# ONE ON ONE ADVENTURES #15 CIPACTLI'S MAW BY ANDREW HIND AND SUZI YEE AN ADVENTURE FOR ONE WIZARD LEVELS 4-6



## CREDITS

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One on One Adventures are for one player and one GM. However, they are easily modified for a traditional party of four players and one GM.

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Compatibility with the Pathfinder Roleplaying Game requires the Pathfinder Roleplaying Game from Paizo Publishing, LLC. See http: //paizo.com/pathfinderRPG for more information on the Pathfinder Roleplaying Game. Paizo Publishing, LLC does not guarantee compatibility, and does not endorse this product. *Cipactli's Maw* is an adventure for one GM and a single PC wizard level 4-6, and as such encourages the use of magic as opposed to strength to overcome problems. Characters should make certain to have skill points in Decipher Script, various Knowledge skills, Spellcraft and Use Magic Device. That being said, the adventure is certainly playable by characters of other classes with little alteration. Indeed, sorcerers, clerics and rogues will have plenty to challenge their abilities.

It's important to remember that a single PC faces unique and dangerous challenges. Unlike within a party concept, a single character has no one to rely on in time of need, and their range of abilities will remain limited. The GM should keep this fact in mind when running the adventure; running a singleplayer adventure requires forethought, care, and flexibility. Likewise, the player should bear in mind the limitations of a single character in terms of skill and combat ability.

## ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

Moldering texts tell of a coastal necropolis rich in ancient treasures. No one knows where the necropolis might be, but you've come to believe that it lies beneath a citadel that was once situated atop a bluff overlooking the seas, a citadel which has long since collapsed into the surf below and been swallowed by sea water. Known today as Blood Brine Ruins, the crumbled edifice seems to bleed from its gaping wounds and turn the surrounding seas crimson. It's a location generally avoided, with whispered legends of vengeful ghosts and ravenous sea serpents serving to keep all but the bravest or most fool-hardy away. You believe that within this necropolis you'll find an artifact of great value – the Ruby Ring. This ring has a long and troubled past.

In ancient times, a daring thief stole from the Queen Huehaatl's legendary vault of riches. Though what he managed to filch was but the merest fragment of her inestimable wealth, Huehaatl was enraged because her vault was deemed to be impenetrable. The thief was captured but even under the pain of death he refused to reveal how he had managed the feat. His resistance to torture angered Huehaatl even more than she already was, since it meant that her treasures would never be returned to her vaults. The only item recovered was the single ruby ring the thief had been wearing at the time of his capture. This ring was later gifted to one of Huehaatl's lovers, Tlatloc, a general in her armies, and was later buried with him and sealed within his necropolis, the location of which has been lost to the mists of time. Mages have long sought the tomb, in the hope of finding the ring and using it as a divination focus to locate Huehaatl's fabled treasure and the means to bypass its many traps and wards.

What no one knows is that Tlatloc's necropolis contains more than his moldering corpse and a piece of jewelry. It also contains the fell taint of a dark religion, the worship of the bat-god Camazotz. The necropolis in which he was eventually laid to rest served as the center of his blood piety until his death, and it was here that Tlatloc performed dark rituals in his deity's name. As a consequence, the tomb is a place of great evil and a dire threat to anyone who deigns to enter it.

## ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS

The Wizards of the Four Winds, an order dedicated to exploring distant lands across the chartless oceans, requests that the PC locate the lost treasure vault of Queen Huehaatl, a renowned monarch of the people. If the player character should be successful where so many before him have failed, his acceptance into the ranks of this esteemed order would be assured, and along with it access to powerful magic and great influence. In addition, he would certainly be granted a share of the vast wealth sure to lay secure in the queen's vaults. To aid the PC, the Wizards provide a scroll bearing a powerful divination spell. Armed with this, the character's first objective is to locate the Ruby Ring, said to be buried with its owner, the general Tlatloc, within a necropolis below the submerged Blood Brine Ruins. This ring had at one time been stolen from Huehaatl's treasure vaults, and by using the scroll on it, the secrets of how the thief located the horde and overcame its wards can be obtained.

From the Blood Brine Ruins, the PC makes his way inland through inhospitable jungles to Cipactli's Maw, an ancient monument that appears as a 60-foot tall, vine-choked crocodile's head bursting forth from the earth. It's beneath this remnant that the adventurer must go, since the morbid landmark is the location of the queen's vault. Unfortunately, Cipactli's Maw is closely guarded by a primitive tribe that regards the stone edifice as sacred, and only the worthy can enter without defiling it and angering the gods (and the tribe). The PC can prove his worth by entering the Caves of Darkness and dispatching the clutch of darkmantels to gain honorary membership to the tribe and enter Cipactli's Maw without interference from the tribe or the gods.

## SETTING THE STAGE

The adventure begins with the player character standing atop a bluff overlooking the drowned remnants of a crumbled fortress, the Blood Brine Ruins. He is accompanied by a pair of natives, Barranca and Satipo, hired by the Wizards of the Four Winds to serve as the adventurer's porters and guides (see appendix for more details on these hirelings). Exactly how the character got to this stage is left purposefully vague so as to ease integration of the adventure into a game master's campaign. The GM may choose to flesh this out, perhaps including an ocean voyage and an overland trek. Otherwise, he could simply begin the adventure using the pregenerated character ready to enter the legendary ruins and begin what promises to be an epic quest.

## PART ONE: BLOOD BRINE RUINS

Centuries ago, the cliff-side fortress Tachiquetzal tore from the land and fell into the sea, taking its garrison with it. The trembling earth and surging sea destroyed the once mighty bastion. Known today as the Blood Brine Ruin for the crimson colored waters that surround it, the fortress is little more than a desolate expanse of toppled buildings and rubble mounds. Somewhere within lies Tlatloc's forgotten necropolis.

## CONDITIONS

**Footing:** The expanse of crumbled masonry makes for unsteady footing. Characters must make a Balance check (DC 12) for every ten-feet traversed. A failed check indicates the character trips and makes no progress. A rolled failed by more than five indicates that a slab of masonry below the character shifts, dumping her into a water-filled cavity ten-feet deep. Getting out requires a successful Climb (DC 13) or Swim check.

**Water Depth:** The water is two-feet deep in most cases, though in depressions and cavities it can be much deeper.

**Reeds:** Stands of tall reeds have taken root throughout much of the ruins. A stand of reeds offers concealment to anyone who ventures 5-feet into them, and total concealment to anyone who has ten-feet or more of reeds between them and the viewer. It costs two squares of movement to enter a square of reeds.

**Murky Waters:** The bloodied waters surrounding the ruins make it difficult to see objects below the surface. Add a +5 circumstance penalty to any Perception checks.

## **ENCOUNTERS**

For every hour spent in the ruins, roll 1d20 on the following table to determine encounters.

D20	Encounter
1	Driftwood
2	Stingray
3-4	Light Surf
5	Heavy Surf
6-7	Shark
8-20	No Encounter

## **ENCOUNTER DESCRIPTIONS**

**Driftwood:** Logs and wreckage from sunken vessels wash up in the ruins, gathering in sprawling heaps against stone walls and mounds of rubble. It is treated as difficult terrain, costing an extra square of movement to cross driftwood, and driftwood provides cover as a low wall.

**Stingray:** A stingray has burrowed itself into the sand, providing a +7 circumstantial racial bonus to Hide. Anyone who fails to notice the stingray accidentally steps on the creature, resulting in a reflexive lash of its venom-tipped tail barb. The stingray makes a single attack (+4 melee), causing 1d3-1 points of damage. Stingray poison is very painful; fortitude DC12, nauseated 1d4 hours/1d3 Dex. A character that makes its saving throw against the poison's initial damage is instead sickened for 1d6 rounds.

**Light Surf:** Light surf has surging water 1-foot in depth. It costs 2 squares of movement to enter a square of light surf, and characters must succeed on a DC 6 Strength or Balance check or fall prone.

**Heavy Surf:** Heavy surf consists of violently surging water about 4-feet in depth. It costs 4 squares of movement to enter a square of surf, and characters must succeed on a DC 12 Strength or Balance check or fall prone.

**Shark:** The blood-tinged waters attract the attention of small sharks capable of hunting in the shallows. A lone shark attacks anyone found wading in the water, but retreats in search of easier prey if reduced to half its hit points.

## Shark

N Large animal (aquatic) 600 XP Init +5; Senses blindsense 30 ft.; keen scent; Perception +8

## Defense

AC 14, touch 10, flat-footed 13 (+1 Dex, +4 natural, -1 size) hp 22 (4d8+4) Fort +7, Ref +5, Will +2

#### Offense

**Speed** swim 60 ft. **Melee** bite +5 (1d8+4) **Space** 10 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.

## **S**TATISTITICS

Str 17, Dex 12, Con 13, Int 1, Wis 12, Cha 2 Base Atk +3; CMB +7; CMD 18 Feats Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative Skills Perception +8, Swim +11

## SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Keen Sense (Ex)** A shark can notice creatures by scent in a 180-foot radius underwater and can detect blood in the water at ranges up to one mile.

## BLOOD BRINE RUINS MAP



## AREA 1

CR 2

This old, two-storey tower is flanked by stretches of crumbling wall. Most of the mortar on the tower has cracked or sloughed away, leaving stone to grind on stone. From their perches atop the tower parapets, seagulls watch your approach through black eyes, squawking nervously as you draw near. The battered door swings with the movement of the waves and looks as though it is barely hanging on its hinges.

The upper floor of this tower has fallen in, leaving the interior of the tower little more than tangled mound of stone and wood. If the PC enters, the seagulls suddenly take flight with a cacophony of panicked cries. With a successful Perception check (DC 12), a character notices a submerged skeleton pinned beneath the rubble. This triggers a ghostly recreation of the poor fellow's demise which, though illusory, nonetheless poses very real danger. First, the ground begins to heave and buckle underneath, forcing PCs to make a DC 15 Balance check to remain standing; anyone being thrown off his feet is considered prone. The character then believes he sees the ceiling above collapsing, just as it did when the fortress was destroyed ages ago. He suffers 2d6 points of damage from falling timber and stone, or 1d6 points with a successful DC 12 Reflex save. In addition to suffering damage, a prone character may be pinned beneath the rubble and begin to drown in the salt water. A DC 16 Strength or Escape Artist check is required to extricate himself. Every round after the illusory ceiling collapses an affected character can make a DC 12 Will save to snap out of the waking nightmare. Any damage suffered, however, remains.

## AREA 2

A large round, flat-topped stone monument, 20-feet in diameter and eight-feet in height, stands amidst the crimson waters. Carved stone reliefs of naked men engaged in mortal combat against warriors resplendent in ornamental armor and helms shaped like jaguars and eagles adorn the monument's sides. An iron ring has been driven into the center of the stone.

