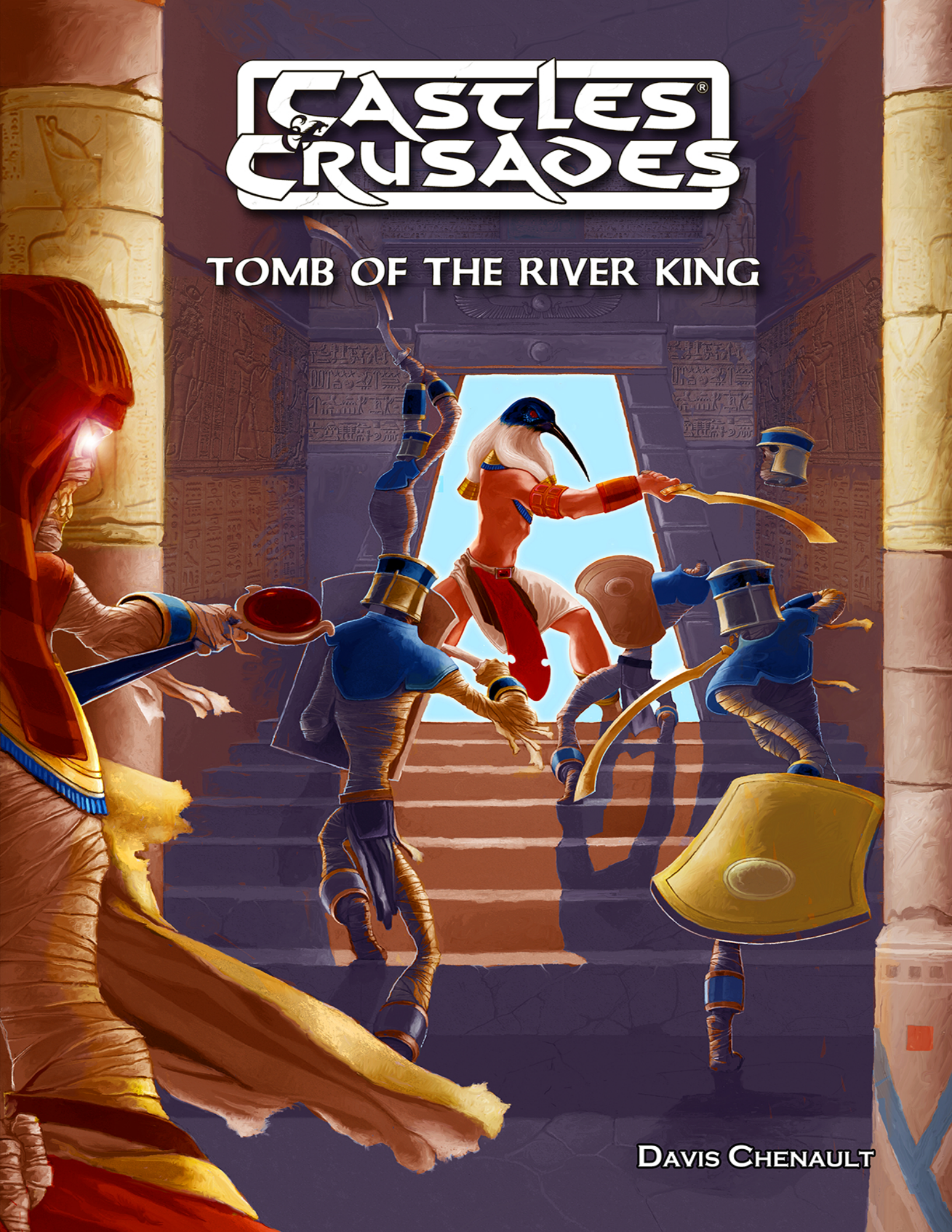


# CASTLES & CRUSADES

## TOMB OF THE RIVER KING



DAVIS CHENAULT





# **TOMB OF THE RIVER KING**

**BY DAVIS CHENAULT**

**EDITOR:** DAN CROSS, WAYNE TRIPP, PETER ENDEAN, SAMUEL DILLON

**FRONT COVER:** PETER BRADLEY **INTERIOR ART:** PETER BRADLEY, JASON WALTON, SARAH WALKER

**ART DIRECTION/ CARTOGRAPHY:** PETER BRADLEY



1818 North Taylor, #143, Little Rock, AR, 72207

email: [troll@trolllord.com](mailto:troll@trolllord.com)

website: [www.trolllord.com](http://www.trolllord.com) or

[www.knightsofthecrusade.com](http://www.knightsofthecrusade.com)

©2020 Troll Lord Games. All Rights Reserved. Castles & Crusades® is a registered Trademark of Chenault & Gray Publishing LLC, d/b/a Troll Lord Games. SIEGE Engine™ is Trademark of Chenault & Gray Publishing LLC, d/b/a Troll Lord Games. Amazing Adventures™ is a Trademark of Jason Vey. The Troll Lord Games, Castles & Crusades, SIEGE Engine, Troll Lord Games logos are Trademarks of Troll Lord Games. The Amazing Adventures logo is Trademark Jason Vey. All Rights Reserved. 2020.

Art, artwork, cover art, cartography is copyright Peter Bradley of Ravenchilde Illustrations, 2020 or Troll Lord Games. All Rights Reserved. All content copyright 2020 Troll Lord Games. All Rights Reserved.

**Printed in the United States of America**

This module is designed for four to five players from 5<sup>th</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> level. The adventure takes place in a desert with little to nourish the players' characters as they move through the wilderness. The characters face many obstacles while exploring the ruins, including dehydration and heat exhaustion. This module can be used before Behet's Rampage. In this case, the fort is located 60 miles east of Paros in a hilly region bereft of any resources.

Enhance play with 3D Printable Terrain from **Fat Dragon Games**. This adventure uses pieces from the *DESERT ADVENTURES*, FDG0163.

This adventure takes the characters across a portion of the desert to explore the ruins of an ancient complex that served as a residence, place of worship, and ultimately as a tomb for a heiracosphinx. The residence is a walled rectangular structure reaching forty feet or more in height. The walls enclose assorted interior structures such as shrines and sleeping areas. A large pyramid is located beside the residence. A dry moat wraps around the walls and pyramid.

## INTRODUCTION

Agès ago, a heiracosphinx decided to settle in this wadi and build its tomb. The beast spent several years gathering slaves to build a fort and a residence before beginning the construction of its tomb. At first the design was simple, but as the years passed the heiracosphinx became bored, and it decided to add ever-increasing rooms and structures, eventually creating a larger complex than intended. Eventually the heiracosphinx's original vision for a mausoleum changed to that of a pyramid in which to entomb itself when it was dying. The pyramid was completed and all its rooms were laid out for his eventual death. It terrorized the surrounding lands until having grown so old, it sensed death was near.

The pyramid was designed so that the heiracosphinx could go inside and seal itself in the tomb with no chance of escape. It would then ingest a poison and lay down upon an ornate platform where its body would rest forevermore. However, the heiracosphinx had a change of heart, deciding it wanted to live, and desired to leave his death chamber inside the pyramid. Alas, unable to take the draught of poison, and trapped inside the tomb, it perished of dehydration. It had, ironically, cursed itself. Its essence has never left that chamber.

## CURRENT SETTING

The area has been abandoned for more than a century now. Countless people, beasts, and creatures have temporarily occupied it in those years between. The buildings have worn down, and some have started crumbling, but the bulk of the residence's framework remains solid. The complex is currently occupied by some brigands who have been raiding the surrounding region for several years. They use this and other places as a hideout. Typically, the brigands are cautious and on guard for potential problems. However, because they believe they have never been discovered here (on this they are wrong) and are a somewhat lazy and disorganized lot, the brigands have

become less guarded, spending more time imbibing their ill-gotten gains than elsewhere.

## INTRODUCING THE CHARACTERS

There are several avenues the Castle Keeper can use to bring the characters into this adventure. The location of the residence could be known to a few individuals where the characters are located, whether sheriffs, constables, rangers, sages, priests, or others. These individuals could impart to the characters interesting gossip about the place, such as old treasures, curses, or reveal that a strange beast has come to reside there. Another method is to have a reward offered for the brigands' capture or death (the locals know brigands reside in the fort, unbeknownst to the brigands). Or, the characters could simply hear rumors of the fort in some darkened corner of a bar, spoken of only in whispers for the ancient curses laid upon it and the magical trove buried therein.

## REGION AND WANDERING MONSTERS

This adventure occurs in a desert dominated by massive sand dunes reaching up to one hundred feet in height. The dunes mix with and cover large rocky outcrops that twist and bend in a maze of canyons, buttes, cliffs, and defiles. It is a harsh and forbidding landscape with scarce water for sustenance. The heat is unbearable at midday, and most of that which lives here scurries underground during the day, only to come out after the sun has set. During the evening the temperature drops, becoming quite frigid on some nights. Even moving over the dunes and down the canyons is trying for those unused to such activities.

The trip to the fort should take at least five days. If the characters know the location, then it should be a straight five-day trip. If they do not know the location, there is a chance they become lost during the trip and must find their way back. There is also a chance for wandering monsters. To determine if the characters become lost or move off the track, the lead character makes a tracking check. If the character making the tracking check fails, add 1d2 days to their trip.

While traveling in this region there is virtually no possibility of finding water. There are a few oases, but they occur about once every 100 square miles. When a character runs out of water, they can go a number of days equal to 1/3 their constitution score without showing ill side effects. After that they must make a constitution check every day, starting at CL1 and increasing by one each day. Failure indicates heat exhaustion. The third time a failure occurs, the character suffers from heatstroke.

Heat exhaustion: the character suffers 1d6 damage and must rest a day to begin recovery. The second time a failure occurs, the character suffers 2d6 damage and must wait two days to begin recovery. If a third check is required, it is to determine if the character is afflicted with heat stroke. Failure on that constitution check indicates 3d6 points of damage and 1d2 permanent loss to their constitution score. Each failure thereafter results in 3d6 damage and an additional 1d2 permanent damage to their constitution score.

## 2 CASTLES & CRUSADES

Wandering monsters are rare in this arid land. Roll a d12 every day. A '1' indicates an encounter. Roll a d6 and consult the chart below.

