

Rippers



The Third Hand

THE THIRD HAND

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GM OVERVIEW

This adventure is set entirely in London, England. It is suitable for Rippers from any faction and of any experience level, though at least two combat-oriented character are strongly recommended.

The plot revolves around a naga, a mythical Indian (not the American sort) creature that resembles a giant snake with a human head. The creature, corrupted by the Cabal, seeks to set up her own empire after overthrowing the British Raj, but first must retrieve a magical artifact known as the Third Hand of Kali.

A party of explorers brought the Hand to England after looting it from the temple where it had remained safe for centuries. The naga arrived in England two months ago, along with a band of Thuggee cultists (think *Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom™*), and spent the first month building herself a lair from which to operate in safety. In the past four weeks, she has successfully located and killed five of the explorers, but has yet to retrieve the Hand.

Only this morning did her fanatical followers locate one of the two remaining explorers. As the adventure begins, unknown assassins are tailing the gentleman, waiting to strike him dead.

The entire adventure takes place over a single night and involves roleplaying, some problem solving, and plenty of Fast! Furious! Fun! Ripper-style combat. The adventure starts at a fast pace and gathers momentum as it goes, building into a frantic chase to stop the forces of the Cabal from acquiring a potentially powerful artifact.

ACT 1: MISTAKEN IDENTITY

The adventure begins for the Rippers outside Waterloo train station in London. The date is late September, 1892 (though this could be changed if required).

SCENE 1: A MYSTERIOUS NOTE

The heroes have just returned from a successful mission overseas and are waiting for a cab to take them to their lodgings. After waiting for a few minutes in the damp air a four-seater cab pulls up to the station. As the party approaches, the door flies open and a smartly dressed gentleman jumps out, bumping into one of the party. He hurries into the station without stopping to apologize.

Once the cab is underway, have one of the heroes (the one with the highest Notice die) spot a crumpled envelope under the seat opposite him. The envelope is addressed simply to "Dr. Morrison" and must have been hand delivered, as it has no delivery address or stamp. It has been opened already.

If the characters look inside (perhaps hoping to find an address so they may return it to its rightful owner or just because one of them is Curious), the envelope contains a green calling card with the words "Chimera Club" typed across the center and a short note. The note is written in a shaky hand, and reads:

"Samuelson is dead. Watch your back, they will be after you next. Meet me in the Chimera Club Green Room tonight at 9 sharp. Bring the Hand, and for God's sake be careful. May God have mercy on our souls."

It is signed Donnelly. Neither the note nor envelope gives any indication of when or where it was written.

Trying to find the previous occupant is impossible; by the time the party reads the note, the mysterious stranger is long gone.

BACKGROUND CHECK: CHIMERA CLUB

Characters coming from a wealthy or professional background, such as a noble or doctor, should make a Common Knowledge roll when they see the contents of the note. On a success, they know that the Chimera Club is a gentleman's club located in Mayfair. With a raise, they recall that the club has a "secret" room, the Green Room, in which members can gather to discuss private matters.

If there are no suitable characters in the party or should they all fail the roll, they can learn the basic information by asking their superiors or checking a list of gentleman's clubs at their local library.

SCENE 2: A MOST UNPLEASANT JOURNEY

Unfortunately for the heroes, the previous occupant, the aforementioned Dr. Morrison, is already being chased. An assassin in another coach is following behind, but due to heavy traffic never saw the coach make its quick stop and the passenger disembark. By the time he arrives outside of the station, the heroes are already underway. As far as he is concerned, the coach has never stopped and his quarry waits within.

After ten minutes of travel have the heroes make Notice checks (+2). Those who succeed spot a carriage pull along side theirs. The occupant, a well-dressed Indian gentleman, gestures to them to open their window. If they do, he throws a cobra into their carriage!

Having a poisonous snake thrown at you is not a daily occurrence, even for Rippers! The heroes must make Guts rolls or be Shaken. The carriage compartment is also cramped, and certainly not designed to allow the wielding of swords or other long weapons. The heroes' attack rolls suffer a -2 penalty when using any weapon longer than a dagger.

By the time the heroes have dispatched the snake, the other carriage is lost from sight, having turned a different way to the heroes' own transportation. This event should convince them that the author of the mysterious note was right in his assumption that Dr. Morrison's life is in danger.

☠ **Venomous Snake:** See *Savage Worlds*.

ACT 2: THE CHIMERA CLUB

The combination of the warning note and the cobra attack has hopefully piqued the heroes' interest in this affair. Given that their only real lead at this stage is the proposed meeting at the Chimera Club later that night, it makes sense they start the investigation here.

If the heroes wish to perform other actions first, such as rearming themselves or contacting their superiors, then that is fine, but do not let them get side-tracked in meaningless detail. Time is of the essence!

SCENE 1: WELCOME TO THE CHIMERA CLUB

The Chimera Club is located in Mayfair, as are many other gentlemen's clubs. The outside of the building reveals nothing about its function, and only the presence of two bronze statues of a chimera flanking the door give any indication that this is the right address. Standing between the statues, blocking passage to the front door, is a large, bald gentleman dressed in a frock coat.