This monument was erected for gladiatorial sacrifices. The victim was tied to its centre and forced to fight against elite noble-born warriors. The carvings around the sides depict enemy kings conquered by Tlatloc in the name of Queen Huehaatl. Characters making a Knowledge (History) check at DC 16 recognize the significance of the monument.

## AREA 3

A flight of stairs, strangled by vines and weeds, leads down into the cloudy waters of a submerged chamber partially filled with rubble. Broken crates float lazily on the surface, and occasionally a bubble percolates up from the depths.

The water is 6-feet deep. A DC 15 Perception check of the pool reveals a ringed metal handle partially obscured by the silt at the bottom. A character making a DC 10 Knowledge (dungeoneering) or Knowledge (engineering) realize that the ring will be attached to a plug, providing access to unseen areas below. Unfortunately, getting into these areas is somewhat problematic. First, the prying open the plug requires a DC 15 Strength check. Secondly, it is protected with a magical ward (see below) designed to deter tomb-robbers. And finally, the dark waters are now the hunting ground of a giant water spider that lurks behind the rubble and attacks once potential prey enters the water. A DC 20 Perception check gains the PC a partial action during the surprise round – otherwise, he is completely caught off guard by the spider's assault.

## GIANT WATER SPIDER

**CR1** 400 XP

N Medium Vermin 400 XP Init +3; Senses darkvision 60 ft., tremorsense 60ft.; Perception +4

#### Defense

AC 14, touch 13, flat-footed 11 (+1 armor, +3 Dex) hp 16 (3d8+3) Fort +4, Ref +4, Will +1 Immune mind-affecting effects

**OFFENSE Speed** 30 ft. **Melee** bite +2 (1d6 plus poison)

#### **S**TATISTICS

Str 11, Dex 17, Con 12, Init –, Wis 10, Cha 2 Base Atk +2; CMB +2; CMD 15 (27 vs. trip) Skills Climb +16, Perception +8, Stealth +11

#### SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Poison (Ex)** Bite – injury; save Fort DC 14, frequency 1/round for 4 rounds; effect 1d2 Strength damage; cure 1 save.

Trap: The plug to the catacombs below is trapped by a pair of magical wards. The first, an *alarm* spell that sounds in a guard room now reduced to foundations, is of little consequence. That said, PCs may hear it echoing upon the night breeze (DC 12 Listen check) and become concerned; encourage that to add atmosphere and set the players on edge. The second ward, a *hold person* spell, is far more troubling. Characters that touch the plug and become paralyzed are easy prey for the water spider, and because they must be submerged to grip the handle, run the risk of drowning.

Hold Person Trap	CR 3
Type magic; Perception DC 28; Disable De	vice DC 28
Effects	

Trigger touch; Reset automatic; Bypass evil alignment

**Effect** spell effect (*hold person*, paralyzed for 3 rounds, Will save DC 15 negates, victim allowed new save every round)

**Development:** If the character is standing in the pool when the plug opens, he must succeed at a DC 10 Acrobatics check or be swept through the drain and down into the tunnels below, resulting in 1d6 points of falling damage. A metal rung ladder that descends into the tomb allows anyone to enter or exit the tombs at will, though it is slick with moisture and algae and requires a DC 5 Climb check to safely climb.

**Treasure:** The crates floating in from a sinking warship collected here recently. Searching them uncovers three flasks of alchemist's fire, intended for use against enemy vessels but equally valuable in the hands of a dungeon-delving adventurer. A DC 20 Perception check also reveals a vial containing wisps of gloom that coil and uncoil like black snakes. The vial is unnaturally cold to the touch. The gloom is actually the trapped essence of a dying shadow. If the seal is broken, the shadow essence instinctively aims for the nearest source of living heat within 5 feet and deals 1d6 points of Strength damage before dissipating forever.

## NECROPOLIS FEATURES

Once removed, the plug gives the PC access to the necropolis, an unsettling place to explore. It gives off a necrotic chill that cuts through clothes and gnaws away at the very soul. Breath mists before ones mouth, and while the temperatures do not dip low enough to be dangerous, characters will nonetheless find the location uncomfortable. Water with the coloration of blood seeps from the walls and collects in floor, cracks, and puddles.

All necromantic spells cast within the barrow are empowered, their numeric effects increased by 50%. Healing spells, on the other hand, have their numeric effects decreased by 50% as the shroud of necromantic energy that hangs over the locale dampens such life-giving magic.

The tunnels and rooms within the necropolis are handcrafted and hewn from solid rock. Tunnels are arched and a uniform 6-feet wide and 8-feet high. The entire necropolis is unlit. All the doors are made of heavy stone and are unlocked.

## AREA 4

A curved staircase descends further into the darkness, framed by faded frescoes of bearing arcane symbols. Unnerving rivulets of blood seep from the symbols, trailing down the walls.

Thirty feet down, just beyond the curve, the stairs end abruptly in an impassable cave-in. Most of the water from Area 2:1 (and with it the giant spider, should it still be alive) will have settled here if the plug sealing the necropolis has been removed. In time, this water will slowly drain through the rock into the halls beyond, but such drainage is measured in hours. The rivulets of blood are the remnants of an ancient and malfunctioning necromantic trap, which characters making a DC 15 Spellcraft check will realize.

**Trap:** Though it no longer works as it should, the trap still has an unnerving effect, and any character that steps foot on the stairs triggers it.

MALFUNCTIONING TRAP	CR 1	ł
Type magic; Perception DC 34; Disable Device DC	34	A
Effects		5
Trigger touch; Reset automatic		Ι

**Effect** All characters within 20-feet must make a DC 15 Will save or be shaken for 1 hour as waves of intangible terror course through their bodies.

## Area 5

Pillars in the corners of the chamber hold aloft a doublevaulted ceiling of cracked frescoes. This once ornate room has been reduced to faded paint, crumbling plaster, and moldy tapestries. Blood-red water seeps through the walls and collects in ankle-deep puddles on the floor. A low altar of stone stands against the west wall.

This chamber once served priests as a place to prepare the dead for burial in areas 7 and 8. Though the painting that once adorned the altar is badly faded, characters making DC 10 Knowledge (religion) check will recognize that it served an evil deity. Similarly, it radiates evil if *detect evil* is cast upon it.

**Trap:** A DC 20 Perception check reveals that the top of the stone altar can be pushed aside (Strength DC 12), revealing a hollow within occupied by a mummified priest whose teeth have been filed down to needle-points resting on a layer of human skulls. The mummy's arms and legs are bound together by leather cords, and a pouch filled with gravedirt rests within his mouth, indications that the people who laid him to rest were concerned he would rise as a vampire. A golden ceremonial necklace carved to resemble a string of bats hanging around his neck looks valuable. Unfortunately, the air within the sarcophagus is thick with ancient disease. When opened, a cloud of dust blooms from within, filing a 10-footradius area. All creatures within this area must make a DC 12 Fort save or succumb to the mummy dust.

## MUMMY DUST TRAP

Type mechanical; Perception DC 21; Disable Device DC 21

#### Effects

Trigger touch; Reset none

Effect Mummy dust (Curse and disease; save Fort DC 12; onset 1d3 days; frequency 1/day; effect 1d3 Con and 1d3 Cha; cure 2 consecutive saves; targets all within 10-foot-radius) **Treasure:** The golden necklace is an *amulet of necromancy*, which has the same properties as a *staff of necromancy*. The sarcophagus also holds 200gp in loose coins, and a bone scroll case containing a piece of skin parchment. A DC 20 Spellcraft or Linguistics check allows a character to read the arcane text on the parchment, conjuring a bat familiar loyal to the caster (for good-aligned characters the familiar would be a flying fox; for neutral characters, a normal bat; and for evil characters the familiar would be a vampire bat).

A flying fox (use stats of a raven), is a large a species of fruit bat that, despite its 5-foot wingspan and frightening appearance, is actually almost harmless. Rare among bats, it does not use echolocation. It is considered to be wise, and omens are read from its flight. As a familiar, it grants the use of *fox's cunning* once per day and +1 caster level for divination spells.

Vampire bats (use stats of a normal bat) are dark-natured and evil, the source of superstition and legend. A vampire bat familiar provides a bonus +1 caster level for necromantic spells and the use of *vampire touch* once per day.

## Amulet of Necromancy

Aura strong (necromancy); CL 13th

Slot neck; Price 82,000 gp; weight 0.5 lbs
DESCRIPTION
This golden amulet shaped into a string of bats allows the use of the following spells (like a staff): <i>Cause fear</i> (1 charge) <i>Ghoul touch</i> (1 charge) <i>Halt Underd</i> (1 charge)
Halt Undead (1 charge) Enervation (2 charges) Waves of fatigue (2 charges) Circle of death (3 charges)

#### CONSTRUCTION

**Requirments** Craft Wondrous Item, *cause fear*, *circle of death*, *enervation*, *ghoul touch*, *halt undead*, *waves of fatigue*; **Cost** 41,000 gp

## AREA 6

This chamber is rough cut, designed to resemble a natural cave. In this, however, the stalactites and stalagmites are covered with runes and carvings of bat-headed fiends. The floor is covered in a slick creamy-colored film, and the ceiling far above seems to roil in a seething mass. Several small chimneys have been carved into the ceiling and disappear into darkness. Standing in the midst of the room is a large drum of carved wood and animal skin, atop with rest a pair of humanoid femur bones.

This room held great significance to worshippers of Camazotz, since it is a roostery for hundreds of bats. The film that covers the floor is bat guano. It's so slick that moving beyond standard speed or attempting to fight within this chamber requires a DC 12 Acrobatics check to retain ones footing. The bats are harmless, though if disturbed they will take flight, swirling around the cavern before heading out of one of the chimneys – anyone in the cavern caught in the whirl suffers 1d6 points of damage must make a DC 11 Fortitude save or be nauseated for one round

**Monster:** Lurking within one of these chimneys is a Camazotz faithful, a worshipper who enjoyed the taste of warm blood and human flesh so much that upon death he returned as a ghoul. This ghoul has bat-like head and vestigial (though useless) wings that flap from its emaciated arms. It clambers along the walls and ceiling effortlessly, stealthily approaching from above. Have the PC make a DC 15 Perception check in order to see the ghoul before it springs its attack.

CR 5

## GHOUL

CE Medium Undead Init +2; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +7

## DEFENSE

AC 14, touch 12, flat-footed 12 (+2 DEx, +2 natural) hp 13 (2d8+4) Fort +2, Ref +2, Will +5 Defensive Abilities channel resistance +2, undead traits

OFFENSE

#### Speed 30 ft

Melee bite +3 (1d6+1 plus disease and paralysis) and 2 claws +3 (1d6+1 plus paralysis)

Special Attacks paralysis (1d4+1 rounds, DC 13, elves are immune to this effect)

## **S**TATISTICS

Str 13, Dex 15, Con –, Int 13, Wis 14, Cha 14 Base Atk +1; CMB +2; CMD 14 Feats Weapon Finesse Skills Acrobatics +4, Climb +6, Stealth +7, Swim +3 Languages Common

#### **SPECIAL ABILITIES**

Disease (Su) Ghoul Fever. Bite – injury, save Fort DC 12, onset 1 day; frequency 1/day; effect 1d3 Con and 1d3 Dex damage; cure 2 consecutive days. The save DC is Charisma based.