- 1 Giant lizard
- 2 Giant scorpion
- 3 Desert leopard
- 4 Heat exhaustion
- 5 Small poisonous animals
- 6 Ukha

## FORTRESS AND PYRAMID

The immediate area of the residence is a confusing maze of box canyons, defiles, and buttes. There was never any attempt to hide or disguise its location; it just so happens it is difficult to locate. The structures sit at the confluence of three canyons. The fort is rectangular, being several hundred feet long and somewhat narrower. A slightly tiered wall, roughly fifty feet tall, wraps around an interior wall and several blockhouses. All the structure is covered by a contiguous flat roof. The fort can be viewed from atop any nearby buttes, sand dunes, or cliff tops.

No monsters or creatures are wandering through or around the defile near the fortress. However, on occasion, several brigands make their way outside the fort or walk around the roof, relaxing or looking for interlopers. Importantly, the brigands have desecrated several shrines causing several magical beasts to materialize seeking 'justice,' and by that meaning the death of all those dwelling within.

There are three huai who guard the fort and prowl around at night and during the day, hiding in the shadows and dark corners of the fort looking for prey. They can take on the appearance of many small animals. In this case, they almost always take on a chicken's appearance since there are so many in the complex. This allows them to move around in disguise to observe the brigands and easily prepare an ambush. The longer the characters are in the complex, the greater the chance of encountering a huai.

When the characters enter the complex, roll a d20. A '1' indicates an encounter with a huai. The huai approaches cautiously, either as a chicken, bird, or animal, testing its prey. It may attack if the character is alone, although it will more than likely call the others for help before attacking. Once wounded, the huai makes a hasty retreat to lick its wounds. It then comes back later to continue the fight. On the following hour roll a d20 again. On a score of 1-2, an encounter occurs. Repeat the process until all three beasts have been encountered by the characters. The huai prefer to stalk their prey and attack while their victims are alone or in small groups, retreating once wounded, only converging to attack 50% of the time. They will heal their wounds while hiding in the complex or in the desert.

**HUAI 3** (These chaotic evil magical beasts' vital statistics are HD 4d8, HP 30, AC 17, BtH +4, and Move 30 feet. Their primary attributes are mental. Their attack depends on which form they take [from a small chicken to a large lizard or hyena]. Their special abilities are shape change, turn to mist and vampiric thirst.)



## FORTIFIED RESIDENCE

The complex is a large fortified residence and a massive pyramid. A dry moat surrounds both structures. The fortified residence is roughly two hundred feet long and one hundred feet wide with a fifty-foot-tall wall between two courtyards. Two square buildings are in each courtyard. The roofs are all flat and connected by walls and walkways. A short battlement runs the length of the wall. Inside the east bailey are four obelisks (see "O" on Map One for location of Obelisks), each a different size with the easternmost being the smallest. The tips of the obelisks' glint with gold. Two large statues of sphinxes are positioned to either side of the obelisk and along the wall, while four smaller statues of sphinxes are in front of the obelisks. One massive statue of a sphinx is located on the east wall of the bailey (see "S" on Map One for location of sphinx). Several horses can be seen inside the east bailey. Fire pits and debris are visible on several of the roofs. If any of the brigands are on the roof, describe them to the players as well. To the east of the residence is a small pyramid a hundred feet to a side and a hundred feet tall. The top of the pyramid glints with gold. A dry moat extends around all the structures.

The complex consists of three layers, each slightly narrower than the one below it. The lower portion of the walls is fifteen feet wide; the middle is fourteen feet wide, and the upper section is thirteen feet wide. The interior of all the buildings conforms to the same shape, with each level being slightly smaller than the previous. All the walls have tunnels or corridors connecting most areas

of the complex with one another. The pyramid is a tomb for the heiracosphinx and is not connected to the fortress by any tunnel

## BRIGANDS

The residence is currently occupied by thirty brigands. This is just a portion of a larger group of seventy brigands. The group has split up; one party is going in search of loot and food, another raiding farms, while the remaining brigands are here. They are led by Kham Ushite, but he is away with the larger of the groups looking for loot and food. The group in the fortress is led by Ahkmad Phum. Both are wanted men and there is a substantial reward offered for their capture.

The bandits staying in the fort are spread out, each having found their favorite spot to sleep or pass the time. The brigands spend much of their time drinking, gambling, and fighting one another. They are not expecting danger and though a few are supposed to be watching, there are no guards stationed anywhere.

It should be daytime when the characters arrive. The brigands are described below. The brigands are usually encountered where they are placed in the following description, but this is a dynamic environment so their position should change with time. Assume the brigands are moving around, going to the roof during the evening, catching chickens in the morning, collecting water at various times, and other activities throughout the day. This is also a small environment; thus, it is easy to hear all the way across the compound. It will not be long before others move in to discover what is occurring once some heated fight or problem is underway.

**AHKMAD PHUM** is tall and ugly with greasy hair and a bent nose. Ahkmad blinks constantly, even when relaxed, but this goes away when he is engaged in combat, as his gaze steadies with the fire of battle. Ahkmad is straight forward, even abusive, lacking any capacity for sympathy.

*(He is a chaotic neutral, human, 7th-level barbarian, whose vital statistics are HD 7d10, HP 52, AC 17, BtH +6, and Move 30 feet. His primary attributes are strength, dexterity, and constitution. His significant attributes are strength 14, dexterity 16, and constitution 17. He wears +1 studded leather armor, +1 belt of defense, ring of regeneration 1, necklace of spell resistance 2, and boots of striding and springing. He wields a +1 feather-edged bearded axe, light crossbow, and a +2 spear in combat. He carries a horn of fog, two potions of cure light wounds, a tan bag of tricks, and 1500gp in gems and jewelry.)*

He is in Area 23.

**OHARM IMWAD** stands a bit shorter than most but carries her slight frame with such ferocity that most feel she is a giant amongst men. Her silvery hair and pockmarked skin reveal a mixed heritage (of which little of value from each came to the fore). Most regret talking to her due to her quick wit and decidedly unforgiving nature.

*(She is a chaotic evil-half-elf, 5th level cleric whose vital statistics are HD 5d8, HP 28, AC 15, BtH +2, and Move 30 feet. Her primary attributes are wisdom and charisma. Her significant*

*attributes are strength 15, wisdom 15, and charisma 14. She wears +2 studded leather armor, a necklace of protection from lawful good, a ring of spell storing capacity 5, and a cloak of etherealness. She wields a +2 heavy mace and dirk in combat. She carries a potion of healing, potion of sleep, potion of gaseous form, scroll with the spells 'protection from good' and 'shield of faith' on it, a cleric's pack, desert pack, and 2500gp worth of coin and jewelry. She can cast the following spells; 0th -5, 1st-4, 2nd-2, and 3rd-1.)*

She is in Area 21.

**MAHMUT GRUFF** is short-tempered and not one to be trifled with in a fight. Mahmut has a thin frame, lanky gait, long flaxen hair, achingly angry eyes, and an untampered beard. He is always busy with one thing or another; sharpening a weapon, practicing, drinking, gambling, or whatever strikes his fancy. Mahmut is a menace. His paranoia and insomniac traits have him on constant guard and prone to quick violence.

*(He is a lawful evil human, 5th level ranger whose vital statistics are HD 5d10, HP 36, AC 17, BtH +4, and move 30 feet. His primary attributes are strength, constitution, and intelligence. His significant attributes are strength 15, constitution 16, intelligence 15, and charisma 14. He wears +2 scale mail, shield, and a ring of the ram. He wields a +1 broadsword, +1 short composite bow, and +2 hand axe in combat. He carries a potion of restoration, horn of blasting, 2000gp in coin and jewelry, a desert pack, and a ranger's pack.)*

He is in Area 26.

**WAK HAMA** is dark skinned, with bloodshot black narrow eyes like slits, and hair blacker than a midnight sky. She has her eye on a goal, and that goal has nothing to do with her current situation. Wak views her time here as a temporary respite from the more difficult life she and her friends had prior to now. Wak has no loyalty to anyone here other than her close companions. Wak is frightening under the best of conditions.

*(She is a lawful evil human, 5th level assassin, whose vital statistics are HD 5d6, HP 19, AC 17, BtH +2, and Move 30 feet. Her primary attributes are dexterity, intelligence, and wisdom. Her significant attributes are dexterity 17, intelligence 15, and wisdom 13. She wears +2 leather armor, +1 bracer of defense, cloak of arachnid, and hat of disguise. She wields a +2 dagger, +1 trident dagger, and poisoned darts in combat. She carries 3 vials of type II poison, two vials of type III poison, a potion of gaseous form, a potion of cure serious wounds, a manual of quickness of action +1, an assassins pack, a desert pack, and 200gp in coin and jewelry.)*

She is in Area 25.

**ROGUES 4** *(These chaotic neutral, human, 2nd level rogues' vital statistics are HD 2d6, HP 8, AC 13, BtH +1, and Move 30 feet. Their primary attributes are dexterity, constitution, and intelligence. Their significant attributes are dexterity 14. They wear leather armor. They wield scimitars, daggers, and short bows in combat. They carry overland expert packs and 50gp in coin and jewelry.)*

## 4 CASTLES & CRUSADES

These are in the following Areas: Area 15-1 Rogue, Area 17-1 Rogue, Area 21-1 Rogue, Area 25-1 Rogue.

**WIZARDS 2** (These lawful neutral human, 2nd level wizard's vital statistics are HD 2d4, HP 6, AC 12, BtH +1, and Move 30 feet. Their primary attributes are constitution, intelligence, and wisdom. Their significant attributes are constitution 13, dexterity 13, and intelligence 16. They wear +1 bracers of defense and robes. They wield darts and daggers in combat. They carry desert packs, overland expert packs, spell books with six spells in each, and 100gp in coin or valuables. They can cast the following number of spells; 0<sup>th</sup>-4 and 1<sup>st</sup>-3.)

These are in the following areas: Area 20-1 Wizard and Area 26-1 Wizard.

