

Dwellers of the Forbidden City

Conversion Guide by Jay Murphy

For Character Levels 4 - 7



Classic Modules Today A D&D 5th Edition Conversion of the Early Adventure Modules

1 Classic Adventure Module Conversion Module Conversion

I1 DWELLERS OF THE Forbidden City

CONVERSION GUIDE

Introduction: An AD&D 1st Edition adventure written by David Cook where characters may explore a unique and interesting mini-campaign setting. This conversion guide allows Dungeon Masters to run the original module with 5th Edition rules and provides a reference sheet for encounters.

An adventure location for 4th– 7th level characters which parts where used in 1980 convention tournaments. The module itself provides some information one needs to recreate tournament play.

By Jay Murphy



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I1: Dwellers of the Forbidden City

"Dwellers of the Forbidden City is the adventure that introduced us to several classic DeD monsters: the yuan-ti, the aboleth, the mongrelmen, the bullywugs and the tasloi first see their adventure debut in this module."

---<u>http://merricb.com/2012/09/04/review-of-i1-dwellers-of-</u> the-forbidden-city/

Introduction

To use this conversion guide you will need a copy of "I1 Dwellers of the Forbidden City", originally available in hard copy for the first edition of Advanced Dungeons & Dragons and now for sale in Digital format at www.dndclassics.com.

This document gives DMs advice to convert the module to the latest 5th Edition rules and guidance on preparing the adventure. A list of random encounters and a summary of principle NPC's provide a quick in-game reference. Most creatures refer to stat blocks found in the D&D 5e Monster Manual. The different clans and inhabitants of the Forbidden City are all included in the "Monster" list in alphabetical order to facilitate the DM looking them up at the table. If "New Monsters" cannot be referenced from the D&D 5e Monster Manual suggested statistics are provided.

Page listings may refer to abbreviations: MM (Monster Manual), CR (Challenge rating), DMG (Dungeon Master Guide), etc. All other page numbers refer to the locations in the original 'Dwellers of the Forbidden City' module. Key text is in **bold** for easy scanning. Magic items are noted in *italics*.

Find more information about this and other early edition conversions at <u>www.classicmodulestoday.com</u>.

Reference Sheet

For your convenience, the last two pages make a Reference Sheet which summarizes the key information you'll need during the game onto one concise sheet. You can print this onto a single, double-sided page (perhaps on colored card stock) as a handy tool that you can use alongside a hard copy of the module. After reading this document, all you'll need to run the game is the original module, the Monster Manual, the Reference Sheet, and optionally, any notes or visuals you've prepared.

Adventure Summary

The adventure begins when the player characters hear reports of bandits waylaying and attacking caravans in a jungle region. Most of the ambushed merchants and guards have been killed, but the few who have returned alive tell fantastic stories about deformed plants and deadly beasts in the jungle. The stolen goods taken from the caravans provide an impetus for the characters to enter the jungles in search of this lost treasure.

Converting to the Realms

This brief guide outlines a suggested location and ideas to bring "Dwellers of the Forbidden City" into the Forgotten Realms world of Faerun.

This adventure was instrumental in terms of introducing the Yuan-Ti as a new species of antagonists. Much like the drow from the GDQ Series, the yuan-ti have gone on to be featured in a number of 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Edition books for the D&D game and have an official history in Forgotten Realms world of Faerûn.

Long before humans dominated the continent of Faerûn, the Creator Races ruled Toril. The reptilian Creator Race, the sauroids, or sarrukh, were foremost among these and built up empires such as Okoth, Isstosseffifil and Mhairshaulk. They bred the first yuan-ti by magically experimenting with and breeding men with snakes. This way they also created nagas, and through a similar process, lizardmen. The sarrukh eventually fell from power and the resourceful yuan-ti rose up to claim their Creators' power vacuum, even for while sustaining the empire of Mhairshaulk. Of the fragmented World Serpent deity that the sarrukh had worshipped, the yuan-ti venerated the strongest aspect, a cruel and despotic deity, Merrshaulk, who grew distant and aloof.