Tactics: If the ghoul is spotted, it screeches in frustration, causing the bats roosting above to take flight and hoping the frightening bats will distract their intended prey.

Treasure: The drum was used in ritual sacrifices done in Camazotz'z name and has great symbolic importance to the dark religion. The skin stretched across the drum head is that of a dire bat, and the bones are indeed human femurs. A worshipper would beat upon the drum with these bones, creating a deep, ominous thrum that built to a wild crescendo as the ritual was completed in an orgy of blood and gore. The drum can also be used once per day, to cast summon swarm (bats only) or *summon monster V* (1d4+1 dire bats only).

## AREA 7

The walls of this chamber are lined nooks, each one with a skeleton lying within. Moisture and the passage of time have left the bones blackened, brittle, and in many cases broken. Large roaches scurry among bare ribs and into eye sockets and gaping jaws, agitated by your sudden appearance and the disturbance it represents.

This room is an ossuary where the bones of the deceased were laid to rest. There is nothing of interest to player characters here.

## AREA 8

Water drips from the double-vaulted ceiling and trickles down the walls to pool on the floor. Bone shards of a hundred skulls litter the room and crunch underfoot. On the south wall, an open doorway gapes, a carved relief depicting horrifying bats and yawning human skulls filling the archway over the door. The rest of the walls are filled floor to ceiling with nooks that house ancient, but drenched, skeletal remains and the moldering remains of their former finery.

Monster: Three zombies begins to stir as soon as PCs enter the room, and they then crawl forth from their burial nook a round later. Have the PC make a DC 18 Perception check in order to see the creatures begin to rustle with unlife; a success allows the PC to act in the round before the zombies emerge and attack. The zombies are wrapped in the yellowed remains of funerary shroud and have a withered, husk-like appearance, giving them the appearance of far more dangerous mummies. The zombies are ever vigilant for those that would desecrate their sacred tomb and relentlessly pursue any enemies throughout the tomb but not beyond.

## ZOMBIE

NE Medium Undead Init +0; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +0

## DEFENSE

AC 12, touch 10, flat-footed 11 (+2 natural) hp 12 (2d8+3) Fort +0, Ref -1, Will +3 DR 5/ slashing; Immune undead traits

#### OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft (can't run) Melee slam +4 (1d6+4)

#### **S**TATISTICS

Str 17, Dex 10, Con -, Int -, Wis 10, Cha 10 Base Atk +1; CMB +4; CMD 14 Feats Toughness SQ Staggered

Trap: Several of the skulls above the door to the south are magical traps. When someone passes beneath the archway, a chilled mist seeps forth from their open mouths and envelopes the unsuspecting character.

Treasure: A DC 15 Perception check finds a +1 heavy flail lain to rest with its wielder in one of the nooks. A DC 15 Knowledge (religion) check reveals the relief on the south wall depicts imagery of Camazotz, an ancient bat-god, and his countless human victims.

## CHILL TOUCH TRAP

Type magic; Perception DC 26; Disable Device DC 26

#### **E**FFECTS

Trigger touch; Reset automatic; Bypass evil alignment

Effect spell effect (chill touch, 1d6 points of negative energy drain, plus DC 11 Fortitude save or take 1 point of Strength damage).

## AREA 9

A huge statue of a humanoid with bat head and expansive bat-wings stands along the west wall. His gaping and fanged mouth is open wide enough to hold several human skulls. A crumbled well sits in the middle of the room under the statue's malign gaze.

The well in this room connects to the gore-chocked rivers of Camazotz's fiendish realm, allowing unholy blood water to fill it on a continual basis. Since the earthquake that shattered the necropolis, fissures in the rock has allowed sea water to seep into the well and abyssal blood-water to leach out into the ocean, tainting both. As a result, the magical fluid within the well is not as potent as it once was.

CR 1/2 200 XP

## CR 2

The fissures opened up by the earthquake allowed more than sea-water to seep into the well: also slithering through these fissures was a gibbering mouther that hunts in the necropolis when hunger strikes, usually feeding on bats and other vermin. Because of prolonged exposure to the well's evil-fouled water, the gibbering mouther was corrupted, losing some of its martial prowess and Constitution. It appears to be a mass of intestines, swollen veins, flaccid organs, and blood-filled cysts interspersed by countless ravenous maws. Anytime the gibbering mouther suffers more than 5 points of damage in a single attack, it must make a Fortitude save (DC 10+ 1 per point of damage) or suffer a grievous wound that sees blood and organs spill from its amorphous body, inflicting an additional 5 points of damage.

## CORRUPTED GIBBERING MOUTHER

N Medium Aberration 1,200 XP Init +3; Senses all-around vision, darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +12

#### Defense

AC 19, touch 13, flat-footed 16 (+3 Dex, +6 natural) hp 34 (4d8 + 16) Fort +5, Ref +4, Will +5 Defense Abilities amorphous; DR 5/blougeoning; Immune critical hits and precision damage

## Offense

Speed 10 ft., swim 20 ft.
Melee 6 bites +7 (1d4 plus grab)
Special Attacks blood drain, gibbering, ground manipulation, spittle (+6 ranged touch)

#### **S**TATISTICS

Str 10, Dex 17, Con 18, Int 4, Wis 13, Cha 12 Base Atk +3; CMB +3 (+7 grapple); CMD 16 (can't be tripped)

**Feats** Weapon Finesse. Weapon Focus (bite) **Skills** Swim +8; Racial Modifiers +4 Perception **Language** Aklo

#### SPECIAL ABILITIES

**All-Around Vision (Ex)** A gibbering mouther sees in all directions at once. It cannot be flanked.

**Amorphous (Ex)** A gibbering mouther's body is malleable and shapeless. It is immune to precision damage (like sneak attacks) and critical hits, and can move through an area as small as one-quarter its space without squeezing or one-eighth its space when squeezing.

**Blood Drain (Ex)** On a successful grapple check after grabbing, several of the creatures mouths attach to its target. Each round it maintains its grapple, its mouths automatically deal 1d4 points of bite damage as it drains its victim's blood.

**Gibbering (Su)** As a free action, a gibbering mouther can emit a cacophony of maddening sound. All creatures other than gibbering mouthers within 60 feet must succeed on a DC 13 Will save or be confused for 1 round. This is a mind-affecting compulsion insanity effect. A creature that saves cannot be affected by the same mouther's gibbering for 24 hours. The save DC is Charisma-based.

**Ground Manipulation (Su)** At will as a standard action, a gibbering mouther can cause stone and earth under its body to grow soft and muddy. The ground remains muddy for 1 minute after the mouther moves off of the location. A gibbering mouther can move through these areas with ease, but other creatures treat them as difficult terrain.

**Spittle (Ex)** Each round as a free action, a gibbering mouther can emit a stream of acidic spittle at one target within 30 feet. On a successful attack, the target is blinded for 1d4 rounds unless he succeeds on a DC 15 Fortitude save. The save DC is Constitution- based.

## AREA 10

CR4

With the frequency of storm waves approaching the shore, salt water erupts from cracks in the floor of this chamber. Foamy, blinding spray jumps in every direction, then drains from calf-height to ankle-deep before the next wave hits. Occasionally a length of black-brown seaweed shoots in and adds one more strand to a room that already appears draped in long, wet hair. On each wall stands a dais topped by a stone sarcophagus.

The wave action that periodically spouts into this chamber adds an extra complication for combat. Once every 1d3 rounds, the water spout shoots into the chamber. Each person in the room must make a DC 12 Reflex save when the wave comes in or be blinded by the spray until the end of their next action (-2 AC, lose Dex bonus to AC, -4 penalty on most Strength- and Dexterity-based skill checks and on opposed Perception checks, DC 10 Acrobatics check to move faster than half speed, 50% chance miss).

A few rounds after the PC enters the room, the lid of the sarcophagus on the south wall slides aside with the sound of a grinding millstone. Out climbs Tlatloc dressed in rotting finery and with a small bat idol carved from jade resting within his hollowed out chest cavity. A jaguar tooth tusk pierces his lower lip, a status symbol denoting Tlatloc as a general, and he carries a turquoise-inlaid shield decorated with the tattered and threadbare remnants of a feather fringe. Each of his fingers is capped with a razor-sharp golden fingernail, but he wears only one ring – an ornate gold piece resplendent with a stunning red ruby.

## TLATLOC, WAKING DEAD

LE Medium undead Init +2; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +9 CR3

800 XP

#### DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 12, flat-footed 15 (+2 Dex, +1 shield, +4 natural) hp 25 (4d8+4) Fort +1, Ref +3, Will +7 DR 5/ -; Immune undead traits

#### OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee 2 claws +8 (1d6+4) and bite +7 (1d4+2 plus bite of despair)Special Attacks bite of despair

#### **S**TATISTICS

Str 18, Dex 14, Con –, Int 8, Wis 15, Cha 11 Base Atk +3; CMB +7; CMD 19 Feats Toughness, Weapon Focus (claw) Skills Climb +11; Perception +9, Stealth +9

#### **SPECIAL ABILITIES:**

**Bite of Despair (Su)** A living creature bit by Tlatloc's bite must succeed on a DC 14 Will save or envision itself lying in a coffin/sarcophagus desperately trying to escape. The victim falls to the ground and lies perfectly still in a helpless catatonic state and begins suffocating under the delusion of being trapped in an airtight coffin. Characters



in this predicament can hold their breath for 2 rounds per point of Constitution and afterward must make a DC 12 Constitution check each round to continue holding their breath. The check DC increases +1 each round.

When the character fails a Constitution check, he lapses into unconsciousness on the first round, falls to =1 hp on the second round and then feigns death on the third round. Fortunately, the character's associates can revive him from this state in the same manner as the sleep spell. The effect spontaneously ends four minutes later if neither of the other conditions occurs. Characters previously affected by this illusion receive a +4 bonus to their Will save to resist the bite of despair for the remainder of combat. This is an enchantment and compulsion effect. The DC's are Wisdom-based.

**Treasure:** The golden fingernails worn by Tlatloc are worth 10gp each, but the remainder of his ornamentation is long since rotted and mouldered into worthlessness. The following treasures lie within the sarcophagus: a gold-plated, ceremonial macuahuitl sword (worth 300gp); stone tablets detailing Tlatlocs victories (worth 600gp to collectors with the lost historical knowledge they impart); the ruby ring (worth 250gp); and an ivory bowl stained black inside with dried blood and decorated with grotesque imagery of Camazotz (worth about 140gp, but since its a relic of an evil religion finding a buyer may run the risk attracting unwanted attention).