**RANGER 2** (These chaotic neutral human, 2nd level ranger's vital statistics are 2d10, HP 13, AC 14, BtH +1, and Move 30 feet. Their primary attributes are strength, constitution, and wisdom. Their significant attributes are strength 13 and constitution 14. They wear studded leather armor and shields. They wield scimitars, short composite bows, and daggers in combat. They carry a potion of cure light wounds, overland expert backpacks, and 60gp.)

These are located in the following Areas: Area 15-1 Ranger and Area 17-1 Ranger.

**ROGUE 5** (These chaotic neutral human, 1st level rogues' vital statistics are HD 1d6, HP 4, AC 12, BtH +0, and Move 30 feet. Their primary attributes are dexterity, constitution, and intelligence. Their significant attributes are dexterity 14. They wear padded armor. They wield scimitars, daggers, and short bows in combat. They carry overland basic packs and 10gp in coin and jewelry.)

These are located in the following Areas: Area 12-1 Rogue, Area 15-2 Rogue, Area 21-1 Rogue, and Area 26-1 Rogue.

**RANGER 5** (These chaotic neutral human, 1st level rangers' vital statistics are HD 1d10, HP 6, AC 14, BtH +0, and Move 30 feet. Their primary attributes are strength, constitution, and intelligence. Their primary attributes are constitution 14 and intelligence 13. They wear studded leather armor and shields. They wield scimitars and short bows in combat. They carry a desert pack and 10-60gp each.)

These are located in the following Areas: Area 7-1 Ranger, Area 21-2 Rangers, Area 25-1 Ranger, and Area 26: 1 Ranger

**FIGHTERS 5** (These chaotic neutral human, 1st level fighter's vital statistics are HD 1d10, HP 6, AC 14, and Move 30 feet. Their primary attributes are strength, dexterity, and constitution. Their significant attributes are strength 14 and dexterity 13. They wear scale mail and shields. They wield spears and scimitars in combat. They carry 10-60gp and a desert pack.)

These are in the following Area: Area 7-2 Fighters, Area 15-1 Fighter, Area 21-1 Fighter, and Area 25-1 Fighter.

**CLERIC 3** (These chaotic neutral human, 1st level clerics' vital statistics are HD 1d8, HP 4, AC 13, BtH +0, and Move 30 feet.

*Their primary attributes are strength, wisdom, and charisma. Their significant attributes are strength 13 and wisdom 14. They wear leather armor and shields. They wield flanged maces in combat. They carry a desert pack and have 10-100gp in coin and jewelry.)*

These are in the following Areas: Area 17-1 Cleric, Area 21-1 Cleric, and Area 25-1 Cleric.

## **RESIDENCE AND PYRAMID**

### **AREA 1 MOAT (GROUND LEVEL)**

A dry moat surrounds the entire structure. The moat is fifteen feet deep and 20 feet wide. The walls angle inward. There is one stone bridge over the moat though most of the moat is filled with sand and can be crossed almost anywhere. On either side of the bridge's west end are large statues of a creature with a lion's body and head of a hawk. Both statues are of mediocre craftsmanship, five feet tall and ten feet long. Four wagons sit near the bridge outside the moat. These have been emptied of all goods, though they appear to be in good condition.

### **AREA 2 ENTRY (GROUND LEVEL)**

This is the entry to the fort. The doors have long since rotted away or been ripped down. The area inside is empty except for piles of sand. Cracked and dilapidated murals are barely visible on the walls. These portray ocean scenes and people fishing. Narrow stone steps lead up to the next level in both the north and south corners of the room. The room opens onto a narrow and cobbled alley to the east. Corridors lead through the walls to the north and south.

### **AREA 3 COURTYARD AND ALLEY (GROUND LEVEL)**

This area comprises the courtyard and alley between the two interior buildings on the west side of the residence. The entire area is cobbled, much of it covered in sand that is piled especially high in the corners. There are two sets of narrow steps leading up to the roof located to the north and south of the entry. Three horses wander in this area. Talking can be heard in the building on the north side of the courtyard.

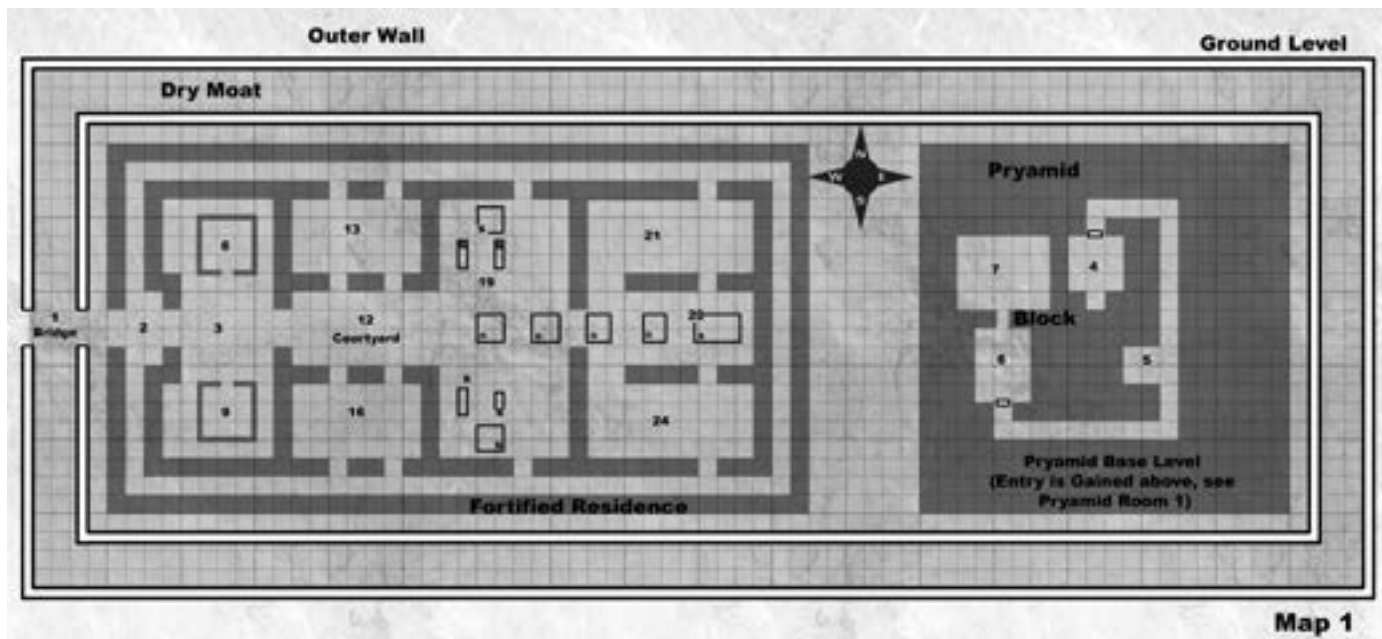
### **AREA 4 ROOM (LEVEL 2)**

This room is empty. There are three loop windows in the west wall. The single set of steps leading up to the area above is broken near the middle.

### **AREA 5 ROOM (LEVEL 3)**

The third floor of this tower has etchings over all the walls and a large area has been burned. The etchings on the wall are hieroglyphs depicting alligator shaped creatures mixed with humans bearing gifts to a beast sitting on a throne that looks like a human with a dog's head. Two other figures are waving fans over the figure. The characters etched onto the wall appear random. Three loopholes are in the west wall. Steps lead up to the roof.

If an arcane caster or similarly classed character makes an intelligence check after examining the etchings, they determine that the whole of the etchings and drawing are a summon



monster spell. The spell went awry during casting, causing an explosion. Note that the spell can be copied into a book.

#### AREA 6 ROOM (GROUND LEVEL)

Several crates, barrels, and boxes are found here, busted open and pilfered through. Clothing, stonemason's tools, wooden toys, rope, iron ingots, lanterns, broken vases, and other common bric-a-brac are scattered around the room. Narrow steps in the corner lead upward.

#### AREA 7 ROOM (LEVEL 2)

A few blankets are piled up in the room. A small keg sits in one corner with a few cups nearby. A barrel of water is near the middle of the room. Two spears lean up against the wall. Two windows are on each wall.

Three people sleep in this room and when the characters arrive, they are found lounging and telling one another jokes. These individuals are ostensibly keeping watch for anyone coming in from the valley but rarely perform their duties.

The following are in this room: Fighter 1<sup>st</sup> x2 and Ranger 1<sup>st</sup> x1.

#### AREA 8 ROOM (LEVEL 3)

Graffiti has been scrawled on several walls in this room. A wash basin with some dirty water is located near the center of the room. Food scraps, wooden bowls, and some ragged blankets are on the floor. Narrow steps lead up to the roof. Two windows are on each wall.

#### AREA 9 ROOM (GROUND LEVEL)

A cloth hangs across the door to this room. Inside are several bolts of cloth leaning against a wall, an opened box with a few pieces of tableware made of tin, three barrels (one that has been broken apart) and a handaxe laying on the floor. Steps lead up to the floor above.

The six bolts of cloth are expensive cottons worth 100gp each. They weigh 20 pounds each and are five feet long and one foot thick. The barrels contain bad wine.

#### AREA 10 ROOM (LEVEL 20)

Each wall has two windows. Steps lead to the upper floor. A cadaverous stench fills the room. Ten large burlap bags are stacked to one side of the room. A spear and shield rest against the bags. A sleeping roll has a pile of half eaten food and a spilled cup of wine beside it.

The bags contain grain for the horses.

#### AREA 11 ROOM (LEVEL 3)

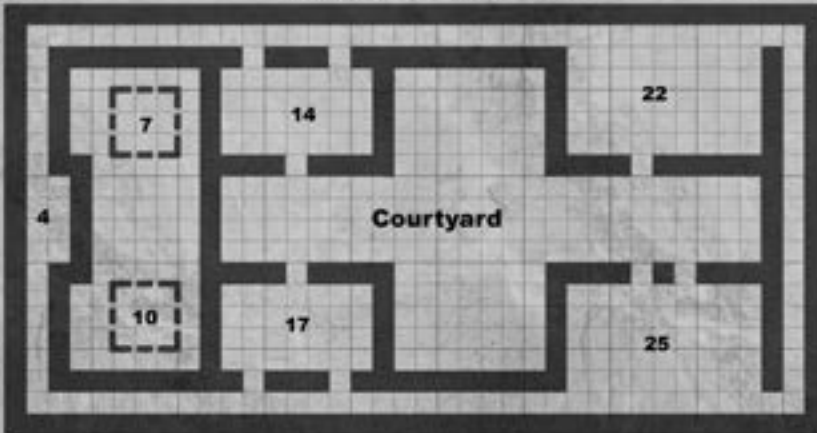
A bloody body covered in flies and gnats lies in the middle of the floor. A single stone shelf wraps around the entire room except where the steps lead upstairs. Paintings cover the walls but are so eroded and faded that the depictions cannot be made out. Consistent with the architectural design, two windows are on each wall. Steps lead to the roof above.

