a pewter chamberpot worth 35 gold pieces (the Three Horsemen take any gold and gems with them).

4. Trapped Passage:

Behind the secret panel a roughly cut passage leads to a wooden door.

The passage contains a magical trap (which can be detected as normal) - the ceiling is held up magically and will collapse when the door is touched. Anyone in the passage at the time will take 7D4 damage (RQ: spread among all locations) - armour offers no protection - and must roll under CON on 3D6 or suffocate (unless the other characters can rapidly dig him out). Note that this damage does not vary according to the phase of the moon - it is only set off magically, the actual damage is caused by the weight of earth. The party will have to dig out the passage, shoring it as they go (probably with branches from the mound above) if they wish to reach room 5. Once the trap has been set off the door can be opened easily

5. Burial Chamber:

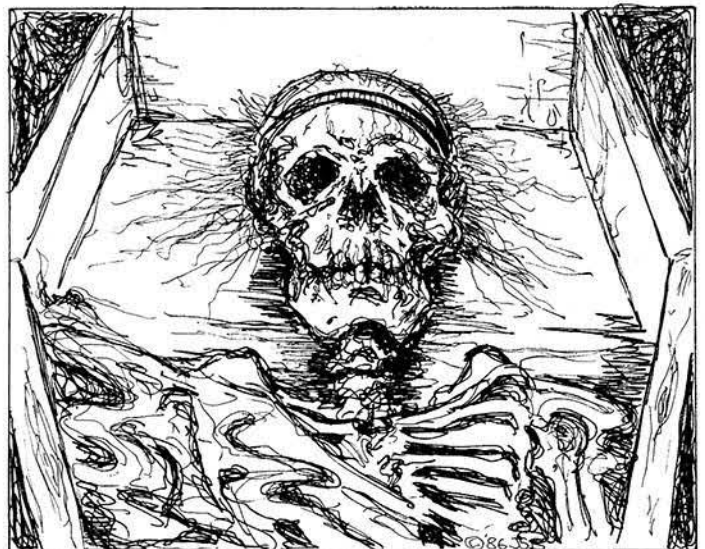
Beyond the door is a small chamber, less than 5' high. A large sarcophagus, about 3' high and apparently made of wood (it has bronze handles and is covered in green lacquer) almost fills the chamber.

If the party inspect the sarcophagus further they will discover that it has a large red circle on the lid. It will prove impossible to completely remove the lid while the sarcophagus is in the chamber - the best that can be managed is for a character to prop it slightly open and put his head under it to peer inside. The party may be expecting some undead occupant and hence be unwilling to attempt this - preferring to attach a rope to one of the handles and drag the coffin to room 3 (STR 25+ required) to open it where they have room to surround it. The body in the sarcophagus is of the Priestess. It is inanimate and completely harmless, but the party will not know this.

Opening the sarcophagus reveals a dusty skeletal figure loosely robed in some flimsy decaying silks. Some gold jewelry is visible on the figure which also wears a fine platinum circlet around its forehead.

The gold jewelry consists of a pair of bracelets worth 500 gold pieces each, a pendant worth 800 gold pieces and a belt buckle (which has fallen to the bottom and may be missed) worth 200 gold pieces. They are all engraved with wave shapes and representations of the various phases of the moon, and would be worth 2500 gold pieces as a set to the right buyer. The circlet is magical and gives the wearer a 50% chance of reading any foreign languages or magical scripts encountered merely by concentrating (adjust chance downwards for very ancient or obscure texts). Note that it will not enable the wearer to cast spells from any magical writings they find unless they would normally be able to do so. It is also extremely fragile - it will be broken if the wearer is hit on the head while wearing it or if it is dropped or struck in any way. Even if it is repaired its magical abilities will be lost. It is worth about 500 gold pieces as a piece of jewelry - you should determine its value as a magical item as seems applicable. The actual sarcophagus is worth at least 100 gold pieces, but it is unlikely that the party will take it away.

If the players have successfully reached this stage their troubles will still not be over. The Horsemen will have followed them and will now try to prevent the players escaping (you can omit this encounter if the players have suffered heavy casualties, or decide that only one or two of them followed, expecting the party to have perished). You may decide that they moved into room 2 while the party were busy below; alternatively they can try to pick the party off with missile fire as they leave the barrow, or (if you have the floorplans) they may ambush the party in the forest nearby.



In the SHADOW of the KING

AD&D/Zhalindor module for 5-7 characters of 4th-5th level.



In The Shadow Of The King is an AD&D scenario taken from the Zhalindor Campaign. It is designed for 5-7 PCs of 4th-5th level; occasional reference will be made to the Campaign supplements in *TS13* and *TS14*, but these are not essential to the module - if the adventure is being played outside the Zhalindor Campaign, you should make sure that nothing herein conflicts with your normal rules or the setting of your own campaign. If you are using the Campaign, the scenario should be set in the north of hex O20; note that this is Zone 3 (W direction) for spell effects.

BACKGROUND

The island of Kaskala, on which this scenario is set, is 200 miles north-west of the coast of Nerria, and about 65 miles north-east of the nearest major island (ie an island shown on the Campaign map). Although it lies within the Empire - though only just - the island is not currently inhabited by any Imperial citizens, having been recently abandoned due to the incursions of various marauders. Prior to this it was used as a base for a small number of fishermen who trawled the waters around Kaskala and occasionally traded dried fish with the larger islands to the south. When these fishermen were driven out of their homes, despite constant complaints to the authorities, the matter was deemed of insufficient consequence for any action to be taken.

Before the fishermen came, and before the Empire had reached and overrun this area, Kaskala was a site of some religious importance to the local islanders, primarily as the location in which coronations took place. Originally it had only a few primitive shrines located on its shores, but invasion of this area by Imperial troops prompted the construction of a number of towers and similar defences in a vain attempt to prevent the desecration of holy soil. The limited resources of the locals seemed pitiful against the might of the Empire and it was the work of only hours for the invaders to crush their opposition and leave the island open for settlement. However, the island priests were not without some power, and they left defences that discouraged the idle interest of the fishermen, keeping the shrines at least temporarily intact.

PLAYERS' INTRODUCTION

This scenario is open to a variety of introductions and may even be used with no particular introduction, the PCs merely coming across the island in their travels. No specifics are given below as you will need to tailor the introduction to suit the state of play in your own game, but a few notes may prove useful as a guideline.

As usual in a situation like this, rumours about the island have built up over the years, most bearing a small amount of truth mixed with a large dose of fancy. In the past months, these have been augmented by the sudden departure of the few fishermen who lived there. On the neighbouring islands, and as far away as Kalabay or Alyrien, stories are told of great monsters that slither out of the sea at night to consume the unwary, of fire-breathing brigands who arrived in silent and invisible boats to eat the inhabitants, or of the long-dead natives rising again to seek revenge with a dread pale king at their head. These fanciful tales will be related along with the old legends of the vast wealth of the priests and kings hidden below the shrines, including those maintaining that the Crown of Kaskala still lies undisturbed beneath the waters of the island where it was secreted when the invaders from the mainland came to kill and conquer. Even obviously exaggerated stories such as these should serve to whet the appetite of the PCs and encourage further investigation.

If you wish to have a more complicated introduction using a specifically campaign-related approach, it is suggested that you introduce the PCs at some point prior to this scenario to a number of local insurgents struggling against the power and dominion of the Empire. These fellows, probably loosely organized and ill-funded, will be seeking, as part of their plans, to crown a new king using the lost Crown of Kaskala, which they believe to be hidden somewhere on the island. By persuasion or payment they will try to obtain the services of the PCs to recover this crown, either returning with it, or awaiting their arrival with an heir to the throne. This introduction opens myriad paths for future play with vicious rivalries between insurgent groups, Imperial interference, spying, treachery, large-scale conflict and so on.

DM'S INTRODUCTION

The outcome of the various options open as introductions for the players is likely to be a search for some item or items of treasure on the island, most probably the legendary Crown of Kaskala, lost at the time of the Imperial invasion and by all accounts secreted somewhere on the island by the last of the priests. Rumour will disagree slightly as to the exact nature of this crown, but all will attribute to it a great monetary value, being made of gold or platinum and encrusted with gems, and some will also grant to it a number of arcane magical abilities linked to populace control or mass death. The PCs may believe that these tales stretch the truth, but not until the end of the scenario (assuming they complete it successfully) will they discover that it is near-worthless, with no intrinsic value, and being only of symbolic value to the locals (especially those of rebellious tendency).

Between the PCs and the Crown stand a number of obstacles: the traps set at the shrine by the priests, the island's natural inhabitants, and the two new groups of marauders who displaced the fishermen. Details of the shrine are given below in the key, and it need only be noted here that if the PCs are to complete the scenario they will need to collect and understand the clues that can be found around the island (the meaning and use of these clues should become obvious to you as you read through the scenario; you are advised not to aid the PCs in deciphering or solving the information unless they are particularly inexperienced - though it is possible that players not used to the Campaign may need a little help with a few of the more cryptic references).

A number of the island denizens will also be detailed in the key if they are found in a specific location, otherwise the following information will apply to the whole island. Apart from specified encounters, all contact with island denizens will be on a random basis - these can be divided into three categories: waterborne, daytime and night-time encounters. Such encounters may occur in any of the six normal periods.

Waterborne Encounters: check at 1:6 each encounter period

01-04%	Crab, Giant	65-66%	Ray, Manta
05-08%	Eel, Giant	67-68%	Ray, Pungi
09-10%	Hippocampus	69-70%	Ray, Sting
11-13%	Ixitxachtl	71-72%	Sahuagin
14-30%	Koalinth	73-76%	Sea Lion
31-35%	Kopocacanth	77-80%	Sea Horse
36-40%	Lacedon	81-85%	Shark
41-43%	Locathah	86-87%	Shark, Giant
44-58%	Men, Smugglers	88-90%	Snake, Sea
59-60%	Mottled Worm	91-95%	Strangle Weed
61-62%	Octopus	96-97%	Triton
63-64%	Portuguese Man-O-War	98-00%	Turtle, Giant Sea

Note that for encounters with koalinth and smugglers see the notes below. Make sure that the encounter is reasonable; if not, throw again until you get a sensible one (ie PCs cannot encounter underwater creatures in a boat, smugglers on the sea bed, nor giant sharks right next to the shore).

Daytime Encounters: check at 1:4 each day encounter period

01-02%	Bear, Black	43-57%	Men, Smugglers
03-04%	Bear, Brown	58-61%	Owl, Giant
05-06%	Beetle, Bombardier	62-69%	Owlbear
07-08%	Beetle, Stag	70-71%	Porcupine, Giant
09-10%	Boar, Wild	72-73%	Scorpion, Giant
11-12%	Boar, Giant	74-75%	Slug, Giant
13-14%	Centipede, Giant	76-77%	Stag
15-20%	Displacer Beast	78-80%	Stag, Giant
21-25%	Eagle, Giant	81-82%	Tiger
26-35%	Koalinth	83-85%	Tiger, Sabre-T.
36-38%	Lizard, Giant	86-93%	Troll
39-42%	Lizard, Minotaur	94-00%	Wyvern

Note that for encounters with koalinth and smugglers see the notes below. None of the animals will approach any man-made edifices to closer than 100' - even the monster types (such as trolls, wyverns, etc) will not actually enter one of the stone circles, although they will pursue into the village or other constructions if the opposition seems surmountable.

Night Encounters: check at 1:3 each night encounter period

01-03%	Centipede, Giant	43-59%	Pteranodon
04-07%	Displacer Beast	60-62%	Snake, Con.
08-11%	Ghoul	63-65%	Snake, Poisonous
12-19%	Koalinth	66-68%	Spider, Huge
20-23%	Leucrotta	69-88%	Teratosaurus
24-31%	Men, Smugglers	89-92%	Troll
32-38%	Owl, Giant	93-96%	Wight
39-42%	Owlbear	97-00%	Wyvern

Note that for encounters with koalinth and smugglers see the notes below. The animals and monsters will behave at night just as during the day with respect to man-made structures (see above). The exception to this rule are the pteranodons and teratosauri (in fact, these are not really dinosaurs but the statistics in the M.M. come close enough to the creature intended to be used in play). These saurian monsters were once partially trained (though barely tamed) by the clerics who attended the shrines, and they are entirely unaffected by any of the priestly traps (to such an extent that their presence will not even activate said traps); they will quite happily hunt the PCs into the stone circles, etc, and if the PCs are resting within one of these at night, the only type of encounter possible will be with one or other creature (a 60% chance of teratosauri). Once they have begun to hunt, nothing will deter them short of their death; additionally, pteranodons will call out to their fellows, attracting 1 per turn until the maximum number appearing are present, and the teratosauri will attract their kindred at 1 every other turn until 6 are present.

Note that there are a limited number of creatures living on the island, especially of the monster types, and you should make sure that the PCs do not encounter an unreasonably huge number of any one type (rethrow for a different type).

KOALINTH

The koalinth (aquatic hobgoblins) that may be encountered on Kaskala are of an unusual type, in that they are not merely aquatic, but amphibious (ie they can operate equally well on dry land or in the sea). Their statistics are: AC 5; MV 9"/9"; HD 1+1; AT 1; D 1-8 (or by weapon); to hit AC 0 18; Int ave; SZ M. Weapons will be: spears (75%) or 2-5 javelins (25%), plus morning stars (50%), flails (25%), swords (15%) or axes (10%); in addition, 20% will carry crossbows adapted for underwater use (treat as heavy crossbows with a reduced range of 4/8/12 when used underwater, normal above - 11-20 bolts), and 50% of those remaining will have nets.

Random encounters will be with groups of 12-24 koalinth; in charge of such groups there will always be a leader of 2 HD with at least 10 hit points, attacking with +2 to hit and damage. If there are 20+ creatures, two will be 2 HD.

Although at your option you may choose to have the koalinth interested in the shrine, and hence in direct competition with the PCs, it is assumed for the following that this is not the case; if you do use this more intricate version make sure that you spend some time in advance of play deciding on the actions and reactions of the koalinth.

The koalinth arrived at Kaskala some years ago and swiftly moved on the fishermen, burning their houses, attacking them both on land and at sea, scaring off fish, and cutting nets; it was not long before the men got the message and fled the island, leaving it in the hands of the aquatic marauders. A few years later the smugglers who now control the north-east islet (see below) appeared - after a brief, violent struggle the two groups came to a mutual but distrustful truce; some extreme circumstance would be needed to see the two groups in co-operation, each being more than happy to see the other destroyed by the PCs. The koalinth now use the island as a base from which to raid further, attacking other islands and ships at sea. Their raids are not frequent enough to alert the interest of the Empire, although they have proved most annoying to local fishermen and traders, not to mention the coastal communities they have pillaged and burnt. It might be possible to have the PCs introduced to the scenario on an expedition to eradicate these amphibious vermin, but this is not recommended as it does not provide the required emphasis on the shrine and exploration of the island.



SMUGGLERS

The smugglers are more likely to be found in the north-east area of the island, especially on the smaller islet on which their base is situated, and you might wish to reflect this in the nature of random encounters (ie you could swop around the koalinth and the smugglers, depending on which part of the island the PCs are in). The smugglers' statistics are: AC 6 (or treat as buccaneers - see M.M. 67); MV 12"; 75% are fighters and 25% thieves of 1st level (50%), 2nd level (35%) or 3rd level (15%); AT 1; D 1-8 or by weapon type (see M.M. 67 again - note that in any case 30% will have crossbows and 30% spears); to hit AC0 20/19/18; Int ave; SZ M. If at sea, the smugglers will be in a large rowing boat (50%) or some form of small masted vessel (50%).

Random encounters will be with groups of 11-18; in charge of such groups there will always be at least one 3rd level.

Under no circumstances should the smugglers be assumed to have any interest in the shrine unless such interest arises as a direct result of the PCs' actions during play.

The smugglers came to Kaskala after the koalinth, knowing of the desertion of the fishermen. After establishing a truce, as mentioned above, they occupied the keep on the north-east islet and used the wharf in the caves below as a base from which to run their operation. This consists of off-loading illicit goods from large ships plying their wares south from Tanarsa (mainly Alyrien) in order to avoid the customs ships of Nerria patrolling the waters further south and then, with much smaller vessels, sneaking the goods into the islands or through to Kalabay. Like the koalinth, their operation is too small to attract any attention from the authorities. A search for the smugglers might provide an introduction for the PCs, but again this is not particularly recommended.

NPC REACTIONS

The koalinth will want no truck with the PCs and would far prefer to see them slowly roasting over a spit for breakfast than talk to them. Initial encounters will therefore always be hostile and probably immediately lead to combat. If, in the course of play, it becomes obvious that the PCs are more of a handful than at first suspected, the koalinth will tend to avoid them unless the PCs deliberately interfere further - in the latter case they will assemble a large force and hunt the PCs down. The smugglers may be more likely to converse with PCs, as long as they do not think that they are spies for the customs service; initial encounters will probably be wary tending to hostile, though not immediately violent - any later encounters will depend entirely on the PCs actions and communications with the smugglers and you should judge them as you see fit. The smugglers may be encouraged to aid the PCs (ie use them and then rip them off afterwards) or to attempt the same as them (and hence be in direct conflict). Wise PCs will try to allay the fears of the smugglers, maybe enlisting their aid in some really minor ways, without ever actually revealing their purpose on the island. Note that information concerning the group leaders is given in the key and may be of help in determining NPC reactions (see below).

GENERAL DETAILS

Kaskala is a small island with a steep west coast rising to a ridge and then descending in more leisurely fashion to the east. At the highest points the island is 500' high, the cliffs being 100' high in the main, reaching nearly 200' in a few places. Most of the island is covered with a tangled forest, home to a variety of ravenous denizens and numerous smallish stone circles and lone standing stones. Beaches are gravel, not sand. Weather is temperate with a tendency to sudden rainstorms. Note that in addition to the areas of importance described below, you may wish to add extra minor details, such as: small stone circles or menhirs; tracks and old camp fires; derelict fishermen's huts; wrecks of boats; the lairs of randomly encountered animals and monsters, etc.

APPROACHING THE ISLAND

Disregarding exceptional approaches, it is probable that the PCs will reach the island by ship or boat, either in a large ship of their own, or more likely, having being set down by a ship passing nearby (and hence presumably having a dinghy or small rowboat). The east coast and the west beaches can easily be reached, the currents being strong but by no means unmanageable. However, at the base of the cliffs, there are many rocks and any boat coming too close will be grounded and probably holed (only the most un-observant of PCs could fail to notice the approach of these rocks, but they might choose to come in close to take a look at sea-caves; in such a case, make an adjudication as to the chances of success depending on the skill of the PCs in sea-craft and relevant factors such as STR, DEX, weather, etc).

DROWNING

See D.M.G. (53-57) for details of both marine and submarine action. Note that the PCs may have trouble with the latter environment due to breathing problems (though there are some spells and items to aid them). Without magical assistance, a PC may hold his breath for 1 round (2 if inactive); each segment thereafter he must roll under CON on a d20, with a cumulative -1 penalty per segment after the first, or begin to drown. The PC can now take no actions by himself and there is a cumulative 5% chance per segment that subsequent actions by other PCs (kiss of life, etc) will not revive the PC - without such actions he will die. If revived, AC, to hit, saves and all other rolls will be at -4 for 7-12 turns.

A: SEATROLL'S CAVE

On the east side of this headland the cliffs rise 100' - at the base of this sheer mass of rock is the cave of the sea troll to whom a party of humans will seem but a tasty snack. His statistics are: AC 2; MV 6"/15"; HD 11; hp 88; AT 3; D 7-12/7-12/4-16; SA may attack 3 opponents at once or may use a large net for snaring in each hand; SD +2 on all saves vs spells of types D and E, and regenerates at 6 hit points per round after 3 rounds; Int low; SZ L (12'). His appearance is that of a huge troll with gills, webbed hands and feet, a greeny-blue skin and a scalp apparently covered with long strands of seaweed. His character can be best described as voracious, though he is not so dim as to continue to fight a lost battle (he knows that the PCs are likely to quit his cave having searched it) but is vindictive enough to track PCs and launch a surprise attack when they least expect it (having, of course, regenerated!). On land he moves slowly, and he must return to water (rivers allowed) for one turn in every six. If he can snare PCs in his nets, he will take them to the cave and eat them within 4-48 hours.

1. Small Cave: The cave is flooded to a depth of 15' with a 5' gap between the water level and the ceiling. A large net has been strung across the narrow part of the entrance and disguised with weed. PCs passing through must roll under DEX-6 or trip the cord holding it to the roof. The net is weighted and barbed and will drop over a 10' area, ensnaring any PCs there as if a giant spider web. The hole in the floor leads to 5 via a 10' shaft and sloping passage.

2. Main Cavern: This cavern is 25' deep with a 5' gap above water level, rising to 10' in the middle. A pair of nets as above are strung between the walls and rock pillars of the entrance, ready to trap unwary entrants; note that the traps will be activated by boats, as well as swimming/walking PCs.

The floor of the cavern is covered with thick weed - around the rock pillar is a patch of strangle weed (4 dice hence 12 fronds). A shoal of fish that live off the troll's remnants dart round the cavern (like the troll, they are not subject to either the weed or the nets), causing combat to be at -2 and vision to be halved - they are otherwise harmless. The weeds are full of old bones, etc, and a multitude of coins, mostly silver (total value of 450 gp found at 2-8 per turn).

3. Dry Passage: As the floor of the cavern slopes up, this area is left dry; any PCs captured will be dumped here, tied and entangled in a net, awaiting consumption (PCs must make a bend bars roll to break free, once per hour, or $\frac{1}{2}$ an open locks chance to untie themselves, at the same rate). In the passage are also three skeletons, still wearing chain mail, and carrying swords, flasks of wine, stale rations, spikes, oil, rope and similar equipment. Each has a silver bracer denoting membership of the Imperial customs service (worth 10 gp each), and one carries a sealed scroll case that holds various mundane documents relating to marine traffic through Kalabay (still dry) - if the smugglers find these on the PCs they will be convinced that the PCs are Imperial officials and will become implacably and violently opposed to them. A scroll of **water breathing** (magical) is also enclosed.

4. Passages: The roof drops to water level in the passages; the floor is still weed-covered. The hole leads to a shaft 30' deep and is partially concealed by the weed.

5. Troll's Lair: This part of the cave complex is 30' below the other, the east passage sloping up 20' over its length. The troll will use this section to out-manoeuvre PCs and to launch surprise attacks from beneath. The north-east cave is his lair proper and contains numerous bones and other odd remnants of past meals, plus his hunting nets, a few large spears, some rusted armour and a bed of living weed.

6. Small Cave: The cave is used by the troll to conceal the treasure that he has collected (the coins scattered around 2 are too small to interest him). This is placed in a hole at the base of the south wall, covered with another 4 dice, 12 frond strangle weed (all the floor has normal weed on it). The treasure consists of a fine set of Hemeni china (worth 350 gp, though VERY fragile), a pair of silver statuettes of eagles (100 gp the pair), a large sack of assorted coloured corals (worth 15 gp), a **potion of water breathing** (4 doses - it has become tainted over the years and also has the effect of a **slow** spell) and a section of the altar rod from J.

B: KOALINTH CAMP

This small fishermen's settlement has been taken over by the koalinth. Only one of the original buildings remains intact (there are a couple more ruins off the edge of the map), but the koalinth have built three simple wattle and daub huts on the beach. Parties of koalinth patrol the west coast of the island from this camp, looking for both intruders and ships that might be raided. At times (at your option) there might be 1-3 boats moored in the river mouth, their crews being in the huts or on board (such boats will have a single stepped mast, and six pairs of oars - crews will be 15-20 men). At other times there will be only 12-36 koalinth here, with a similar number on patrol near enough to return if there is a disturbance (very loud noises, burning huts, etc).

1. Menhir: This standing stone is 20' tall. Despite harsh weathering, there are still signs of the original carvings around the base: on the west side is a crowned figure seated above a throne, and on the east the same figure sitting upon a throne with a halo of some sort around his head.