The Chultan peninsula, in the southern part of the Trackless Sea, and the jungles of Chult makes for the ideal location of the Forbidden City itself. This island encompasses the land from the Mhair Jungles westward, including the Black Jungles, the jungles of Chult and the countries of Tashalar, Samarach, and Thindol.

It is a mountainous jungle of savage beasts, hulking dinosaurs, and disease-ridden swamps. Savage human tribes, goblins, and even stranger monstrous folk haunt the thick jungles. Nevertheless, Chult draws adventurers who search for its legendary riches.

Tournament Play

The strength of I1 is in the city itself and having the DM create their own original version of it, not so much in its touted use as a tournament module. If one is inclined to try their hand at tournament play the following notes will be of use.

No scoring sheet is provided for in the original module as is found in "C" series modules, so those wishing to run a tournament based on the tournament section of the module must design their own scoring system.

This is much more work than one might think coming from the module's description on the original hard copy edition.

Here are notes from other "C" series to give the DM an idea how these official tournament modules were scored at convention play.

To calculate the Individual score of each player:

1: Add up the number of *Hit Points Inflicted*.

2: Subtract from this the number of *Hit Points Received*.3: Enter this number under *Combat Scoring* on the DM'S SCORING SHEET.

4: Calculate the Subjective score (if any) for this player (remember it can't be more than 20% of the total *Keyed Individual Score).* Multiply the player's score by any Subjective bonus given and add it to the player's score.

5: Add together the *Combat score*, the *Subjective score*. and the *Keyed Individual score* to find the *Total Individual Score* for that player.

To calculate the Team score:

1: Find the total of the *Keyed Team Scoring*.

2: Find the value (in gp) of all of the treasure and divide this gp value by 1000 and enter this

result under Treasure score.

3: Add the *Total Individual Scores* of the characters, alive or dead, in the team, and take one-half of this amount (drop any fractions). Enter the result under 1/2 *Sum of Total Individual Scores*.

4: Enter the *Number of Turns Elapsed* (as taken from the DM'S SCORING SHEET).

5: Add the *Keyed Team Score*, the *Treasure Score*, and the 1/2 *Sum of Total Individual Scores*. Subtract from this total the *Number of Turns Elapsed* to obtain the *Total Team Score*.

"Keyed" scores are totals assigned to the keyed areas of the dungeon. Reaching and clearing a keyed location is necessary to score the Keyed value. Since none of these values were added in the original module the DM will have to come up with these values, and their locations, themselves.

Further Adventures

The city ruins are vast, and the factions found within can provide a springboard for more adventures among the time eaten halls. The original module provides notes on running the Forbidden City in Campaign Play (p.22) with Backgrounds and Adventures listed to provide inspiration for the DM.

Notes for the Dungeon Master

The adventure was first used as a module for tournament play at the 1980 Origins Game Fair, and was later published by TSR in 1981 for use with the first edition Advanced Dungeons & Dragons rules. The module was written by game designer David "Zeb" Cook, who partly ascribes his hiring by TSR to his work on this module. In the adventure, the characters are hired to find an object taken to a lost orientalstyle city, which has been taken over by a cult of snakeworshipers, the yuan-ti, and their servants, the mongrelmen and tasloi. The module was ranked as the 13th greatest Dungeons & Dragons adventure of all time by Dungeon magazine for the 30th anniversary of the Dungeons & Dragons game in 2004. Dwellers of the Forbidden City is the first of the mostly unrelated and unconnected Intermediate series (I-series) of modules designed for characters at between 4th and 8th levels.

As can see from the map, the Forbidden City is large and located within a canyon and thus isolated from the rest of the jungle. It is a world unto itself, one that operates according to the whims of its inhabitants. Still, the DM would be remiss in not making the surrounding jungle, and the journey through it, filled with danger and opportunity!

WotC's official conversion notes can be found here;

http://media.wizards.com/2015/downloads/dnd/DnD_Conver sions_1.0.pdf.