The body is that of a bandit killed by a huai several hours before the arrival of the characters. He is wearing robes typical of the region, but which have been ripped open and shredded. Upon inspecting the body, a ranger or druid notes that the damage is from rips and scratches and not a weapon. A scimitar lies near the body. There is 15gp in coin and 50gp in jewelry on his person.

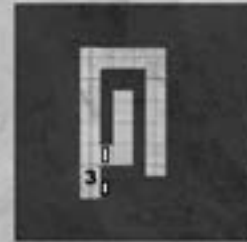
#### AREA 12 COURTYARD (GROUND LEVEL)

The arched entry to this area is ten feet wide. Murals painted in vibrant colors on the underside of the arch are still visible. These depict fruit trees and men tending to them. There is also a makeshift fence covering the lower half of the arch. It is made of old slats of wood, incorporating broken handles, pieces and cloth, and straps of leather. A small fruit tree in the cobbled courtyard, about fifteen feet tall, grows against the wall of the south building. Several chickens rest in the shade of the tree.

**Fortified Residence**

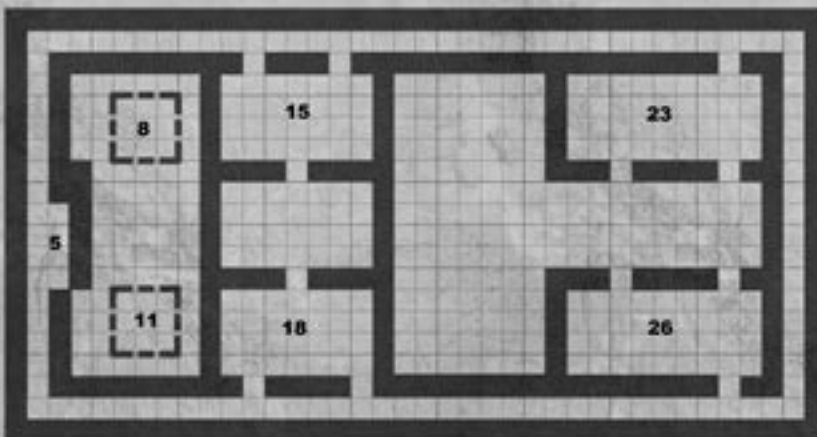


**Pryamid**



**Level 2**

**Fortified Residence**

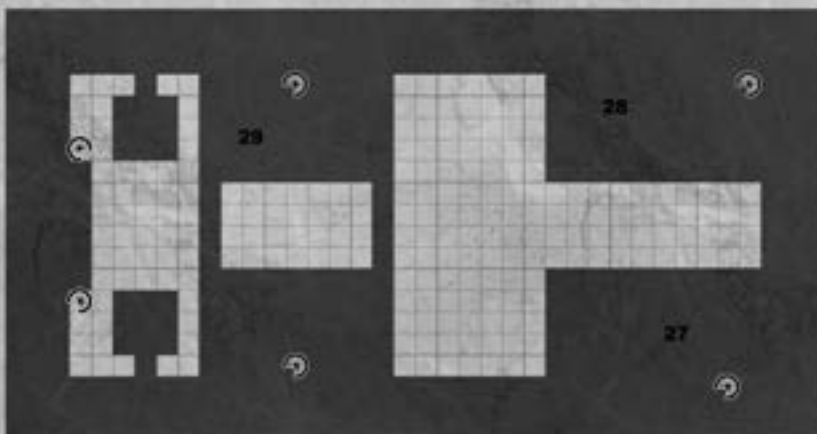


**Pryamid**

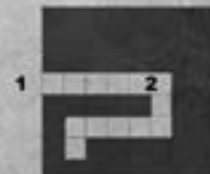


**Level 3**

**Fortified Residence**



**Pryamid**



**Roof &  
Level 4**

**Map 2**



and amongst its branches. A man leans against the wall in the shade of the tree, snoring loudly.

Unless the brigands are awakened and gathering for a fight, one person is located here day or night, passed out and sleeping deeply. The chickens scatter once the characters get within five feet of them. If the characters scare the chickens, they begin squawking and making noise, prompting the people in Area 15 and Area 17 to look out the window.

The following are in this room: Rogue 1<sup>st</sup> x1.

### **AREA 13 ROOM (GROUND LEVEL)**

Chickens roost and wander around this room. It is scattered with chicken poop and smells of the same. Food scraps have been cast in here. The bottoms of several broken vases are scattered around the room, each filled with a little water. A stone shelf runs the length of both the east and west walls. Narrow steps on the north wall lead to the upper floor. Chickens are wandering about the steps and hopping onto the shelves.

There are eighteen chickens in this room. The chickens are rather large considering their living conditions, but they get a lot to eat since the brigands bring back all manner of foodstuffs from their raids. If the characters enter the room, the chickens start to squawk and scatter, alerting the occupants in Area 15 and Area 17 (if they have not already been alerted).

### **AREA 14 ROOM (LEVEL 2)**

This room is cluttered with debris. The brigands use this room to 'store' material they have stolen, but for which they have little use. Boxes, crates, barrels, and baskets are strewn about. All have been opened and the contents dumped out onto the floor. There are a few gourds, water flasks, belts, pieces of clothing, small nets, copper bowls, dishes, broken china, pairs of boots, half a dozen small books (genealogies, histories, etc. all from one geographer), a broken mirror, combs, makeup, and even several wigs.

The characters can find some potentially useful items searching through the debris. The wigs and makeup are part of an actor's makeup kit and are useful for an assassin. A large magnifying glass, a set of six ink vials and quills, 100 sheets of vellum, several exotic wooden masks worth 10-100gp each, a box of spices, a small barrel of coffee beans, and a coffee pot can be found amongst the debris.

Of the exotic masks, one is magical. This mask is made of wood, is garishly colored, has a pronounced brow ridge, large teeth with canines, an elongated chin, and pug snout. When worn, it conforms to the wearer's face, and the wearer can then cast a fear spell once per day at an 8th level ability. The wearer simply tries to do so, and the spell is cast.

### **AREA 15 ROOM (LEVEL 3)**

This room is used by five of the brigands as sleeping quarters. There are five sleeping areas which have bedrolls and personal gear beside them. See the personal items below for the brigands sleeping here.

A stone bench wraps around the whole room. The room contains a barrel of water in the center of the room, two flasks of oil, a lantern hanging on the wall, and some dirty tableware with food scraps left on them. There are four spears, two halberds, 3 scimitars, six small wooden shields, and a dozen knives in here as well.

There are five brigands in the room. They cook and eat on the roof above this room (see Area 27), and usually only sleep and gamble in here. Any disturbance in the courtyard below attracts their attention, but only furtively. If they do not immediately see anything untoward happening in the courtyard they go back to gambling.

The following are in this room: Ranger 2nd x1, Rogue 2nd x1, Rogue 1<sup>st</sup> x2, Fighter 1st x1.

### **AREA 16 ROOM (GROUND LEVEL)**

Five horses are currently in this room, lounging in the shade and the cool that the room offers. A few chickens are in here as well. Four large and deep pans of water are in the center of the room. A trough with some grain in it is against the wall. Saddles, saddles bags, and harnesses are stacked near the entrance of the room. There are a dozen saddles. Several of the saddles are ornate and obviously quite valuable.

These are all riding horses. Two of the saddles are very well made and studded with glass beads and other ornamentation like bright tassels. All the saddles are for riding horses and not warhorses and worth 100gp each. The horses are hot and lounging. They get up and neigh or move about if disturbed but otherwise do not pay much attention to those who come into the room. If fighting breaks out they rush out of the room and either leave the fort or go to Area 19, the courtyard.

### **AREA 17 ROOM (LEVEL 2)**

Three brigands sleep in this room. There are three bedrolls, a cask of water, a small wine cask (empty), and some foodstuffs scattered around the room. Each of the bedrolls has the equivalent of an overland expert pack, a desert pack by it, and 10-100gp worth of coin or jewelry nearby. Three spears, three short composite bows, several axes, a mace, and a scimitar lean against the walls in various places. There are two windows in each wall.

The brigands are lounging and slightly drunk after having finished the cask of wine. They are not armed except with daggers though they can quickly grab their weapons if alerted. They fight at a -1 for several hours after the characters arrive in the complex.

Amongst the debris by the bedrolls is a set of six nicely carved ivory dice. They are also loaded. If the dice are used for gambling, the person who knows how to bet using loaded dice receives a +1 to any gambling check.

The following are in this room: Cleric level 1<sup>st</sup> x1, Ranger level 2<sup>nd</sup> x1, Rogue level 2<sup>nd</sup> x1.

## **8 CASTLES & CRUSADES**

### AREA 18 ROOM (LEVEL 3)

This room has a stone bench stretching around its interior and along the walls. There are two windows on each wall that are covered in ragged cloths and cloaks, shading the room. Stairs lead upstairs to the roof. Some debris is scattered on the floor; foodstuffs, chicken bones, a few empty sacks, and a pan.

Occasionally a group of five or more will gather here and gamble.

### AREA 19 ROOM (GROUND LEVEL)

This is the courtyard for the main part of the complex. The arch leading to this area is thirty feet across and fifteen tall. A makeshift fence crosses the entry. It is made of wagon wheels, planks of wood, old bags, and other debris. Beyond, twelve horses are relaxing in the shade of various statues, two buildings, and four large pylons. A character will immediately notice the four statues of sphinxes to either side of the entry. There are two on each side and they face one another. These are richly detailed and well-crafted statues sitting on stone pedestal five feet tall, four feet wide, and eight feet long. The statues are of seated sphinxes staring at one another. These have been worn down and broken over the ages.