2. Beached Boat: Regardless of the possible koalinth boats, this 20' vessel with a stepped mast (no sail) and 4 pairs of oars (one of which is missing) will always be on the beach. Although it seems to be sound, it is damaged and will start shipping water after 4-7 rounds, sinking 1-4 turns later.

3. Jetty: This landing stage will have a few water barrels, coils of rope, tackle and pulleys, etc, on it. There is a 60% chance of 1-4 koalinth (95% of 2-7 if there are koalinth boats in the river mouth) on the jetty, possibly fishing, or just keeping guard. Still tied up underneath the jetty are a number of old lobster pots, nets, etc, currently unused.

4. Bridge: The bridge is wooden and, although rickety, will not collapse - it is 5' wide without railings and if a PC is in combat on it he must roll under DEX on a d20 if hit, or fall off. The river is shallow (3'-4') so he will not drown unless unconscious. The two posts to the north-west of the bridge are 5' high wooden stakes with teratosaurus skulls on top and smaller skulls and bones hung all over them.

5. Old House: The walls of this fisherman's house remain, but the roof, doors, furniture, etc, have all been removed. Depending on the numbers of koalinth in the camp, about one quarter of those sleeping or resting will be here.

6. Huts: The three huts will hold all the other koalinth - if a large number are present they will sleep in shifts, and in any case there will never be more than half asleep at any one time. The rubble from another building beside the huts will cause a combat penalty of -2 to hit and damage and will prevent thieves from moving silently (MS-50%).

7. Forest: Koalinth tracks lead SSW into the forest.

It is likely that the PCs will have to come to this bay, or at least near it, in order to locate the shrine. There is a good chance that the koalinth will spot them and attack - if the PCs move off and land somewhere else, the koalinth might trail them across the cliffs or through the woods and attack them at a later date, harrying the PCs while they need time to concentrate on finding and entering the shrine.

C: ALTAR TO KHI-NAN-KALA

This was a sacred site of the old Kaskalans, an altar to the sea-god, Khi-Nan-Kala (a variant of the Imperial Khian). At the centre of the site is a large altar stone, surrounded by two stone circles of 15' and 25' high stones respectively, with a corridor of stone leading to the west; at sun-set the dying sun would seem to drop down this corridor, signifying the recurrent victory of water over fire as the orb was once more swallowed by the sea. As with the other major circles on Kaskala the priests protected the altar against intrusion (hence the island creatures' fear of these places).

1. Outer Circle: As soon as a PC moves into this circle, an eerie whining sound and a rustling of twigs and branches may alert him to the imminent danger represented by four shadowy creatures, one each emerging from the single outer stones; a PC approaching down the west corridor will NOT activate this magical trap. These creatures should be treated as shadows (M.M. 86), except they drain DEX, not STR - the PC will lose movement at the same rate as loss of DEX (ie at half DEX, MV will be halved). Additionally, consider them as each having 25 hp, and as enchanted, not undead, creatures. They will attack until destroyed but will not move more than 100' from the circle - if the PCs flee further than this, the shadows will return and disappear back into the stones, awaiting the next intrusion. If the shadows are destroyed, they will not reappear unless the PCs all leave the circle, and then only after 25 turns have elapsed. Note that the shadows will not be hindered in movement by the forest, unlike the PCs.



2. Corridor: To negate the above trap, this corridor must be entered from the west and not left until the east (ie the PC is inside the inner circle) - should a PC enter or leave other than at the relevant end, the trap will activate as soon as he enters the outer circle (or leaves the corridor, if already inside the circle). To make life trickier, the corridor itself is trapped. On the inside of each column, 5' up, is a carving of a head, crowned and haloed - PCs may notice on an FRT chance that the eyes are studs that may be pushed in. If this is not done before a PC passes between each pair of pillars, a wall of cold blue flames will leap across the gap, burning until dispelled. These flames will do 2-12 points of damage - a PC in-between the pillars at the time may roll under DEX for half damage, though he must choose whether he leaps forwards or backwards to avoid the flames. This trap will be set off on all but the eastern pair of pillars. All four studs per pair must be pressed, but this may be done in any order.

3. Inner Circle: Only a priest of the old sect could enter the inner circle unscathed and the ritual phrase to disarm the final trap has been lost with their disappearance (at your option, a **bleed** or similar spell from a priest of Khian may suffice). As a PC crosses into this circle, 8 figures will step out of the pillars and move to attack, advancing on anyone in the outer circle. The creatures are similar to stone golems in appearance, but their statistics are: AC 5; MV 6"; HD 6; hp 30; AT 2; D 2-8/2-8; SD normal weapons will cause half damage with a 10% chance per point of damage of shattering - magical weapons do normal damage and will not break; MR affected by spells as normal stone golems (M.M. 48-9); Int non; SZ L. They can regenerate at 3 points per round if they return to the stone from which they appeared and will do this if their opponents quit the outer circle - reunited with the pillars, they are immune to all physical damage unless of at least +3 magical bonus. They will defend the altar to either their or their opponents' death.

4. Altar: The altar is a 4' high slab of stone, stained by decades of sacrifice. At the east end, the altar is carved with the image of a crowned and haloed king, at the west end a supplicant priest, and between these diagonal striations run from the king's eyes, around the altar stone, to where the priest kneels. There is apparently nothing else of any interest at this site, but if the PCs dig around the altar, they will find that it descends 2' into the ground and that, 1' from the base, there is a sentence or incantation of some sort carved into the rock. Being in an old priestly tongue, there is no chance that a PC will be able to read it without magical aid (you could allow a **read magic** to translate it if you feel generous). A literal translation reads:

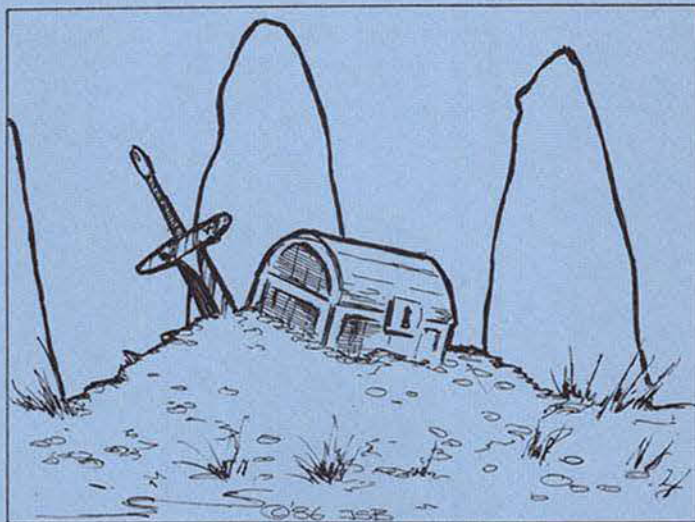
Where the sun rises, there comes the light, the dead sun.
But our Lord will swallow it, and our king stands before.
From his eyes will the shadow fall at moontide and sight.
Seeing all, the world will open and the holy places rise.

The spell will not translate any finer nuances than this and it is up to the players to unravel the true meaning of these words (though you should not inform them that these are not merely ritual phrases).

If the PCs can dig underneath the altar, they will find that seven skulls have been placed below it, each facing west and in a line along its length; between the teeth of each is one tarnished gold piece. If the PCs get to this altar thinking that it is the shrine they seek, do not disillusion them but encourage them to keep exploring until they wise up.

D: ALTAR TO KHI-YAN-KALA

Consecrated to a different manifestation of the sea-god, the ceremonies at this altar were supposed to protect sailors in storms by sacrificing substitutes to the waters below (most of the victims were enemies captured in war, or pirates). A pair of stone circles, 15' and 25' high, give it a somewhat similar appearance to the altar described above, though its defences and centrepiece are rather different. The centre of the site is, in fact, a 20' wide hole, leading via a long shaft to a flooded cave at sea-level. However, when the PCs first look out of the trees into the clearing (there will be no indication as to what maintains this clearing), they will not see the pit, but an illusion designed to dupe them.



1. Outer Circle: The effects of the illusion reach out 120' from the centre of the circle (ie into the woods where the altar cannot be seen). Note that an illusion would normally suffer a -1 penalty in this spell effect zone (a +1 bonus to saves) but this is of clerical nature, cast by a worshipper of Khi-Nan and hence the spell counts as type D, with a +1 bonus (ie -1 to a PC saving throw). As soon as a PC passes out of the woods and can see the pit, he must save vs spells or see an illusion of something he finds highly attractive (choose as you see fit; for example a pile of treasure, an alluring man/woman, a gleaming weapon, etc); if he makes the save he will merely see the ground continue over the hole. Once the PC moves inside the outer circle (he may already be inside when he first sights the illusion), if he has failed his save he will move towards the illusion at top speed. If another PC tries to stop him at this time, he will merely remonstrate and attempt to move towards the pit as soon as he can. If another PC forcefully explains his error, allow a save at +1 per PC who is not deluded.

2. Inner Circle: Any PC entering the inner circle will fall under the full power of the spell - if allowed, he will walk up to the 'treasure' only realizing his mistake as he drops down the shaft. If other PCs make an effort to stop him, he will retaliate violently, using his most effective attack mode against them. He will move toward the treasure if he can, and will hence fall into the shaft. The only way to convince him of his error is to inflict damage, the deluded PC gaining a save at +1 per point caused. If his comrades can tie and subdue him, a save at +1 per turn of persuasion can be allowed. Note that PCs who have not fallen for this illusion will be able to spot the hole once inside the inner circle, and will be safe from delusion if they return later.

3. Flooded Cavern: The shaft drops 100' to this cave, which is 35' high - 10' above water level and 25' under. Because of the water, PCs falling here will only suffer 2-12 damage, or 2-8 if in leather armour or less. There are several rock pillars reaching to the roof and a flooded passage leading 200' south to a cave in the cliff-face.

4. Dry Cave: The north passage slopes up to this dry area, which currently serves as the lair of three koalinth. These creatures have been outcast for good behaviour and now hunt and fish from this hidden cave. They are armed with spear, net and morning star, plus two have submarine crossbows; two of them are normal (hp 6 and 7) and one is of 2 HD (hp 14). Although these 3 koalinth are not greatly enamoured of their erstwhile fellows, they are still bloodthirsty brutes, more likely to eat than aid the PCs. Nevertheless, their purpose is to serve as opponents, informants, guides or whatever you feel is necessary at this point in the scenario: use them to help or hinder PCs as required (eg: PCs descending on ropes may be attacked by missiles from cover; PCs drowning may be fished out for later consumption; PCs with no clue about the island or its past may be educated; inexperienced players or unfortunate PCs may be given guidance and information, etc). At the back of the cave the koalinth have another section of the altar rod from J and a purse with a dozen 10 gp gems.

E: KOPOACINTH LAIR

The southern head of Kaskala is broken into several smaller islets and rock stacks; the current around and between these is often treacherous, especially in bad weather, and you should increase the chance of sinking if PCs try to navigate these waters. At the base of the mainland section are several sea caves, home to a band of 23 kopoacinth - these marine gargoyles are as ill-tempered and voracious as their land-based kin, and have the same statistics (except flying becomes swimming). Their initial reaction to PCs will be to regard them as dinner and to attempt to kill or, preferably, capture them; strong PC retaliation will, however, lead to reconsideration of their aims. If they can capture one or more PCs, it will take 2-24 turns per PC for them to bore of the excruciating torture they will inflict, whereupon they will dispatch that PC and move onto the next. Note that if they intend to take a PC alive, they will employ nets rather than claws, attacking as if 6 HD for this purpose.

1. Channel: The strait between the mainland and the islet is 20' deep at the edges, where the cliffs continue into the sea, deepening to 50' in the middle. The floor is littered with a mass of rock debris and the remains of several boats, covered by a thick layer of weed (including some patches of strangle weed, at your option). There are always 5-8 of the kopoacinth hunting here, 2-5 with crossbows which they can either use underwater, or can briefly surface to fire at targets on the cliffs (PCs climbing down, or using the rope will be certain to come under this mode of attack).

2. Large Cavern: The entrance is 35' high, 20' above water level and 15' under, with the cavern sloping down behind it so that the rear is about 30' deep, 5' of which is above the water; there are several rock pillars reaching from floor to ceiling. It is in this cave that most of these creatures lair, 5-8 generally sleeping on submarine ledges at any one time. There will also be two guards armed with crossbows as marked on the map. Camouflaged ropes allow these guards to release two traps at the lair's entrance - these will not be noticed by PCs entering the cave unless they are searching, whereupon they will be automatically found as they are so poorly hidden. The east guard can release a set of weighted and sharpened stakes from the roof in a line running roughly north-south of the pillar in the middle of the entrance. Any PCs to either side of this pillar may be hit by 1-3 of these; treat as spears cast by a 5th level fighter - damage at -2 if underwater. The west guard can drop a weighted net in a 20' area centred on the narrow section just to the east of him, snaring PCs as if a giant spider web. Note that the guards are underwater and unlikely to be noticed by PCs on the surface; they will wait for the most opportune moment to release their traps, attacking as many PCs as possible.

3. Small Cavern: The south-east entrance is 25' high, with 10' above water level, the south-west 30' with 15' above the water. The floor again slopes down away from the entrance, and the inner cavern has a 20' depth of water with a 10' air gap. Another 2 guards wait as marked, also with crossbows. At the northern point of the rock column by which they lurk, slung on plaited weed hawsers, is an old iron cauldron with a wooden club in it. If the guards wish to alert the other kopoacinth they will bang on this cauldron; the sound will carry to all those in this area and in the strait - in good weather, it will even reach those in cavern 2. There are a number of ledges around the walls with spikes and manacles - it is here that the kopoacinth are most likely to gather to torture captured PCs (assuming they cannot breath water). A shaft in the north-east corner drops 20' to the roof of area 5; the sides of this shaft are lined with strangle weed, to which kopoacinth (due to their magical nature) are immune.

4. Flooded Cave: From 3 to here the floor drops another 10' and the ceiling 15' causing the cave and some of the passage to be entirely flooded. The cave has weed over the floor to a height of 15', under which is a lacedon (aquatic ghoul), chained to the east wall with 30' of chain - it will burst out of the weed, surprising on 5:6, to attack any PC in the cave. At the base of the wall is the kopoacinth's treasure: a number of sacks containing 4500 coins with a total value of 750 gp; a gold-plated statuette of a mermaid, apparently worth 500 gp, but really worth a mere 50 gp; and a **potion of free action** (treat as the ring, with a 5-8 turn duration).



5. Flooded Cavern: Below the main caves is a 30' high cave, completely flooded, reached by shafts rooms from 3 or 6. In this cavern is a kopoacinth of enormous size who acts as shaman for the tribe; he attacks, etc, as normal, but is to be regarded as 8 HD for hit points (45) and saving throws. B'lubn'shoo the shaman has no magical powers but casts the tribe's auguries and tends the orange weed that grows over the sides of this cave. If a PC attempts to communicate with him it will be found that he understands, though cannot speak, common, and he may, under the right circumstances (ie when cornered and threatened) be willing to cast auguries for the PCs; these will be mostly nonsense but may, at your discretion, contain some useful information about the island which will be conveyed in cryptic sign language (should the PCs use spells to talk to B'lubn'shoo, he will be equally cryptic in his own tongue). After a long preparation known only to the shaman (which he will not disclose), the orange weed can be turned into brown pellets allowing kopoacinth to breath air or PCs to breath water for 5-8 turns. A leather pack hidden in the weed contains 18 such pellets.

6. Cliff Top: The cliffs here are 75' high. The shaft that drops to 5 is 115' long - the hole in the ground is only 3' across and overgrown by shrubs. PCs will not be aware of it unless they walk right over it, or are searching the area.

7. Rope Crossing: There was once a rope bridge across the strait, but this collapsed after a landslide. There is now a thick rope, quite able to take the weight of an armoured PC, anchored at each end to a 1' thick, 8' tall stake. To swing along this, a PC must roll under an average of STR + DEX, -1 per 100 gp (10 lbs) weight carried, and -1 per point of damage inflicted that round - it will take 3-5 rounds to cross. If a PC falls off, he will take 2-8 damage from the fall, but will be winded and unable to hold his breath (if he cannot swim he will immediately begin to drown). As the rope is angled, it is possible to make some sort of looped harness and merely slide across to the islet.

8. Islet: The first of the huge rock stacks is 50' high (ie 25' below the mainland cliff). The old rope bridge drops to the water level but will break 10'-40' up if climbed and the climber will fall to the rocks at the base of the cliff for 2-9 damage per 10'. The areas marked by dotted lines on the cliff edge are landslips, 10'-25' lower down - these are 25% per round likely to collapse if crossed (damage as above).

The rope connecting this area to the main island was placed here by the koalinth, who watch out for possible water-borne victims from this point - they will not suffer attack by the kopocynth who are aware of their strength. There will be 4-16 koalinth here at all times, usually huddled down into dips and hollows to protect them from the weather - PCs are therefore unlikely to notice them either from the sea or the mainland - the koalinth, on the other hand, will always spot the PCs and will attack with surprise, possibly choosing to attack when they are split with some here and some still on the mainland (using missiles against anyone on the rope).

The stone circle is formed of 15' high menhirs, the original carvings on which have been almost entirely obliterated by decades of weathering. PCs who have seen similar markings on other stones on the island will recognize the crowned and haloed symbol of the king on the north side of the stones. There are also crossed swords or swords and axes on the east side and a circular figure on the west (the moon, in fact) - the south sides are blank. On the top of each stone, should the PCs climb up to look, may be seen a triangular figure in the centre of which is a skull. If the PCs clear away the undergrowth in the middle of the circle and dig for 1', they will find a circular stone, about the size of a cart-wheel, 6" thick, and with a spiral of letters or symbols engraved upon it. These can only be read by use of magic (see C4), and state, from the outside spiralling inwards:

As the sun falls, so shall the moon rise - and a new sun, for twelve and a half years, shall rise, lighting the son of our fathers. Seated, a decade long will this son look out over his people, and from his eyes will shine forth a beam of glory and truth, revealing the ways that the folk should tread if they wish enlightenment and riches. And, from the sun's rising to the fall of our lord, it will be twenty-five years - and on again in the same manner until the holy ground is reached and the way is opened and joy.

The PCs should be left to decide for themselves if the words are anything other than mere ritual phrases, and if so, what meaning they have; do not help them to unravel this meaning.

F: SMUGGLER'S KEEP

On the islet off the north-east coast of Kaskala is the ruin of a keep built at the time of the Imperial invasion. It is in a state of disrepair but is nevertheless being used as a base by the smugglers (detailed in the introduction). They value it for the underground wharf hidden in a sea cave, not for the keep proper, though they do use the latter to keep a watch over the north and east approaches to the island. It is via this base that they conduct their smuggling operation and it is here that they will bring any PCs they encounter should the PCs be captured or desire communication with the smugglers' chiefs. Using the information given in the DM's Introduction and below you have the freedom to run a number of different scenario variations based on this keep and the smugglers, and you should feel free to use them in whatever fashion you think necessary for an interesting development to the adventure (though do not merely let the PCs take over the smugglers and use them as additional manpower - unless the PCs are doing very badly, these desperadoes are meant to be played as a hindrance not a help, though they might seem to be the former to the PCs temporarily).

Encounters around the islet are likely to be with smugglers in a boat. Those actually on the islet will always be with the smugglers unless a flying creature is indicated. On the sea-bed between this and the main island there are plenty of rocks near enough to the surface to hole a boat - even the smugglers will not attempt this crossing in bad weather, but they know it well otherwise and will be quite safe. On the east side the water is deep and the approach to the wharf is unharmed. The sides of the islet are fairly steep, being 50' on the east side, though only 40' on the west.

The keep itself is four floors high, most of the crenellated roof having collapsed. The second and third stories have an area of floor missing, and anyone walking within 18" of the edge of these areas has a 1% chance per 10 lbs (100 gp) per round of causing a further collapse (save vs DEX-6 or fall). The rest of the keep and the underground areas, though old, are intact and quite safe, operating as intended.

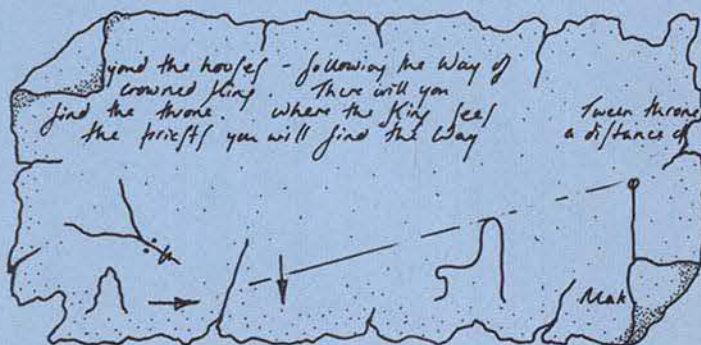
Note that both the keep's ground floor and the underground wharf have been shown on the same map for convenience.