From the Dungeon Master's Guide

Special rules and tactics to brush up on prior to the game:

- Leverage **Conversation Reaction Table (DMG 245)** for NPC reactions. Specific reactions of notable NPC's and monsters are found detailed throughout the module and should be considered when rolling on the Reaction Table.
- Know how to use **perception** rules to detect **wilderness** encounters as well as **traps and secret doors**.
- Know the **poison** rules (DMG 257).
- Determine **spell tactics** for NPC Magi and Clerics.
- Use the **Fatigue rules** as characters will have to navigate a difficult jungle environment to reach the city.
- Know the **disease** rules (**DMG 256**) as infection and sickness are real dangers from traps and the jungle wilderness.
- Review the wilderness survival rules (DMG 109).

Visuals

Suggested visuals to create:

- Panoramic images of the ruined city will help your players envision the extent of the ancient ruins laid before them. Whether you create your own or find useful images from other sources, anything you can do to give the city character and flavor will help the location live in your player's imagination.
- Prepare a map and dungeon key additional floor plans for different temples, palaces, dungeons, caverns, and sewers. When the players range wide and far through the city this will save the DM time a the table instead of trying to create these floor plans on the fly.
- A custom equipment list for the primitive inhabitants, and perhaps what items useful for barter.

City Wandering Monster Table

Die Roll	Day	Night
01	Ant, Giant	Ape, Carnivorous
02	Bugbear	Beetle, Fire
03	Bullywug, Intelligent	Bullywug, Intelligent
04	Centipede, Giant	Bullywug, low intelligence
05	Mongrelmen	Frog, Giant
06	Spider, Giant	Mongrelmen
07	Yuan-ti	Spider, Giant
08	Event	Tasloi
09	Event	Tasloi
10	Event	Event

Events

Twenty percent of the results found on the Wandering Monster Table are an undefined event. To effectively use this module the DM will want to have at least several different types of "events" to choose from when this result occurs. The module itself gives several mundane examples. Here the DM's imagination is the best guide.

Entrance Keys

- A. The Forgotten Entry (p. 4)
- B. Vines of Danger (p. 6)
- C. Main Tunnel Entrance (p. 7)
- D. Meeting with the Mongrelmen (p. 10)
- E. The Towering Tree (p. 10)
- F. Cave of the Brutish Bullywugs (p.12)
- G. Lair of the Treemen (p. 12)
- H. Court of the Master (p. 14)
- I. Bugbear Brigands (p. 17)
- J. Ruins of the Mongrelmen (p. 18)
- K. The Bullywug Stockade (p. 20)
- L. The God of the Bullywugs (p. 21)
- M. The Swamp Horrors (p. 22)

Notable Dwellers of the Forbidden City

1. Horan: Treat as Arch Mage (MM 342) CR 12 (8,400 XP).

2. Kwairno: Treat as Mage (MM 347) CR 6 (2,300 XP).

3. Taslo Shaman: Treat as Druid (MM 346) CR 2 (450 XP).

4. Yrak the Witchdoctor: Treat as Bugbear Chief (MM 33) CR 3 (700 XP).

5. Shruzgrap: Treat as Bugbear Chief (MM 33) CR 3 (700 XP).

6. The "Boss": Treat as Bugbear Chief (MM 33) CR 3 (700 XP).

7. Aretheas: Treat as Mage (MM 347) CR 6 (2,300 XP).

8. The "Leader": Treat as Veteran (MM 350) CR 3 (700 XP).

9. The "Chief's" son: Treat as Scout (MM 349) CR 1 (200 XP).

Traps found at the Forbidden City

1.**Fire Trap (p. 16);** Horan's spellbook is protected with a spell which acts as a fire trap. DC 15 passive Wisdom (Perception) check to spot, or DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) check if actively searching spots scorch marks in the room which emanate from the book. A Dispel Magic spell destroys the trap.

Spell Conversion Notes

Leomond's Trap: Treat as Arcanist's Magic Aura (Wizard 2nd Level).

Read Magic: Removed from 5th Edition, do not use.

Ventriloquism: Treat as Minor Illusion (Wizard 0 Level).

Detect Invisibility: Treat as See Invisibility (Wizard 2^{nd} Level).

ESP: Treat as Detect Thoughts (Wizard 2nd Level)

Forget Invisibility: Replace with Confusion (Wizard 2^{nd} Level).