Beyond these four sphinxes are four pylons. The westernmost pylon is the tallest. It is exactly one hundred feet tall from the cobbled ground. The following three are ninety feet, eighty feet, and seventy feet tall. Each is made of a pure white stone and superbly carved. The top of each glint with gold. Each pylon is ten-foot square at the bottom and 5-foot square at the top. The stone is otherworldly and unrecognizable. The stone is smooth as glass, and the edges are razor sharp. On the west side of the smallest pylon are the beginnings of a makeshift ladder stretching up  $\frac{2}{3}$  the pylon's height.

The north and south ends of the courtyard have statues of sphinxes on pedestals. These are like those described previously but larger at about ten feet tall, eight feet wide, and fifteen feet long. The sphinxes are standing on their back legs with paws reaching up the sky while roaring. These have been worn and broken over time. Two small drainages run the court's length from beneath a huge statue at the far east wall (see Area 20). These drainages are 2 feet deep and 1 foot wide. They are cobbled as is the rest of the courtyard. The drainages turn to the south and north walls, where they go under the wall and empty into the moat. The drainages are partially filled with wet sand toward the east end of the fort.

The pylons are cursed, as the bandits will find out once they reach the top. The gold on the top of each pylon wraps the tip and is worth, from tallest to shortest, 4000gp, 3000gp, 2000gp, and 1000g. The face of each gold plate is inscribed with an unrecognizable rune. Each face on each pylon is the same. When any living creature gets within 1 foot of the gold, the runes begin to glow icy blue. When the tip of the pylon is touched, the faces have the following effects.

North rune: Constitution save at CL10 or fall paralyzed to the ground with appropriate damage. This paralysis lasts 1-6 days, and one point of constitution is permanently lost.

**SOUTH RUNE:** Dexterity save at CL10 or take 3d10 burn damage and fall to the ground with appropriate damage. Dexterity is reduced 1d10 points for 1-6 days and one point of dexterity is permanently lost.

**EAST RUNE:** Intelligence save at CL10 or take 4d8 lightning damage and fall to the ground with appropriate damage. Intelligence is reduced 1d10 points for 1-6 days, and one point of intelligence is permanently lost.

**WEST RUNE:** Wisdom save at CL10 or take 5d6 damage (of a spiritual nature – to the soul :) and fall to the ground. Wisdom is reduced 1d10 points for 1-6 days, and one point of wisdom is permanently lost. No spells can be cast if the character's wisdom drops below 9.

Climbing the pylons is nearly impossible. Checks are made at a CL15. Also, the edges are razor sharp and can cut through a rope, although not chain.

Safely removing the pylons is nigh impossible. Some things are not meant to be had. That said, each can be melted off. This destroys the runes, the curses, and all other ill effects. Only an automaton, undead, or similar non-living entity can try to pry the caps off and suffer no ill effect from the runes. This can take quite a while as the caps were cast on top of the pylon, and there are funnels in the pylon into which the gold was poured when the cap was created. This creates a locking effect requiring the gold to be torn off in pieces.

If anyone tries to knock the pylons over, they have the following hit points from the tallest to the shortest; 1000hp, 900hp, 800hp, and 700hp. That is the minimum amount of damage that needs to be done to the pylons to cause them to topple. All have an AC 22 for purposes of being hit with any effect. Only tools made of iron, steel, or some other harder material has a chance of doing damage. A normal iron pick does 1d4 damage if the pylon is struck. The pylons have an SR10. It saves versus any effect as if mental and physical are primes and has a +5 to that save.

The drainages once funneled water away from the fountain and statue (Area 20) and into the moat. However, since that statue was damaged centuries ago, it does not create as much water as it once did. That water is collected in buckets by the bandits and used to keep the chickens and horses refreshed.

### AREA 20 ROOM (GROUND LEVEL)

This is a huge statue at the far east end of the courtyard (Area 19). It stands 50 feet tall and comprises an elaborate and magnificently carved heiracosphinx standing on its rear legs and clawing at the sun while stepping on the body of a dragon. It sits on a low fifteen-foot-long and ten-foot-wide square pedestal. Water pours from its mouth into a large wooden barrel at its bases. The barrel sits over the spot where the drainages crossing the courtyard converge. There are piles of cups and buckets where the water pours into the drainage. Some weedy grasses, thorn bushes, and a raggedy tree grow nearby. A man with a large slouch hat is sitting up against the barrel sleeping and snoring away, blissfully unaware of the desert's heat.

Close inspection reveals the statue has a large crack running down one side, and a portion of the statue has moved a ¼ inch. Water leaks from the seam. The statue was originally designed as a fountain, out of which about 800 gallons of water poured every day. The water was used as refreshment, to fill the moat (which was also used as a pool), and to water an extensive exotic garden that surrounded the fort. During an earthquake many centuries ago the statue was the only thing damaged, and it cracked. This crack sealed most of the tube through which the water flowed. About a century ago that tube opened back up after another quake, and a little more water now flows through the fountain. The fountain produces about 200 gallons of water a day. At first this water flowed into the drainages and beyond, allowing vegetation to grow and attract a little wildlife. It also attracted the brigands who collect all the water and use it for themselves, their horses, and the chickens. Hardly any water flows into the ground anymore and has not in the decade or more since the brigands have been using this place.

The fountain is sourced from a decanter of endless water built into the base of the statue. That decanter produces about 30 gallons of water an hour. When the statue cracked, it blocked that flow. If the statue is knocked over and the pedestal removed, the decanter's chamber can eventually be found. The decanter is made of a magically enhanced iron, weighs about 100 pounds, and has a cap attached to its side. When the decanter is sealed, the water stops flowing.

The following is in this room: Wizard level 2<sup>nd</sup> x1.

### **AREA 21 ROOM (GROUND LEVEL)**

The entries to this room are rectangular and covered with capes and blankets. A large stone lintel sits above each door. These lintels are carved with hieroglyphs. The floor is made of a white marble with green veins running through it. Thick columns hold up the roof. A stone bench runs the length of the north wall and the south wall between the entries. The east wall has the remnants of a statue leaning against it. Though once painted in bright colors, the walls have faded, so the colors are a dull brown at this juncture. There is a wide and broad stone ramp leading to the floor above. There are usually four or more horses in this room. There are 6 bedrolls, a makeshift fire pit on the floor, and packs, backpacks, sacks, and crates spread around the room.

The hieroglyphs on the lintels are imbued with spells. If any of the characters can read the hieroglyphs and they are chanted out loud, the person who chants them receives deific protection of SR5 versus all spiritual magic and spells cast upon the character for one hour (i.e. from clerics, druids, or similar classes and/or magic items that are blessed by deific magic.)

There are six narrow columns placed on an east-west axis down the center of the room. Each is roughly two feet in diameter and reaches to the roof ten feet above. The columns are elaborately carved in intricate renditions of monsters, beasts, humans, humanoids, and other animals. These carvings are all placed in rows around the column, each being distinct from the other.

The southeast column has a hidden chamber that contains some treasure. To get to it, the uppermost row of figures that depict crocodiles eating people must be turned. It is not noticeable upon inspection, but if anyone tries to turn it, it moves a little and, with some effort, that entire row spins. For every figure, if spun it starts to release stone pins allowing the rows of figures beneath to turn. There are 24 rows, and all must be spun to the correct setting like a combination lock. This releases a final pin that clicks open a stone block on the pedestal upon which the column rests. This small door can be slid out. To align the pins, someone must listen at the column, and a pin sliding into place can be heard.

A successful listening check at CL 4 identifies when the correct pin has been released and locked. Otherwise, it is nigh on impossible to guess the 24 correct figures that make up the combination. In the chamber are 200 gold coins, a crown worth 1000gp, a necklace worth 500gp, a pair of golden armbands worth 1000g which confer a +2 to armor class when both are worn, and a gem of true seeing.

The exquisitely carved statue at the end of the room is of an unidentifiable creature, as it has been cracked in half and the upper portions removed. The only part remaining is that of the bottom half of a lion sitting down. There are many divots in it. The top half was where gems and jewels were placed. All were removed long ago.

The walls depict tales of various sphinxes and the wars they fought amongst one another. It would take some time, but a character so concerned could glean that there are various types of sphinxes who make war on one another.

There are twelve 100-pound sacks of grain, a barrel of dried meat, and two crates with bags of various grains and beans inside.

The horses buck and fight but try to escape if there is any fighting inside the room.

Oharm and six other brigands reside in this room. They each have their own sleeping areas spread throughout the room. At the beginning of the adventure all six are in this room. See their character descriptions for what each NPC has either on their person or in their bedroll. During the evening several or all will go up to the roof to relax in the cool and often to sleep.

The following are in this room: Oharm Imwad, Cleric 1<sup>st</sup> x1, Fighter 1<sup>st</sup> x1, Rogue 1<sup>st</sup> x 2, Rogue 1<sup>st</sup> x1, Ranger 2<sup>nd</sup> x1.

### **AREA 22 ROOM (LEVEL 2)**

This room has four windows in it. Two wide ones overlook the courtyard to the south, and two narrow windows overlook the moat to the north. A stone bench runs the entire length of the room except where the ramp comes up and leads to the floor above. The walls were once colorfully painted depictions of a garden. Examination reveals a heiracosphinx moving amongst the plants and trees of the garden. The ceiling is painted in stars and clouds with various types of sphinxes in battle scenes. The paintings on the wall have faded to dull browns, but those on the ceiling still retain some brightness. There are four bedrolls on the floor. Characters

## **10 CASTLES & CRUSADES**

will see a couple of broken casks, trunks, and emptied bags, as well as foodstuffs, plates, and wooden cups scattered around.

The debris on the floor is some of the material the brigands collected over the years and kept, though they never found any use for any of it. There are several blankets, some wooden candle holders, wooden flatware, a few shovels, broken vases, ceramic lamps, hats, belts, and similar mundane debris. There is nothing of any real value left in here. The brigands just regularly go through it when they need a piece of clothing or some random item.