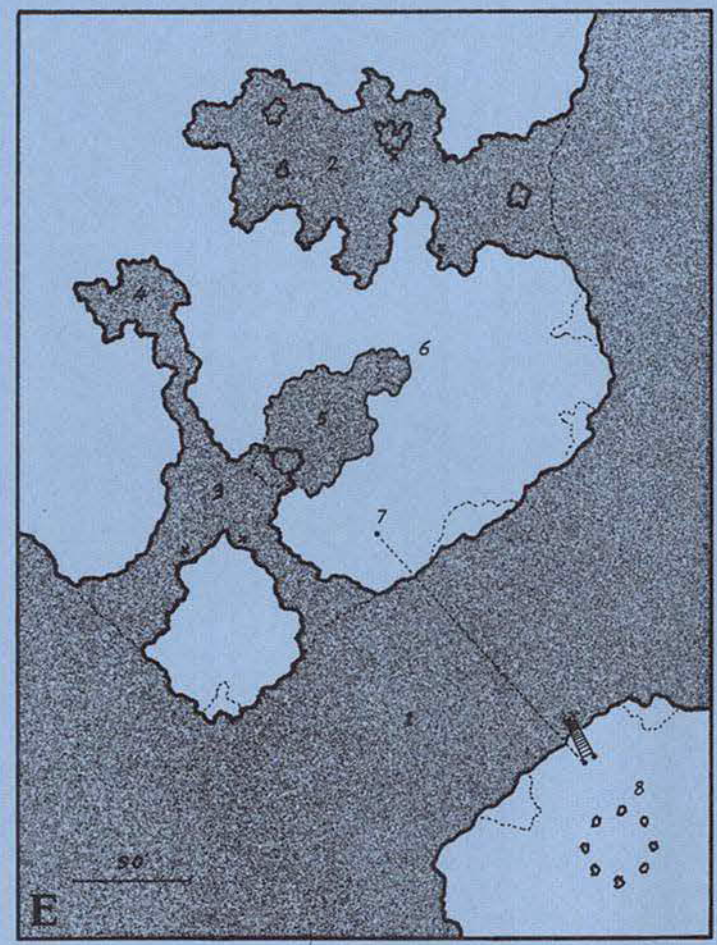
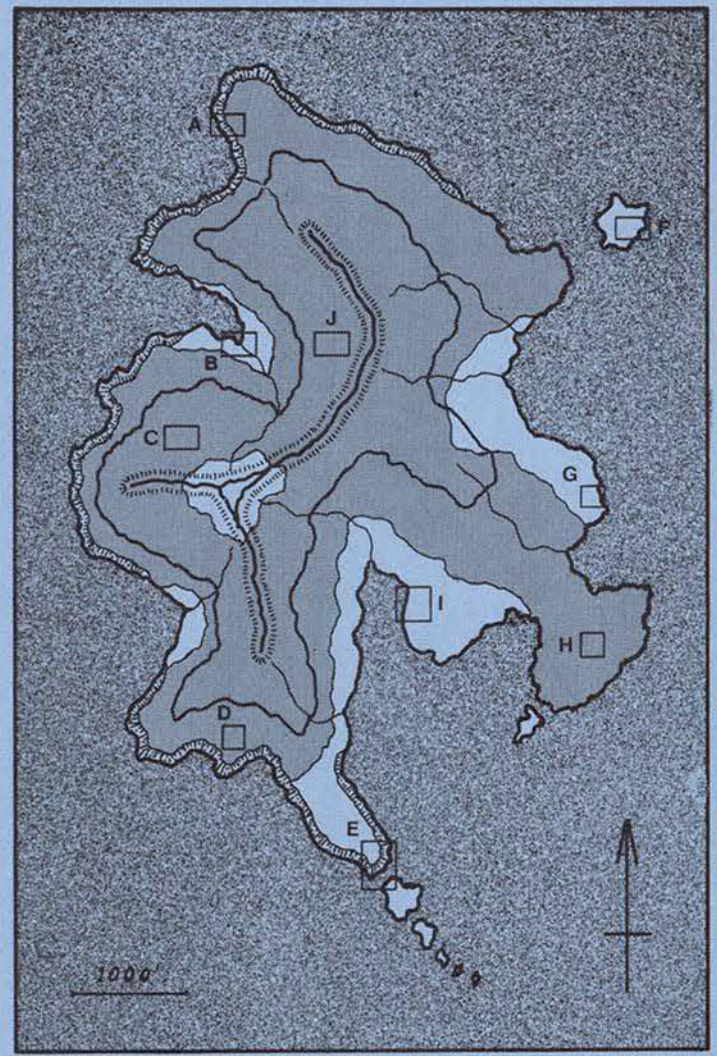
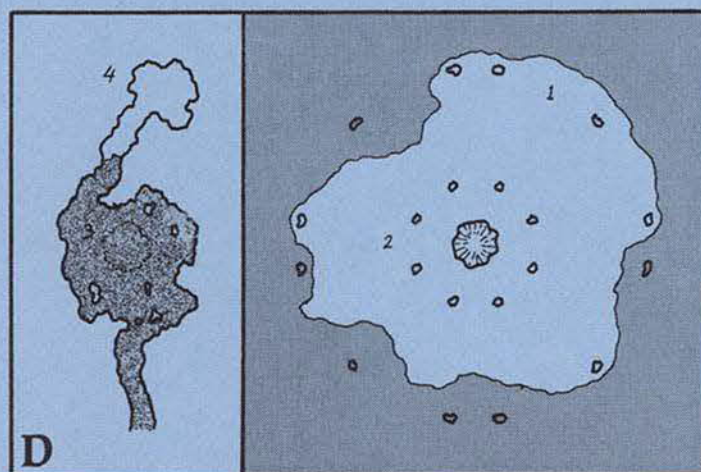
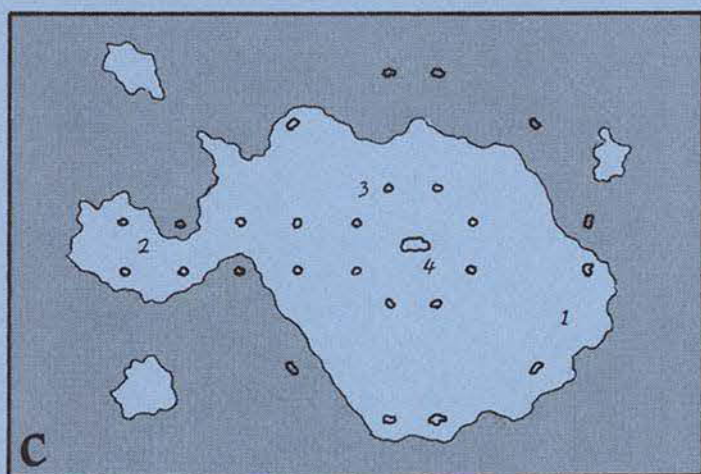
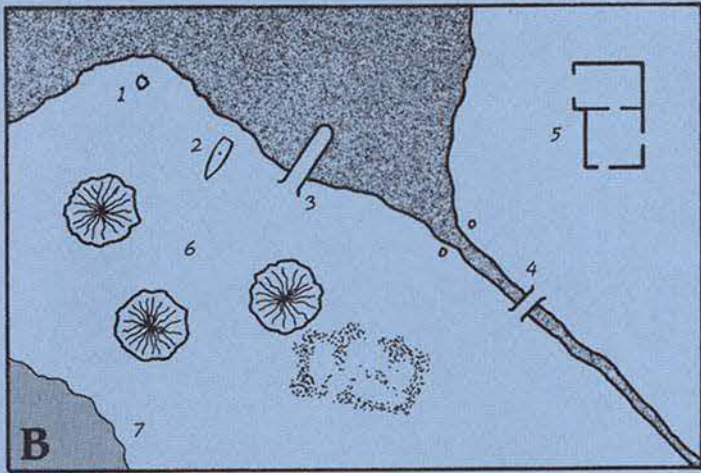
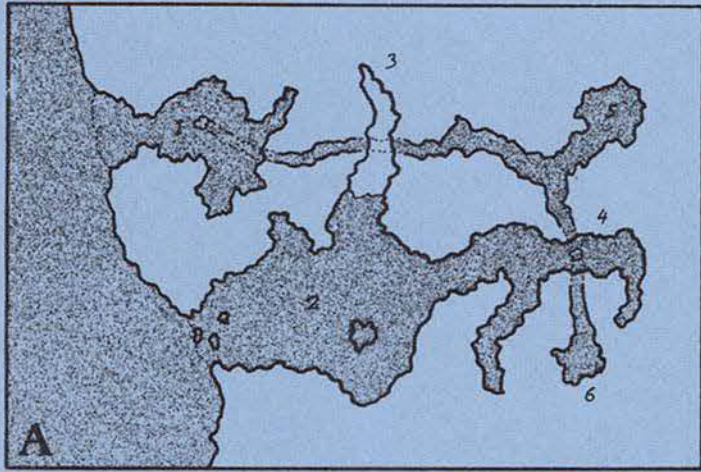
1. Keep: Ground Floor: The main door is sturdy and iron-bound, exhibiting signs of recent repair and reinforcement. It will open as a normal dungeon door unless barred, when it will open at -2 or -3 depending on whether only one or both bars are in place. The door may additionally have a trap set from the inside so that a weighted blade swings out at the opener, causing 3-18 damage (save under DEX for half) - this trap may be found at -25% and removed at -50%.

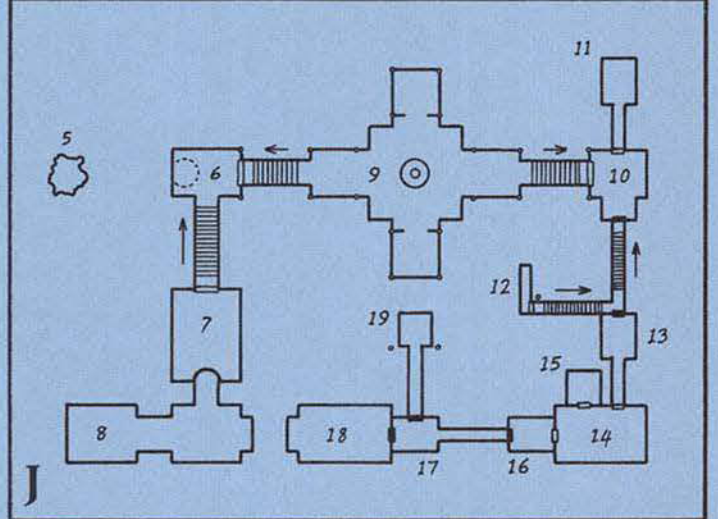
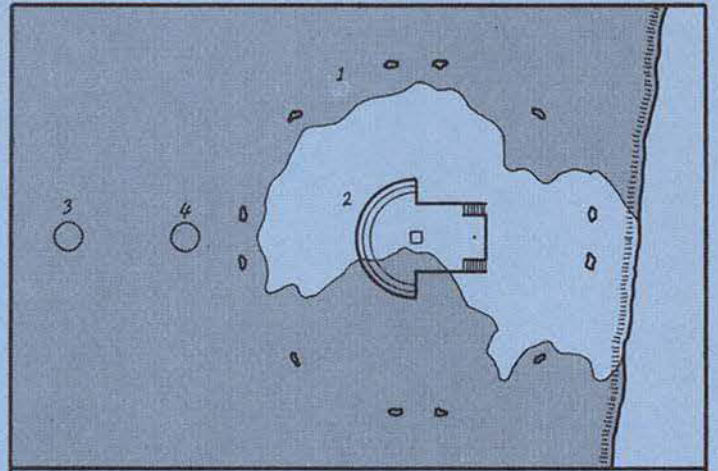
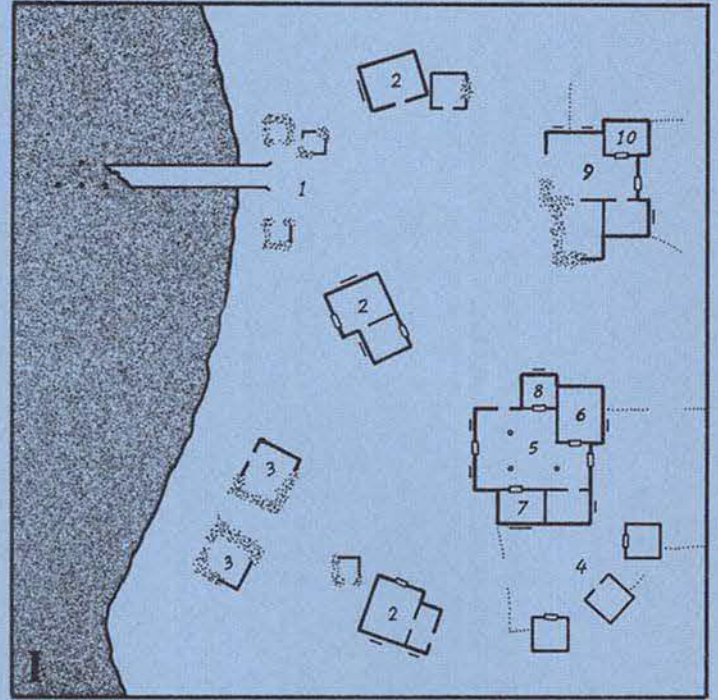
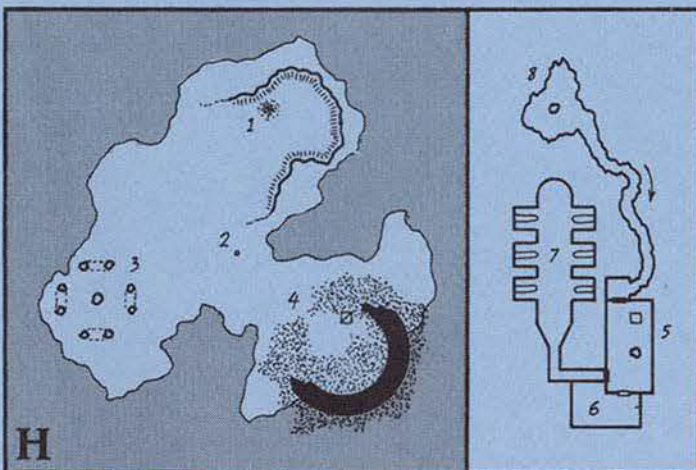
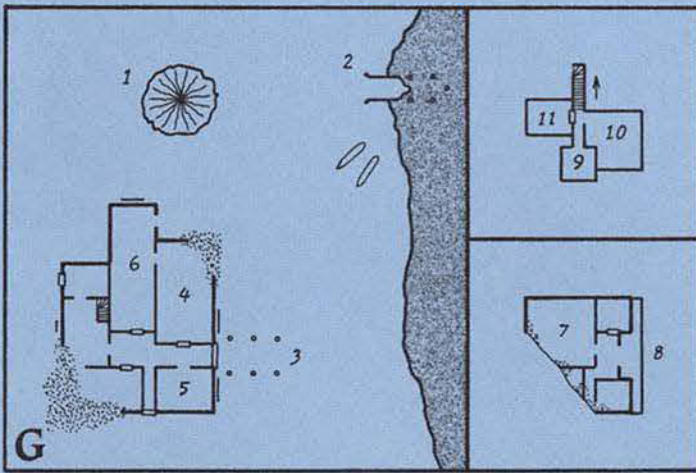
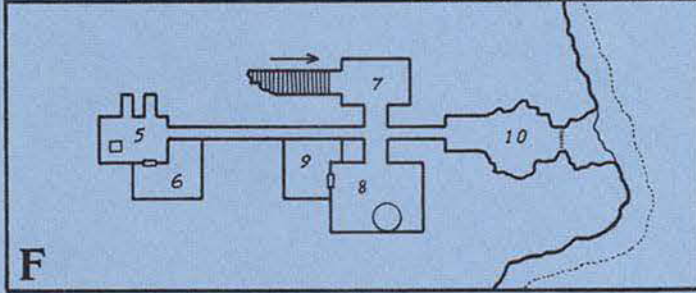
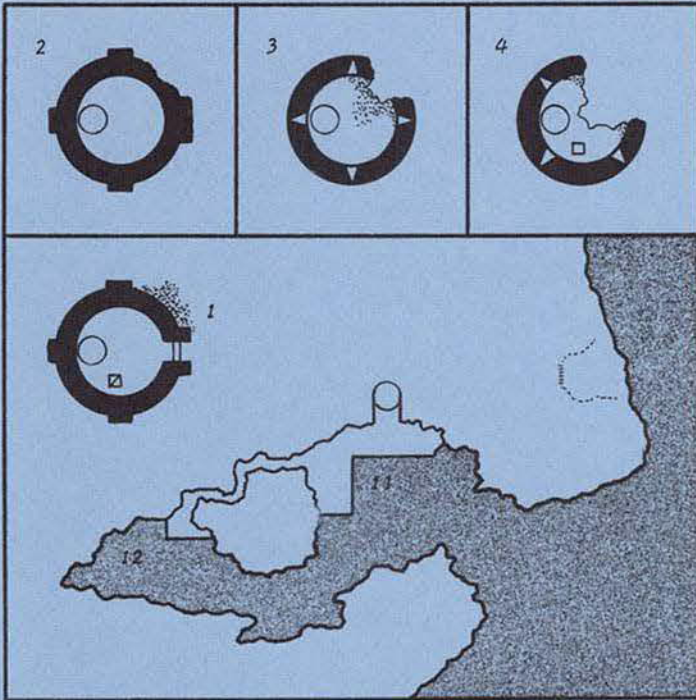
The spiral staircase ascending the height of the tower goes up in a clockwise direction. The trapdoor in the floor can be barred from above (open as a dungeon door at -1 if barred or automatically otherwise) and leads to the cellar complex, 20' below; there is an iron ladder against the west wall of the shaft. This floor of the keep contains no furniture but the stone flags are covered by packs, bedding and sleeping smugglers; there will be 7-12 of these here at any time.

Outside the keep, there will be at least one group of 11-18 smugglers; these will be engaged in the mundane chores that are necessary for the smooth running of such an outfit - cleaning weapons, cooking food, training, repairing nets and sails, etc. In bad weather they construct simple shelters out of spears and sails; at night they will burn small fires (never big enough to attract the unwanted attention of off-shore vessels) and use hooded lanterns to light their work. Due to the oft-changing composition of the smugglers' group, PCs may be able to sneak through this group when it is dark.

2. Keep: First Floor: A lantern hanging on the east wall is the only light source to this level; it shows a selection of grimy, dilapidated furniture and possibly the inhabitants of the room, the leaders of the smugglers. The furniture, most of which was designed for shipboard use, consists of three low cots, a round table and five stools, a broken armchair, a barrel of water with a keg of brandy on top, three crates of various foodstuffs, and a pair of locked wooden chests - the keys to the latter are held by the gang's leader, Drago. One of the chests contains only coins, separated into their different types and held in small leather purses; there are 850 cp, 2275 sp, 497 gp and 54 pp. The lock on this chest can be opened as normal, but the second chest has a far more complicated device on it that will open at -15%. As well as this lock, it has been trapped with a **glyph of warding**; this will cause 16 points of fire damage to anyone who opens the chest without uttering the glyph's name (Drago knows it). A quick inspection of the chest will reveal that it holds many items of jewelry and a cloth bag containing a few gems - the total value of this is 1750 gp. A closer look may show that the chest has a false bottom, also trapped - this may be found and removed at +10% as it is badly made and concealed, but if this is not done, a cloud of yellow mould spores will erupt into a 5' area as the false bottom is removed. Below it is a 3" gap in which is a **dagger +1**, in a fine silver scabbard worth 250 gp, and two scrolls. One of these is a magic-user scroll with **fly**, **water breathing**, **minor globe of invulnerability** and **airy water**. The other is a map as shown below; the smugglers do not know the meaning of the comments on this map, nor that it refers to an area so close at hand. In their ignorance they may be willing to sell it for 250 gp but the price could increase drastically if the PCs let on that they are particularly interested or that it concerns an area on Kaskala (if this is revealed the smugglers are less likely to sell it, and may pursue the matter themselves).







The room is used by Drago, and his two sidekicks: Gallen and Kraph. They plan and co-ordinate the smuggling activities and any group of smugglers with one of them will exhibit greater ingenuity and cunning when dealing with the PCs; they are also the only people able to make deals with PCs (though others may escort them here for a meeting).

Drago: S 17, I 15, W 9, D 12, C 13, Ch 16, CL F, LVL 7, hp 41, AC 8, bastard sword - if expecting trouble, he will put on a suit of **chain mail +1** and use a shield (hence AC 3). A tall and imposing figure, Drago sports a bristling beard and shoulder-length hair dyed brilliant orange, accompanied by a resounding, maniacal laugh, and a verbosity of hearty swash-buckling terms. This appearance belies his calculating and constantly scheming mind that turns every situation around until he can find the best angle for himself. If peacefully approached, he will be bluffly cordial while attempting to find out the PCs' business, but will not hesitate to turn on them if he sees a profit in it.

Gallen: S 13, I 9, W 10, D 18, C 15, Ch 14, CL T, LVL 8, hp 35, AC 3, **short sword +1**. A happy-go-lucky fellow, Gallen is short and nimble, fond of demonstrating his dexterity by sleight-of-hand tricks and liable to filch a few valuables from his audience while so doing. He helps Drago dispose of their smuggled goods through his wide net of contacts in the ports and it is he who is mainly responsible for the acts of piracy occasionally carried out by the smugglers. He will be all for stringing the PCs up and removing their goods.

Kraph: S 9, I 17, W 15, D 12, C 10, Ch 8, CL MU, LVL 6, hp 17, AC 10, dagger - usual spells: **charm person, light, magic missile, shield, invisibility, web, fly** and **lightning bolt**. Although a straightforward chap, Kraph gives the impression of being shifty and up to no good. He is here for his spell casting and intelligent planning, rarely taking part in any of the operations. He will wish the PCs no harm, as long as they keep out of the smugglers' way, but if he hears of the search for the Crown he will be fascinated and insist that he and his companions are allowed to help (intending to take all the proceeds for themselves, of course). Kraph always wears a tattered old brown cloak which is in fact a **cloak of the manta ray**; he also has a dozen of the brown pellets that are prepared by B'lubn'shoo and a scroll of **haste**.

You should position the leaders of the smugglers as you see fit, depending on the action of the scenario so far.

3. Keep: Second Floor: In much the same state as the ground floor, this level has 5-10 smugglers asleep. The hole in the wall has been covered by an old sail. Water kegs are set around the edge of the broken floor to prevent snoozers from falling 25' to their death. In atrocious weather, the guards from the level above will be on this level.

4. Keep: Third Floor: A sail has been placed over the hole in the floor to keep those below dry. The trapdoor in the ceiling leads to the remains of the roof; a large bonfire on the latter has been covered with a tarpaulin to keep it dry, and is only lit to guide an incoming ship in bad weather - they do not go onto the roof for any other reason, as it is dangerously weakened. In the middle of this level a brazier is kept alight for warmth and speedy ignition of the fire. Unless the weather is diabolical, there will be 4-6 men on watch, armed with crossbows - a horn hanging on the stairway is used to warn of the approach of ships or intruders.

5. Cellar: The shaft in the ceiling leads to 1, 20' above, via a ladder on the west side. The room is used for storing some of the mundane stores needed in the day-to-day running of the smuggler camp (mainly food). The two short passages leading north were designed for wine storage, but have been converted into a brig by the smugglers; each has a couple of sets of irons fixed to the wall and PCs may be chained and placed here if captured - alternatively, you may want to put a disaffected smuggler or other captive (possibly koalinh) here, to aid, mislead or give away the PCs.

6. Cellar: This room is full of water kegs, crates of food, sails and materials for the repair of boats, nets, grappling hooks and rope, spears, crossbow bolts, chests and barrels with false bottoms, urns full of packing, and so forth.

7. Unfinished Stairway: These stairs were never completed, rather than having been blocked at a later date. All manner of rubbish has been thrown down here. 5-8 smugglers will be in the room (though, as in all these descriptions, they may move due to PC actions) - they will be engaged in various activities preparatory for future missions, but all will be armed and ready to confront intruders at any time. If the PCs carefully search the rubbish on the stairs they may find another piece of the altar rod from J; however they will not recognize this as such unless they already have at least one section and will merely assume it is trash (ie do not even tell them of its presence as they will not have noticed it).

8. Large Storeroom: The spiral stairway descends 30' to 11. Depending on the smugglers' recent successes, this room will be more or less full with items ready for shipping to the southern islands or into the Nerrian capital of Kalabay. There will usually be several smugglers moving about between the wharf and here, and at least one guard at all times.

9. Small Storeroom: This room contains more valuable goods, and those that will not be shipped for some weeks. The door has a lock outside to which Drago has the key. Guarding the loot are two worgs, Drago's pets (hp 21 and 23); they will attack anyone who enters the room, unless ordered not to by Drago - he usually takes them out walking one at a time (he sometimes takes them both to hunt, using a captive as prey, leaving one of his subordinates in charge of the valuables).

You should determine the smugglers' goods as you see fit; in any case, the value of the goods should not be less than 500 gp and not more than 5000 gp. Almost all of the goods will need to be disposed of through expert fences in a large town or city (and PCs will probably get a much worse price than Gallen arranges). Most of the goods are bulky, only 10-20% being easily moved; the rest will need at least a large boat and probably several journeys to transport (ie make sure that the PCs cannot easily pick up several grand in loot).

10. Guard Post: 3-6 smugglers with crossbows watch over the eastern approaches at all times. The portcullis across the entrance is usually raised, but will be lowered should they expect trouble; the mechanism to operate it is a large wheel set into the recess in the south wall. Note that this level is 30' above the sea - the dotted line indicates the bottom of the cliff (for climbing treat as very rough but wet).

11. Main Wharf: The cavern is 30' high, the entrance being 25' high and the passage to the west 20'; the water is about 20' deep throughout, rocks on the bottom having been cleared away. The wharf is obviously not designed to take sea-going ships, but can accommodate large rowing boats and cutters - the smugglers use these smaller vessels to load and offload ships, often then sailing on to the island ports with their goods in boats disguised as fishing vessels, etc. There may be 1-3 boats in the wharf at any time; you should choose the number rather than randomly determine it, depending on how you wish the adventure to progress - note that more boats in here should indicate both more smugglers on the island, and more loot in the storerooms. If you wish the PCs to be able to fight the smugglers you will have to ensure that very few are about, but this is most inadvisable; ironically, if the number of smugglers is great, the PCs will stand a greater chance of sneaking about unnoticed amongst them, and even of making off with one of their vessels (though this will cause the gang to set out to hunt the PCs). In any case, 3-8 smugglers will be working here, with others moving between the levels and some on the boats (at least 1-3 per boat).