#### **DIVINING THE RUBY RING**

After recovering the Ruby Ring from Tlatloc, the character may use the scroll given him by the Wizards of the Four Winds to determine that Huhuetl's treasure vault lies within Cipactli's Maw and how the thief managed to bypass its wards. It shows a night of the full moon, when the pale light illuminates a staircase down the gullet-like shaft of Cipactli's Maw. At the base of the maw, the ring reveals the location of the secret door leading to the vaults and the pressure-plated brick that (when pressed) causes the door to swing open. Once inside, the thief uses a scroll of *command undead* to ensure safe passage through the corpse wall. Ignoring the trapped door that is the centerpiece of the lethal pilferer's bane door trap, the thief instead goes through the real door craftily concealed at the end of the tunnel, and then steps on the appropriate rune-tiles to bypass the animated statue trap that was the final obstacle.

While the divination certainly assists the PC infiltrate the vault, it does not ensure success; some things have changed since the thief performed his near-miraculous heist. At the time of the theft, the Olman priest was not yet dead, so his undead spirit did not haunt the ancient monument; the magical bonds securing the fire elemental were still strong, ensuring the outsider never emerged from its confinement beneath the queen's regenerative blood pools; and Queen Huhueetl's vain attempts to extend her life had not yet transformed her into a ghost eternally protective of her valuables.

## PART TWO: THE JUNGLE EXPANSE

An ancient road of massive flagstones cuts straight through the jungle undergrowth, and while the jungle has reclaimed some stretches, it nonetheless allows for faster and more effortless movement than going overland. Barranca and Satipo strongly encourage the PC to take this route, pointing out that unimaginable dangers lurk within the darkened forest.

The journey to Cipactli's Maw takes 3 days utilizing the remains of the ancient road and, when the road succumbs to the jungle, the savvy of the native guides. Even with the relative safety of the ancient road, travel in the jungle always carries a risk. The GM may insert the following encounters to extend the action on the way to Cipactli's Maw or simply use them as wandering encounters.

D6	Encounter
1-2	Pool of Chalchihuitlicue
3-4	Late-night Snack
5	Corpse Dust Cloud
6	None

## THE POOL OF CHALCHIHUITLICUE

You emerge into a clearing, at the center of which lies a pool of water that seems to be fed from a spring below. Standing amidst the water is the stone statue of beautiful woman wearing nothing for a skirt of green scales. Her hands are cupped together and seem as if they should be holding something, but at present they are empty. At one time, you've no doubt that the statue was exquisite and the pool crystalline, but the statue has become cracked and the pool itself overgrown with weeds and lily pads.

The pool is perfectly round, spanning 15 feet across with a gradual slope leading to its deepest point in the middle, a mere 5 feet deep. The pool detects as magic, and a Knowledge (history) check DC 20 reveals much about it and the statue at its center. This pool has been touched by Chalchihuitlicue, the goddess of water, and is considered a holy place. The water, though choked with weeds, in fact acts as a *potion of cure light wounds* and *cure disease*. Water taken from the well retains its curative powers for 1d4 days.

Originally, the pool was blessed with even greater powers. Unfortunately, in ages past, the jade fish once held in the statue's outstretched hands was stolen. This defilement angered Chalchihuitlicue, who punished her worshippers for their apparent lack of vigilance by robbing the water of much of its healing power. Should the PC succeed in a Knowledge (arcana) check DC18, the PC would also surmise that the return of the jade fish may rejuvenate the pool's magic potential and the returner may garner the blessing of Chalchihuitlicue.

The jade fish lies within the darkmantle lair, Area 13b in the Caves of Darkness. If the jade fish should be returned, the pool would *heal serious wounds* and, in addition to curing disease, would also serve as a *potion of restoration*. The individual who returns the relic would be blessed by Chalchihuitlicue forever, allowing him to cast *purify water* and *create water* at 10th level of ability once per day each.

**Monsters:** The pool is home to an aquatic-version of the assassin vine; it appears as a mass of lily-pads, with lethal vines hanging out of sight below the water.

## AQUATIC ASSASSIN VINE CR 3

N Large Plant 800 XP Init +0; Senses blindsight 30 ft.; low-light vision; Perception +1

## Defense

AC 15, touch 9, flat-footed 15 (+6 natural, -1 size) hp 30 (4d8+12) Fort +7, Ref +1, Will +2 Immune electricity, plant traits; Resist cold 10 and fire 10

## OFFENSE

**Speed** – (bound to pool bottom) **Melee** slam +7 (1d8+7 plus grab) **Space** 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft. **Special Attacks** constrict (1d8+7), entangle

## **S**TATISTICS

Str 20, Dex 10, Con 16, Int –, Wis 13, Cha 9 Base Atk +3; CMB +9 (+13 grapple); CMD 19 (can't be tripped) SQ camouflage

## SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Camouflage (Ex)** Since an assassin vine looks like a normal plant when at rest, a DC 20 Perception check is required to notice it before it attacks for the first time. Anyone with ranks in Survival or Knowledge (nature) can use either of those skills instead of Perception to notice the plant.
- Entangle (Su) An assassin vine can, as a free action, cause plants within 30 feet of it to animate and grasp at foes. This ability is otherwise similar to *entangle* (CL 4th , DC 13). The save DC is Wisdom-based.

**Tactics:** The aquatic assassin vine is anchored to the pool's bottom by the statue, giving it access to attack creatures that approach the pool at any side. It uses entangle once potential prey approaches the water, and then slams the creature, hoping to grab and drag its victims into the pool in order to drown it.

## LATE-NIGHT SNACK

From dusk to dawn, the dire bat combs the jungle for food. It is looking for an easy meal and will flee if brought down to less than half hit points. Also, if any of the pieces from the Necropolis bearing Camatzotz image are visible, the dire bat is shaken for 1 round.

## DIRE BAT

N Large Animal	600 XP
Init +2; Senses blindsense 40 ft; Perception +12	

**CR** 2

## Defense

AC 14, touch 11, flat-footed 12 (+2 Dex, +3 natural, -1 size) hp 22 (4d8+4) Fort +5, Ref +6, Will +3

## OFFENSE

**Speed** 20ft., fly 40 ft. (good) **Melee** bite +5 (1d8+4)

## **S**TATISTICS

Str 17, Dex 15, Con 13, Int 2, Wis 14, Cha 6
Base Atk +3; CMB +7; CMD 19
Feats Alertness, Stealthy
Skills Fly +9, Perception +12, Stealth +4; Racial Modifiers +4 Perception when using blindsense

## CORPSE DUST CLOUD

A yellow-hued dust cloud coils in from the surrounding jungle, engulfing all before it. Leaves curl up at its touch, birds drop lifeless from above, and a scorpion rolls onto its back in thrashing death throes.

The dust cloud moves at 40-feet, as if driven by a strong breeze that simply isn't there. It measures 60-feet high and over a mile in width. PCs making a DC 10 Knowledge (arcana) roll recognize it as the storied Corpse Dust Cloud, said to be dust blown off the desiccated body of the god of death that periodically sweeps through the region. Characters making a Knowledge (arcane) roll note evidence of necrotic magic at work within the dust cloud. Additionally information can be gained with higher success rolls:

- DC 10 This phenomenon is known as the Corpse Dust Cloud, which leaves death and desiccated corpses in its wake.
- DC 13 Death comes painfully and quickly from inhaling the dust.
- DC 15 The Corpse Dust Cloud is carried by the wind, and legend says that those with a control of this element can control the movements of the cloud.

The PC and his guide(s) have 3 rounds from sighting the cloud before it is upon them. They have little chance of outrunning the phenomenon, and they are subjected to a Corpse Dust Cloud for five rounds. Anyone holding his breath that long is unharmed. Otherwise, the PC must rely on magical means to survive, such as water breathing to submerge himself below water, wind wall or gust of wind to deflect the dust cloud, or gaseous form. Inhaling the dust requires the character make a DC 20 Fortitude save or suffer 2d6 Con damage.

## APPROACHING CIPACTLI'S MAW

A massive stone crocodile head seemingly erupting from the earth, jutting out from the dense canopy early on the third day. The immediate area (100 feet) surrounding the edifice is meticulously cleared, kept by the Hovitos tribe who regard Cipactli's Maw with equal parts awe and fear. They are charged to protect the sacred monument from defilement for only the worthy may approach Cipactli's Maw. The village shaman divined the PC's arrival, and a party awaits him hidden among the foliage just outside of the clearing (detectable by a DC 25 Perception check).

As soon as the PC breaks from the jungle foliage and emerges into the clearing, the ground begins to vibrate underfoot, slowly building to become an earthquake of considerable intensity. The PC must make a DC 15 Reflex save each round or fall down. Fissures open in the ground, and every creature has a 25% chance to fall into one (Reflex DC 20 to avoid a fissure). Such a fissure is 10+d20 feet deep. The earthquake lasts for 1d4+1 round and then just as suddenly as it began, it fades away to a low rumble in the ground below that hints at Cipactli's agitation. Read the following after the earthquake has ended.

As the earth stills, a tall figure immerges from the greens – a tall, striking woman with a pair of brightly colored wings like those of a macaw jutting from her back and a thick mane of red-gold feathers instead of hair and the taloned feet of a bird of prey. Not wholly woman, nor wholly bird, she delivers her message with poise and quiet resolve. "Know this stranger of the jungle – only the worthy can enter the mouth of the gods."

This is Xaatxlitl (loosely translated as 'Peregrine' in Common), wise woman of the Hovitos, and she is initiating first contact with the PC in order to gauge his mettle. Should the PC attack her, she will turn into a bird and fly away as the hidden Hovitos warriors in the brush engage the PC and provide cover. If the PC seems interested in parleying, he can learn the following. None but a member of the Hovitos tribe is permitted to even venture near Cipactli's Maw. It displeases Cipactli and therefore the Hovitos. However, Peregrine offers a mutually beneficial solution. The Hovitos have been plagued of late by unseen creatures that strike by night and drag off chickens, dogs, even children and the elderly. The screams of the victims can be followed to a nearby cave, but no one dares go any further for the cavern is said to be the entryway to the subterranean hell ruled over by the bloodthirsty bat god, Camazotz. Should the PC dispatch the creatures plaguing the Hovitos, Peregrine offers to bless the PC, bestowing honorary membership to the tribe for his service, which would allow him to enter Cipactli's Maw.

Peregrine will not accompany the PCs, mostly out of stubborn respect for traditions—it is her duty to remain with her people and tend to their spiritual needs as best she can. Yet she is comfortable answering questions about the history and legends surrounding the Caves of Darkness and Camazotz.