### **AREA 23 ROOM (LEVEL 3)**

The ramp leading up to this room has a makeshift curtain around it. This room's ceiling has a half dome in the middle, with a skylight in the dome. The dome's interior is painted in a bright blue that still, after all the years, retains a crispness that no other paint in the building does. The walls were painted at one time as well, although they are faded and indistinct at this point. Two narrow windows overlook the moat to the north and two large windows open to the south. These windows have elaborate stone scrollwork screens. A circular bench, about 2 feet tall, is in the center of the room. Inside the circular bench, on the floor, is a richly designed mosaic of fish and other undersea creatures.

The blue tile of the floor is dusty but has the same brilliance as the ceiling above. A stone bench runs the length of the north wall. A ramp leads up to the roof above. Several bedrolls are in here. A wooden trunk is beside one bedroll and another wooden trunk with metal strapping and a small iron box is beside the other bedroll.

This room is used by both Ahkmad Phum and Kham Ushite. Kham is gone with the other brigands while Ahkmad is in the fort. When the characters arrive Ahkmad is in here sleeping.

**TRUNK 1:** This trunk belongs to Ahkmad Phum. It is wooden and locked with a large padlock. The trunk contains 100gp, 400sp, 2000cp, six pieces of jewelry worth 100-600gp each, a potion of pass without trace, a potion of cure serious wounds, and a silk robe that confers +1 to armor class when worn without any other armor.

**TRUNK 2:** This trunk belongs to Kham Ushite. This is a wooden trunk with iron banding and a complex lock built into the top. Picking the lock is a CL 3. A failed attempt trips a spring and pin inside making it more difficult to pick, increasing it to a CL 4. A second failed attempt trips another spring and pin that breaks a ceramic vial that releases a type II poison in a five-foot square area. Inside is 300sp, 1000cp, a silver lamp with double radius illumination, a jewel encrusted dagger worth 300gp, and a wig with silver and gold thread adorning it worth 200gp.

**IRON BOX 3:** This box belongs to Kham Ushite. This is a small metal box, 1x1 foot in size and secured with iron bands, with a key slot on top. Kham has never opened this trunk, having only recently acquired it, and he does not know what is inside. The key slot is a trap. When anything is inserted, a magical glyph

is activated, causing 2d6 damage to all those not of lawful evil alignment. A wisdom save can halve this damage. This glyph activates every time.

The actual locking mechanism is on the opposite side of the trunk from where the key slot is located. A piece of the iron banding can be moved to the side, exposing a knob, the turning of which causes another metal plate to slide over the glyph mentioned previously. Then a key can be placed in the hole and the box unlocked. Kham has the key. Picking the lock is a CL 7. The whole top is removed.

Inside the box is a padded compartment holding a six-inch blue and white veined egg. This is an egg of a monstrous lizard, worth 1000gp. It can be trained as a mount and grows 1d8 HD a year until mature at 8d8HD. It can not be ridden until it reaches 4d8 HD.

The following is in the room: Ahkmad Phum.

### **AREA 24 ROOM (GROUND LEVEL)**

This room has a large statue of an eight-legged lion with three ram heads. The lion is standing, and the front four paws are scratching the air. The central head is open as if in a growl revealing long sharp canines. There is an exceptionally low and broad bench wrapping around the entire room. The center two thirds of the room is shallower than the rest of the room. This area has a fresco on the floor that has been broken and shattered in many places, but its complex angular designs can still be discerned. A ramp leads up to the floor above. The walls have dull and time worn paintings on them. These depict creatures like the statue in various poses of relaxation.

No one likes to stay in this room and it is used for transit to the roof only. The statue is that of a god of the heiracosphinx, Nekraphon Hep. Anyone who comes within five feet of the statue and does not make one of two offerings suffers from the curse. An offer of gold, silver, gems, or valuables of that nature of not less than 1000gp prevents the curse. The offer should be laid before the statues. The treasure slowly disappears once placed. Another way is to fill the shallower portion of the room with water. The latter prevents anyone in the room from being cursed.

The curse causes those affected to suffer 1d6 points of randomly determined attribute points to be temporarily lost (roll a d6 for the number, then a d6 for each point to determine which of the six attributes are affected). These repair at 1 attribute point per day. The curse stacks. So, reentering the area can cause the curse to renew. All attribute points can be cured by making the offering in valuables or filling the depression with water.

### **AREA 25 ROOM (LEVEL 2)**

This room has ten short one-foot tall intricately carved stone pedestals arranged in the center of the room. They cover an area of about eight feet to a side. Several are cracked and broken and others are off center or out of line. Two windows look out over the moat to the south and two larger windows on the north wall, with intricate lattice stonework covering them, look out over the courtyard. A broad ramp leads up to the floor above.



A half dozen bedrolls are spread out, and a firepit is in the center of the room. Personal debris, such as blankets, clothing, pots, pans, and similar items, are scattered around the room. Also, several large horses are in this room.

Five of the brigands use this room as their sleeping quarters. There are five well-tended horses in the room. The five people in this room typically go to the roof at night. However, while they prefer cooking on the roof, they do not sleep on the roof knowing the danger that poses. These three are latecomers to this band of brigands, and their loyalty to one another exceeds their loyalty to the other brigands.

The following are in this room: Wak Hama, Rogue 2<sup>nd</sup> x1, Fighter 1<sup>st</sup> x1, Cleric 1<sup>st</sup> x1, and Ranger 1<sup>st</sup> x1.

#### **AREA 26 ROOM (LEVEL 3)**

This room is sectioned off into eight alcoves between a central walk. Most of the alcoves have a metal grating over them with a door set into the grate. The metal grating has been ripped off the others. Bedrolls and personal gear are piled in each of the alcoves. A ramp leads to the roof. Two narrow windows are overlooking the moat to the south and two broad windows with elaborate stone latticework overlook the courtyard to the north.

This room was once a treasury belonging to the heiracosphinx. Everything of any value was long ago removed. The brigands use this room as their sleeping quarters. Four are in here currently. See the character descriptions to find out what is in each of the alcoves.

The following are in this room: Mahmut, Wizard 2<sup>nd</sup> x1, Rogue 1<sup>st</sup> x1, and a Ranger 1<sup>st</sup> x1.

#### **AREA 27 ROOM (ROOF, LEVEL 4)**

The roof is flat with a two-foot-tall stone railing running its perimeter. There is a firepit here and several blankets laying around it. One barrel with several wooden cups on it sits several feet from the fire pit.

The brigands who are staying in the room below often come up here at night to relax in the cool. If it is cold enough and they have spare wood, they light a fire as well. The roof is often used for cooking. One or more persons are always supposed to be up here to keep a lookout for anyone coming here, but this rarely happens. If the characters raid the fort and leave, a guard will then always be up here.

#### **AREA 28 ROOM (ROOF, LEVEL 4)**

The roof is flat with a two-foot-tall stone railing running the south and west sides of the building. The north and east side connects to the battlement, where a five-foot-tall railing wraps around the entire fort. There are several fire pits here, blankets, pots, and pans for cooks, barrels, cups, foodstuffs, and even two benches made from wagon seats.

The bandits often use this area for cooking or sleeping in the cool of the evening. Occasionally the area is used to keep a watch over the valley. The roof is rarely used during the heat of

the day, but there is almost always someone up here during the evening. The barrels have water in them.

#### **AREA 29 ROOM (ROOF, LEVEL 4)**

The roof is flat with a two-foot-tall stone railing running the south and west sides of the building. The north and east side connects to the battlement, where a five-foot-tall railing wraps around the entire fort. There are several blankets, a barrel, and a fire pit up here.

The bandits occasionally use this area to relax in the evening breeze and cool off. They cook up here as well. The brigands from the room below will likely be sleeping up here during the evening.



#### **PYRAMID**

To the east of the fortress is a pyramid. It is constructed of the same stone as the obelisks and is glassy smooth, with just barely perceptible joint lines in the stone. The pyramid is one hundred feet on a side and just as tall. The edges of the pyramid are razor sharp. The tip of the pyramid glints with gold. The moat extends from around the fortress to wrap around the entire pyramid as well. There is no discernible door or entry.

The heiracosphinx had the pyramid built as a tomb for itself when it died. Rather than trust others to take its body to its final resting place, the heiracosphinx had the tomb designed

such that it could go to its burial chamber, close the doors behind itself and lock the doors from the inside. The idea was an effective one, but the heiracosphinx changed its mind at the last minute and could not take the poison after locking itself inside. It tried to get out but having designed the tomb door to lock in place permanently, it could not escape and died in that room fighting for air. Its skeletal remains and spirit are still there and animate as soon as anyone enters that room.

Climbing the side of the pyramid is extremely difficult though not impossible. All climb attempts are made at a CL10. The top of the pyramid is gold and worth 8000gp. It can be removed in the same manner as the gold on top of the obelisks.

#### **ROOM 1 ENTRY (ROOF, LEVEL 4)**

Gaining entry to the pyramid is difficult as it was never intended to be reentered. However, a conniving servant devised a manner by which it could be done, and the heiracosphinx never learned of it. Late in the afternoon as the sun sets, rays of light glint off the tallest obelisk. A small portion of the west face of the obelisk's golden tip has a divot in it that reflects light, almost like a laser beam pointing to a spot on the pyramid. This ray of light glints for but a minute then winks out. It illuminates a spot on the pyramid that is at an intersection of joints, a small area with a hole in it about one inch around, which is the key to unlocking the pyramid.

A pin is released by placing a ¼ inch wide rod about 2 feet down that hole and pressing hard. The pin releasing can be easily heard as one stone after another grind into place. What this does is release a locking stone on the cap of the pyramid. At this point, the cap of the pyramid can be turned.

The gold on the tip of the pyramid has small grooves in it, allowing for a grip. The tip only rotates one direction, and as soon as it is rotated one complete turn, another pin is released. This pin holds a locking stone in place. Once released, the stones around the point where the rod was placed give way slightly, revealing a ten foot by ten-foot seam on the face of the pyramid.

If the stones of the 'door' are pushed on with a combined strength of 18, they give way and roll inward for a few feet before turning on a hinge, opening to reveal a corridor descending into the pyramid's depths. Handles are revealed on the reverse side of the door. Once inside, closing the door causes all the pins to fall back into place, locking the characters inside, quite possibly forever.