12. Small Wharf: Although it is possible that another large rowing boat, etc, will be moored in this 20' cavern, it is more likely to contain 1-3 small row boats. There may be a few smugglers in here, but this is not always the case. If the PCs investigate the walls of the cavern, they may notice crude carvings similar to many of those found elsewhere on Kaskala: a seated crowned figure with rays from his eyes to the feet of a bowing priest, a triangle with a skull inside, concentric rings of small circles with a skull or a crown in the centre of the whole design, etc. If the smugglers see the PCs taking an interest in these their suspicions will be aroused and they will want to know (if they do not already) exactly what the PCs are doing on the island.

G: DJAUBO'S CAMP

Once the home of a rich fisherman, this derelict building is now occupied by the koalinth shaman, Djaubo. He claims that it is the house of a mage, and that he seeks arcane secrets amongst its ruined timbers, but in fact he merely likes the relative warmth and comfort compared to a draughty hut.

1. Koalinth Hut: The warriors who guard the shaman sleep in this hut, not being allowed into the house. These are split into 3 bands of 7, one of each band being of 2 HD; one band will always be asleep, one somewhere near to hand hunting or fishing, and the third on guard round the main house. The hut is a mess and contains nothing of any real interest.

2. Collapsed Jetty: The end of this jetty has broken away, and only the supporting posts remain. Beached by the jetty are a couple of rowing boats (quite sound, with their oars); it is possible that one may be out fishing, or that 1-3 more will be here if more koalinth have turned up (25% chance or your decision); if it is suspected that the PCs may be near, extra guards may be dispatched to watch over the shaman.

Main House: Note that only areas of interest are described. Other parts of the house are in a state of disrepair, some of it having actually collapsed; at the edge of the upper fallen area further collapse may occur if anyone comes too close - a 1% chance per 10 lbs (100 gp) per round within 3', doubling within 1'. Most of the furniture has been removed, though a few larger items (tables, wardrobes, etc) have been left. The house is damp, mouldy and covered with lichens, mosses and climbing plants. Interior doors open easily, exterior as dungeon doors. All windows are shuttered but these can easily (if noisily) be broken through. Djaubo's room is noted in the key, but he could be anywhere nearby.

3. Entrance: The pillars are 15' high and entwined with old growths of a climbing ivy. Between the easternmost pillars, a trip-wire has been strung, attached to a tinny bell hidden amongst the ivy; PCs will see this on a 1:6, 2:6 if cautious (-1 at night) - thieves will find it automatically and be at +25% to remove silently (100% chance to remove at all).

4. Main Hall: Placed in the middle of the room, with an old table next to it for access, is a 12' high frame made from three poles lashed together at the top (note that the ground floor rooms are 15' high). Hanging from the frame is a huge iron cauldron with the remains of a small fire under it. In it, half-submerged under a noxious green ichor, is a human head, beginning to rot and having been recently par-boiled. On the table are 13 potion bottles, filled with the same slush as in the pot, and a set of silver cutlery (worth 50 gp). Anyone stupid enough to drink the liquid deserves more than the 3-18 points of damage (save vs poison for ½ damage) plus 2-5 days of retching misery (no actions) received.



5. Front Parlour: This room is being used for the koalinth stores: some food (mainly salted fish) and a little ale.

6. Library: There are shelves lining each side of the room, and a battered desk in the middle. Much damage has been done to the shelves where Djaubo has searched (in vain) for hidden compartments. An iron brazier at the north end is surrounded by odd sheets of damp and illegible parchment - Djaubo burnt any documents that he could not understand.

7. Master Bedroom: Doors, chairs and roof timbers have been placed in a large pile near the south-east edge. It will be lit if there is trouble, alerting those in the village (1). Despite Djaubo's searches, he has not found the compartment in the floor at the base of the north wall, between the two windows. This can be found at FRT+25%, and the mechanism to open it, a catch in the south window frame, at FRT. Below an 18" square of floorboards, a 1' deep recess contains a silver chain with an engraved silver fish pendant (worth 35 gp), a gold ring with an amethyst set in it (worth 150 gp) and two damp parchments that are about to fall apart; any PC handling them must roll under DEX each turn or they will degenerate into a useless pulp. The first of the parchments is a very rough map of the island with a few features marked on it - these are marked as dots, with no legend to identify them (draw a rough map yourself based on the island map, on which should be marked the positions of areas B, F, G, H and I). The second parchment is a fragment of a larger piece with the following still visible (written in common):

- - - and see, there is no end to it.

That is the way it must be done. For I've heard it told, by the old men around the fires, that the priests hid it, long ago, in the undersea caves, so that none should find it again. And who's to say - maybe it's true. I for one would like to see where the kings once walked in - - -

8. Balcony: The east part of this floor is a balcony - a 3' high stone wall surrounds it. There will be two koalinth on guard here at all times, with crossbows and a signal horn.

9. Small Cellar: This room is being used by Djaubo and now sports a bed of rags in an old wardrobe, a fire over which a tripod dangles a rusty pot of fish stew, and a broken stool supporting a jug of rum. Djaubo spends half his time asleep here, the rest in 10 or wandering in and about the house.

Djaubo: The koalinth's strange shaman is smaller than most, with dry wrinkled skin and a myriad of tiny warts all over his body. He does have magical powers, but makes these out to be a lot stronger, engendering fear even in the tribe's leaders. He wears a capacious, many-pocketed, scarlet-lined cloak in which he secretes all manner of nauseous pastes and potatoes, crushed weeds and even a few small lizards and insects (not always dead). He will begin any dealings with PCs in a high-handed way but if they get the better of him will turn into a wheedling and snivelling coward out to save his own skin. The shaman has the following spells (he is a follower of Ghaza): **cause fear, command, cure light wounds, forget, hold person, ventriloquism, fumble, suggestion and confusion.** Although a 7th level cleric, treat as 4th level for combat with hp 25 - he uses a long sword and sling. He also carries a set of 'scrolls' that are, in fact, merely a symbolic representation of the local fishing grounds.

10. Main Cellar: Djaubo has placed various odds and ends in pseudo-magical patterns on the floor of this chamber and he spends hours contemplating them in the vain hope of divine revelation. Some of the patterns he picked up from items in the house or elsewhere on the island, and they may be of use to the PCs as clues (though Djaubo himself has no idea what they mean). One is a triangle scratched into the floor with a lantern on one point, a small cairn of pebbles on another, and a bucket on the third; in the middle is a skull with a stone bearing a symbol for death on it. A second group has a shallow bowl of water in the centre with a spiral of weed at one side and a scratched set of waves at the other. In a third there is a long spike hammered into the floor from the base of which stream thin red strips of cloth and in a line away from which are placed a block of driftwood and a tiny skull on a larger shell. Ad lib other patterns so that the PCs do not have an easy time distinguishing the useful ones.

11. Secret Cellar: Djaubo has not discovered this room; the secret door is opened by release of a tiny catch at the east end of the bottom stair (FRT to find). Inside the room are crates and barrels of mouldering stores and any PC poking in amongst these must make a system shock survival roll or fall foul of a random, but not fatal, disease (see D.M.G. 14). A careful search, however, may reveal a small box at the rear of the room containing a platinum bracelet (worth 125 gp), a **potion of water breathing** and a piece of parchment with the same words as found on the circular stone described at E8.

H: RUINED KEEP

Hidden in the forest on the south-east head is a keep, more derelict than the first. Near it is an ancient stone circle and a more recent working, a quarried area in which the remains of a fire are present. The site has been visited by Djaubo, but is now the lair of a group of owlbeats.

1. Quarry: This hole has obviously been dug quite recently, by use of picks and shovels (not by a natural burrower). It slopes from ground level at the west to 15'-20' deep at the east. The remains of a large fire can be seen as marked.

2. Skull Post: A thick wooden stake has been thrust in the ground, supporting, at a height of 12½', a huge lizard skull. Painted on this skull are various arcane symbols for death.

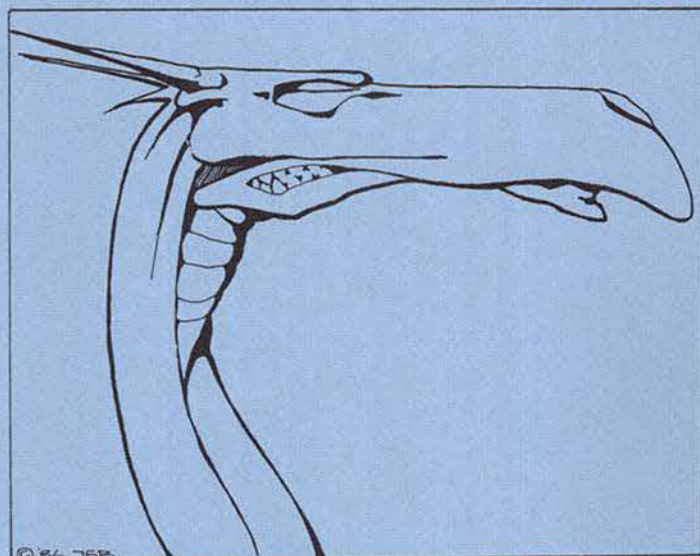
3. Stone Circle: The paired 15' stones have lintels on top. The central stone is 10' high, its sides covered with faded carvings; the others are bare, apart from triangles engraved at the base of each face, inside of which are death's heads.

4. Keep: Only part of the lower wall remains, although the ground is covered by rubble from the upper walls; the area still standing is 15' at the highest point. Partially below the rubble, though still visible, is a wooden trapdoor - it will take 2-3 rounds to clear but can then be easily lifted. Beneath it is a 12' long shaft, leading to 5, with a ladder down the east side. If the PCs investigate the rubble they will find various bones of the island's denizens, and a few items of koalinh armour and weaponry, the remains left by the 4 hungry owlbeats lairing here (hp 23, 31, 27 and 26).

5. Main Cellar: The shaft from 4 leads to this 8' high room in which the top 5' of a menhir protrudes through the dirt floor. Also in the room are a few old crates, barrels, etc, and, on rickety shelving, broken pottery, earthenware jars, and so forth. The body of a koalinh, in an advanced state of decay, leans against the south side of the menhir. Any PC closely examining the body may notice that there is no apparent physical damage that could have caused death. The corpse's position would seem to indicate a sudden demise while scabbling at the earth around the stone, corroborated by shallow holes that expose the top of some carvings. It will take a PC two hours with the correct tools to uncover one face of the buried menhir (double without). Once these faces are visible, a number of carvings can be seen; PCs may recognize these as similar to those on the stone above (3), though the latter were too faint to decipher. The carvings seem to be ideograms, interspersed with triangle patterns as seen above; PCs will not be able to read the writing without some magical assistance - if such is available, a rough translation, the best that can be managed, runs as follows (note that players not used to the Campaign may not get the gist of this, or the following, if they are not aware of the correspondences between the four elemental forces and their traditional geographical locations, nor know their symbols):

Death comes to us in the centre and advice from all sides but which gate to take. From words, the signs of air, we will take our lead. The king opens the way with his eyes by blocking light to praise Khi-Nan - we, then, shall use rock for our medium, imprisoning these airy nothings, and guide our children past death to tread once more the Way.

The two secret doors may be found as usual; the west has its opening mechanism 4' up the wall in the south-west corner - find at FRT. Once the north door is found a tiny pattern of carvings may be located at its base (FRT), positioned in a diamond pattern: circle at the top, triangle at the base, 2 wavy lines on the left, and a circle radiating lines on the right, each of which is on a small stud or button.



If one, or more, of these is pressed, the door will swing open; only if the top stud is pressed first will the trap on the other side by deactivated. If another is pressed first, or if all are pressed together, a PC entering the small room to the north will activate a trap: an explosion causing the PC 4d6 damage (save vs spells for half), and anyone within 20' 2d6 damage. The nature of the damage will relate to the button pressed: left causes cold damage, lower normal damage and right fire (protection spells will operate appropriately - apply spell effects to the damage and saves as normal).

6. Small Cellar: Full of more broken and mouldy junk.

7. Crypt: Each alcove holds a stone sarcophagus, 4' x 4' x 8'; at the foot of each is a name-plate, but the engravings have all been scratched off. At the north end is a 5' high stone pillar with an ornate wooden box on top; on the front of the box is a crown picked out in gold and silver tracery. As a PC (or any object or magical force) enters the 15' wide part of the room, a low groan will emanate from the middle west sarcophagus, rising to a piercing scream followed by a blinding flash of darkness - before a PC can act, a skeletal apparition will appear in the centre of the room, hand held out towards the PCs. This will not move unless assaulted (magically or otherwise), but will then attack or pursue the PCs unless they move to the surface. They would be foolish to attack it (even its mere presence will send shivers down their spines) as can be seen from its statistics: AC 0; MV 12"; HD 11; hp 77; AT 2; D 2-5 per bony claw; SA a hit also drains 2-5 points from a random requisite (which will return in 7-12 turns unless in any requisite drops to 0, indicating death); SD +1 weapons to hit, immune to spells as a spectre; Int high; SZ M. This is an undead creature and is turned as a ghost. Should the PCs escape, it will immediately return to the middle of this room - it may then regenerate at 2 hit points per round while inactive here.

The sarcophagi are sealed; if broken open, all will be found to contain poorly embalmed corpses, each with 10-100 gp in jewelry upon it. The box on the pillar is worth 50 gp; for all its fine exterior, it is solidly made and closed with an awkward lock (OL-15% - note that breaking it open will lower its value to 5 gp). Inside is a velvet-lined recess in the shape of a crown, in which is a gold circlet (worth 85 gp) obviously too small for the space. If the lining is removed a compartment in the lid may be found - this holds a slip of vellum folded around a small gold key. The vellum has two concentric circles drawn in red below Khian's wave symbol. If the base of the pillar is examined, a catch will be found (FRT) that opens a 3" hole in the top, beneath the box. The hole is 5' long and contains part of the altar rod from J.

8. Cave: The passage from here to 5 ascends 30'. Standing in the centre of the 15' high cave is a third 10' menhir; it has runes engraved around the bottom 5', surmounted by the now-familiar death's head in triangle symbol. The runes (an archaic language used for many arcane works and spells) may be read by clerics or MUs on a d20 roll of less than INT:

Of air we have spoken and of sea (we will naught of fire) now tis time to take another form. To you, our children, we and our fathers and our forefathers say - Death may be conquered and the old king crowned if you heed our words. Take note of them and use them for they have the force of many - look to where the circle lies, and there the sword of stone may be taken and held out against the dark ones.

Investigation of the menhir's top will show a carved circle; if a PC touches this, the stone it will shatter, leaving the form of a sword rising out of the remaining 6' of menhir. If the hilt is grasped, it will come free from the rock and may be wielded by a PC with STR of 15+, though even then not easily. If the user confronts the creature in room 7, he may attack it at +3, causing 10 times the normal damage for longswords; if he kills the creature, the sword will shatter into a fine dust. If the PCs do not do this, but chip off smaller fragments of the menhir, allow them to be used as if daggers or sling stones, at +1 to hit and 5 times damage.

1: DERELICT VILLAGE

Lescar was the main settlement on Kaskala but it now stands derelict; recently the koalinth have taken it over as their camp. Around the village are the huts of the koalinth (not shown on the map) - most live in these, but some, including the leaders, have taken up residence in the old houses. It is not necessary to give full details of the houses, some being empty, others having little of interest - only areas likely to affect play are described below and you will have to ad lib the mundane features where not given. The houses are all stone built - none of two storeys. Walls are sound where still erect, doors easy to open (unless barred - your option); the roofs are holed, collapsed near fallen walls.

Koalinth Huts: Off the map edge, most of the marauders live in huts like those in maps B and G. No numbers are given for the koalinth but you are advised to consider the matter before play begins, depending on whether you want the PCs to be ridiculously outnumbered, or to have a chance of success in hit-and-run raids, for example. Numbers between 50 and 300 are recommended. There will be some koalinth boats in the bay, or tied to the jetty, and the number will increase with the number of koalinth. The following assumes a small number (about 75-100) and you should increase proportions as necessary. It need only be noted that a koalinth hut is smelly and unpleasant, full of all manner of rubbish and old food - they will usually go in huts merely to sleep.

1. Jetty: There will be 2-8 koalinth working on or guarding the jetty, more if cargo is currently being moved. A few barrels, crates, nets, ropes, spare oars, etc, can be found. The end of the jetty has fallen away, leaving a number of the supporting posts showing; captured PCs may be left tied to these (probably upside-down) to be lashed by the waves. The sheds at the foot of the jetty are entirely derelict and are used only for the storage of junk and domestic debris.

2. Small Houses: These will contain 5-8 koalinth sleeping, maintaining weapons, gambling, eating and so forth.

3. Derelict Houses: These houses are too dangerous to be occupied, though the koalinth may place a few guards in them lying concealed among the piles of rubble.

4. Outhouses: Used for the storage of food supplies. If the koalinth expect the PCs they may choose to set up tripwires across the gaps in the fences, attached to crossbows or to bells for warning - these may be accompanied by guards hidden in the store-houses, watching over this approach.

5. Main Hall: Wooden pillars support the 15' high roof of this building. The room forms the heart of the camp - it is here that the leaders gather to make plans and celebrate victories. An old door on two barrels forms a table in the centre of the room and rum kegs and mugs are used both to visualize imminent marauding, pillaging and ravaging and to drink the proceeds of such ventures. At all times there are likely to be 2-5 koalinth in here; sometimes there may be as many as two dozen, plus their leaders (possibly drunk).

6. Kitchen: This room now serves as the quarters of Lro-Noord, the violent, barbaric warrior chief of the koalinth.

The culinary remnants have been pushed into a corner to make space for a weed bed and Lro-Noord's weapons. If asleep he will be guarded by four 2 HD creatures; when awake, only a pair will accompany him. As would be expected of a leader of koalinth, his room is more nauseatingly smelly and messy than normal - after all, he must set an example to his men.

Lro-Noord: Treat this tall warrior as 5 HD (hp 30), with +1 to hit and +2 damage. He may use chain mail on land (AC 3), and will fight with a huge axe in one hand and a net in the other. As a chieftain, he will lead his warriors from the front, but is wise enough not to remain there if the going gets tough. His tactical sense derives from a simple disregard for everyone else; it usually involves the maximum of pain, bloodshed and entirely gratuitous violence possible.

7. Bedroom: The quarters of Lro-Noord's second-in-command, the formidable Omull the Reaper. Nailed to the walls of the room are Omull's mementos: bones, scalps, eyeballs in brine, fingernails, etc. On the floor, he keeps a vast collection of weapons from his conquests (most of which he cannot use).

Omull the Reaper: As broad as Lro-Noord is tall, Omull the Reaper has the strength of many koalinth, but the dexterity of a sea slug. Treat him as 4 HD (hp 27), with -1 to hit and +3 damage; he will fight with flail and net or flail and mace (at -3 with the mace). Content to follow Lro-Noord's command in all but consumption of the victory feasts, Omull has a slightly better understanding of tactics than his boss and will hence usually be seen at the back of any combat, in charge of ordering the troops and avoiding personal damage.

8. Small Bedroom: This contains the arms cache and treasure - the former's size will depend on the number of koalinth (with spears and javelins enough for the force - they do not carry these at all times - plus spare crossbow bolts, etc). Treasure will also be related to numbers with a basic guide of 2-5 gp per koalinth (though most of this will be in large booty from merchant ships, difficult to move). Magic will be one **potion of water breathing** per 100 troops, a clerical scroll of Khian: **chill metal**, **water breathing**, **wall of ice**, and **conjure water elemental**, and a **net of snaring** (which may be used against PCs, if circumstances allow). There is also (hidden at the back of the room) the map given below. This room is locked (OL +15%) and guarded by 2-4 koalinth.

9. Derelict Hall: Quartered in this run-down building are the koalinth assault troops, a band valued mostly for their suicidal approach to combat. They may be regarded as 2 HD with a 10% chance per round of beserking - in a beserk state they feel no pain and will attack until death, continuing in combat until they are reduced to -5 hp (even their fellows may be attacked if none of the enemy are left alive). These koalinth never use crossbows, though they may launch javelin attacks as they attempt to close for melee. There will be at least 13-24 of them, plus their leader Yod-Towh.

Yod-Towh: The most scarred of the beserkers, Yod-Towh seems to have an unconquerable urge to die, and an amazing ability to fail to do so (though the same cannot be said for either his opponents or his troops). Treat him as of 5 HD (hp 40), at +1 to damage; if he goes beserk he will get +2 to hit and +3 damage, making him the most formidable of the koalinth. Beserk or not, his sole rationale is kill, kill, kill!

10. Storeroom: This room has no exits other than the doors and will be used by the koalinth as a gaol to hold prisoners (if they take any). The door may be double barred from the outside (-2 to open), and then the PC would have to escape unarmed through Yod-Towh's lunatic mob of beserkers.





J: KING PHAON'S SHRINE

This shrine, named after the first king crowned here, is the place that the PCs seek, although they may not know it. The lost Crown of Kaskala is hidden beneath the shrine and it is to this place that most of the clues on the island refer.

1. Stone Circle: The old menhirs are 20' high and unmarked. Entering the circle will apparently be safe, but in fact a magical call will go out to the priests' lizards. In 7-12 rounds one teratosaurus will appear for each person who has come into the circle, to a maximum of 12; once arrived they will attack and pursue without let or mercy as usual.

2. Dais: Made of the grey stone of the cliffs, the dais is 5' high, with 3 steps at the front (ie west) and two shallow stairways at the rear. In the centre of the semi-circular area is a 10' high white-stone statue of a king seated on a throne looking west. 25' behind the statue a hole about 1" in diameter and 6" deep has been cut into the dais - this may be found on FRT+25% if the area is searched. At the rear of the dais, between the stairs, there is a secret door 3'6" wide and 2'6" high (find as normal). The mechanisms to open this are hidden at the base of the stairs and may be found at FRT; each consists of a stud that must be depressed to open the door. If opened, an empty recess the size of the door and 1' deep is revealed; there are 8 small clips set into the back wall in pairs at 6" vertical intervals and 3" from the side walls - these once held the four parts of the altar rod that are now spread about the island. The sections are all 3'3" long and if placed end to end (in any order) they will magically combine into a single shaft. The resultant 13' rod may be placed in the hole in the dais, leaving 12'6" protruding. In the priests' ceremonies, light was cast on the top of the rod, shining out over the statue and casting shadows westwards; the edge of the shadow from the top of the statue falls on the false entrance (3), that from a position taken as the king's eyes (9' up) falls on the real entrance (4). The various clues left around the island and detailed below should allow the PCs to calculate or recreate this effect, and locate the correct entrance.

If the dais is searched carefully, there is an FRT chance of finding many small rune-like depressions running all the way around the sides; if the PCs enter at night and there is a moon and/or they are using torches or lanterns, these runes will show up, glowing slightly (in daylight you may make the PCs spend several hours transcribing them one by one). They may be read with the use of magic, translating roughly as:

Where the King looks down, there shall the priests kneel, and there shall they see the light and find the Way. Ten years it took to crown the old king and once less ran the seasons in his sight. One quarter century later, the sun shall rise for one hundred and fifty months and its rays, splendid from the east, will be held at bay by this king. And when he looks no more, there shall we enter the hall.

Cryptic though these clues may be, the PCs should really be able to locate the entrance from them (if not by luck).

3. False Entrance: Buried 1' under the soil is a 5' radius stone acting as a trapdoor over a shaft below. This may be smashed through or dug out, but it will drop open easily if correctly activated. On a small raised area in the centre are four religious symbols: waves to west, circle to north, flames to east, triangle to south; under these is written:

Friends of Khian press onward - others avault and depart!

If the waves are pressed and then rotated the trapdoor will open (the others have no effect); a PC must be on the stone to activate this, which is unfortunate as the door will drop suddenly, precipitating him into the pit below (see 5).

4. Shrine Entrance: Buried 2' under the soil is a similar, though more secure, stone trapdoor. This may be dug around or broken through as above, but unlocking it is more tricky. As above, there are 4 symbols on the stone, each with a hole beside it; underneath this is written (in common):

The sun shall be quartered and used to lead us; the light shall be staked first, then three and one we will place a final part in the water and call on our lord to bring his glory to this place and allow us free passage. All pray!