Minor Globe of Invulnerability: Treat as Resilient Sphere (Wizard 4^h Level)

Wizard Eye: Treat as Arcae Eye (Wizard 4th Level)

Bigby's Interposing Hand: Treat as Mage Hand (Wizard 4th Level)

Mordenkainen's Faithful Hound: Treat as Faithful Hound (Wizard 4th Level).

Chant: Treat as Healing Word (Cleric 1st Level).

Resist Fire: Treat as Protection from Energy (Cleric 3rd Level). Snake Charm: Treat as Conjure Animals (Druid 3rd Level). Pyrotechnics: Treat as Flaming Sphere (Wizard 2nd Level). Scare: Treat as Fear (Wizard 3rd Level).

New Spell Notes

Rary's Mneomonic Enhancer (Wizard 4th Level): Casting this spell allows you to prepare additional spells or retain spells recently cast. Pick one of these two versions when the spell is cast. Prepare: You prepare up to three additional levels of spells. A cantrip counts as ½ level for this purpose. You prepare and cast these spells normally. Retain: You retain any spell of 3rd level or lower that you had cast up to 1 round before you started casting the mnemonic enhancer. This restores the previously cast spell to your mind. In either event, the spell or spells prepared or retained fade after 24 hours (if not cast).

Friends (Wizard 1st Level): A Friends spell causes the magicuser to gain a temporary increase of 2-8 points in charisma or a temporary lowering of charisma by 1-4 points depending on whether creatures within the area of effect of the spell make - or fail - their saving throw versus magic. No effect on creatures of animal intelligence or lower. Duration is one round per spell caster level.

Magic Items found at the Forbidden City

- Rope of Climbing
- Wand of Illumination; allows the user to cast the following spells; Dancing Lights (Sorcerer 0 Level), Light (Sorcerer 0 Level), Daylight (Sorcerer 3rd Level), Sunbeam (Sorcerer 6th Level).
- Ring of Protection +1
- Potion of Extra Healing (Use Potion of Greater Healing)
- Potion of Levitation (Use Potion of Flying)
- Potion of Human Control (Treat as Dominate Person (Wizard 5th Level))
- Wand of Magic Missiles
- Bracers of Defense
- Dagger of Venom
- Spell Scroll w/Protection from Magic (Wizard Level 8), provides a +8 resistance bonus to saving throws against spells and spell like abilities. Duration is 1 Turn per level of caster, minimum 8 turns.
- Spell Scroll w/Cure Disease (Treat as Lesser Restoration (Cleric 3rd Level)), and Heal (Cleric 6th level).
- Jewel of Flawlessness; when placed with other gems it doubles the likelihood of them being more valuable. The jewel has from 10-100 facets, and whenever a gem increases in value because of the magic of the jewel, one of these facets disappears. When all are gone, the jewel is a spherical stone that has no value.

- Ring of Spell Turning
- Cursed Scroll
- Sword of Wounding
- Spell Scroll w/Non-Detection (Treat as Invisibility (Warlock 2nd Level)), and Emotion Treat as Enthrall (Warlock 2nd Level))
- Ring of Regeneration
- Potion of Amnesia (Treat as under the effect of Hypnotic Pattern (Warlock 3rd Level), but effect is permanent until cured))
- Dagger +1
- Cloak of Protection+1
- Rod of Absorbtion
- Potion of Water Breathing
- Spear +2
- Trident +3
- Potion of Fire Giant Strength
- Potion of Polymorph Self
- Spell Scroll w/Cure Serious Wounds (Cure Wounds (Cleric 1st Level)), Remove Curse (Greater Restoration (Cleric 5th Level)), Neutralize Poison (Protection from Poison (Cleric 2nd Level))