A note to the Castle Keeper. Gaining entry to the pyramid is difficult. As it is intended. However, if the players are having difficulty figuring out how to get into the pyramid, please be sure to emphasize the divots on the obelisk tips, the hand grips on the top of the pyramid, and perhaps make the pin hole at the top of the pyramid rather obvious to any who is up there.

#### **ROOM 2 HALL (ROOF, LEVEL 4)**

A corridor slants down and into the pyramid. The hallway is five feet wide and eight feet tall. The walls are colorfully painted in scenes of servants carrying stones and laying offerings at the feet

of a sphinx, faded with time but still clear. The corridor leads to a landing where it switches back 180 degrees, continuing down into the pyramid before coming to another landing and switching back. The north wall of the landing has two large slots in it, extending from the roof to just above the floor, spaced about 2 feet apart. These slots are four inches wide. Between the two slots is a depiction of a sphinx rearing up with a paw extended to both slots. On either side of the slot are depictions of the god of the underworld.

The landing is trapped; roughly the entire center of the floor is a pressure plate. When any weight over 100 pounds is on the floor the trap is triggered and two blades come swinging out of the slots. These strike as 8hd and cause 2d10 damage to whoever they hit. A dexterity saving throw reduces that damage by half. If one or either of the blades does not strike something, they continue their path up and back, getting another strike. On the return stroke, the blades strike as 5HD and deliver 1d10 damage with a dexterity save versus half. If they do strike, both blades come to a stop inside the wall where they hang at equilibrium.

The second landing has a switchback with the corridor extending further down and into the pyramid leading to another landing. There is a chain suspended from a hole in the ceiling with a large loop at the bottom. If the trap has been set off the chain is near the ceiling. If the trap has not been set off it reaches the floor. There is a hook in the floor used to affix the chain, which is how the trap on the previous landing is set. Pulling the chain down causes the blades and the pressure plate on the floor to be raised. When the pressure plate is depressed, the hook releases the chain, this in turn releases the blades in the wall.

#### **ROOM 3 (LEVEL 2)**

The corridor extends past two more landings before ending in a level corridor. This corridor has paintings depicting elaborate funerary rituals in which a sphinx takes drinks from a decanter and then lies down in repose. It ends in a wooden door wrapped in gold and silver bands. There is a single handle in the center of the door but no visible hinges.

This is a trap. Pulling on the handle to open the door releases a locking pin holding a 10-ton block in the ceiling in place. That block falls into the corridor on the landing. The stone blocks the entire ramp up. It is possible the trap can be detected before being set off. The stone in the ceiling has dropped slightly over the years and is offset by about ¾ of an inch. If searching the corridor this is noticed with a wisdom check CL 4. If not searching the corridor allow each of the characters a wisdom check to notice it at CL5. The trap cannot be disarmed from within the corridor. However, the stone can be jammed into place with wedges or spikes or even an iron pole. This would prevent the stone from dropping into the corridor. If it does drop into the corridor the five-ton stone blocks the exit and slowly reduces the oxygen available, eventually suffocating everyone. The stone can be lifted. See Area 5 below.

If the stone drops, it does so with enough force to cause a crack in the wall's secret door. The secret door is near the fake door. It is difficult to locate the secret door as it is magically disguised.

Searching for it is a CL6. This locates the seams. One can also knock on the wall and hear the hollow sound from behind the wall. In the latter case, it is a normal check to locate. There is no way of pushing the door open as it is closed and locked from the opposite side and was never meant to be used again. The stone is thin, only 6 inches thick, and can be broken with sledgehammers and chisels or other tools and time.

#### **ROOM 4 SHRINE (GROUND LEVEL)**

This room contains a shrine. There are four columns, each in the shape of heiracosphinx, standing with their paws holding up the roof. The walls are painted with elaborate depictions of gardens and canals. At the far end of the room is a large colorful statue of a six headed, six-armed sphinx. Each head depicts a different thing such as a human, hawk, alligator, dragon, elephants, and canine. Each arm is of a different type of appendage such as a lion's paw, hawk's claw, human hand, goat's hoof, dog's claw, and dragon's claw. A silver bowl rests at the end of each.

The silver bowls are easily removed and contain nothing but the ashes of incense cones. They are quite valuable and when incense cones are placed in them, they act as candles of invocation. The arms of the statue all move. When the arms are all pulled down, this releases a hook that is holding the statue in place. After the hook is removed, the statue can be pulled or pushed forward, as it rests on stone rollers. After moving it forward, an opening is revealed behind the statue. A rank and musty odor spills into the corridor.

#### **ROOM 5 CORRIDOR (GROUND LEVEL)**

The corridor beyond is simple and unadorned. There are no drawings nor paintings, unlike all the other rooms and corridors. The hall extends down until an aperture opens on the right-hand side. This space has a series of half a dozen large pulleys and chains. These pulleys lift the stone for the trap in Area 3. If this is used to try and pull up the stone blocking the corridor, the chain might snap. It takes a combined strength of 26 to use the pulley and lift the stone. If the stone is lifted, the pin on the door must be replaced for it to lock in place again (when the stone is lifted all the way, the false door needs to be pushed back in place, thus replacing the pin).

There is a chance that the chain snaps when it is lifted. The chain makes a saving throw as if a prime check for every round it is being used to pull the stone back in place. A combined strength of 20 is needed to pull the chain and only two people can effectively work the chain at a time. It takes 2d4 rounds to pull the chain. For each point of combined strength above 20, subtract one round to a minimum of 2 rounds.

The corridor continues and ends in a stout wooden door with iron bands. There is no hinge nor handle to be seen. The door must be broken open to get inside. A glyph of warding is on the far side of the door. When the door receives more than 20 points of damage, the glyph explodes in a wave of spiritual energy causing 2d6 damage to everyone within 20 feet of the door. A dexterity save reduces the damage by half. The door has 100 hit points.

#### **ROOM 6 TREASURY (GROUND LEVEL)**

Behind the door is a long and wide room. Both sides of the room are lined with furniture, statues, rugs, vases, trunks, boxes, and sundry silver and gold platters and adornments. Much of the material in here are the personal goods used by the heiracosphinx, such as sleeping rugs, desks, and other assorted furnishings. One of the rugs is worth 100gp but weighs almost 50 pounds and is 12 feet long and 10 feet wide.

There are a dozen silver and gold platters with etchings on them. Each is worth 100-600gp. Some silverware, eating platters, and candelabras are laid out. These are worth 1000gp. There are four small iron trunks, each of which is locked and requires a CL5 to pick.

**TRUNK 1:** This trunk contains scrolls and papyrus. All of them relate a history of the whole complex and the life of the heiracosphinx. These writings are worth 1000gp to the right person.

**TRUNK 2:** This trunk contains silver coin and silver jewelry. There is 1000gp worth of silver in here.

**TRUNK 3:** This trunk contains gold coins and jewelry worth 2000gp.

**TRUNK 4:** This trunk contains platinum coin and jewelry worth 3000gp

At the far end of the room is a small recess in the wall about two feet deep and ten feet wide and tall. A stone sits squarely inside it, covering anything beyond.

This is a stone that was dropped into place by the heiracosphinx when it sealed itself in the tomb beyond. It cannot be moved but must be broken apart or magically destroyed somehow. With the correct tools it takes several days of work to remove it.

#### **ROOM 7 TOMB (GROUND LEVEL)**

This room veritably glitters with tiny jewels, the walls painted with scenes of a sphinx in a tomb, and its journey to the afterlife. Many jewels are scattered on the floor, having fallen off the wall. However, it is what is in the center of the room that is most amazing: The skeletal remains of a massive beast lie on the floor. It appears as if it was a gigantic bird, adorned in a ragged and ancient leather vestment with metallic plates attached to it.

The beast appears to have curled up and laid down in the center of this room.

Examining the room reveals scratch marks on the wall, and deep scratch marks on the stone blocking the hallway. The scratching also pried hundreds of the jewels from the walls. A broken decanter lies among the skeletal remains. The garment wrapped around the skeleton is made up of 100 small steel plates weighing 4 pounds each. These plates are engraved with silver and worth 10gp each. The jewels are uncut and tiny, each worth 1gp. There are 3000 of them.

Within a minute of entering the room, the skeleton of the heiracosphinx begins to revive and animate. It takes a full ten

minutes to begin animating, during which time its skeleton does nothing. Once the ten minutes have passed, it takes just 3 rounds for it to be able to move and take actions. The beast wants to leave the room and cares not for the characters nor what they have or have not done. It makes for the exit right away, knocking over or attacking any character that stands in its way. It will fight to the death, so to speak.

Once “killed”, its spirit departs to the next world. If turned, it cowers in a corner until it can leave the tomb or can fight the characters again.

**HEIRACOSPHINIX SKELETON** (*The chaotic evil, undead monster's vital statistics are HD 9d10, HP 70, AC 20, BtH +9, and Move 40 feet. Its primary attributes are physical. It attacks with 2 claws for 2d4 damage and a bite for 1d10 damage. Its special abilities are darkvision, twilight vision, SR 4, partial immunity to slashing damage for 1/4 damage, and regeneration 2.*)

## WRAPPING UP

After the characters have finished clearing the complex and fighting the heiracosphinx, there are several aftereffects to consider. The first is getting all the material gathered back to a town to sell. There are ample horses and three useful wagons to aid them in this. However, they must cross the desert to return. Selling all the items may be difficult. Merchants and nobles will come forth wanting their goods returned to them and are willing to offer some pay if pressed. The gems and coins attract thieves and other ne'er-do-wells. The religious artifacts attract the attention of those of spiritual bent who would rather all the items be destroyed rather than preserved.

The leader of the bandits does eventually return to the complex. He finds the dead and seeks revenge for this. It may take some time, but the bandit leader will find the characters.

If the heiracosphinx survives, its ghostly remains leave the complex and do not return any time soon. However, it does return after wreaking some havoc on the lands around.





This book is published under the Open Game License version 1.0a by permission of Wizards of the Coast, Inc. The Open Game Content appearing in this book is derived from the System Reference Document v 3.0, copyright 2000 Wizards of the Coast, Inc.