If the altar rod is broken into four pieces again and these are put into the holes in the order east, south, north and lastly west, the rod will glow and the stone shudder. If a cleric of Khian now casts a suitable spell (bless, etc, or a spell calling water into being) or an MU casts knock (or any water-based spell) the stone will descend the shaft to 6.

5. Pit: 30' below the stone trapdoor is a pit full of sharp stakes - damage will be 3d6 from falling plus 2-5 attacks as if by a 10th level fighter with spear set versus charge.

6. Entrance Chamber: The shaft is 50' long and enters this 15' high chamber - the stone will descend slowly and safely, stopping gently when it reaches the floor. If, however, the PCs manage to enter the shaft at a point below the stone (ie by digging past it), the latter will plummet down the shaft, crushing anything in its way (say 10d10 damage). The magics to make the stone rise have been long lost.

This room, the rest of the underground complex and 15' up the shaft are flooded; an odd viscosity may be noticed about the water, though it will not impede PC actions in any way - if drunk it will taste a bit strange, but will do no harm. The room is empty, with a pair of stone columns in the east corners and double doors between these (open at -2).

7. Royal Antechamber: The stairs descend 30' at 1:1; at the south end are double doors that open at -1. On each door is a gold-leaved engraving of a crown set above waves. Most of the splendour that once filled this room was removed by the fleeing priests after defeat by the Empire, but there are a few faded, washed-out murals of royal victories on the walls and the ceiling displays some fine floreate plaster patterns (others have dropped off since the flooding). At the south end of the room, in front of the semi-circular intrusion, is a throne similar to the one on the dais, but man-sized.

If the throne is carefully examined it may be noted that the area directly behind it seems to contain a secret door (find as normal), but that there is no room to get past the throne to it. It may also be noticed that at the throne's base are a number of symbols repeated on either side of a sentence in common - a crown, waves and a triangle, followed by 'Seek death to avoid it!', then triangle, waves and crown. If the two triangles are depressed, the throne will swing forwards to allow access to the door; pressing any other symbol will cause a ghostly figure to appear on the chair, and advance toward those in the room: this is a wraith (hp 34) - it will attack any PCs in the room, pursuing as long as they do not go up the shaft. Once the secret door is approachable, the PCs may discover a pair of small catches at the base, one in the form of a triangle, the other a circle, with the words in common 'Now the other' above them. Releasing the second catch will open the door, releasing the first will cause the door to open by falling forwards crushing whatever is before it - fortunately for the PCs the water will halve the damage to only 2d12 (save under DEX for a mere 1d6).

8: Royal Quarters: Built when the Empire began to invade as a royal sanctuary, the furnishings were simple even then - most were removed, the rest left to the depredations of time and flooding, so now the room is hardly fit for an ostler, let alone a king. The room has 2 parts, the east end being a day room, the west end a bedroom. In the former is an old table and chairs, an empty display case for jewelry and a large pile of cases and barrels against the east wall. The west is dominated by a huge four-poster draped with crimson curtains - the king may not have wanted Imperial domination, but he was not loath to import their luxuries. Standing motionless in the corners of the west room are four flesh golems, their skin badly wrinkled after decades under water. Searching the items in the east side of the room will reveal nothing interesting; PCs may note, however, that the part of the wall only 15' wide is covered with fine carvings of the wave symbol of Khian (or Khi-Nan, as he is known here).

If PCs (or other objects) enter the west half of the chamber (more than half-way along the 15' section), the golems will animate, attacking and pursuing relentlessly unless the PCs leave the subterranean complex. Underwater, their crushing fists do 1-4 damage each and movement will be reduced to 6". If the draperies on the bed are touched they will fall apart and float around the room. Inside the bed, which cannot be seen while the curtains are up, is a skeleton with its skull stoved in, wearing old priestly robes which will suffer the same fate as the hangings. Beneath the bed is a large chest. The lock is rusted shut (OL-75%) and the chest will have to be broken open; this will set off the trap (find at +15%, remove at -15%), scattering yellow mould in a 5' area - fortunately, due to the flooding, the spores spread slowly and are ineffective anyway. The chest is full of decorated ceremonial cloaks, all of which are in the same state as the curtains. However, the bottom of the chest is false and may be lifted out to reveal half-a-dozen stoppered ivory scroll cases. Two have cracked and their contents are sodden and illegible. Two contain lists of names, titles, property rights, etc - these may be worth up to 100 gp each for collectors (or possibly the Imperial authorities wishing to settle old feuds and land claims). The final pair contain spell scrolls, one clerical but usable by any cleric, the other magical. The clerical spell seems to relate to some form of opening magic, though it is not of any normal type (see below). The magical scroll has the spells **hold person**, **wizard eye** and **animate dead** on it. Note that opening any of the sealed tubes under the water will ruin their contents!

9. Shrine: The main room is 20' high, the side rooms only 15'. In the centre of the large chamber is a fountain, with a 10' wide basin and a 10' high stem - this is the source of the water flooding this complex. It still emits water, but at a rate equivalent to the natural loss through porosity of the rocks. The walls of these chambers are covered by murals of various episodes in the legendary existence of the water-god, Khi-Nan of Kaskala. These adventures tend to be essentially martial in nature, and often reflect victory over the invading Imperial army (whose deity is, naturally, the Khian-loathed god of fire, Filhean). All the religious fittings that once filled the room have been removed, though various scratches and holes are evidence of their presence.

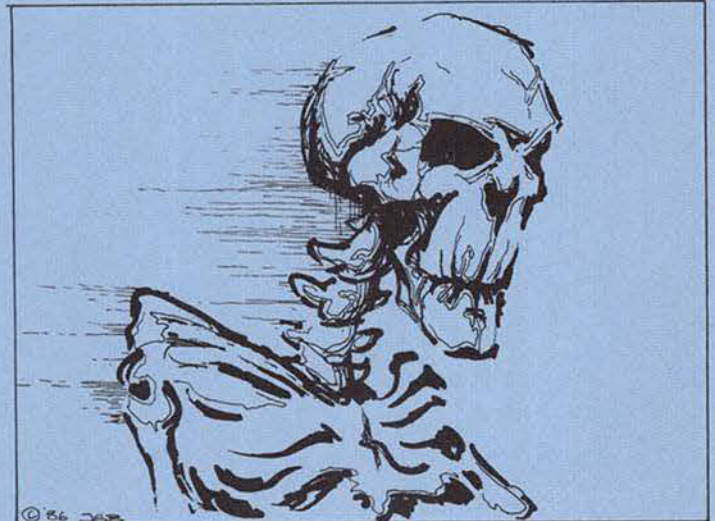
Passing between the pillars in the corners of room 6 causes the fountain to burst into a new flurry of activity (coming into the circle anywhere will do so, should the PCs have some form of **teleport**, etc). Snaking out of the top of the fountain will come a thick red liquid that will quickly spread out in rope-like strands and reach into all the corners of the room and up the stairs (at a slope of 1:1, as all the stairs here). These snakes will attack the PCs, easily forcing the doors open if necessary. These creatures are a type of water elemental with the following statistics: AC 4; MV 15"; HD 1; AT 1; D 0; SA a PC hit by one must save vs paralysis or be caught by a strand - he will then take 2-5 damage each round unless the strand can be broken; SD ½ damage from edged, none from blunt weapons, spells affect as if a water weird (see M.M. 100); Int non; SZ M. There will be a dozen of these strands, with a new one forming every 5 rounds, to a maximum of 24 at any one time, though new ones may form as others are cut apart. They will all be anchored to the fountain top, but may stretch up to 120' from it, and will then lose 1 hp per extra 10' (thus a maximum of 200').

There are 3 ways to destroy the red elemental snakes: the first is improbable - if they are all dead in any one round no more will come. The next involves smashing the fountain; assume that it will take something like 200 points of damage - weapons will have a 1% per damage point inflicted chance of smashing. Neither method will stop the replenishment of water, but the creatures will disappear. The third method involves the key from H7 - any PC possessing this will not be affected by the snakes and may advance to the fountain. Here he will find that the key fits a hole in the top of the spout; turning it will cause the snakes to retract and the water to cease; it will then only be a matter of time before the whole complex is dry. The water will drop at 1' per hour, with the shaft emptying in the first hour - check the map and the heights of chambers to see when each will empty: 6 in 16 hours, 7 in 46, and so forth; you may speed this up.

10. Priests' Vestry: The double doors at the top of the 20' stairway from 9 cannot be battered down as usual, nor will a **knock** spell work; for **dispel magic** treat the opposing caster as of 15th level. Just on the east side of the doors there is a wall of elemental force keeping the doors closed - they may therefore be chopped away, but this will merely allow a PC to walk into the force wall (visible as a light haze) and suffer 1-6 damage as a result. The only way (dispellation or magically bypassing it aside) to dispose of this blockage is to cast the clerical spell found in room 8 - if this has been water damaged the PCs will have to dig through the wall around the force field (24 man hours with the right tools).

The vestry has a door in the north wall (opens as normal) and hooks along the south wall, from which hang some damaged priests' robes. On the east wall there is a large silvered mirror (3' x 4'); though this causes a strange distortion of anyone looking into it, it is also irresistibly fascinating and he must roll under his WIS or be captivated by the image and merely stand and stare. If the person is dragged away in this state he must save vs spells or suffer the effects of **confusion** for 2-12 rounds. If the mirror is broken, the PC so doing will suffer bad luck for the rest of the module; treat him as -2 or -10% on all things, and any throw of a 20 or 100 will indicate a result of 1 (or vice-versa, if 1 was the desired result). If the mirror is smashed while someone is staring into it, they will suffer a loss of 2-12 WIS for 2-5 weeks, and fall into a coma for 7-12 turns, thereafter suffering **confusion** as above. The secret door can be found as normal, the hook to the west of it causing it to open.

11. Priests' Chambers: This room contains rotted furniture, garments and food of a mundane nature. There are also two skeletons of priests sitting in chairs - these will animate as the door is opened and attack; they are, however, unusual skeletons, having the same statistics and attacks as wights (hp 23 and 24), with the exception that they can be turned only as if wraiths and the level draining is not permanent, lasting 5-8 hours (if a PC dies, though, he will actually be dead). If the room is carefully searched 100 gp of assorted jewelry may be found, with a set of five small keys numbered 1, 3, 5, 7 and 9 and shaped rather like bones.



12. Trapped Passage: The stairs descend 50' to a door which opens normally. However, as the passage is entered, a trap is set off. Astute players may note they are about to go in the circle again (if you feel the trap is a little hard on the less perspicacious make the passage wider, including the side of the pillar shown). As a PC crosses the line of the circle, a lightning bolt will shoot out of the north wall, striking the PC and ricocheting into the roof. If still flooded, damage will be 6d6 as a fireball; if not it will be 6d6 for the front PC and 3d6 from the falling roof for PCs between him and the stairs (save vs spells or DEX for half).

13. Priests' Chambers: The secret door is found as normal - the operating mechanism is a small catch, 4' up the wall on the opposite corner (FRT+5% to find). The chamber has much the same furnishings as 11 in much the same watery disarray.

14. Priest's Quarters: This room still has pallets, trestle table, stools, etc that were placed in here for the priests' concealment during the invasion, now damaged by submersion. There are five corpses in here, none completely decomposed, three on pallets, one on the floor and the last slumped over the table. As the PCs enter they will rise to meet them. A cleric may turn them as wraiths, though he will only be able to turn them one per attempt; due to the water-based source that partially motivates these undead, clerics of Khian MAY turn them. If not turned, they will attack and pursue, but they will not leave the underground area; their statistics are: AC 6; MV 12"; HD 3+3; AT 3; D 1-4/1-4 with raking claw-like fingers, 1-3 with bite; SA each hit with a hand also drains STR as if a shadow and each bite causes a disease as if a mummy - save vs paralyzation to avoid this; SD +1 weapons to hit, immune to spells as a mummy; Int low; SZ M. If wounded or dead characters are abandoned, PCs returning will find that their comrades have been consumed. An odd few coins can be found about the room, with a couple of cheap trinkets, to a total value of around 35 gp.

15. Storeroom: Of the barrels, chests, crates, sacks and so on piled up, most have rotted, though a few are still water-tight and contain stale but edible rations and water (these will be magically tainted by the preservation spells used).

16. Priests' Chambers: Little needs to be said about these that has not been covered in 11, etc. The secret door can be found as usual; there are three operating mechanisms: one is a small stud at the base of the door (FRT+10%), another is a stud 5' up the wall, 3' to the north (FRT) and the last is a catch set above the lintel of the door to the east (FRT -10%). The door will open when all have been activated; if an attempt is made to force it (as a magically held door) or it is broken through, a set of bolts will emerge from the walls of the passage, attacking as 2-5 heavy crossbow bolts fired by a 7th level fighter inflicting the normal damage, plus 2-5 each unless a save vs poison is made.

17. Antechamber: This room has been designed to look like a ransacked treasury: open chests lie around the floor, empty but for odd rags; there are bare shelves along the south wall; and a 'hidden' panel in the floor has been opened in the south-east corner, again bereft of valuables but holding a smashed wooden box and a handful of copper and silver. In fact, this subterfuge is meant to forestall the location of the secret doors. That to the west may be found at normal chances, that to the north at -1. On the ground in front of the west door, under a chest, is a small catch (FRT to find) that operates the door. The mechanism to the north door is concealed behind a shelf (ie where the shelf meets the wall) and may be found at FRT+5% only if the shelf is removed.

18. High Priest's Quarters: Originally well furnished, the despair of defeat by the Empire drove the High Priest to consign his goods to the ultimate ignominy of destruction by fire. There are still pieces of wood and lumps of iron lying around the floor but the PCs will discover mainly a shallow slush of charnel grey water. He left a final twist for his Imperial conquerors, though: he drew a 10' radius magic circle in the centre of the room (which is now hidden by the ashen slurry) and then partially-completed a powerful summoning spell - as soon as anyone or anything breaks the magic circle a water elemental of the largest size appears and attacks the (theoretically Imperial) intruders.

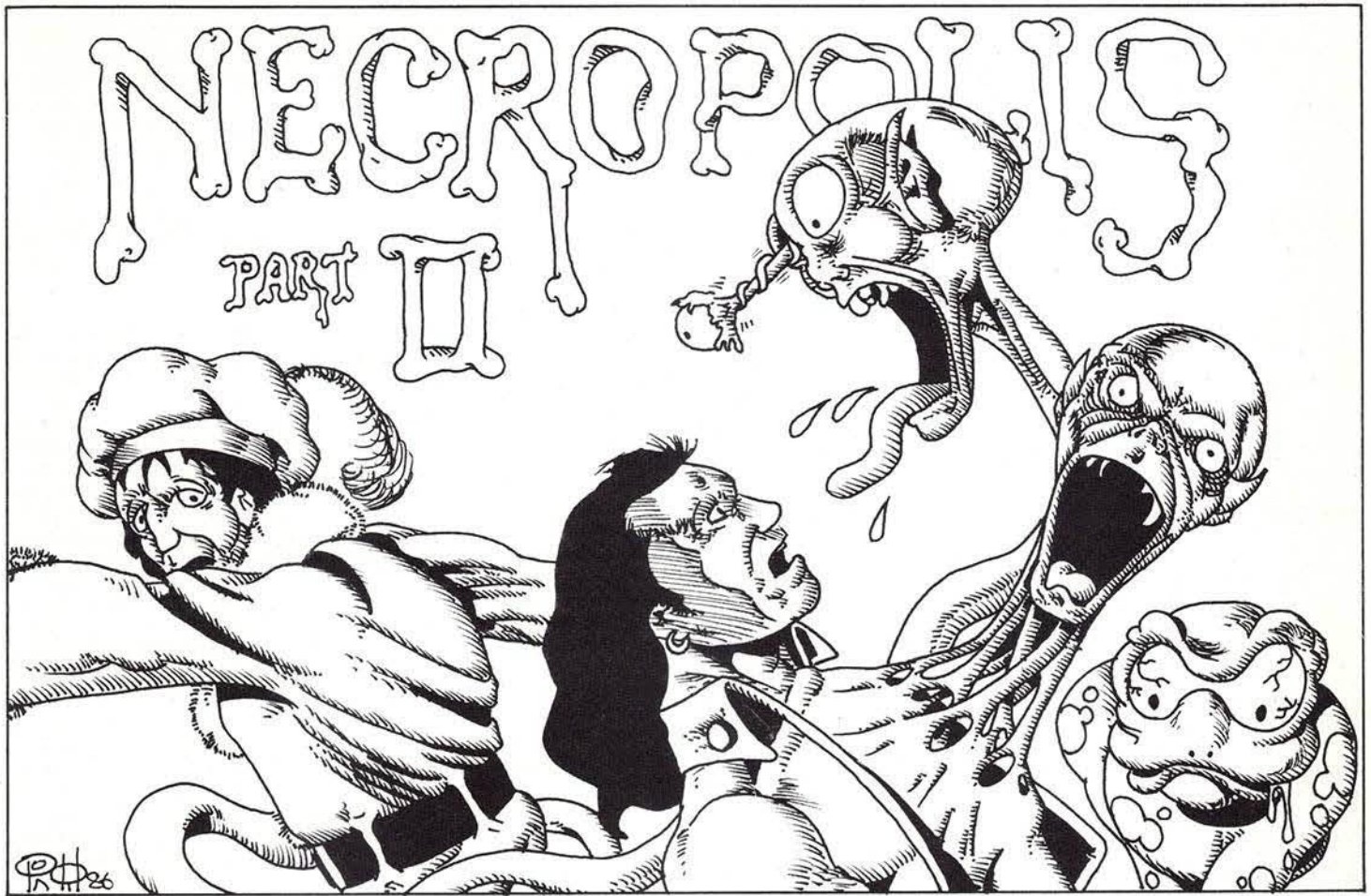
This creature will have 16 HD (hp 100), its appearance made more terrifying by the ashes that will be swept up into its writhing centre. If the chamber is still flooded it will inflict the full 5-30 points of damage, but otherwise it will do only 5-20. Unless the complex has been left many days to dry out, there will be enough water around for the elemental to move freely, though you may choose to restrict it to this level (or even this room, if very dry).

On the west wall there is a large relief design in the stone of three waves, each of three peaks. If examined, PCs may notice that the south end of the top wave, and the north end of the bottom have small holes in them - these will seem to be the same size as the keys from 11, if checked; they might also notice a secret compartment, 1' square, in the ceiling above these waves, if that area is checked. A thief will have an FRT+25% chance of noting that the central wave has a trap in it, but only an FRT-5% chance of disarming it. If a PC turns the key numbered 1 in the upper south hole and that numbered 9 in the lower north hole, the secret compartment will unlock and may then be opened easily. If any other key is placed in either hole, a pair of blades will scythe out 3' to each side of the design, doing 3-18 damage to anyone there (save under DEX for half). The compartment conceals a 1' recess in which is a small locked wooden box (OL-5%). In the box are a pair of scrolls and four gems each worth 100 gp: an azurite (blue), an obsidian (black), a rock crystal (clear) and a coral (red). The first scroll is in the old priestly tongue (a spell will be needed to read this):

Two have been used - of the others, the earth we discard; that which lies squared between rod and throne also goes; this leaves but one to open the way. But first, to see a new king, give offerings to the rock and the sky; fire is ignored. Then place the one in the pool and give praise!

The second scroll is clerical, for worshippers of the island god Khi-Nan (and similar water-gods of the Khian family - it may therefore be used by PC clerics of Khian) and contains the spells: remove curse, cure serious wounds, wall of ice, atonement and ice storm.

19. Treasury: Again this room lies inside the circle and if entered a magical trap will be released - this will have the effect of a confusion spell on any PC who cannot roll under WIS, a check being made each round in the room, the effects lasting for 2-5 rounds thereafter. The room contains only a 4' high pillar against the north wall on which rests a box similar to that in H7. In this case it is surrounded by a strange globe of light, 2' in radius and centred on the box itself. If this is touched it will repel the PC or object vehemently, causing 2-5 damage where applicable (if either a PC touches it, or a weapon bounces back, etc) - it will also reflect back any spells cast at it, including dispel magic. On examination it may be noticed that around the base of the pillar there are four symbols, each with a hole in it; these lie in the now-familiar elemental pattern: a circle to the north, a circle radiating lines to the east, a triangle to the south and wavy lines to the west. To remove the globe of force, the following course must be correctly completed: the obsidian must be placed in the south hole, then the rock crystal in the north hole, and finally key number 7 must be placed in the west hole and turned. This will dispel the globe and allow access to the box. Any other sequence will cause the globe to expand by 1' per attempt (ie after two, there will be no way to reach the box), and simultaneously give off an electric shock to all within 15' for 2d6 damage. Inside the box, as might be expected, is the lost Crown of Kaskala - as detailed at the beginning of the scenario, this is a worthless lump of iron, a simple coronet with delicate wave-symbols carved around it (worth perhaps 10 gp as it is, although obviously worth a lot more to the correct buyers - see the introduction). As a slight recompense, there are also 10 platinum rings (worth 50 gp) each set with a 250 gp jade in which are exquisitely carved 10 different designs - these were the rings of the princes and dukes of Kaskala but even so they will only fetch an extra 20% over their jewelry value to the revolutionaries and similar groups interested in the Crown as they do not have anywhere near the political or symbolic importance of the latter. If you are feeling in a generous mood you could allow the rings to have a strictly limited number of uses of water breathing or free action.



This is the second part of a continuing adventure that began in **TS!11** and that will be concluded in **TS!13**. It has been designed for four characters, one from each major character class, of about 10th-12th level, using either the **D&D** or the **AD&D** games systems. Background material for this scenario has been drawn from the 1:1 scenarios in issues 7 to 10, but these are in no way essential to play **Necropolis** - you will, however, need **TS!11** to be able to properly play this part.

SYNOPSIS

In the thronging alleys and busy markets of Chuza all is not well: dark shadows linger long after the sun has risen; grim figures appear through walls, pausing to open doors that are not there; Citadel guards hack and slash the life from their own bodies; grey spectres eat the hearts of sleeping men and pale mists strangle wailing babies in their cribs.

Meanwhile, far across the non-space of the astral void, deep within the bone-city of Zchau, Theophagus the God-Eater is brewing his catastrophic potations, and belching words of power so great that the mere sound of them shreds the flesh from his attendant gnords. Drawing only on the sheer force of his implacable will, fuelled by the sateless consumption of innumerable deities, divines and demonlings, Theophagus brings his universe ever closer to that of Chuza, clawing in a shimmering net of threads spun out of the very fabric of the multiverse and gurgling a fetid belly-rumble that rocks the foundations of his city and causes the curs and whipping dogs of Chuza to run tail-tucked to their masters.

In Chuza, the Duke having fled, the Chamberlain calls to him four adventurers of undoubted mettle and oft-proven talents, setting them on the path that will finally lead them to a confrontation with the God-Eater himself. Having located an old wizard named Kahrn in the iniquitous Dens and begged his aid, our four heroes are flung far across the astral void to burst into the city of Zchau. There they begin their quest to discover the source of the disruptions, encountering the mindless brunts and sadistic gorbals who live in antipathy under a blood-red sky on the brink of a sateless inferno.