Monsters

- 1. Aboleth: Aboleth (MM 13) CR 10 (5,900 XP))
- 2. Ants, Giant Worker: Treat as Swarm of Insects (MM 338, CR .50 (100 XP))
- 3. Ants, Giant Warrioir: Treat as Swarm of Insects (MM 338, CR .50 (100 XP))
- Ape, Carnivorous: Treat as Giant Ape (MM 323, CR 7 (2,900 XP))
- 5. Beetle, Fire: Giant Fire Beetle (MM 325, CR 0 (10 XP)
- 6. Bugbears: Bugbear (MM 33, CR 1 (200 XP))
- 7. Bullywug: Bullywug (MM 35, CR .25 (50 XP))
- 8. Carrion Crawler: Carrion Crawler (MM 37, CR 2, (450 XP))
- 9. Chief's Son: Treat as Commoner (MM 345, CR 0 (10 XP))
- 10. Centipedes, Giant: Giant Centipede (MM 323, CR 0.25 (50 XP))
- 11. Crocodile, Large: Treat as Giant Crocodile (MM 324, CR 5 (1,800 XP))
- 12. Crocidile, Normal: Treat as Crocodile (MM 320, CR .50 (100 XP))
- 13. Giant Hedgehog: Treat as Giant Badger (MM 323, CR .25 (50 XP))
- 14. Giant Bloodworm: Treat as Giant Constrictor Snake (MM 324, CR 2 (450 XP))
- 15. Giant Frog: Giant Frog (MM 325, CR .25 (50 XP))

- 16. Invisible Stalker: Invisible Stalker (MM 192, CR 6 (2,300 XP))
- 17. Killer Frog: Treat as Giant Frog (MM 325, CR .25 (50 XP))
- 18. Leapord: Treat as Panther (MM 333, CR .25 (50 XP))
- 19. Lizard, Subterranean: Treat as Giant Lizard (MM 326, CR .25 (50 XP))
- 20. Mongrelman: Treat as Thug (MM 350, CR 0.50 (100 XP))
- 21. Ochre Jelly: Ochre Jelly (MM 243, CR 2 (450 XP))
- 22. Piercer: Piercer (MM 252, CR .50 (100 XP))
- 23. Pan Lung: Treat as Young Brass Dragon (MM 105, CR 6 (2,300 XP))
- 24. Rust Monster : Rust Monster (MM 262, CR .50 (100 XP))
- 25. Shambling Mound: Shambling Mound (MM 270, CR 5 (1,800 XP))
- 26. Snake, Giant Constrictor: Giant Constrictor Snake (MM 324, CR 2 (450 XP))
- 27. Giant Spider: Giant Spider (MM 328, CR 1 (200 XP))
- Large Spider: Treat as Giant Wolf Spider (MM 330, CR .25 (50 XP))
- 29. Stirges: Stirge (MM 284, CR .125 (25 XP))
- 30. Tasloi: Treat as Tribal Warrior (MM 350, CR .125 (25 XP))
- 31. Young Man: Treat as Commoner (MM 345, CR 0 (10 XP))
- 32. Yuan-Ti, Abomination: Yuan-Ti, Abomination (MM 308, CR 7 (2,900 XP))
- 33. Yuan-Ti, Half-breeds: Treat as Yuan-Ti, Malison (MM 309, CR 3 (700 XP))
- 34. Yuan-Ti, Pureblood: Yuan-Ti, Pureblood (MM 310, CR 1 (200 XP))
- 35. Wasp, Giant: Giant Wasp (MM 329, CR .50 (100 XP))
- 36. Xorn: Xorn (MM 304, CR 5 (1,800 XP))
- Yellow Musk Zombie: Treat as Myconid Adult (MM 232, CR .50 (100 XP))

Special Creatures

Yellow Musk Creeper plant, neutral Armor Class 14 (natural hide) Hit Points 32 (5d8+10) Speed nil. 10' striking range.

STR 15+2 DEX 11 CON 14+2 INT 0 WIS 0 CHA 0

Skills: Striking +7, Senses Vibration 17

Actions: Multi-attack; 2D12 Vine Strikes. Each successful attack requires a save against charm. Entranced victims walk into the mass of entangling plants, resisting attempts at restraint. Tendrils will eventually attach to the victims brain and devoured. The left over husk becomes a **Yellow Musk Zombie**.