**DESIGNATION OF OPEN GAME CONTENT:** The following is designated Open Game Content: all stat block information of characters, monsters, and traps that appears in the parenthetical following the character, monster, or trap, including the names of items and spells; and the general names of monsters, but not any unique named NPC, character, or monster, appearing in any table or preceding any stat block. Also, the following open game content related words, phrases, and abbreviations wherever they appear: Strength (Str), Dexterity (Dex), Constitution (Con), Intelligence (Int), Wisdom (Wis), Charisma (Cha), Class, Fighter, Ranger, Rogue, Assassin, Barbarian, Monk, Wizard, Illusionist, Cleric, Druid, Knight, Bard, Paladin, Race, Demi-human, Dwarf, Elf, Gnome, Half-Elf, Halfling, Half-Orc, Hit Dice (HD), Hit Points (HP), Alignment, Lawful Good (LG), Lawful Neutral (LN), Lawful Evil (LE), Neutral (N), Neutral Good (NG), Neutral Evil (NE), Chaotic Good (CG), Chaotic Neutral (CN), Chaotic Evil (CE), Level, "to hit", Damage, Experience Point, Saving Throw, Player Character (PC), Non-player Character (NPC), Turn Undead, Spell, Arcane, Divine, Magic, Spell Resistance, Item, Equipment, Armor, Weapon, Potion, Rod, Staff, Wand, Scroll, Ring, Wondrous Item, Artifact, Cursed, d4, d6, d8, d10, d12, d20, d%, round, and turn.

**DESIGNATION OF PRODUCT IDENTITY:** Product identity is not Open Game Content. The following is designated as product identity pursuant to OGL v1.0a(1)(e) and (7): (A) product and product line names, including Castles & Crusades, Castles & Crusades: Player's Handbook, Castles & Crusades: Monsters and Treasures, Castles & Crusades: Castle Keeper's Guide; (B) logos, identifying marks, and trade dress; (C) all artwork, logos, symbols, graphic designs, depictions, likenesses, formats, poses, concepts, themes and graphic, photographic and other visual representations; (D) logos and trademarks, including Castles & Crusades, Castle Keeper, SIEGE engine, and Troll Lord Games, or any other trademark or registered trademark clearly identified as product identity by the owner of the product identity, and which specifically excludes the open game content. (E) the story, storylines, plots, thematic elements, dialogue, incidents, language, depictions, likenesses, concepts, world and campaign descriptions, proper names of the characters, creatures, groups, spells, enchantments, personalities, teams, personas, likenesses, skills, items, deities, and special abilities other than those designated as open game content above, as well as places, locations, settings, and environments and their descriptions and other accompanying text, though not their stat blocks..

All text, artwork, and maps appearing in this book is property of and copyright 2007 Troll Lord Games. All Rights Reserved. Castles & Crusades, C&C, Castle Keeper, Troll Lord Games, and the Castles & Crusades and Troll Lord Games logos, and products published by Troll Lord Games are Trademarks of Troll Lord Games. All Rights Reserved.

## OPEN GAME LICENSE VERSION 1.0A

The following text is the property of Wizards of the Coast, Inc. and is Copyright 2000 Wizards of the Coast, Inc ("Wizards"). All Rights Reserved.

**1. Definitions:** (a) "Contributors" means the copyright and/or trademark owners who have contributed Open Game Content; (b) "Derivative Material" means copyrighted material including derivative works and translations (including into other computer languages), potation, modification, correction, addition, extension, upgrade, improvement, compilation, abridgment or other form in which an existing work may be recast, transformed or adapted; (c) "Distribute" means to reproduce, license, rent, lease, sell, broadcast, publicly display, transmit or otherwise distribute; (d) "Open Game Content" means the game mechanic and includes the methods, procedures, processes and routines to the extent such content does not embody the Product Identity and is an enhancement over the prior art and any additional content clearly identified as Open Game Content by the Contributor, and means any work covered by this License, including translations and derivative works under copyright law, but specifically excludes Product Identity. (e) "Product Identity" means product and product line names, logos and identifying marks including trade dress; artifacts; creatures characters; stories, storylines, plots, thematic elements, dialogue, incidents, language, artwork, symbols, designs, depictions, likenesses, formats, poses, concepts, themes and graphic, photographic and other visual or audio representations; names and descriptions of characters, spells, enchantments, personalities, teams, personas, likenesses and special abilities; places, locations, environments, creatures, equipment, magical or supernatural abilities or effects, logos, symbols, or graphic designs; and any other trademark or registered trademark clearly identified as Product identity by the owner of the Product Identity, and which specifically excludes the Open Game Content; (f) "Trademark" means the logos, names, mark, sign, motto, designs that are used by a Contributor to identify itself or its products or the associated products contributed to the Open Game License by the Contributor (g) "Use", "Used" or "Using" means to use, Distribute, copy, edit, format, modify, translate and otherwise create Derivative Material of Open Game Content. (h) "You" or "Your" means the licensee in terms of this agreement.

**2. The License:** This License applies to any Open Game Content that contains a notice indicating that the Open Game Content may only be Used under and in terms of this License. You must affix such a notice to any Open Game Content that you Use. No terms may be added to or subtracted from this License except as described by the License itself. No other terms or conditions may be applied to any Open Game Content

distributed using this License.

**3. Offer and Acceptance:** By Using the Open Game Content You indicate Your acceptance of the terms of this License.

**4. Grant and Consideration:** In consideration for agreeing to use this License, the Contributors grant You a perpetual, worldwide, royalty-free, non-exclusive license with the exact terms of this License to Use, the Open Game Content.

**5. Representation of Authority to Contribute:** If You are contributing original material as Open Game Content, You represent that Your Contributions are Your original creation and/or You have sufficient rights to grant the rights conveyed by this License.

**6. Notice of License Copyright:** You must update the COPYRIGHT NOTICE portion of this License to include the exact text of the COPYRIGHT NOTICE of any Open Game Content You are copying, modifying or distributing, and You must add the title, the copyright date, and the copyright holder's name to the COPYRIGHT NOTICE of any original Open Game Content you Distribute.

**7. Use of Product Identity:** You agree not to Use any Product Identity, including as an indication as to compatibility, except as expressly licensed in another, independent Agreement with the owner of each element of that Product Identity. You agree not to indicate compatibility or co-adaptability with any Trademark or Registered Trademark in conjunction with a work containing Open Game Content except as expressly licensed in another, independent Agreement with the owner of such Trademark or Registered Trademark. The use of any Product Identity in Open Game Content does not constitute a challenge to the ownership of that Product Identity. The owner of any Product Identity used in Open Game Content shall retain all rights, title and interest in and to that Product Identity.

**8. Identification:** If you distribute Open Game Content You must clearly indicate which portions of the work that you are distributing are Open Game Content.

**9. Updating the License:** Wizards or its designated Agents may publish updated versions of this License. You may use any authorized version of this License to copy, modify and distribute any Open Game Content originally distributed under any version of this License.

**10 Copy of this License:** You MUST include a copy of this License with every copy of the Open Game Content You Distribute.

**11. Use of Contributor Credits:** You may not market or advertise the Open Game Content using the name of any Contributor unless You have written permission from the Contributor to do so.

**12 Inability to Comply:** If it is impossible for You to comply with any of the terms of this License with respect to some or all of the Open Game Content due to statute, judicial order, or governmental regulation then You may not Use any Open Game Material so affected.

**13 Termination:** This License will terminate automatically if You fail to comply with all terms herein and fail to cure such breach within 30 days of becoming aware of the breach. All sublicenses shall survive the termination of this License.

**14 Reformation:** If any provision of this License is held to be unenforceable, such provision shall be reformed only to the extent necessary to make it enforceable.

## 15 COPYRIGHT NOTICE

Open Game License v 1.0 Copyright 2000, Wizards of the Coast, Inc.

System Reference Document Copyright 2000, Wizards of the Coast, Inc; Authors Jonathan Tweet, Monte Cook, Skip Williams, based on original material by E. Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson.

**Castles & Crusades: Players Handbook, Copyright 2004, Troll Lord Games; Authors Davis Chenault and Mac Golden.**

**Castles & Crusades: Players Handbook, 5th printing, Copyright 2011, Troll Lord Games; Authors Davis Chenault and Mac Golden.**

**Castles & Crusades: Players Handbook, 6th printing, Copyright 2014, Troll Lord Games; Authors Davis Chenault and Mac Golden.**

**Castles & Crusades: Monsters & Treasure, Copyright 2005, Troll Lord Games; Authors Robert Doyel and Stephen Chenault.**

**Castles & Crusades: Monsters & Treasure, 2nd printing, Copyright 2007, Troll Lord Games; Authors Robert Doyel and Stephen Chenault.**

**Castles & Crusades: Monsters & Treasure, 3rd printing, Copyright 2009, Troll Lord Games; Authors Robert Doyel and Stephen Chenault.**

**Castles & Crusades: Monsters & Treasure, 4th printing, Copyright 2009, Troll Lord Games; Authors Robert Doyel and Stephen Chenault.**

**Castles & Crusades Castle Keepers Guide, 2nd Printing, Copyright 2015, Troll Lord Games; Author Davis Chenault. & Stephen Chenault.**

**Castles & Crusades Tome Of The River King Copyright 2020, Troll Lord Games; Author Davis Chenault.**

# CASTLES & CRUSADES

## TOMB OF THE RIVER KING

In ages past, or so the tales relate, a magical beast haunted the lands of the desert people. Some he devoured, others he placed in bondage. These slaves he bid build for him a mighty tomb, a pyramid the likes of which few in those days had seen. He gathered all his manifold wealth and crawled into the tomb and there sealed himself in. By design or happenstance, the tales do not say.

Rumors abound that the tomb has been found, this ancient resting place, filled with wondrous magics of the old world, waiting for the intrepid and bold to unearth it and plunder its history.

This module is designed for four to five players of 5th to 6th level.

TROLL  
LORD  
GAMES

TLG 8366  
\$9.99

1818 N. TAYLOR, #143, LITTLE ROCK, AR 72207  
WWW.TROLLLORD.COM

PRINTED AT CHENAULT & GRAY PRINT  
IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