## HOVITOS WARRIOR (12)

Male human fighter 1 N Medium humanoid Init +2; Senses Perception +2 CR 1/2 200 XP

## DEFENSE

AC 13, touch 13, flat-footed 10 (+2 Dex, +1 dodge) hp 11 (1d10+6) Fort +4, Ref +2, Will +1

## OFFENSE

**Speed** 30 ft **Melee** spear +3 (1d8+2) **Ranged** javelin +3 (1d6+2)

## **S**TATISTICS

Str 15, Dex 15, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8 Base Atk +1; CMB +3; CMD 14 Feats Dodge, Toughness, Weapon Focus (spear) Skills Perception +2, Survival +5 Languages Hovitos

Other Gear Spear, javelin (6)

## TACTICS

- **During Combat:** These warriors will attack from the brush if the PC attacks Peregrine. They will start by launching javelins and close with spears.
- **Morale:** If reduced to 1 hit point or lower, they either flee into the jungle or fling down their weapons and surrender. They melt away if reduced to 8 combatants or less.

## PART THREE: CAVES OF DARKNESS

Deep underground, within caves fearfully avoided by the Hovitos, an abandoned shrine to a twisted deity has become home to horrors that represent a new and deadly threat. Long silent, the shrine once again begins to quaver with the screams of innocents.

## BACKGROUND

These caves include a former shrine to Camazotz, the god of bats, murder, and darkness. Centuries ago the shrine was a hive of mind-twisting depravity, but its caves eventually fell silent, no longer playing witness to gruesome tortures and senseless sacrifices. But while the society that worshipped the deity may have collapsed, Camazotz's essence remained behind and called out to other subterranean denizens. In time, a colony of darkmantles began to roost within its terrorstained confines. Perhaps tainted by Camazotz's unholy aspect, one of the darkmantles began to develop preternatural intelligence and frightening powers. This creature has spread her will over the other darkmantles, lording over them as an aberrant queen. Led by this cunning female, their numbers and appetite growing, the darkmantles are no longer merely a nuisance to the subterranean communities but are now a growing danger.

## CAVES OF DARKNESS MAP



## **GENERAL FEATURES**

The tunnels within the shrine are all natural caves with uneven floors and rough walls. Slaves were used to carve out chambers and refine existing chambers, so that with the exception of areas 11, 12, and 18, all walls, ceilings, and floors are of hewn stone. Unless otherwise stated, the ceilings are uniformly 10 feet high. There is no light within the complex aside from what the characters bring with them. Because of the unholy presence of Camazotz, the effective radius of light sources (including spells and items magical in nature) is halved, and shadows always seem to encroach upon the edges the edges of one's vision (-2 to sight-based Perception checks). Sound travels twice as far within the caves (+2 to sound-based Perception checks).

## AREA II: HIDDEN ENTRANCE

This naturally hewn cave appears empty, save for a scattering of cracked bones that lie upon the ground and a 10-foot wide shaft in the ground that drops away into utter darkness.

Permanent darkness and silence spells have been cast on the shaft to make it appear as a bottomless hole, when in fact it is no more than 6-feet deep. At the bottom of the shaft, a fourfoot tall opening leads into the shrine proper.

Monster: A lone darkmantle lies pressed against the ceiling, waiting or prey to come into range.

## DARKMANTLE

CR1 N Small magical beast 400 XP Init +6; Senses blindsight 90 ft. (echolocation); Perception +4

#### DEFENSE

AC 13, touch 11, flat-footed 13 (+2 natural, +1 size) hp 15 (2d10+4) Fort +5, Ref +3, Will +0

## OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft., fly 30 ft. (poor) Melee slam +6 (1d4+4 plus grab) Special Attacks constrict (1d4+4) Spell-Like Abilities (CL 5th) 1/day-darkness

## **S**TATISTICS

Str 11, Dex 15, Con 14, Int 2, Wis 11, Cha 10 Base Atk +2; CMB +4 (+8 grapple); CMD 14 (can't be tripped) Feats Improved Initiative Skills Fly +2, Perception +4, Stealth +9; Racial Modifiers +4 Perception, +4 Stealth

## SPECIAL ABILITIES

Grab (Ex) A darkmantle can use its grab attack against a foe of any size.

Tactics: The darkmantle casts darkness and then drops down upon the smallest victim. If it successfully grapples a creature, it drags the unfortunate victim into the shaft to feast.

## AREA 12: DARKMANTLE AERIE

You emerge into a large cavern. Before you is a seemingly bottomless void spanned only by a narrow bridge constructed entirely of bones. On the opposite side of the sinister span is another tunnel mouth, leading further into this world that knows no light.

The ceiling is 60-feet above and is studded with stalactites. Characters of medium-size or greater who walk upon the bridge cause it to creak and crack ominously, as if the bones were about to give way at any moment. Generally speaking the bridge is quite sturdy and safe to walk over. Taking the time to secure themselves with rope or prepare spells to safeguard their passage is not time wasted, however, because the cavern does indeed pose a threat. But rather than originating underfoot, the danger comes from above

Monster: This cave is home to a colony of darkmantles that roost from the ceiling, hanging upside down and pulling their flaps among themselves to almost perfectly resemble stalactites (they gain a +4 Stealth bonus in this form).

Darkmantles (6): see area 11

Tactics: The darkmantles wait until a potential victim has made its way out onto the bone bridge before attacking. Then, almost as one, they attack. The darkmantles begin their assault by casting darkness to envelope the entire cavern in murky, impenetrable blackness, then drop from the ceiling and fly en masse towards the unsuspecting and now-blinded victim(s).

Development: Walking across the bone bridge requires a DC 8 Acrobatics check each round. In darkness, the difficulty increases to DC 12. Fighting, performing complex maneuvers, or moving beyond standard speed increases the difficulty by a further 4. The void is 50 feet deep. Characters falling from the bridge suffer 5d6 damage.

**Treasure:** Darkmantles keep no treasure of their own. However, the broken bodies of several of their past victims lie on the cave floor far below, and with them their worldly possessions. These include 150gp, a masterwork great axe, and a *cloak of resistance* +1.

## AREA 13: TEMPLE

Slender, glistening trails of slime weave around this damp, dome-ceiling cave. Flaky white lichen grows in a thick carpet across the cool, wet stone walls. In the center of the room is a 12-foot tall statue of a powerfully built bat-headed figure. The statue's eyes are shiny red gems that gleam with malicious intent, while his bare-chested torso is a mass of scars and wounds. Coiled around the stone edifice is a two- headed centipede, one head located on either end of its eight foot long body. It swings its grotesque heads around to face you and snaps vise-like mandibles in obvious agitation.

Characters making a DC 16 Knowledge (history or religion) check determine that the figure is Camazotz, the god of bats, darkness, and murder. Scrapping away the lichens from the walls reveal grisly paintings done in blood revealing scenes of torture and mutilation, providing a +3 circumstance bonus for identifying the statue.

The slime trails along the floor are made by darkmantle hatchlings, which resemble grubs slick with mucus. A Survival check DC 10 allows the PC to follow the trails back along the floor, up the eastern wall, and into an alcove 12-feet off the floor where the darkmantle nest lies hidden (see area 13b). This alcove is difficult to see from the ground; characters must make a DC 16 Perception check, while those having made a succeeded the Survival roll notice the alcove on a DC 12 Perception check. From atop statue the alcove is plainly visible (DC 10 Perception check).



**Monster:** Other than having two heads, the centipede is a standard specimen of its monstrous species. It has just happened upon the cave and eagerly devoured several of the helpless larvae. The centipede is angered at the sudden intrusion and willing to fight to protect its meal from what it perceives to be rival predators.

Monstrous Amphisbaena Centipede	<b>CR 2</b>	
N Large Vermin	600 XP	
<b>Init</b> +2; <b>Senses</b> darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +4		

## Defense

AC 14, touch 11, flat-footed 12 (+2 Dex, +3 natural, -1 size) hp 18 (4d8) Fort +4, Ref +3, Will +1 Immune vermin traits

## OFFENSE

**Speed** 40 ft., climb 40 ft. **Melee** 2 bites +3 (1d8+1 plus poison) **Special Attacks** poison (Fort DC 11, 1d3 Dex)

## **S**TATISTICS

Str 13, Dex 15, Con 10, Int –, Wis 10, Cha 2 Base Atk +3; CMB +5; CMD 16 (can't be tripped) Feats Weapon Finesse (Bite)<sup>B</sup> Skills Perception +4; Racial Modifiers +4 Perception

**Tactics:** The centipede remains coiled upon the statue, striking at those who come into range. Because the centipede is wrapped around the statue and therefore only a portion of its length is exposed from any given angle, it's considered to have partial cover. The creature won't pursue the PCs beyond the cave and will beat a hasty retreat if reduced to 10 hit points.

**Treasure:** Camazotz's eyes are bloodstones, extremely red and valuable gems that are of particular significance to this bloodthirsty deity. Each is worth 800gp. Climbing the statue requires a DC 12 Climb check.

## AREA 13B: ALCOVE

The alcove is 12-feet off the ground, measures 3-feet wide and 5-feet deep. Its floor is covered in bloated, moist grubs that leave trails of mucus in the wake. At the rear of the alcove are two dozen darkmantle eggs. The eggs are about the size of a chicken's, but their soft, grayish shells allow them to blend against the stone surface. As a result, characters need to make a DC 12 Perception check to notice them at distances greater than 3-feet; a failed check leaves the character with the impression the alcove is empty.

Several of the eggs have recently hatched, and others are about to. If the PCs watch for a length of time, they'll notice one or more of the eggs warping and buckling as squirming larvae inside struggle for release. Finally, the slug-like creatures tear through the membranes and, still covered in the slime of its egg, slide out into the cave. Unless killed, the larvae will grow into mature darkmantles within 6 months.

Characters making a DC 15 Knowledge (arcana) check know that darkmantle larva can be used as a substitute spell component for the darkness spell. Obscured by the mass of eggs is a holy relic called *Camazotz's Ire* (see below) and a small carved jade fish (worth 200 gp).

## CAMAZOTZ'S IRE

*Camatotz's Ire* is a scourge—a multi-tailed, barbed whip infused with a deep malevolence. The barbs themselves are crudely fashioned jagged pieces of bone, each one carved with the image of a screaming face. Gore clings to the barbs and will return even if wiped away. The handle is also bone, and the whips themselves finely wound strands of humanoid hair.

A +2 *wounding weapon*, it provides the wielder a +4 bonus on opposed attack rolls when trying to disarm an opponent (including the roll to keep from being disarmed if the attack fails). Whenever a critical hit is struck, the weapon gives off a scream of sheer agony, a cry maddening in its intensity. All creatures within 100 ft. must make a DC 20 Will save or be shaken and suffer 1d4 points of Wisdom damage. Characters who wield the weapon gain blindsight, allowing them to see effortlessly in even magical darkness.

In addition, *Camazotz's Ire* grants the wielder the following spell-like abilities at CL 5th: *darkness* 2/day, *fear* 2/day, *fly* 1/day, *inflict serious wounds* 1/day.