I1 Dwellers of the Forbidden **City Reference Sheet**

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- 5. Beetle, Fire: Giant Fire Beetle (MM 325. CR 0 (10 XP)
- 6. Bugbears: Bugbear (MM 33, CR 1 (200^{31.} XP))
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08	Event	Tasloi
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- Wand of Illumination; allows the user to cast the following spells; Dancing Lights (Sorcerer 0 Level), Light (Sorcerer 0 Level), Daylight (Sorcerer 3rd Level), Sunbeam (Sorcerer 6th Level).
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- Potion of Extra Healing (Use Potion of Greater Healing)
- Potion of Levitation (Use Potion of Flying)
- Potion of Human Control (Treat as Dominate Person (Wizard 5th Level))
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- Spell Scroll w/Protection from Magic (Wizard Level 8), provides a +8 resistance bonus to saving throws against spells and spell like abilities. Duration is 1 Turn per level of caster, minimum 8 turns.
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- Jewel of Flawlessness; when placed with other gems it doubles the likelihood of them being more valuable. The jewel has
 from 10-100 facets, and whenever a gem increases in value because of the magic of the jewel, one of these facets disappears. When all are gone, the jewel is a spherical stone that has no value.
- Ring of Spell Turning
- Cursed Scroll
- Sword of Wounding
- Spell Scroll w/Non-Detection (Treat as Invisibility (Warlock 2nd Level)), and Emotion Treat as Enthrall (Warlock 2nd Level))
- Ring of Regeneration
- Potion of Amnesia (Treat as under the

effect of Hypnotic Pattern (Warlock 3rd Level), but effect is permanent until cured))

- Dagger +1
- Cloak of Protection+1
- Rod of Absorbtion
- Potion of Water Breathing
- Spear +2
- Trident +3
- Potion of Fire Giant Strength
- Potion of Polymorph Self
- Spell Scroll w/Cure Serious Wounds (Cure Wounds (Cleric 1st Level)), Remove Curse (Greater Restoration (Cleric 5th Level)), Neutralize Poison (Protection from Poison (Cleric 2nd Level))

Spell Conversion Notes

- Leomond's Trap: Treat as Arcanist's Magic Aura (Wizard 2nd Level).
- Read Magic: Removed from 5th Edition, do not use.
- Ventriloquism: Treat as Minor Illusion (Wizard 0 Level).
- Detect Invisibility: Treat as See Invisibility (Wizard 2nd Level).
- ESP: Treat as Detect Thoughts (Wizard 2nd Level)
- Forget Invisibility: Replace with Confusion (Wizard 2nd Level).
- Minor Globe of Invulnerability: Treat as Resilient Sphere (Wizard 4^h Level)
- Wizard Eye: Treat as Arcae Eye (Wizard 4th Level)
- Bigby's Interposing Hand: Treat as Mage Hand (Wizard 4th Level)
- Mordenkainen's Faithful Hound: Treat as Faithful Hound (Wizard 4th Level).
- Chant: Treat as Healing Word (Cleric 1st Level).
- Resist Fire: Treat as Protection

from Energy (Cleric 3rd Level).

- Snake Charm: Treat as Conjure Animals (Druid 3rd Level).
- Pyrotechnics: Treat as Flaming Sphere (Wizard 2nd Level).
- Scare: Treat as Fear (Wizard 3rd Level).

New Spell Notes

Mneomonic Enhancer Rary's (Wizard 4th Level): Casting this spell allows you to prepare additional spells or retain spells recently cast. Pick one of these two versions when the spell is cast. Prepare: You prepare up to three additional levels of spells. A cantrip counts as ¹/₂ level for this purpose. You prepare and cast these spells normally. Retain: You retain any spell of 3rd level or lower that you had cast up to 1 round before you started casting the mnemonic enhancer. This restores the previously cast spell to your mind. In either event, the spell or spells prepared or retained fade after 24 hours (if not cast).

Friends (Wizard 1st Level): A Friends spell causes the magic-user to gain a temporary increase of 2-8 points in charisma - or a temporary lowering of charisma by 1-4 points - depending on whether creatures within the area of effect of the spell make - or fail - their saving throw versus magic. No effect on creatures of animal intelligence or lower. Duration is one round per spell caster level.