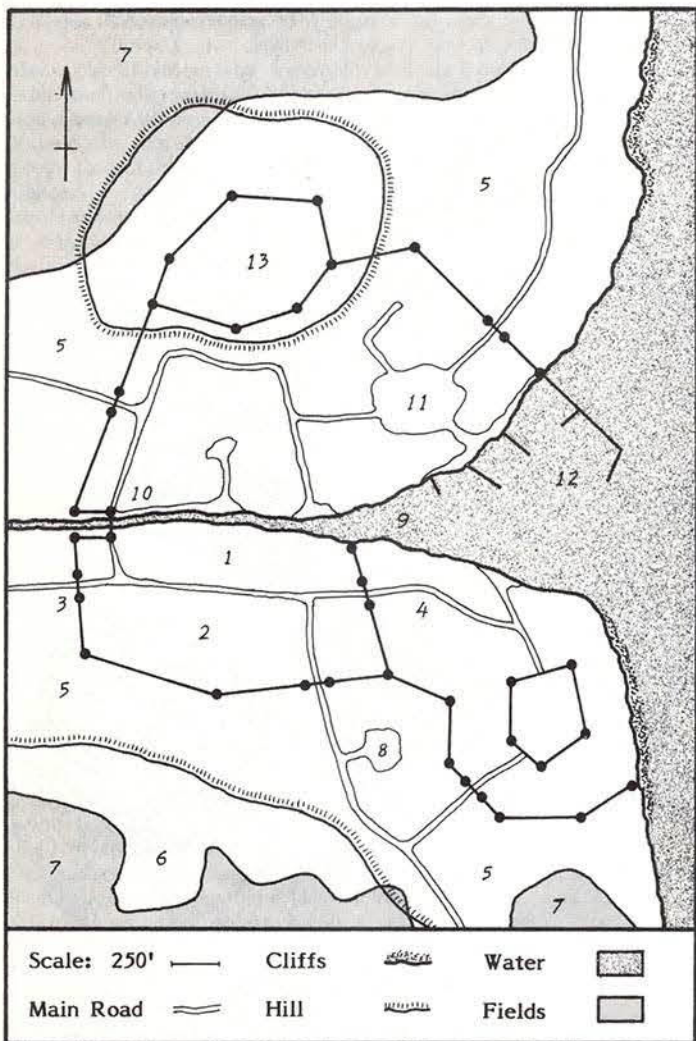
DM'S INTRODUCTION

Part One of **Necropolis** (**TS!11**) featured the PCs' attempt to travel to Theophagus' plane and their first encounters upon arrival - note that at this time they have no concrete ideas concerning who or what they face, and that discovering such information forms the basis of the action in this issue. In **TS!13** the PCs will have to locate and defeat Theophagus the God-Eater in order to save their own plane (and to survive); though you may justly wonder how mere mortals can succeed in a confrontation with such a powerful being, all will become clear in the course of this and the next issue.

To play this scenario it is necessary to possess **TS!11** which contains various rules relating to the plane on which all of the action of this and the next part of the scenario are set (such as rules governing PC sanity, and the chance of their spontaneous disruption due to the great stress of existence on an alien plane). Similarly, certain references will be made to creatures and other features that have been detailed in the earlier issue. As a result of the large area covered by the scenario it is essential to leave many of the mundane details vague, and you will have to fill these in, probably ad libbing them as you play (such as house interiors and similar domestic descriptions, and the actions of non-player characters not central to the scenario; some guidance of the handling of these is given below). Note that in most cases NPC numbers have not been given; there are usually too many to number, and this gives you the option of determining the difficulty and danger of each section as you see fit.

D&D AND AD&D

Where the statistics for these two systems are different, a slash is used to separate the two relevant figures - the **D&D** figure always comes before the slash, and the **AD&D** figure after. Similarly, if two completely different sets of stats are used, the **D&D** stats come first, the **AD&D** second. If you have both sets of rules you may choose to use either set of figures if applicable. Note that, due to the high PC levels encouraged by **D&D**, a quest of this nature may be regarded as fit for PCs of higher than 12th level; in such a case adjust all hit dice, monster types, etc, upwards as appropriate.



ZCHAU

Some details of the bone-city of Zchau were given in **TS11** - these are enlarged upon in this section, and those areas not central to play are briefly described, leaving you to add lib specific details where necessary. The bulk of the scenario takes place within the city walls, so areas outside of these are left fairly sketchy.

If you have **TS17**, you may recognize the outline of Zchau as very similar to that of Chuza, the city from which the PCs began this quest. If the players have not taken part in any of the preceding adventures in this series, you may wish to advise them of this similarity and give them a rough map of Chuza - otherwise, leave them to sort it out for themselves. Nothing, however, is exactly the same: the major landmarks, such as the river, the walls and so on, are correctly placed but the smaller roads and alleys, the houses and, obviously, the inhabitants are different. PCs will therefore be able to locate principal areas such as the harbour or the Citadel but they will be out of luck if they think that individual buildings of their earlier acquaintance can be found.

Having entered this plane, the PCs' task is to discover the source of the power that brings their home city ever nearer to oblivion and to destroy or disable this source (any hope, however faint, that persuasion or rational argument would be at all efficacious will quickly disappear after even a brief sojourn in this dire place). You should have the PCs wander around the city following vague hints and false leads before they come close to solving the puzzle - to this end you must feel free to give them cryptic and misleading information or have their questions answered with outright lies intended to lead them into dangerous areas (indications of the probable reactions of various inhabitants are given in the key). The scenario is meant to be difficult and this should not merely be restricted to combat situations, but should stretch into all areas of play, not least the location of their target.

When describing the city remember that it is in an alternate universe with an alien culture; even so, Zchau should be a reflection, albeit warped and twisted, of Chuza. Keep the latter in mind while making all descriptions atmospheric and redolent with lurking terror - introduce an unexpected and unsettling element into even the most normal circumstances.

Of the inhabitants, the most menial are the brunts - spread throughout the city, they are employed in mundane chores and activities offensively tedious to their betters. Wherever brunts are collected together to work, there will also be gorbals, sadistic beings whose joy and purpose is to pass on orders, shouting to be heard over the screams produced by the beatings they constantly administer; for here the social hierarchy is ordered in relation to the ability of each step on the ladder to personally cause death and destruction.

The third step on this social ladder, the uppermost plebeian class, are those creatures who in Chuza would be the guilded artisans and merchants: the vrex. These humanoid vary in height between 5' and 10', with opalescent complexions drawn tightly around painfully thin, angular bony frames. Clothes of light ashen colours, straggling white hair and milky eyes that seem almost sightless sunk deep into shadowed sockets cause the vrex to appear the victims of a wasting disease in its last stages; their physical weakness would seem contrary to the dictum that position in Zchau is engendered by power. Their power, however, is drawn from mental attributes and is realized in a limited but clever control of the magic forces present in Zchau. Although they seem free of the vindictive pettiness of their underlings, this is really an egocentric disdain for such primitive life forms; they will use them as required and then readily dispose of them. Their concern is solely with the perfection of their arts and an accumulation of prestige and profit; a slight to one or the thought that they are not maximizing the other will lead to a venting of puritanical fury on the transgressor and any brunts nearby.

Their statistics are: AC 4 (due to natural dexterity); HD 6; MV 12"; AT 1; D 1-4 (daggers); SA see below; SD see below; save as M6; morale 10; Int high; AL C/NE; SZ M to L. These creatures may use their mental prowess to draw on the forces around them either offensively or defensively. They have one ability per HD (these will be lost as they are damaged) which can be split between the possible options, changing each round if required. When attacking they may shoot from their fingertips a 6" ray for 1d6 to 6d6 (save vs breath for 1/2) of heat, cold or electrical damage (or some combination). When defending they gain a bonus of 1-6 points to any stat as relevant (eg AC 3 to -2; MV 13"-18"; to hit or damage +1 to +6; save as M7-M12 and so on; a special use is to give a protection against non-magical weapons of +1 to +3, using 2 points per bonus). Chosen options will depend on predicted PC actions, normally with both offensive and defensive uses.

Of all the creatures in Zchau, the PCs are most likely to be able to communicate with the vrex (magically of course). If threatened or given reason to believe the PCs are officially hunted, they will attack or flee, depending on an assessment of the PCs' capabilities. If losing combat they will try to escape, first hiding and then informing the authorities; if cornered they will sue for surrender and will be willing to talk. If initial contact is not hostile, they will talk but will be far more circumspect in their answers. In any case, they know nothing of the threat to the PCs' world, although aware of some build-up of magical power recently. To them, the city is ruled by those who live on the hill to the north and ultimate power resides within the Ziggurat (the Citadel, to the PCs). They will give rough details of the structure of rule if pressed but will NEVER mention Theophagus. Rough details of the city may be revealed but they know nothing of the interiors of the Ziggurat or Necropolis. In all, allow PCs to learn all manner of minor details but nothing vital.

Note that brunts and gorbals have been detailed in issue 11 - their presence will be a constant feature all over Zchau, though probably of little more than nuisance value to the PCs. Of the domestic habitations on Zchau, something has already been written in issue 11 and the basic details given there hold for all of the houses - where they are larger and more richly appointed the style will be the same, though the contents will be more grotesquely grandiose.

KEY TO ZCHAU**1. Slums:**

This monotonous and currently abandoned area of squat black-stone dwellings resembles the Dens of Chuza. Home to brunts (when they are not otherwise occupied), its dull and brutish buildings mirror the inhabitants, being dense and poorly-equipped. It is more fully described on p. 38 of **TS!11**.

2. Inferno:

A vast swathe of the city is being consumed night and day by a raging fire, 500' wide with the flames reaching as high as 200'. The multi-hued inferno, fuelled by elemental beings ever changing their shape, constantly devours and magically rebuilds the houses in the area. This has been incinerating anyone who comes too close for days now and even the PCs are likely to be troubled by its 100 HD core. Along the road to the north, brunts are futilely trying to extinguish the fire with a bucket chain to the river (these are the occupants of the Slums - fortunately, the flames show no inclination to move north). See pp. 37-39 of **TS!11** for further details.

3. West Gate:

The city walls of Zchau are 250' high, cut directly from the black rock of their foundations and surmounted by insanely-conforted gothic battlements of suitably vast dimensions. A pair of 100' high stone gates hang between two towers, each covered with unrecognizable runes and sigils. Atop the wall and towers are the city guards, the humblest of the military classes: giant lizard men, wielding long glowing lances each with a huge bat-creature as steed. The city gates will not be opened for the PCs, for either egress or ingress, and you can determine yourself the tremendous fire-power needed to bring them down. An attempt to cross the walls or otherwise pass these tall barriers will lead to attack by 2-12 of the bat-mounted lizards. See p. 39 of **TS!11** for their stats.

Unless the contrary is specified in the key, the details for the West Gate apply to all the other city walls and gates.

The walls that border the fire ARE still guarded; the flames do not quite reach their crenellated summits, although it is rather warm up there. The guards will engage anyone flying over the flames, but will not descend into the inferno.

4. Estuary:

Where the river opens out into the Bay there are wharfs and jetties, but mainly a grim charnel slush, a breeding ground for various slime-creatures, lizards, leeches and bugs. The area is currently unoccupied as the inferno turns north-east after the old city wall and ravages its way to the shore. A small portion of housing is still intact and this, with the buildings just to the west of the wall, exhibits habitations of slighter higher quality than those in the Slums. As with 1 there are few brunts present, most of whom are fighting an impossible battle against the fire. Note that, as mentioned above, the elementals in the fire are to be considered as of 100 HD for combat - if the PCs should manage to do this much damage, however, the fire will not 'die' as such, the figure merely being a convenient expression for any given section of the fire (ie as a whole its dice would number thousands).

5. Suburbs:

Outside the walls, surrounding the oldest parts of the city, are the residences of the vrex. Here the buildings are less squat, less crowded and less monotonous than in the Slums, but their basic design and decorations are similar. Some of these houses are three or four stories high, others have odd and disturbing gargoyles or relief images cut into the walls and doorways, yet others seem to have no doors but all are cut from the same dull basaltic substance that elsewhere is formed into the city walls or the brunts' hovels. Among the vrex domiciles are scatterings of smaller, grimier buildings in which their attendant brunts eat, sleep and while away their few minutes of leisure time. Using all of the general information presented throughout, specific details of brunts and vrex, and your common sense, you will have to control the action in these areas as seems suitable. It is probable that the PCs will only enter the suburbs by mistake or in an attempt to circumvent other places, so that action here will not be vital to the progression of the adventure; they might however be hunted into the suburbs (see details below).

6. The Heights:

Wide streets, walled gardens and ornate buildings indicate a richer and more socially advantaged sector of the city. The most powerful of the vrex reside here, some having from 7-10 hit dice (and a corresponding number of ability points). On the exterior of their dwellings, the vrex vie to see who can display the most nightmarish and eldritch ornamentation, and these embellishments can be so repulsive and monstrous as to derange the minds of lesser beings; if the PCs approach some of the buildings (you choose as to which and how many) they will have to make a SAN check on a d20 with failure causing a loss of 1-3 points of SAN (each building will cause only 1 check, even if revisited). Although some of the gardens are relatively normal, others contain the plants from the fields around the city - see below for the effects of these plants.

Inside, the vrex dwellings are in much the same style as the other buildings in the city, but their penchant for macabre ornaments is reflected (often literally) in the statuettes and manikins cut from a highly polished ebony wood. In some houses (again at your option) these carvings may be animate, with a duty to guard the dwelling from intrusion. Treat the guardians as golems: D&D mainly as wood golems, but vary the HD and AT up to the equivalent of bone golems; AD&D treat as flesh golems for most characteristics, but with an AC of 7-2 and HD and damage equivalent of gnolls to trolls.

These richer apartments tend to be occupied by large family units with their own domestic brunts and gorbals overseers. A typical house and grounds might contain as many as a dozen vrex and two or three times as many minions. If the PCs are inclined to waste valuable time in this fashion, a search of such a premise may reveal various treasures and even a few minor magic items - actions of this nature will immediately alienate the vrex and cause the authorities to be advised.

7. Fields:

To each side of the city are the fields that supply food and nourishment to its inhabitants, worked by the ubiquitous and downtrodden brunts, many of whose corpses lie unburied among the crops, beaten to a pulp by angry gorbals. Despite their similar function to the fields around Chuza, these support a very different type of vegetation - at Chuza the cereals are not in the habit of fighting back when it comes to harvest.

The plants, known as kanopas to the locals, resemble nothing so much as uliginous entrails flung onto winter gorse bushes with the odd virulent, and generally vermilion, flower. The landscape appears to be some fell battlefield, an impression which is reinforced by the ever-present carrion birds living off the deceased brunts, and the sallow mist that lurks in pockets and dells, emanating from the decaying flesh. The mere sight of this horror will cause a PC to roll under SAN on a d% - failure will indicate a loss of 2-5 SAN points and a second roll on a d20 against the new total, a second fail leading to an insane condition (described on p. 36 of **TS!11**; this will always be temporary). Even if the second test is successful, the PC will refuse to enter the fields, and will lose 1 point of SAN per turn if forced to do so, rethrowing vs SAN each turn. In addition, a d20 SAN test must be taken if the PC approaches one of the flowers, failure indicating hallucinations while in the vicinity, followed by a random insanity afterwards (again temporary). Anyone making a save will not have to do so on re-entering this area.

Even those immune to the eery appearance of a kanopas field may be attacked if they come too close to a plant or attempt to damage one. If the PCs observe the brunts harvesting the kanopas, they will see that a large net is first thrown over the plant, and then pole arms are used to remove the 'fruit' (seemingly entrails). If such precautions are not taken, a plant may (always if damaged) release its 'fruit' which will fly grotesquely towards the nearest creature and attempt to insert a sharpened tuber into that creature to lay its seed. Its statistics are: AC 7; HD 2-3; MV 12"; AT 1; D 1-4; SA if hit, the PC must save vs paralyzation at -1 per damage taken or the next round seeds will be injected, causing 2-5 damage per round as they burrow to the heart; save as F1 (only such spells as would usually affect plants will work); morale 12; Int non; AL N; SZ S. Once a character has been successfully pierced by a kanopas fruit he can only be saved by the swift employment of **cure disease** or a similar spell.

The Interior:

It is suggested that you make every attempt to persuade the PCs that venturing further inland will be highly detrimental to both their health and their mission - alert PCs will have worked out that the answer lies in Zchau. If they do insist of exploring in this direction, you are free to indulge the most mind-boggling and seedy side of your imagination on the alien landscape and possible encounters therein (though such encounters should be designed to return the PCs to the city) - really plumb the depths, taking the material herein as a guide to extravaganzas of unspeakable grotesquery.

8. The Square of the Fakirs:

Religious observance in Zchau is typically distorted, having only the most passing resemblance to the PCs' own faiths, in this case mostly in the position of the temples (this is the location of the White Square in Chuza) - there are other odd temples and shrines dotted around the city (place as you see fit) but these all follow the pattern set here. The temples appear to merely be large undistinguished buildings of the style so tediously copied throughout Zchau, differentiated solely by their regularity, each being roughly a 50' cube. On closer inspection, it will become clear that the sides of the chapels sport relief carvings of fantastical beasts, the beast concerned being repeated in assorted poses on each and every one having its own motif - the PCs will not recognize these creatures (other than possibly from utensils or other carvings already found) but they are reminiscent of familiar monsters and animals twisted into obscene metamorphoses. On each building, one carving will form an arch facing into the Square, though there will not seem to be a door in it - a PC may simply walk through the wall inside an arch to enter.

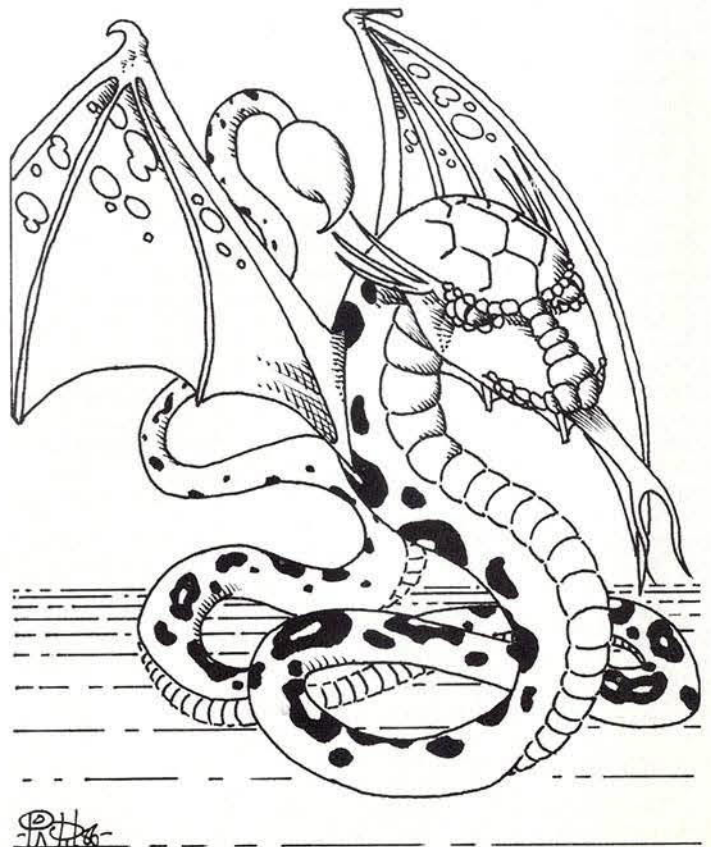
The temples each profess a different belief, whose emblem is the creature displayed outside. To outsiders, such as the PCs, any explanation of these faiths would fail to indicate their subtle differences, and the PCs would be at a loss to understand the bitter rivalry between temples so similar are their common fundamental tenets. Indeed, the inhabitants of Zchau seem to share this opinion, generally being profoundly indifferent to the controversies that rage within the Square (though this may also be blamed on Theophagus, who long ago ingested the deities to whom the temples are dedicated). At the basis of these creeds, briefly, is the concept that the underlying character of life can be symbolized by a specific creature, and that spiritual perfection may be achieved by assuming identity with that creature wherever possible, both in oneself and one's surroundings - the disagreements occur because, although the sects concur on the character of life, they unaccountably diverge on the appropriate symbol. It is obviously impossible to consider every sect here but general notes are given relevant to them all, and one is then dealt with in more detail as a guideline; if the PCs are likely to visit several shrines, give this matter some forethought.

Each sect is the inspiration of a single priest who takes on the task of running the temple and enlightening the populace by himself. These divines are normally drawn from the vrex, but may be taken from any of the higher classes. After much deep commitment and contemplation of his chosen symbol, the priest takes on aspects of that creature and will ultimately take its very form - even more disgusting than the creatures themselves are those priests still in the halfway stage from vrex to avatar. These beings retain some of the statistics of their original form (HD, Int, etc) and take on others as applicable (MV, SZ, etc; AT and D will change, but will stay within the same general range as before). They will draw on the arcane energies present in Zchau to create the interior of their temple roughly in their own image, or at least with affinities to their chosen metaphor - these sanctuaries may be radically changed, even to the extent of being far larger inside than out, and of twisted and contorted shapes. It is certain that entry into a temple will cause a SAN test with possibly catastrophic results for a PC who fails this. When in their own domains, these priests may wield great powers, not least of which may be magic use of level 2-16! Of their reactions to PCs, only an attempt at conversion is certain - perhaps precipitating further SAN checks (devastating for a cleric). They suspect the immanence of a dire event and are willing to ascribe guilt to Theophagus, whom they will place (if asked) in the Ziggurat. Try to bring out in a priest's reactions and conversation the animal aspect he reveres.

The following is presented as an example of a possible sect and temple - use it as a guide for your own inventions. The sect concerned was originated by a vrex who saw an ultimate purity in the image of the slunda - this snake-like creature has bat-wings and a vicious scorpion sting in its tail, tiny iridescent scales that shimmer brightly, and eyes of ireful azure. It travels through the planes (similar to the couatl of AD&D which it resembles in some ways) and is deemed above the workaday cares of mere mortals; however, its main appeal lies in its self-interested ruthlessness in achieving goals, and its cruel disdain and vehement subordination of all it perceives as prejudicial to its aims. In this is seen the symbol of a perfect social being in the Zchau hierarchy.

The priest of slunda has completed his transformation to an avatar hence, and now has the following statistics: AC 2; HD 8 (and hence 8 ability points to apportion as required); MV 3"/15"; AT 1; D 1-8 + poison, save vs poison or an extra 2d8 damage; SA see below; SD +1 weapon to hit, and see below; save as C8; morale 12; Int exceptional; AL C/NE; SZ L. The priest cannot travel through planes, but can blink out once per round, arriving at a point 2'-12' away in any direction. His special attacks are spells equivalent to a 9th level MU, and the ability to perform the slunda dance of death. This causes all onlookers to save vs paralyzation and death magic when it begins; failure of the former causes stupefaction in the observer and prevents action (further saves may be made each round at a cumulative -1); failure of the latter causes the PC to become fatally drawn into the dance, where he will be entwined within the slunda-priest's coils and squeezed to death - a PC must immediately make a d% roll against SAN or lose 2-7 points, plus each round he will receive 1-6 damage and must take a disruption test or lose 2-24 points.

The temple of the slunda-priest is decorated with multitudes of overlapping and interlinking winged snakes - close study will reveal that these in fact form a single extensive snake pattern. Inside, the rock cube has been transmogrified into a meandering labyrinth of narrow tube-like corridors which apparently cross through each other without ever connecting; PCs entering this maze will have to make a SAN check on d20 each turn at a cumulative -1 penalty - failure indicates 1-6 SAN points lost and insanity (re-roll if either mania result occurs). The convolutions of the temple are only matched by the sinuous intricacies and prevarications of the priest and the tortuous serpentine involutions of his theology.



9. The River of Souls:

Zchau is bisected by a great river flowing from deep within the interior to the sea. At a distance, the river seems to flow slowly, its surface clogged with weeds, but as the PCs near it they will see that what fouls up the sluggish waterway is a multitude of corpses. The cadavers, skeletons and dismembered limbs are rotten and decayed, and a fetid, thick mist hangs low over the river. To cross the river, the PCs must either use the bridge, or hire a ferryman to row them over - if they travel west they will find no crossing place for miles and any bridges will be guarded (as you choose).

The ferrymen are all vrex of the smallest size with deathly pale complexions and eyeless sockets that stare knowingly at PCs. Their boats seat one to six people and are then punted across the river, the poles being thrust into the carcasses. The mists part before these boats and close again behind as their pallid, blind pilots unerringly cross the river. Hire of a ferry can be achieved by offering a treasure worth the equivalent of 100 gp, or some minor magic, per character - the only problem is that the fee must originate on the plane and not have been brought by the PCs. The ferrymen will not work their boats unless paid and cannot be cheated, blind or not - any attempt to retrieve a payment part way across will cause the wreck to overturn the punt.