## AREA 14: SILENCED HALLWAY

This tunnel appears to be nondescript, save for the occasional trail of dried blood that stains the ground underfoot. But suddenly, you realize you no longer hear your tentative footfalls, the ragged breath that comes with tension, or the faint rattle of your gear that seems to occur no matter how carefully you arrange it upon your body. You can't hear anything, not even the beating of your own heart.

This corridor has been subjected to a permanent *silence* spell. Its intended purpose was to block the ear-splitting screams emanating from the torture chamber (area 15), which would echo throughout the tunnels and perhaps give away the shrine's carefully concealed location. The *silence* spell provides the PCs with a haven for rest and recuperation since darkmantles, which are effectively blinded if their echolocation-based blindsight is eliminated, will not enter the hallway under any circumstance.

## AREA 15: TORTURE CHAMBER

Clearly, this room was once a torture chamber, based upon the macabre menagerie of racks, screws, branding irons, and assorted other sinister devices that lie scattered about the chamber. The walls, floor, and even the ceiling are stained with dried, splattered blood. Most of the devices are empty, but a few hold remains of past victims.

## AREA 16: PIT TRAP

The cultists built a pit trap here to ensure prisoners attempting escape didn't get far. The pit has long since filled one-third full with murky water seeping in from an aquifer. The moisture has made the walls slick with mold and dampness, making attempts to climb out of the pit very difficult (DC 20). An explorer who happened upon the shrine decades ago fell prey to the trap and, burdened by his heavy armor, drowned in the water below. Fortunately, a PC with a light source can clearly see and avoid the sprung trap.

However, if the PC should fall into the pit, the warrior, now little more than a skeleton and still tormented by the fear he experienced during his final moments, desperately clings to the PC as his only lifeline. Once the PC hits the water, he feels strong hands grabbing hold of his legs, threatening to pull him under. The added weight of the struggling undead and his gear means Swim checks made by the PCs to stay afloat are doubled; a failed check means the character is dragged under. A character can hold his breath for a number of rounds equal to twice his Constitution score. After that, he must make a Constitution check to avoid drowning (DC 10 +1 per previous check).

## PIT TRAP

**Type** mechanical; **Perception** DC 20; **Disable Device** DC 20 **EFFECTS** 

## Trigger location; Reset manual

**Effect** 30-ft.-deep pit (2d6 falling damage); DC 20 Reflex avoids; multiple targets (all targets in a 10-ft.-square area).

There are several ways for a trapped PC to escape. He can break the skeleton's grip with an opposed grapple check or squirm from his grasp with a DC 15 Escape Artist check. He can destroy the skeleton, or sunder his arms (hardness 10, hit points 5).Or he can attempt to climb out or be pulled out by companions, dragging the dead-weigh of the armored skeleton with him.

Because of the murky water, the skeleton enjoys total concealment (50% chance to miss). Characters in the water suffer a -4 circumstance penalty on all Reflex saves, Dexterity based checks, and Initiative rolls, and a similar penalty to all attack and damage rolls except when using piercing weapons. Shields are not usable underwater, and neither are non-piercing ranged weapons.

## HUMAN SKELETON

CR 1/2 200 XP

NE Medium Undead Init +2; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +0

## Defense

AC 19, touch 11, flat-footed 20 (+8 armor, +1 enhancement) hp 7 (1d8) Fort +0, Ref +0, Will +2 DR 5/bludgeoning; Immune cold, undead traits

## Offense

Speed 20 ft.

**Melee** broken scimitar +0 (1d6), claw -3 (1d4+1) or 2 claws +2 (1d4+2)

## **S**TATISTICS

**Str** 15, **Dex** 14, **Con** – , **Int** – , **Wis** 10, **Cha** 10 **Base Atk** +0; **CMB** +2; **CMD** 14 **Gear** *Full-plate* +1, broken scimitar

**Tactics:** Unaware that he has already perished, the skeleton desperately clings to the PC as his hope for rescue. He only grapples, unwilling to let go of his salvation. That he may in the process drown another doesn't register.

## AREA 17: PRISON

A door made of bones banded together with silver banding hangs limply from its hinges. Within the room, rusted chains hang from the walls. Several of them still contain skeletal arm fragments; beneath them lay the remains of splintered skeletons. Small beetles scurry into darkened recesses upon your entry.

This area was quite obviously a prison in ages past. Scratched into the walls is an inscription that reads in common: "The suffering never ends. In this dark world the passage of day and night has no meaning, so I track the loss of my companions. I too pray to be released from my mortal coil." Beside the inscription are eight vertical lines, each one representing a friend taken from the prison and never returned.

## AREA 18: GRAND TEMPLE

A yawning abyss dominates the southern part of this room, its sheer walls descending into darkness below. The north wall features a screaming skull that has been painstakingly, if crudely, carved from the rock wall. It stands as tall as the room is high. Shrouded figures, bound into the fetal position, have been placed within the cavities that form the skull's eyes. The floor of the room is uneven and studded with rocks, some as big as 4-feet in diameter. At first glance, the floor seems to move, roiling and swaying with life-like motion. Then you realize the floor doesn't move, but rather is covered in a blanket of small brown bats that pull themselves about on their fragile forearms, a mass of tiny but vicious teeth and wrinkled faces that snap at one another with ravenous fury.

The pit is 100 feet deep and connects with the void in area 12. A layer several feet deep of shattered bones lies at the bottom, representing hundreds of victims who were cast into the abyss.

The bats that cover the cavern floor number in the thousands. Despite the fact that bats are Camazotz's favorite creatures (or perhaps because of it; one never knows with the sadistic and quite possibly insane deity), he has rendered those that inhabit his temple flightless. They survive primarily through cannibalism, which no doubt amuses Camazotz, and spend most of their time shuffling about pitifully, getting underfoot and impeding movement. Characters moving beyond cautious or attempting to fight must make a DC 12 Reflex save each round to avoid riling the bats underfoot; failure results in 1d4 bats attacking them.

The shrouded figures lying in repose within the skull's cavities are former priests of Camazotz, now little more than desiccated corpses. PCs making a Perception check (DC 15) notice that the throats of each have been cleanly cut, evidence of having had their throats slit. Such is the fate of any priest who grows too wise or too powerful with the divine arts – Camazotz loves feasting on the blood of his most ardent worshippers above all else, and so inevitably all of his priests become willing sacrifices. All three have been laid to rest with their holy symbols.

**Monster:** This chamber is the lair of Xamatlotl, the cunning darkmantle 'queen'.

# FLIGHTLESS BATS (1000s)CR 1/8N Diminutive Animal50 XPInit +2; Senses blindsense 20 ft., low-light vision; Perception +6

#### DEFENSE

AC 16, touch 16, flat-footed 14 (+2 Dex, +4 size) hp 2 (1d8-2) Fort +0, Ref +4, Will +2

OFFENSE Speed 5 ft. Melee bite +6 (1d3-4)

#### STATISTICS Str 1, Dex 15, Con 6, Int 2, Wis 14, Cha 5 Base Atk +0; CMB -2; CMD 3 Feats Weapon Finesse Skills Perception +6

## XAMATLOTL

N Small magical beast 400 XP Init +6; Senses blindsight 90 ft. (echolocation); Perception +5

#### Defense

AC 13, tough 11, flat-footed 13 (+2 natural, +1 size) hp 24 (2d10+4) Fort +5, Ref +3, Will +0

#### OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft., fly 30 ft. (poor)
Melee slam +6 (1d4+4 plus grab)
Special Attacks constrict (1d4+4)
Spell-Like Abilities (CL 5th)
1/day – desecrate, greater darkness, summon swarm

#### **S**TATISTICS

Str 11, Dex 15, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 11, Cha 10

- Base Atk +2; CMB +4 (+8 grapple); CMD 14 (can't be tripped) Feats Improved Initiative
- Skills Fly +3, Perception +5, Stealth +10; Racial Modifiers +4 Perception, +4 Stealth

#### SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Tactics:** Xamatlotl masquerades as one of the rocks studding the cave floor by wrapping her membrane around her body. She casts *deeper darkness* and *summon swarm* as soon as potential opponents enter the chamber, and then under the cover of darkness cover begins to stalk the distracted enemy. When she's been reduced to 10 hit points or less, she attempts to drop into the void and fly away to safety. Once healed, she'll begin stalking the PCs once more, intent on retribution for the injury and insult.

#### FLIGHTLESS BAT SWARM

N Diminutive Animal

**CR 2** 600 XP

CR1

Init +2; Senses blindsense 20 ft., low-light vision; Perception +15

#### DEFENSE

AC 16, touch 16, flat-footed 14 (+2 Dex, +4 size) hp 13 (3d8) Fort +3, Ref +7, Will +3

#### OFFENSE

Speed 5 ft. Melee swarm (1d6) Space 10 ft.; Reach 0 ft. Special Attacks distraction (DC 11), wounding

#### **S**TATISTICS

Str 3, Dex 15, Con 11, Int 2, Wis 14, Cha 4
Base Atk +2; CMB –; CMD –
Feats Lightning Reflexes, Skill Focus (Perception)
Skills Perception +15; Racial Modifiers +4 Perception when using blindsense
SQ swarm traits

#### SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Wounding (Ex)** Any living creature damaged by a bat swarm continues to bleed, losing 1 hit point per round thereafter. Multiple wounds do not result in cumulative bleeding loss. The bleeding can be stopped by a DC 10 Heal check or the application of a cure spell or some other healing magic.

**Grab** (Ex) A darkmantle can use its grab attack against a foe of any size.

**Treasure:** One of the corpses has a sealed clay vial hidden among the folds of his rotting robes, which can be found with a DC 12 Perception check. Inside is a pale paste-like substance that has a heady smell to it. Characters making a DC 10 Knowledge (nature) check can identify the substance as some sort of bat guano, which characters making a DC 15 Knowledge (arcana) check know that cultists of Camaztoz make magical healing salves with bat guano as a principle component. This salve serves as a *potion of cure light wounds*, but is used externally on a wound and each dose can only heal damage suffered from that one particular wound. The clay vial holds two doses. If the salve is ingested, the character must make a DC 12 Fort check to avoid suffering 1d3 Con damage.

## AREA 19: PRIEST'S CHAMBERS

A simple bed, its sheets discolored and wet with mildew, its mattress stained and lumpy, sits within this room. Beside it is a low, flat rock covered with black candles, its surface caked with melted wax. The western wall of the room consists of a fine-meshed cage, the floor of which is littered with tiny bones.

This chamber was formerly home to the shrine's resident priest, a devoted cleric of Camazotz who has long-since joined his patron. Characters making DC 12 Survival checks realize that the cage mesh is made from spider silk, and that the bones lying within belong to a dozen or more bats. The priest reared these bats both to supply the guano that priests of Camazotz use to make their hair stand erect and as foci for various rituals (many of Camazotz's rituals require the caster to bite-off the head of still-living bats).