While crossing the river, a PC must save under SAN on a d20, failure indicating the loss of 1-3 SAN points, plus an urge will overwhelm the PC who will, unless restrained, leap over the side of the punt (possibly upsetting it) suffering the normal effects of the river - these are ineffective to those in punts. If such is not the case, the mist will writhe and twist, and then rise up in the shape of an undead creature - if the PC is 50' above the river he is safe from such beings (but see below) otherwise 1-3 will attack each PC. Roll on an undead encounter table to determine the type of creature, and use the stats there with the following alterations (you can combine one or more of these if you wish - remember that clerics cannot turn these as they are not true undead). All attacks will cause the PC to save under SAN on d% or lose a number of SAN points equal to the damage. Additionally, any successful special attacks (paralyzation, level drain, etc) will necessitate a save vs disruption rather than the normal effect, causing a loss of points equal to twice the being's hit dice (at your options, spectres have two such attacks!).

10. The Bridge of Jet:

Spanning the charnel river is the great, crenellated arch of this dazzling, lustrous edifice. From its sides, the brunts lower buckets on ropes, dropping them through the crust of corpses to draw water destined to hiss and steam uselessly in the raging heat of the inferno. To the west the walls of the city meet the bridge and the usual guards astride their bat-mounts keep watch. In these four towers there are also a number of larger bats with an AC of 4 and D of 2-20; their job is to observe the river and to ensure that no creatures cross it other than by the bridge or having hired a ferryman and, to aid them in this task, they can see invisible. When they do see such transgressors, they will take flight, close with them and attempt to grasp them in their great talons; a damage of greater than the PC's STR will indicate success, and the bat will then dive to the river dropping the PC into the carcass-laden waters - the bats themselves are immune to the attacks of the 'undead' that will so trouble the PCs.

At the north end of the bridge, guarding against any further incursions of brunts (see below) are beings somewhat like an outlandish miscegenation of centaurs and scorpions. Their foreparts resemble gorbals, with even more grotesque armour, and at the rear they have huge scorpion bodies with stingers like scimitars. There are a dozen of these (more may arrive eventually if they are attacked) arranged in a pair of lines across the road - they have a single purpose: to prevent any unauthorized access to the north of the city (nobles only to be allowed through) and cannot be swayed from this except by death. Their statistics are: AC 2; HD 12; MV 15"; AT 3; D 1 polearm and 1 flail, at +4, plus the stinger as if a double-damage scimitar; SA poison causing death in 2-12 rounds, or 2-12 damage if a save vs poison is made; save as F12; morale 12; Int low; AL C/LE; SZ L. Communication with these beings is almost impossible, as they have as little independence of thought as they do of action, being like mere automata.

11. The Market:

The north side of the city, nearer the Ziggurat in which the nobles reside, is less slum-ridden than the south. Although brunts and gorbals do reside here, especially beside the old wharfs and jetties, much of the area is occupied by the vrex and their larger, more finely-constructed dwellings (see 5). It is even possible to encounter the nobles in this section, though they tend to maintain an aloof distance inside their separate quarter (such encounters are allowed at your option and are more likely if the PCs are being hunted; see below).

Despite the countless deaths due to the inferno, many brunts were able to flee the fire and cross to the north - indeed, so serious was the problem of overcrowding becoming that the nobles placed a living barrier on the bridge to prevent any further incursions (see 10). Most of the brunts who managed to make it over are now settled into a shanty town of debris and disease within the old market place, predictably to the chagrin of the vrex traders. After fuming for a short time, the latter have merely begun to erect stalls and platforms over the sleeping brunts, employing gorbals to beat a path through the writhing mass of bodies and heedlessly crushing those who refuse to move; the square now reeks of the slowly decaying corpses and underfoot it is slippery with innards.

These vrex stalls sell all manner of products: food, both of vegetable (mainly kanopas) origin and meat (possibly of more distasteful nature than the meals and broths of kanopas); an enormous assortment of domestic utensils; many hideous and unnerving ornaments of the type already described (entering a closed booth of such monstrosities unexpectedly could make the PCs suffer a d20 SAN check at your option); items of a nature unfathomable to the PCs but whose very appearance is designed to make the blood curdle and shivers dance upon the spine; and slaves and live animals of all manners and types. Most of the salesmen work from large stalls, but some stand and spiel from podia and others skulk in darkened booths. A great opportunity exists here for PC contact with the locals and you will have to play such encounters carefully, giving forethought to the statements and reactions of the denizens.

12. Harbour:

As the river opens out into the sea, the carcasses disperse and are eagerly consumed by great carrion fish (who will not hesitate to eat living flesh). Although the PCs should have no reason to venture out to sea, this may not stop them from taking it into their heads to do so; in such a case you will have to ad lib the marine encounters (which will be with the most awesome behemoths and leviathans imaginable), trying to persuade the PCs to return to Zchau - remember that the sea, reflecting the sky, will be incarnadine as if great arteries have been sliced deep beneath its murky, scudding surface.

The harbour itself contains a number of large vessels, each with a single mast atop which is a dimly-glowing crystal orb seemingly filled with incandescent polychromatic smoke; none of the ships has any provision for sails, as they are driven by magical forces alone, their pilots drawing on the great wells of power that lie all around to push and tug the craft to their destinations (using the globes as a focus). Though the ships' crews and masters would be of many races, for the convenience of this scenario, base them on the vrex, gorbals and brunts described herein (making descriptive changes as you see fit, varying them as if the different humanoid races on the PCs' home world were to be reflected in the diversity here). The docks will be bustling with activity, and all of the ships will have at least a skeleton crew. Cargoes, etc, will be similar to the wares available in the market. These ships are rarely used for passengers and captains approached for berths will be suspicious and likely to report the PCs.

The actual wharfs and jetties are cut from the black rock on which the city stands and of which so many of its buildings are constructed. Along the outer harbour wall, particularly at its extremity, perch the bats with their lizard-riders to guard this maritime entrance to Zchau. Although the wharfs are only 20' above water level, they are immune to the dire effects of the spirit mist hovering over the surface, as are both the innumerable smaller boats and the sea-going ships. However, should the PCs venture beneath the wharfs (perhaps to hide) or fall into the water, the sinuous wreathing mist will reach out and embrace them in its disruptive influence.

13. The Ziggurat:

The Ziggurat, the centre of political power in Zchau, stands on the top of a hill surrounded by its own wall - only those of noble rank may freely pass inside the wall (although some creatures are brought by nobles into the complex). Around the wall lie the houses of the nobles, sited on the sides of the hill both within and without the main city walls. These areas are constantly patrolled by the scorpion warriors (see 10) who will detect the PCs as trespassers and attempt to arrest them, bringing them to a noble for further orders.

Although it might be assumed that the noble houses would be the grandest of all in Zchau, the opposite is the case. The hillsides are covered with small dwellings, not unlike those of the brunts. There are differences, however: these squat buildings are polished to a fine mirror finish, rather like the bridge, and are covered with those runes and sigils that are to be found on the city gates. Additionally, though it may not become immediately apparent, none of the buildings have doorways, or indeed entrances of any type. In fact, if the PCs are able to magically investigate they will discover that these habitations are solid throughout, comprising one huge slab of rock in the centre of which is a crystal matrix of incredible intricacy and delicacy. If the PCs have been to the harbour they will note that the crystals are slightly reminiscent of those perched atop the ships' masts, for they are tuned to the same omnipresent power source. The designs of these crystals, however, are more involved and complicated with no two being the same - even in the total darkness of their stony surrounds, they shine with an iridescent light of their own, radiating a cold malevolent anfractuosity.

The explanation behind such improbable domiciles lies in the nature of the nobles themselves; these were originally drawn from many, varied races, but centuries of miscegenation and co-habitation under the influence of the arcane power of the Ziggurat has led to a gradual coalescence - they now conform enough to be regarded as a uniform type: the qo'vai, eaters of souls, nobility of Zchau and custodians of the eldritch.

In appearance, the qo'vai are insubstantial and wraith-like figures, the incorporeal wisps of their being wrapped around twisted skeletal patterns of light that resemble the crystal matrices in their dwellings - indeed, each dwelling houses a single noble whose essence is mirrored in both skeleton and crystal, the patterns merging as the qo'vai come to rest. A PC will be able to see a qo'va as a dim luminescence entwined with mist; if able to see invisible, etc, he will perceive a bright glittering centre around which an ectoplasmic film is constantly rotating and mutating, forming and deforming into gnarled talons, great fanged maws, roving demented eyes and suppurating sores. Such a vision will cause a d% check on SAN when first encountered, failure indicating a loss of 2-5 points and an effect similar to **confusion** for 2-12 turns.

Although the qo'vai vary quite considerably, their basic set of statistics is: AC -2; HD 12; MV 9"; AT 0; SA see below; SD +1 magic weapons to hit; MR 25%; save as M16; morale 12; Int genius; AL C/NE; SZ M. A qo'va has no physical attack, but coming into direct contact with one might cause a PC to suffer disruption: he must make a roll under his disruption score or lose 2-20 points. At 0 points or less the PC will take disruptive damage of only 2-5 points but will also lose 2-5 points from one or more of his requisites (STR, INT, etc - spread randomly across all six). In addition, the qo'vai have their normal preferred attack mode: spell-casting equal to an MU of 1st-10th level and/or a cleric of 1st-6th level (in AD&D you may wish to give them psionic ability as well). You should feel free to vary these statistics from creature to creature, while keeping within a few points of the above figures (though be wary of altering their disruptive power too much or radically increasing their magical ability).

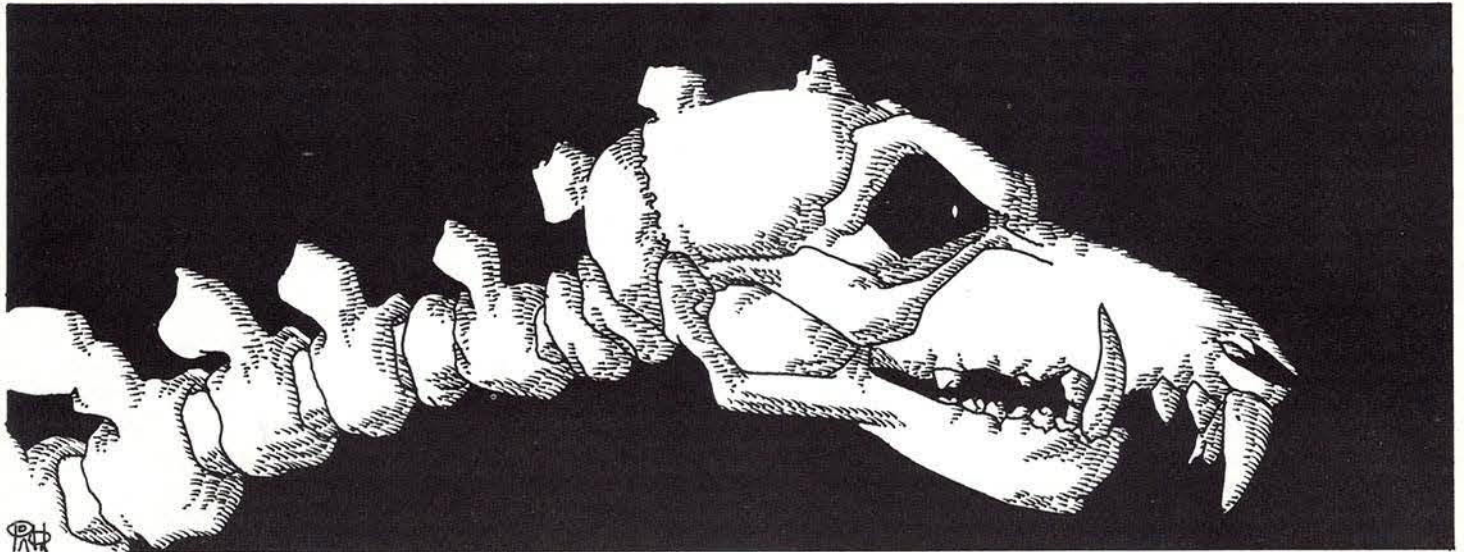
Due to the insubstantiality of the qo'vai, they are able to pass through solid objects at will, entering their stony jet dwellings as easily as flying through the air outside, and a PC proves no more difficult an obstacle (though they cannot travel through magical barriers). Note that the crystalline structures at the heart of their habitations will have the same effect as the qo'vai themselves if seen or physically contacted by PCs - as a PC will have to be ethereal to touch one, at 0 disruption he will instantly be dispelled.

The qo'vai, nobles of Zchau, are the only beings with either the authority or the intelligence to make any sort of policy decisions regarding the PCs. It is to the qo'vai that the humbler creatures of the city will report (see references in the text where applicable) and it is they who organize vrex, gorbals and brunts. They may be found in various places in the city, usually in ones or twos, though most are generally congregated around the Ziggurat or in their homes; decide on the chances of PC encounters with qo'vai as you see fit - no details have been given but you should place some at central positions such as the bridge, the market, the harbour, etc.

Up to now, the PCs' encounters will all have been relatively small-scale affairs with no organized resistance - the lower classes will each attempt to protect their own interests and lives, but will not act in a more socially responsible way, other than to possibly report the PCs to the qo'vai. On the appearance of the qo'vai, however, the PCs begin to get into serious trouble; the city may be raised against them and the qo'vai will hunt and harry them (though mainly for sport, it must be admitted). If the PCs are observed by the nobles or their presence is reported it is probable that a unit of one of the warrior classes will be sent to intercept and arrest them; with stiffer resistance, some of the qo'vai themselves may intervene. It is only when the PCs communicate with the qo'vai that the latter will become aware of the threat they present. Where they have previously had to communicate with magical means, the PCs will now be able to converse directly with the nobles as the latter employ a form of telepathy for colloquy. Though this might seem to be advantageous for the PCs (especially for their magical reserves), the qo'vai have immense precision gained by long practice of the telepathic technique, compared to the PCs' minimal or complete lack of experience; hence the qo'vai will be able to probe the minds and hidden thoughts of the PCs, while the latter will merely receive those images and communications that the nobles wish to transmit (allow PCs who are telepathically experienced to be able to at least partially shield their minds - in AD&D, those with relevant psionics are, of course, able to do so). It is almost certain, therefore, that any dialogue with the qo'vai will lead to the latter realizing the PCs' intentions on this world before the PCs have been able to elicit even the slightest useful information from their interlocutors.

Assuming, momentarily, that the PCs can safely converse with a qo'va, what can they hope to discover? The qo'vai are the first beings met that have an idea of roughly what is going on in Zchau. They are aware of the origins of the current power fluxes, knowing that it can only be the work of their leader, Theophagus - as nobles they can safely speak of this awe-inspiring entity, though they will be loath to do so. A greater acquaintance with matters planar will allow them to predict a conjunction in the immanent future, although they will be blissfully unaware of its catastrophic extent - they trust (or at least fear) Theophagus sufficiently to not have any expressed doubts of the wisdom of his actions. The PCs are highly unlikely to persuade them of the danger to their own world, although the qo'vai will be easily convinced that the PCs' world faces destruction (and will revel in such an idea). They will assume Theophagus is, as usual, within the Ziggurat. They will not willingly assist PCs (even death is favourable to the God-Eater's wrath), and cannot be charmed.

It is, however, improbable that an interview with the qo'vai will go quite so smoothly; it is more likely that the nobles will quickly ascertain the PCs' purpose and plans, becoming implacably hostile. Their actions at this juncture will in part depend on the PCs' position and their own recent acts; it will also depend on the character you choose to assign to the noble. Among possible reactions are those of the weaker and more conscientious qo'vai who will attempt to arrest the PCs, or induce them by lies and trickery, taking them to the elders in the Ziggurat. Stronger and more irascible qo'vai may choose to merely dispose of the PCs on the spot for such a great affront to their city and leader. Those with cruel and spiteful dispositions may regard the PCs as prey for an exotic hunt, pursuing them through the winding alleys of the city and out into the kanpoas fields with their warriors or the Ziggurat guardians. Still others may see a chance for a devious plot to embarrass their fellows and will mislead the PCs, possibly guiding them into the Ziggurat for their own purposes (at your option, if you wish such complications).



Between the nobles' houses and the Ziggurat rises a wall of similar height to that surrounding the rest of the city, but this has one startling difference. This will not be obvious at first, the PCs just perceiving that the wall is slightly lighter in tone than that adjoining it to the east and west. As they approach closely, however, they will notice that it is not as compact, indeed seeming almost corrugated - these undulations will eventually resolve themselves into discrete segments, melted and melded to form a solid whole: the wall, it will become clear, is constructed from countless millions of bones. Ulna, radii, scapulae, ribs, vertebrae, pelvis, femurs, tibiae - all are here in abundance (though alert PCs may notice an absence of skulls); of different shapes, sizes and colours, some form whole skeletons, others are dispersed widely, and all are coated with centuries of grime. Merely the scale of the wall, and contemplation of how many had to die to build it, will cause the PCs to check under SAN on a d20 or lose 1-3 points and stand awe-struck for 7-12 rounds.

At the wall's summit, the gruesome structure has been formed into battlements and crenellations from which the Ziggurat's guardians stare haughtily down on the populace, many of whom dangle, crushed and bloody, at the end of ropes tied to the projecting corbels and gargoyles. These guardians have the size and appearance of frost giants but are skeletal - their statistics are: AC 4; HD 10 + 1-4; MV 12"; AT 1; D 2-24; SA hurl huge spears up to 20" for 2-20 damage; SD see below; MR 15%; save as F10; morale 12; Int low; AL C/LE; SZ L. Once a guard has been damaged he may, if not in combat that round, reach down and wrench a bone from the wall, replacing lost hit points at 1-4 per round (provided he can reach the wall) - the first time this is seen it will cause a SAN check on a d20. Note that in AD&D they have the advantage of receiving only half damage from edged or sharp weapons like skeletons.

Additionally, on each of the seven towers round the Ziggurat there are half a dozen great draconic skeletons, huge winged beasts ridden by the guardians to attack flying opponents or to take part in the pitiless death-hunts of the qo'vai. The statistic of these bone dragons are: AC 2; HD 12; MV 9"/24"; AT 1-4, 1-4, 2-16/3-18; SA see below; SD see below; MR 25%; save as F12; morale 12; Int low; AL C/NE; SZ L. They gain the same regenerative abilities as the guardians, provided that one of the latter is available to replace the bones for 1-3 regained points (plus the ½ damage option in AD&D). The bone-dragons do not have breath weapons like normal dragons, instead they breathe a cone of disruption (hence this will affect only the PCs): anyone struck by such a cone (which is of usual draconic proportions and regularity) will suffer a loss of 2-24 disruption points (save against disruption for half loss). Observant PCs may notice that at the heart of each dragon is a crystal orb rather like those on the ships in the harbour. These are solely for the use of the qo'vai, allowing them ride the dragons (they would otherwise merely pass through them - they grasp these orbs by magical means, drawing on the flux concentrated in them); smashing one will cause a riding qo'va to become dislodged and his mount will suffer **confusion** for 7-12 rounds, thereafter recovering.

The wall of bones surrounding the Ziggurat has no portals or entrances of any form; after all, the qo'vai have no need of such mundanities. PCs can only enter the compound magically (**passwall** or **fly** for example) or by climbing over it (it is unlikely that they will be helped over by the guards unless they have been arrested). They are certain to be spotted if they have not become invisible or taken similar precautions; even if careful, they may still be observed by qo'vai using some form of magical scrying (probable if the PCs' presence is known and the nobles have been alerted to their aims).

Once inside, they will see a desolate area in which there is little life or colour: great gnarled bare branches twist and interlock, flowerless creepers hang down to the ground where a carpet of pallid fungi cover the dusty soil, and the only sounds are the creaking and groaning of the aged plants. In and amongst this joyless grove the qo'vai flit, blind to its mournful aspect. A PC able to see the qo'vai, will also be able to share their perceptions of this place, an experience beyond the sight of common men: the trees and lianas sport a veritable abundance of flowers, each fanged and fork-tongued bloom emanating not a fragrance but an emotion - malevolence and hatred, fear and humility, discontent and lamentation, pitiless ingratitude and jealous enmity, anomie and ennuï, a perfumery of sentiment for the susceptible, in which a qo'va can vicariously revel. Any PC unfortunate enough to witness this spectacle will have to make a SAN check on a d%.

Stalking through the empathic jungle, tirelessly pacing back and forth are the guardians of the qo'vai: great scaled cats with scything tusks and barbed tails. Covered in blue-black scales, with vicious amber eyes, the creatures are the size and appearance of sabre-tooths, with a temperament to match. Their statistics are: AC 4; HD 8; MV 15"; AT 3; D 2-5, 2-5, 2-12; SA if both forepaws hit, they also receive 2 rear claw attacks for 2-8, 2-8 - plus can attack opponents behind with tail for 1-6; SD see below; MR 25%; save as F10; morale 12; Int low; AL N/NE; SZ L. Like their masters, the cats exist slightly shifted out of phase with the PCs and the rest of the city - they can normally only be hit by PCs who are able to strike into the astral/ethereal, etc. However, as they cannot themselves do damage in this state, they must travel into the PCs' dimension to attack them; this they will do as they attack, but will take one round after to shift out (if they are not remaining in combat) and can be hit as if AC 4 during that time. The qo'vai are likely to use these beasts to hunt the PCs - they track auras and the scent of fear as easily as a normal cat can follow the odour of its prey.

In the centre of this morbid and macabre wood, rising above the trees, is the Ziggurat itself. A huge stepped pyramid, it has seven levels, each smaller than the last; the least a cube 21' on each side, the largest a vast slab 147' by 21'. At first this temple of the eldritch qo'vai will seem formed of bones like the wall, but slowly the details will emerge: the Ziggurat is in truth an enormous cairn of skulls, with innumerable snakes, spiders, slugs and centipedes slithering and crawling through its gaping jaws and sightless sockets.

THE ZIGGURAT

The osseous structure of the Ziggurat is merely the symbolic representation of the power of the qo'vai over the people of the city, its dark presence lurking in every mind. As the nature of the qo'vai might lead one to expect, the edifice contains a dimension-shifted area in which its business is conducted - or, to be precise, seven consecutive zones, each only accessible from the previous. There are three ways to enter the Ziggurat: firstly, to be brought in by the qo'vai who will cast the necessary magics and bring the PCs in on the third zone (see below). The second arises when the PCs gain entry by their own powers, probably achieving this by casting some form of phase-shifting spell - in this category are spells such as **astral spell, dimension door, phase door, passwall, teleport** or **wish**, etc (plus any other spells you choose to include); items allowing a PC to enter the astral, ethereal, etc, will be equally effective. Only a single PC has to enter by this means, as it opens a corridor for one round per level (or equivalent), giving the whole party time to cross. Entry by this manner brings the PCs through to the first zone, regardless of the real-world height at which they attempt ingress. The third method involves breaking into the physical structure - at the centre of each level is a crystal, similar to those in the qo'vai residences, but with a number of regular sides equal to the square of the level (the upper being one, ie an orb); joining the crystals is a vertical passage of power which, when touched, will transport the PC concerned to the first zone (as before the physical level of entry is irrelevant). Note that there is no disruptive damage incurred in this process.

Each zone of the Ziggurat conforms to the same design, only their dimensions differing. The lower level is regarded as level seven, the upper as level one - conversely, the lower level is the focus for the first zone, and the upper for the seventh (ie levels refer to the physical structure, zones to the dimension-shifted areas). The zones must be traversed in order, the only exception being in the case of the direct entry to zone three with the aid of the qo'vai.

At the centre of each zone there is a 3' diameter pillar of dazzling polychromatic light, surrounded by a 3' space (a 9' diameter area) into which shafts of light pulse in a spiral formation - this is used to travel between zones. Around it is a chamber whose dimensions are proportional to those of the relevant level of the Ziggurat (zone one proportional to level seven) but whose area is multiplied by that level (ie zone one has an area of seven times that of level seven, or approximately 389' square; multiply all dimensions by the square root of the level). Stretching above each chamber is a dim space that cannot be entered except via the radiant stairway (zone one is an exception - see below) its height in the same relative proportions as the zones. In the zones above the first, it may be possible to look down on the zone directly below through the floor, though only those beings of a higher type can exercise this ability (see below).

Each class of being (with the exception of the PCs, alien to this plane) may only enter a limited number of zones: namely that in which it is dominant, and those above and below. On the lowest, zone one, are the plebeians (brunts, gorbals and vrex, plus the warrior types); zone three falls to the noble qo'vai; zone five to the elders; and zone seven, at the top of the Ziggurat, to Theophagus himself. Those intermediate are accessible by the class on either side and are used for dealings and transactions between them (usually in the form of an audience granted by the higher class).

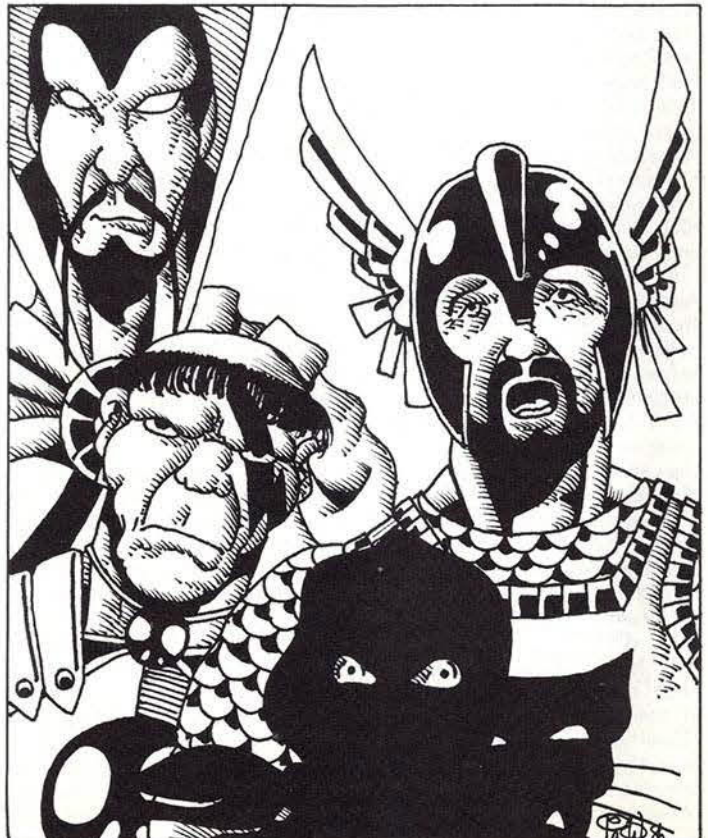
The First Zone:

This zone is 389' square and 55' high. Above it stretches a further 334' of void space - although this cannot be entered from below, PCs who move into the first zone from any level above the first will enter this void at a proportional point and, unless they can fly, will drop to the floor of the zone (eg entering the top of the real Ziggurat means that the PCs might fall 389'). Falling damage could be sustained, but, fortunately, may be broken by a throng of brunts below: the central area is filled with brunts waiting to climb to the second zone and anyone falling from the fifth level or above will plummet onto them, for only 1d6 damage per level above the lowest - a fall from the sixth causes normal damage.

If the qo'vai know of the PCs' attempt to enter the Ziggurat they will order the brunts away and place guards around the centre, waiting to mop up the resultant PC quiche. Apart from this crowd of brunts, all of the plebeian and warrior types are represented in this zone. Around the brunts are gorbals keeping control of the fated herd. At the edges of the zone stand the guards: there are several of the skeletal giants and the lizard men who watch over the walls (without their mounts) but most of the warriors are scorpion men (see 10). If the PCs enter without attracting attention, these will not attack; otherwise, or should they have orders to be ready for PCs, the guards will attack to subdue and capture.

The majority of this zone, however, is taken up by the vrex; some stand in humble groups bearing lengthy petitions or are sheepishly grasping their wares; most tinker and fiddle with the infernal machines that are spread over the floor and, in a few cases, dangle from the ceiling. The function of these contraptions will be obscure in the extreme, any explication given will contain myriad untranslatable terms of a specific technical nature; all will claim that their machine is vital to the running of Ziggurat and city, although none will be entirely sure why. Built from incandescent crystals set into jagged metallic frames and convoluted organic tubes and sacs, they produce nauseous odours and deafening noises. In fact the instruments are vital to nothing but the surfeit of aesthetic pleasures demanded by the qo'vai - the operators are skilled in the fine manipulations and dextrous handling necessary to control the devices, but do not understand them (despite their technical terminology) nor realize their true function. Any interference (certain knowing the meddlesome nature of PCs) is guaranteed to alert the qo'vai.

It will be obvious that all attention is concentrated on the spiral and on reaching zone two. Should the PCs make their presence known to the qo'vai, a vreck will descend to demand their immediate attendance above (enforced by the guards if the PCs show any hesitation). If they wish to be undetected the PCs must find a method of sneaking upstairs - the vrex attending the stairway will not admit any who have not been called. Thus they are presented with two options: they can disguise themselves as vrex who have received a summons (and dispose of the originals), or as brunts (who do not receive personal invitations, a few being indiscriminately herded up the spiral every so often) - or they can magically influence the vrex administrators and thus ascend unrequested.



The Stairway:

The general details of the stairway apply between all zones. Note that though the stairway crosses from one dimension to another, this is a natural and inherent effect on this plane and will not be subject to the rules about the appearance of powerful beings and the occurrence of non-matter implosions as would the same effect caused by a PC (you may ignore the effects for PCs while near the Ziggurat, at your option).

As PCs approach this luminous spiral they will feel a gentle tug towards it. Should a PC touch it he will become stuck, able to move his hand on the spiral, but unable to disengage himself; only **dispel magic** vs a 24th level MU will allow the removal of his appendage. As soon as he has put a foot on one of the pulsing shafts, he will have to ascend and can do nothing to prevent this - the stairway automatically rises (not apparent if the steps are merely observed), but the PC cannot turn round to descend and he is forced inexorably to travel to the top (the floor of the next zone). There, he is deposited and may not continue for one turn - any attempt to do so will cause the eager PC to be flung away 7'-12' and suffer d6 damage per zone (ie 2d6 for the first spiral).

The Second Zone:

This zone is 308' square and 51' high - above it the void is 257' high, and 51' below the floor of zone 1 (now only 360' square) appears as a misty grey area, though the qo'vai can see the occupants and their instruments with a weird second sight - to them the ineffable vrex devices produce beautiful and stunning images in scent, sight and sound to titillate and amuse them as they meditate upon the fate of the brunts. If the PCs have been summoned by the qo'vai, they will stay on this level for no more than the required one turn minimum before being replaced (forcibly if necessary) on the stairs to continue to zone three. If they have finagled their way past the vrex attendants, they will be spotted by the qo'vai immediately, and will be persuaded to visit the third zone; this may not happen if they are concealed (eg invisible) and the qo'vai are not on their guard with detection spells. If they appear as vrex the qo'vai will spot their imposition in a short time and either order their guards to dispose of the intruders or deal with them as noted above. If they make an error of judgement and ascend to the second zone disguised as brunts, they will be dealt with as would those creatures; such is hardly conducive to the continuation of their quest and they will either have to reveal themselves, or resist - both courses will alert the qo'vai, the latter being more likely to provoke a violent retaliation before questions are asked. You will have to determine the precise nature of qo'vai reactions depending on the situation as it occurs but generally the more surprised and threatened the qo'vai feel, the more chance there is of immediate unthinking violence.

The 100' square in the middle of the room is filled with all manner of crystalline structures, similar to those found in the qo'vai domiciles but less regular. In and around these hover the incorporeal qo'vai, seen as a hazy, twisted miasma of iridescence; note that they will no longer cause the PCs to check SAN (even if the first encounter). Some qo'vai deal with vrex petitioners; they may suffuse the area with a gentle viridescence of agreement or an incarnadine glow of dismissal, or occasionally a mere cerulean of indifference - after consultation, the vrex are dismissed to the corners of the zone. Others in this section observe the floorshow, or draw nourishment from orbs of crystal and glow with satiety.

Around the qo'vai is a jungle of gnarled vegetation in which the writhing forms of brunts can be glimpsed, accompanied by screeches of pain. These plants have thick stems supporting huge bright flowers, and from their angular branches drape long muscular creepers. The arriving brunts are thrust into this wood where they may wander aimlessly for a while before being grasped by trailing lianas and hugged to the stems; as their trepidation mounts, flowers will lean down and seem to leer over their trembling frames. The horror of this awful spectacle will be compounded by the wracking pain inflicted as the creepers rip the brunts asunder, destroying them both mentally and physically. As the brunts pass away, the flood of emotional and psychic energy released is sucked in by the blossom craning over them, and quickly a crystal fruit forms to be picked and taken to the qo'vai - the sustenance of the nobles is drawn directly from the suffering of the minions.

Guarding the stairway and spread around the zone are several skeletal giants - it is they who will conduct the PCs around this zone, in whatsoever guise they appear: to the qo'vai if as themselves or vrex - into the jungle if as brunts. They are instructed to protect the qo'vai and will act swiftly if they perceive any threat to their masters, unless the qo'vai can react to PC actions and countermand the standing orders with specific instructions. Should the PCs enter the jungle they will be attacked in an attempt to drain them of their life energy - these botanical carnivores have the following statistics: AC 5; HD 8-16; MV 0"; AT 2-5; D 0; SA PC must roll under STR on d20 at -1 per creeper or become entangled; save as F4-8; morale 12; Int non; AL N; SZ L. Once caught, a PC will suffer a loss of 1 point of CON and 1 point of CHA each round; at zero points of either he has died either from being rent asunder or from the emotional draining.

At the zone corners (if the PCs survive to reach this area), are tall columns of glowing smoke - into these vrex who have been successful in their supplications are lead (others are merely abandoned to their fate in the voracious vegetation - accompanied by guards, the fortunate ones are not troubled). The vrex are thence transported back to the market square to go about their business with the approbation of the qo'vai. PCs who make it this far may flee using the teleporters with no adverse effect (except having to start all over again).

The Third Zone:

Assuming that the PCs have either managed to give the qo'vai and their guardians the slip (unlikely), or are escorted to the spiral in the second zone, they will travel to the third zone, domain of the qo'vai themselves. Here the qo'vai take on a corporeal form (as this is the dimension in which they really exist) with the following alterations to their stats: AC 6; HD 8; AT 1; D 2-16 electrical or cold damage; SA loss of disruptive effect; SD hit by any weapons, regeneration at 2 points per round; MR 10%; save as M12; otherwise the same.

This zone measures 234' square and 47' high - above the void is 188', below 94'; the qo'vai (not the PCs) can see through to zone two, and will observe any PC actions there. Unless the PCs fight to remain here, it is unlikely that they will be on this zone for much more than a turn. If brought here by the qo'vai they will be moved on up to the fourth zone as quickly as possible; if they arrive on their own, they will also be transferred onwards as soon as the qo'vai are aware of their aims on this plane. If, for some reason, they wish to remain, they are almost certain to end up in combat with the qo'vai - the latter may show some interest in them for a while, but will eventually want to either return them to the zone below for processing and consumption, or hand them over to their elders, employing force if the PCs do not concur.

The zone is filled with numerous of the qo'vai crystals, but these are not radiant, merely having a micaceous glister in the dim azure light that pervades the area. Smashing one of these will require the infliction of 48 damage (or 24 in one blow) and will cause 1 point of damage to all PCs within 10' and 2-12 damage to qo'vai within 25'; these clusters are not so closely packed as to cause any impairment of combat, but they may easily be dodged around and hidden behind by PCs. In the corners of the chamber there are four crystal columns each of which has a reflective face and a plethora of runes carved over its surface; at these the qo'vai may observe the city (as if through a **crystal ball**) and may use their powers to draw any of the plebeian or warrior classes into zone one (a **teleport** device, the reverse of the smoke columns below).

The Fourth Zone:

This zone is 168' square and 42' high; there is 126' of void both above and below. The chamber itself is entirely empty, with only the spiral stairway continuing up to the next zone lighting the area. It is here that the qo'vai come to beg audience with their masters, the elders of Zchau, creatures who are above the mundane matters of the city, spending most of their time in contemplation of the great arcane mysteries and studying methods of controlling the dark, hidden driving forces of the multiverse. If the PCs are brought up here by the qo'vai they will be told to wait for one turn, and then to ascend. If not, they will soon feel an insistent urging to climb upward, apparently sourceless, originating in their own minds even though they are aware of no such desire.

The Fifth Zone:

This is 109' square and 36' high - the voids are 145' below and 73' above. In this area exist the slornaba, the elders of Zchau, of whom the foremost is Theophagus, God-Eater and Destroyer of Worlds. There are nine slornaba, excluding the God-Eater himself who does not deign to dwell with his peers (indeed, he barely regards them as beings akin to himself, a tendency not designed to promote harmony and co-operation).

On this dimension, the slornaba exist as physical creatures, though these forms are, in truth, merely shells from which their eldritch spirits can range far and wide throughout the multiverse; like Kahrn (see TS111) they live for exploration and understanding of alien worlds, though unlike the humbler human they also seek (and generally exercise) power over the forces they encounter therein. It is from the slornaba that the compelling urge to ascend to this zone originated, and they will have been observing the PCs since they entered the third zone (unless the PCs have managed complete surprise).

Even in their own dimension, the slornaba are less of a form than a concept, constituting an indefinable but unmistakable presence whose mere proximity will cause **fear** in characters of less than 9th level. They tend to occupy a physical body but this is more from convenience than necessity, the nature of this body changing as their mood: from boulder to flowing water, from bougainvillaea to borzoi, raptor to lacewing, to whirlwind, to a chameleon figure of fire, and so forth. Any form, or no form, can be chosen, although at all times there is the same potent aura and an overriding sense of facing a being of vastly superior capabilities. It is probable that, unless the PCs choose to go against their wishes, the elders will appear in an impressive, but unalarming form. The PCs will have no chance to overcome these creatures should they unwisely opt to oppose them. Their statistics are: AC base of -4 or less if appropriate to form; HD 24; MV as per form; AT as per form; D as per form; SA see below; SD can only be hit by +3 weapons and see below; MR 50%; save as M24; morale 12; Int supra-genius; AL C/NE; SZ as per form. For stats, though not for appearance, figures cannot exceed a creature whose HD is greater than 24. They are magic-users of great power and can use spells as if of 24th level; plus they have as innate all the **detect** spells, the **charm** and **hold** spells, limited **teleport** to anywhere in the city (though they will be plane-shifted and hence all-seeing but not seen), and the power of telepathic communication. They may also be allowed the immortal/deity ability of aura/awe, as if possessing CHA of 24. In terms of physical attacks, they can use more or less whatever form they wish, receiving the mode appropriate to that form. In addition, they can choose to make attacks on the PCs' SAN or attempt to cause disruption. The horror of their appearance can be varied such as to give the PCs a +50% bonus to a -10% penalty on a d% save, for a loss of up to 3-18 SAN points and a choice of insanities off the table (TS111, p. 36). Disruption may be similarly biased with a loss of 3-36 points - if this causes a PC to drop below 0, the slornaba may choose both the outcome of the failure, and the plane to which the PC is dismissed, if appropriate (he may later be collected by these beings to whom interplanar travel is second nature). All in all, the slornaba are too powerful to mess with and their suggestions should certainly be carefully heeded. Essentially, this should be of little consequence unless the PCs develop an overwhelming desire to commit suicide - any opposition will be met with persuasive, rather than destructive force and only whole-hearted bloody-mindedness of an extent beyond even usual PC obstinacy will cause the PCs serious and permanent loss (the slornaba might chose to send one or two of them off to distant, unwelcoming dimensions to cool down, retrieving them at their leisure).

The reason for the leniency of the elders and their interest in the PCs is intimately connected with the latters' quest. The qo'vai may bring the PCs to the Ziggurat for their own purposes (probably to drain their strong life energies, but perhaps just for the joy of watching them squirm as they try to escape), but the slornaba will immediately see in them an opportune solution to their current problems (though the PCs can only be considered a long-shot at the best). The elders strive to command, or at least to comprehend, the harmonies and discords of the multiverse and for this require a stable focus for their energies, a safe harbour from which they can launch their inquiries of the mind and soul.

The elders will converse telepathically with the PCs, their sepulchral tones echoing through the PCs' minds. They will ask why the PCs have come, their probing thoughts swiftly discovering the true causes, whatever the attempts to hide them. Nothing thus revealed will surprise the slornaba, for in their own travels, they have noticed that all is not well - webs of astral energy radiate from Zchau; through ethereal passages and astral corridors the rumours run, predicting a conjunction of catastrophic proportions; all appeal to the immortals or deities is hopeless, as these beings wait with aloof interest for the upshot of this vainglorious boast of Theophagus, scourge of the heavens and manducator of gods. For once, the humdrum workaday concerns of their flesh-bound minions have imposed themselves upon the noetic affairs of the slornaba; they fear not for the safety of their charges, but for their own freedom of action, and even their lives if the God-Eater succeeds - and here they need the PCs' aid.

To persuade the PCs that their interests coincide the elders will elucidate a few background details, outlining to their temporary allies the only course left open if Chuza is to be saved (and, needless to say, if the Ziggurat, the slornaba's power base, is to be preserved). They know that Theophagus is the cause of the current turmoils - only the downfall of their lord will maintain the status quo and avert disaster. The ruler of Zchau, they will inform the PCs, is a being of vast power, whose knowledge of the multiverse is equalled only by a consummate ability to manipulate dimensions. The slornaba survive by tapping the veins of force that pervade every plane, the same skein of energy that magic-users draw upon to cast their spells. Theophagus' sateless hunger grew and matured until it craved more power than even his great psychic maw could consume - then he turned to immortals and deities who are the mere languorous spectators of the trials and tribulations of the lower beings. Across the planes Theophagus would pursue demi-gods and the manifestations of greater beings, entrapping them and feasting on their death-throes, ingesting the power released as they were destroyed or banished from the plane and revelling in it.

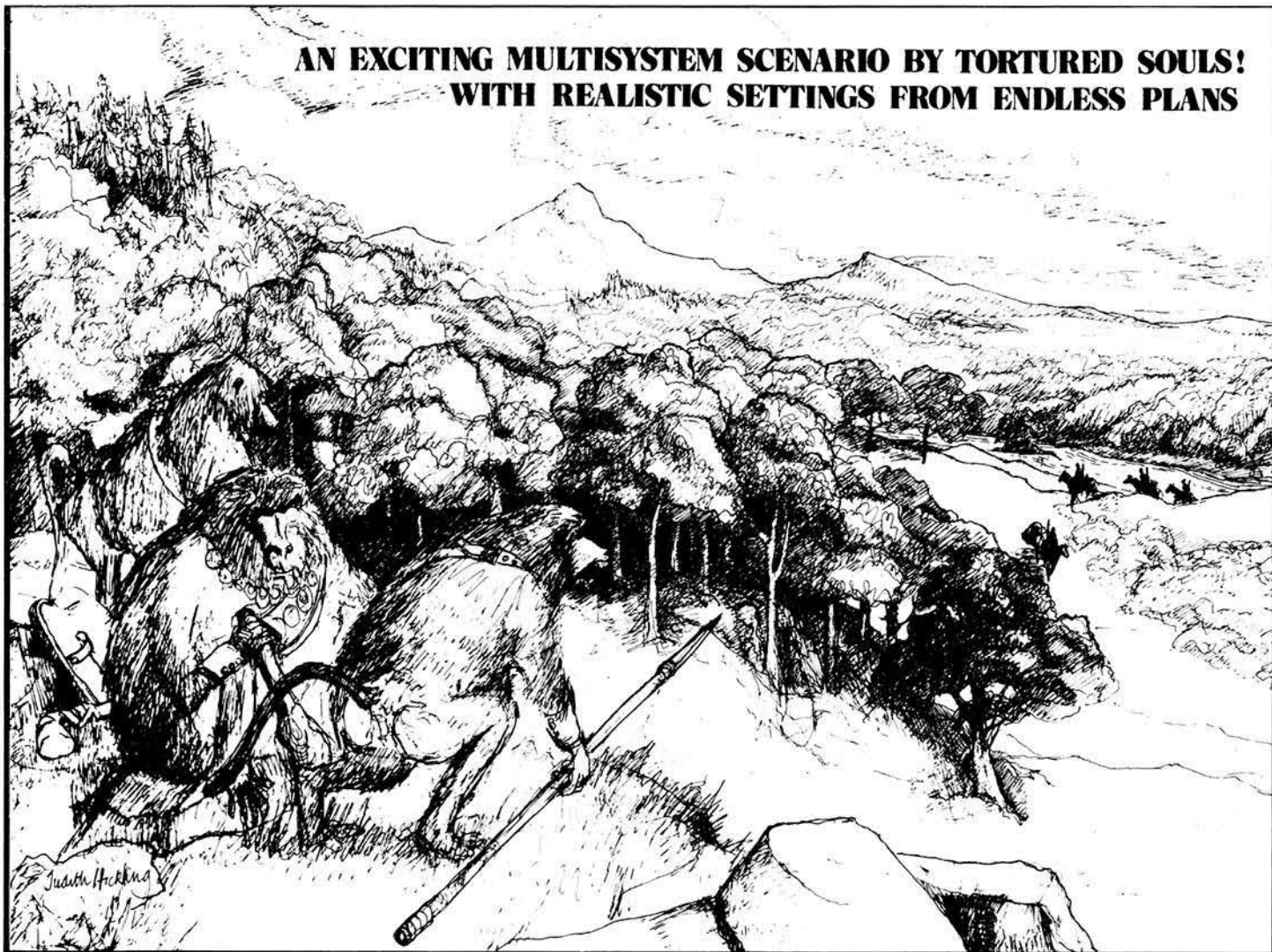
As his power grew, so did his pride - and, unknown at first to the other slornaba, a seed of madness had lodged within a dark crevice of his soul. This slowly germinated, drawing its sustenance from his sanity, eventually blossoming into a spinose lunacy that dared to challenge the gods themselves. That this divine vengeance of derangement will bring death to millions is of no concern to the deities who wish to see Theophagus suffer a downfall as glorious as his aspirations; to them, the grand spectacle is all, the message to vaunting ambition clear and the humiliation complete.

All this notwithstanding, the PCs may justly wonder why the slornaba themselves cannot curb their psychopathic leader - surely his execution could be achieved by a concerted action on their behalf? To this valid query they will explain that they have endeavoured to overthrow the demented Theophagus, on more than one occasion, but that they cannot approach him is his current refuge. He has retreated to the Necropolis, a city of death within the city of Zchau, entering from the astral plane and then sealing all of the dimensional portals against possible intruders; even the combined efforts of the nine remaining slornaba could not break his defences now he is drawing his power from divine expirations. However, one method of ingress is still available for those capable - the Necropolis may be entered from this plane itself. The only drawback: the dead alone can gain admittance to the city of corpses, a living soul being instantly drained by the cold necromantic power that suffuses the diabolic mausoleum. The slornaba will explain that they can temporarily transfer the PCs' souls out of their bodies, and store them for a while; the slornaba, being creatures of pure spirit, cannot undergo this experience - it would cause their instant demise. But the PCs could survive and reach Theophagus - their only hope that he is drained and distracted by his exertions, weary to the extent of lowering his defences; otherwise, the slornaba will warn them, they will not survive the encounter.

- Alas, here we leave our long-suffering heroes to carefully consider life after death, the future of all Chuza resting in their hands - will they surrender their souls and take a chance on the God-Eater's lassitude? or will they crawl home to die? See **Necropolis** in TS113 - the worst is yet to come!

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