**Treasure:** The candles are made of human fat, sputter uncontrollably, and give off tendrils of inky smoke. Their usefulness as light sources is therefore minimal. While most of the candles are mundane, one is actually a chaotic evil *candle of invocation*. A *potion of expeditious retreat* lies inside the moldy mattress; finding it requires a DC 10 Perception check.

## PART FOUR: CIPACTLI'S MAW

Bursting from the earth juts a 60-foot-tall, vine choked sculpture of a gigantic crocodile's head. With jaws wide open to snap at the air above, this highly-stylized remnant holds the entrance to a deep shaft which drops into the ground like a stone gullet. More than 100-feet below, bones choke this passage – countless bodies that fill a space of unknown depth. While the Maw is little more than a morbid landmark by day, it is said that at night a spectral priest haunts the site, performing rites and guarding a crypt temple hidden deep below.

The monument is a representation of Cipactli, also known as the world lizard, a massive, crocodilian creature of myth that dwells beneath the earth. In depictions, its body is colored like the earth and its scales seem like great slabs of stone. The colossal monstrosity hibernates for centuries, then wakes up and spreads terror for a few weeks, feasting and causing earthquakes with every laborious step taken, before returning to hibernation once again. It spends its brief waking period gorging on humanoids, animals, trees, buildings, rivers, and even mountains – the awakening of Cipactli is quite literally an earth-shattering event.

## DAY

Even during the day, Cipactli's Maw is ominous somehow. No monkeys clamber over its stone surface, birds refuse to fly overhead, and the constant buzzing of mosquitoes falls

# CIPACTLI'S MAW MAP



silent as one approaches. While the spectral priest cannot materialize once the sun rises above the horizon, its unnatural aura is still sensed by animals, both wild and domesticated (no animal will come within 30 feet of the Maw and will panic if forced to do so unless a master succeeds at a DC 25 Handle Animal, Ride, or wild empathy check).

The priest's presence can be felt in another way as well: when within 30 ft. of the maw, character must make a DC 16 Will save or feel the sensation of invisible hands dragging him toward the precipice, as the blood-curdling chanting of a primitive ritual echoes in his skull. The character is helpless as he is dragged towards the edge of the shaft and held on the precipice. A final DC 16 Will save is made; if this one fails as well, the character screams in abject agony as his still-beating heart is ripped from his chest only moments before he is thrown into the gullet of the stone crocodile. Anyone falling into the maw suffers 12d6 damage.

## NIGHT

Under the pale blue light of the moon, the specter of a priest appears atop Cipactli's mouth, pantomiming the ritual sacrifice of a victim. The priest wears a shirt fringed with feathers, a headband consisting of skulls crafted from jade, and an ornamentally painted human jaw bone that hangs from the headband and fits over his own jaw. He carries a small stone-headed axe in one hand, and a severed human head in the other. The sudden appearance of the undead fiend and the grisly sight of the rotting head serves as *cause fear*, CL 5th.



**CR 2** 

600 XP

GHOSTLY PRIEST (HUECUVA) CE Medium Undead Init +6; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception 5 Aura faithless (30 ft.)

#### DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 12, flat-footed 15 (+2 Dex, +5 natural) hp 20 (3d8+3) Fort +2, Ref +3, Will +4 DR 5/magic or silver; Immune undead traits

#### OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft. Melee 2 claws +4 (1d6+1 plus disease) Spell-like Abilities (CL 3rd) 3/day-*disguise self* 

#### **S**TATISTICS

Str 13, Dex 14, Con –, Int 4, Wis 12, Cha 12 Base Atk +2; CMB +3; CMD 14 Feats Improved Initiative, Weapon Focus (claw) Skills Perception +5, Stealth +7

#### SPECIAL ABILITES

- Disease (Ex) Claw; save Fort DC 12; frequency 1d3 days/ 1day; effect 1d3 Dex damage and 1d3 Con damage; cure 2 consecutive saves. The save DC is Charisma-based.
- **Faithless (Su)** The huecuva and all undead creatures within 30 feet receive a +2 profane bonus on Will saves made to resist channeling energy and any effects based off that ability. This bonus stacks with channel resistance.

## ACCESSING THE VAULTS

Getting to the bottom of the 120-foot shaft is problematic. The light of the full moon reveals a staircase that winds its way down the shaft, allowing access to the treasure vault below. Unfortunately, this materializes only a few evenings every month and requires tomb raiders to brave the undead priest. Short of that, the PC must use skills (climb), equipment (rope and spikes), spells (*fly* or *spider climb*, for example), or some combination thereof, to get to the bottom and access the vaults.

# AREA 20 SHAFT BOTTOM AND SECRET DOOR

The pit floor is a tangle of bones and broken bodies. Centipedes, beetles, and maggots swarm over the bodies, picking at the flesh until only bones remain.

Some of the bodies are relatively fresh, the remains of fortune hunters and occasional sacrifices offered up by the Hovitos. Others are centuries old, their bones preserved by a *gentle repose* spell that covers the entire shaft. Neither the skeletons nor the vermin pose any danger to characters.

The divination spell cast on the ruby ring reveals the location and password which opens the portal; otherwise, finding the secret door in the wall requires a DC 20 Perception check, and opening the door requires a *knock* spell at CL 10th or ability or other similar unconventional methods.

## AREA 21 CHAMBER OF YOUTH

The walls in this room are rounded – hard angles have been polished away to smooth corners. With no hard lines defining where walls meet floor and ceiling, the place seems subtly alien and is difficult to gaze upon. A rack of scrolls stands in the room, casting a shadow over a steaming pool set into the chamber's floor. Queen Huehaatl was stunningly vain, and sought all manner of means, many of them debased and inhumane, to retain her youth and legendary beauty. While she managed to prolong her life well past when it would have naturally run its course, in the end, she could not find a way to cheat death. This chamber represents the sum of her attempts.

The pool is actually boiling blood. Immersing oneself in the scalding fluid results in 1d4 points of damage, but serves as *greater restoration* (its life-extending properties can only be gained by immersing oneself on a routine basis, once a month at a minimum). The restorative blood can be taken from the pool and used as a potion. It retains its magical properties for 1d4 days, but it must be heated for ten minutes before use. Ingesting the steaming fluid inflicts 2d4 points of damage.

A small fire elemental bound to the pool heats the fluid. The passage of time has weakened the binding magic, however, allowing the elemental to emerge from the water for short periods. Now virtually insane from centuries of confinement, the elemental lashes out at anyone who enters the chamber. It cannot leave the room, however, and after 3 rounds must make a Willpower save (DC 15) each round to resist the magic pulling back to its crimson prison.

#### Small Fire Elemental

C Small outsider (elemental, extraplanar, fire) Init +5; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +4

Defense

AC 16, touch 13, flat-footed 14 (+1 Dex, +1 dodge, +3 natural, +3 size) hp 11 (2d10) Fort +3, Ref +4, Will +0 Immune elemental traits, fire Weaknesses vulnerability to cold

**OFFENSE Speed** 50 ft. **Melee** slam +4 (1d4 plus burn) **Special Attacks** burn (1d4, DC 11)

## **S**TATISTICS

Str 10, Dex 13, Con 10, Int 4, Wis 11, Cha 11
Base Atk +2; CMB +1; CMD 13
Feats Dodge, Improved Initiative <sup>B</sup>, Weapon Finesse <sup>B</sup>
Skills Acrobatics +5, Climb +4, Escape Artist +5, Intimidate +4, Knowledge (planes) +1, Perception +4

The shelves contain dozens of stone tablets written in a mixture of ancient common and magical scripture that is collectively a massive manuscript called *The Origins of Eternity*. Anyone reading the text who makes a DC 15 Knowledge (religion) or Knowledge (arcane) check realizes that it is essentially an incomplete and fragmentary exploration into the various methods by which one can extend one's lifespan, including legends of youth-restoring pools, magical spells, lichdom, vampirism, lost artifacts, and a host of other possibilities. The book can be used as a springboard for adventure or magical research, or can be sold for 5,000gp.

While much of the research is far too obscure and challenging for low-level characters to pursue, one discarded avenue of research jumps out: the recipe for a potion that would deprive the ingesting individual of the need to sleep and immunity to sleep effects. The character would still, however, require 8 hours of uninterrupted rest for spell preparation. The drawback is that dark rings form around the characters now-sunken eyes, resulting in a -1 Charisma penalty. This potion requires crushed gems worth 5,000 gp, powdered mummy, the casting of a *sleep* spell (minimum CL 4th , and a successful DC 20 Craft (alchemy) check.

## AREA 22 CORPSE WALL

The hallway abruptly ends before a crude wall constructed of rotting corpses and rubble. You recoil in horror from the vile edifice, shaken by the callous disregard for the sanctity of life that the wall represents.

Characters must make a Will save (DC 13) to approach the wall; failure indicates that the character is unable to overcome his repulsion to move any closer than 10 feet; he cannot make another save attempt for 24 hours. When approached by Queen Huehaatl, the corpses—the remains of monarchs whose kingdoms were subjugated by Huehaatl and her general Tlatloc—would disentangle themselves and part to allow passage. For all others, the wall represents a considerable barrier.

#### Corpse Wall: 3 ft. thick, Hardness 5; 60 hp; Break DC 28

There are several means by which the PC can pass through the wall. First, he may elect to break it down, though it should be noted that the wall does not idly sit by while it is destroyed. Instead, it fights back with 1d3 Slam attacks per round (+2 melee, 1d6+1 damage, Fort save at DC 12 or also suffer 1 point of Strength damage) any one involved in the demolition effort. Slain characters are dragged into the wall to reinforce its structure. If ranged spells are employed to damage the wall, the wall responds in kind by throwing 1d3 large chunks of rock each round (range increment 20 feet, -1 to hit, 1d8+1 damage).

Alternatively, the PC might attempt to force a passage using *command undead*. If the attempt is successful in turning four or more zombies, a 3-foot wide opening is made in the wall. This breach lasts for only 10 rounds (1 minute) before reforming. Clerics can use turn/rebuke undead in a similar fashion.

## AREA 23 INSIDIOUS TRAP

A large stone door studded with dozens of colorful gemstones and with an image in jade of a beautiful woman sitting atop a throne stands before you. Although the door has no latch, there is a fist-sized hole in middle of the decorative throne.

This door is in fact in trap intended to lure would-be pilferers to their death. The actual entrance to the vault is hidden at the end of the corridor, revealed to the PC in the divination of the Ruby Ring. Otherwise, locating the secret door requires a DC 30 Perception check.

**Trap:** The door is actually nothing more than a thick block of stone set in the wall. It has a non-functioning fake lever within the fist-sized hole, completing the illusion that it is in fact a real door. The stone block is attached to a piston in a recessed area behind it. When any part of the fake door is touched, the piston thrusts forward with incredible force, smashing everything in its path against the opposite wall. A chamber behind the block houses complex counterweights and gears that retract the piston and resets the trap.

**Treasure:** The precious stones embedded within the fake door are worth 500gp in total.

CR1

400 XP

## PILFERER'S BANE DOOR TRAP

CR 10

Type mechanical; Perception DC 28; Disable Device DC 24 EFFECTS

Trigger touch; Reset automatic

Effect crush (12d10 bludgeoning, DC 24 Reflex save to avoid); multiple targets (all creatures within four adjacent 5-ft. squares).

## AREA 24 TREASURE VAULT

Decorative braziers illuminate this chamber. The floor and walls are covered in colorful jade tile, while the ceiling is made of lustrous stone that reflects the orange glow of the dancing flames. The floor tiles differ from those on the wall in that each is etched with alien runes. At the far end of the room, three steps lead up a dais atop which lays gold and riches beyond your wildest dreams, an overflowing mound of greed. There are urns of gems, decorative furnishings inlaid with gold, a large jade crocodile statue with onyx eyes, bejeweled weapons, scroll cases, and countless coins spilled across the tile.

The floor to this room represents a dangerous trap. A single path passes safely through the rune-etched tiles; stepping on even one wrong tile causes the jade crocodile to animate and attack. Characters who previously divined the Ruby Ring know how to bypass this trap, otherwise doing so requires 6 consecutive DC 20 Perception checks.

## ANIMATED OBJECTS TRAP CR 3

Type magic; Perception DC 31; Disable Device DC 31

EFFECTS

Trigger touch (floor); Reset automatic; Bypass correct path

Effect spell effect (animate objects, CL 11th)

## JADE CROCODILE

N Medium Construct 800 XP Init +0; Senses Darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception -5

## DEFENSE

AC 18, touch 10, flat-footed 18 (+8 natural) hp 40 (3d10+20) Fort +1, Ref +0, Will -4

OFFENSE Spd 30 ft. Melee Bite +5 (1d8+3)

#### **S**TATISTICS

**Str** 16, **Dex** 10, **Con** – , **Int** – , **Wis** 1, **Cha** 1 **Base Atk** +3, **CMB** +5; **CMD** 15 **SQ** stone

This trap isn't the only thing guarding the treasure; Queen Huehuetl, though long dead, refuses to release her iron grip on her horde and lingers as an allip. In her final days, at an age reputed to be well in excess of 200, the queen found that while her body remained vibrant and youthful, her mind was unraveling with senility and decay. In a fit of madness she took her own life here, surrounded by all she held dear.

Hueheutl materializes as soon as her treasure is touched and attacks until destroyed, unwilling to relinquish any portion of her wealth. "Mites, you are not worthy of my treasure....my treasure, my precious treasure," she babbles between sobs.

## QUEEN HUEHUETL ALLIP

CE Medium undead (incorporeal) Init +5; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +7 Aura babble (60 ft., DC 15) **CR 3** 800 XP

## DEFENSE

AC 14, touch 14, flat-footed 13 (+3 deflection, +1 Dex) hp 30 (4d8+12) Fort +4, Ref +4, Will +4 Defensive Abilities incorporeal, channel resistance +2; Immune undead traits

#### OFFENSE

Speed fly 30 ft.(perfect) Melee incorporeal touch +4 (1d4 wisdom damage) Special Attacks touch of insanity

## **S**TATISTICS

Str –, Dex 12, Con –, Int 11, Wis 11, Cha 16
Base Atk +3; CMB +3; CMD 17
Feats Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes
Skills Fly +16, Intimidate +14, Perception +7, Stealth +8
SQ Madness

#### SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Babble (Su)** An allip constantly mutters and whines to itself, creating a hypnotic effect. All sane creatures within 60 feet of the allip must succeed on a DC 15 Will save or be fascinated for 2d4 rounds. While a target is fascinated, the allip can approach without breaking the effect, but at attack by the allip breaks the effect. This is a sonic, mind-affecting compulsion effect. Creatures that successfully save cannot be affected by the same allip's babble for 24 hours. The save DC is Charisma based.

**Madness (Su)** Anyone targeting an allip with thought detection, mind control, or telepathic ability makes direct contact with its tortured mind and takes 1d4 points if Wisdom damage.

**Touch of Insanity (Su)** The touch of an allip deals 1d4 points of Wisdom damage. A successful critical hit causes 1d4 points of Wisdom damage and 1 point of Wisdom drain. On each successful attack, an allip gains 5 temporary hit points.

**Treasure:** The treasure here is vast, almost beyond measure. Its contents are not detailed here, since by the agreement under which the player character began the adventure the wealth herein belongs to the Wizards of the Four Winds, and the PC is merely to locate the treasure. Additionally, the Hovitos will not respond favorably to seeing anyone loot Cipactli's Maw, something tantamount to stealing from the gods in their minds. However, a discreet PC can comfortably hide the following on his person without drawing the attention of the Hovitos or Wizards of the Four Winds: 2000gp worth of gems, jewels, or coins; two potions of his choice; a scroll with any combination of arcane spells totaling ten caster levels; and one of the following magical items: *staff of spell storing, minor ring of energy resistance* (fire), *wand of summon summoning III*, or *cape of the mountebank*.

CR 3

Upon return, the player character is also welcomed into the brethren of the Wizards of the Four Winds. The exact benefits are up to the GM and the nature of his campaign, but should include a +2 circumstance bonus on all Knowledge checks made in their libraries and the services of an unflinchingly loyal follower (2<sup>nd</sup> level human expert) to serve as personal chronicler and servant. Less tangible but no less valuable is the benefit of having such as a powerful order as patrons and allies.

## APPENDIX

The following are the natives hired to guide the PC and a sample PC for fast and convenient play; however, players are welcome to create their own PCs.

## BARRANCA AND SATIPO

Barranca and Satipo are twin brothers who serve as porters and guides for the player character. Somewhat shifty, they will involve themselves in whatever activity will make them money: they've traded with natives, hunted and trapped, prospected for jade and silver, guided expeditions into the jungle, and even turned to banditry on occasion. But as long as the money holds out and they are treated well, they remain loyal to their current client

Barranca and Satipo are virtually indistinguishable from one another. They both sweat profusely and their black, straight hair is always matted to their heads. Their clothes are always stained with sweat and dirt, and rumpled. Superstitious and fearful, they often have a worried look about them, and their dark eyes always seem crushed together with anxiety. They will under no circumstance enter a ruin, cave, or other place of looming danger....they're paid to guide and carry trapping, they will plaintively point out, not die in some gods forsaken hole. Barranca and Satipo begin play as Friendly, but their attitude worsens by one each time the player character compels them through Diplomacy or Intimidation to do something against their better judgment. When they become Hostile, they begin to plot against their client, looking for an opportunity to rob him or, if that seems unlikely, to abandon him to the jungle.

## **BARRANCA AND SATIPO**

Male human rogue 1 Init +2; Senses Perception +5

## Defense

AC 13, touch 13, flat-footed 10 (+2 Dex, +1 dodge) hp 8 (1d8) Fort +1, Ref +4, Will +1

OFFENSE Speed 30ft. Melee machete +1 (1d6+1)

## **S**TATISTICS

Str 12, Dex 15, Con 11, Int 11, Wis 12, Cha 9
Base Atk +0; CMB +1; CMD 13
Feats Dodge
Skills Appraise +2, Bluff +2, Climb +5, Profession (Trapper)
+2, Profession (Prospecting) +2, Sense Motive +5, Stealth
+5, Survival (Jungle) +5, Swim +2
Languages Common
SQ trapfinding
Gear Packs, machete, coil of rope

## SAMPLE PLAYER CHARACTER

## BARAEL FULLIS

Male human Wizard 5 CG Medium humanoid Init +3; Senses Perception +6

#### Defense

AC 16, touch 12, flat-footed 15 (+4 armor, +1 dex, +1 deflection) \* hp 30 (5d6+10)

Fort +3, Ref +4, Will +6

\* Includes bonus from mage armor spell

## OFFENSE

**Spd** 30 ft./x4

Melee Quarterstaff +3 1d6+1 20/x3

Ranged Crossbow, light +3 1d8 19-20/x2

Special Attacks cantrips, divination specialist bonus

Spells Prepared (CL 5)

- 3rd arcane sight, dispel magic
- 2nd continual flame, invisibility, protection from arrows, see invisibility
- 1st-detect secret doors, identify, mage armor, magic missile, shield
- 0-arcane mark, detect magic, detect poison, light, mage hand, read magic

School Powers forewarned, diviner's fortune

#### **S**TATISTICS

- Str 12, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 15, Wis 14, Cha 10
- Base Atk +2, CMB +3; CMD 15
- Feats Arcane Strike, Lightning Reflexes, Magical Aptitude, Scribe Scroll, Self-sufficient, Spell Mastery
- Skills Appraise +8, Heal +6, Knowledge (arcana) +8, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +6, Knowledge (geography) +8, Knowledge (local) +6, Perception +6, Profession (cartographer) +8, Spellcraft +8, Stealth +6, Survival +6, Use Magic Device +8
- Languages Common, Draconic, Dwarven
- SQ arcane bond (amulet), scribe scroll, traits [Courageous (Combat), Dangerously Curious (Magic)]
- Combat Gear Quarterstaff, light crossbow, ring of protection +1
- Other Gear Explorer's Outfit, Spell component pouch, Waterskin, Spyglass, *Wand of scorching ray* (50 charges), Handy Haversack, Block and Tackle, Chain (10 ft.), Rope, silk (100 feet), Grappling hook, Bucket, Shovel, Hammer, Crowbar, Emply sack (x5), Tent, Bedroll, Pot, iron, Rations, trail (5 days), Tindertwig x20, Inkpen x3, Parchment (10 sheets), Vial of ink x4 (black, red, blue, green), Climber's kit, Healer's kit, Vial of antitoxin x3, Sunrod x5, Smokestick x2, Tanglefoot bag, Flask of acid x2, Flask of alchemist's fire x2, Flask of holy water x2, Thunderstone x2, Tindertwig x20, *Potion of cure light wounds* x4, *Potion of cure moderate wounds* x1
- Spellbook (opposition schools necromancy, enchantment): 0 – acid splash, arcane mark, dancing lights, detect magic, detect poison, flare, ghost sounds, light, mage hand, mending, message, open/close, prestidigitation, read magic; 1st – detect secret doors, identify, mage armor, magic missile, protection from evil, shield; 2nd – continual flame, invisibility, protection from arrows, see invisibility; 3rd – arcane sight, dispel magic

## SPECIAL ABILITIES

Courageous (Combat) +2 saves vs. fear effects Dangerously Curious (Magic) +1 to Use Magic Device checks. Use Magic Device is always a class skill for you.

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