This is Malhoon, an Irishman with an excellent memory for faces (he knows every member by sight), a quick temper, and two well-trained fists.

On seeing the heroes approach, Malhoon arches his back slightly, raising himself to his full 6' 3" and cracks his knuckles in a threatening manner. He glares briefly at the party before saying, in his strong Irish accent, "This is a private club. No admittance without a member to vouch for you. Be off with you now."

Attempts at bribery are not warmly received, no matter their value, and persistent offenders (in Malhoon's case that means anyone offering a bribe twice) receives a punch on the nose. Players trying to convince Malhoon that they are meeting someone inside or claiming to be important people (even nobility) are answered with the same reply. Malhoon is immune to the effects of Status. Again, trying to this way more than once is answered with a fist.

The only way past him is to show the green Chimera Club card the heroes found in the envelope. Under Club rules, anyone presenting one of these cards is automatically allowed access, no matter how scruffy their appearance or their ethnic background (historical note: most Victorian gentlemen's clubs were restricted to well-to-do white males.

Women were tolerated in certain clubs, but only on ladies' nights, and in some clubs not at all!).

When the card is shown, Malhoon becomes a different man. He is polite, courteous, dusts down any characters he knocked to the floor, asks how the heroes have been keeping, and comments on the unusually cold weather for the time of year. He then knocks once on the door and, when it opens a moment later, waves them inside with a slight bow. He does not apologize for hitting anyone.



MALHOON THE DOORMAN

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d10, Guts d8, Intimidate d8

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 6

Edges & Hindrances: Stout-Hearted, Two Fisted

Gear: Fists (Str)

SCENE 2: INSIDE THE CLUB

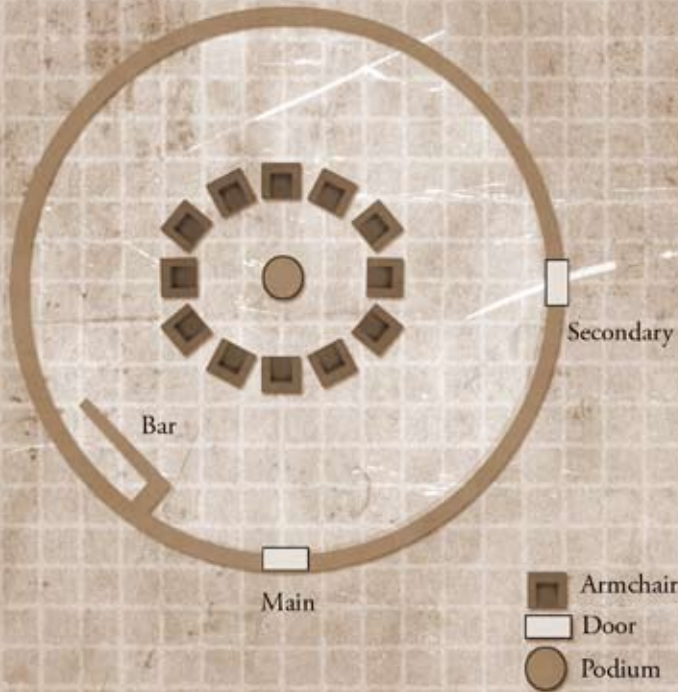
Once inside, the heroes find themselves at one end of a wide hallway. There are two doors along the right hand wall, separated by ten feet of wall, and another door at the opposite end of the corridor. All three doors have signs on them. The nearest door reads "Members Only," the next "Staff Only," and the door at the far end of the corridor "Green Room - Private." The left hand wall is decorated with a small collection of portraits of distinguished-looking gentlemen.

The décor is in typical Victorian style and wall-mounted gas lamps provide lighting. Standing just inside the door is a butler, who offers to take the party's hats, scarves, gloves, and coats, as well as any openly carried weapons. The Club has a strict no weapons policy, a result of several unsanctioned "duels" between tipsy members over the exact rules of bridge!

The butler, who answers to the name of James (which could be his personal name or surname—he never says), remains quiet while he hangs up the coats and hats, then holds out his right hand. Any character putting money in his hand receives a shocked look; James then says, in a slightly sarcastic tone, "Your *card*, please, sir." James is expecting to receive the Green Room card and if presented with a personal card merely says, "No, sir, the *other* card." Once it is presented, he gestures for the party to follow him, and walks slowly toward the door at the other end of the corridor.

Naturally, the heroes are going to be inquisitive (true heroes always are). Rather than try to second-guess every possible question the players may ask James, the most likely questions (and his answers) are presented below. If the question is not listed below, James simply replies, "I am afraid I cannot assist you with that enquiry, sir." James

The Green Room



cannot be bribed with any amount of money, nor can he be cajoled, taunted, or intimidated.

Although women are allowed into the Green Room (with the specific invitation of a green card *only*), James does not particularly like their presence in the club and never speaks to them or answers their questions directly. Instead, he answers any question posed by female characters to the nearest male, acting as if he had spoken.

Q: Who are the men in the portraits?

A: "They, sir, are the founders of the club. The Chimera Club was established in 1826 as a private retreat. It continues to serve that function today."

Q: Are any of them still alive?

A: "No, sir. The last one died thirty years ago."

Q: Who runs the Club now?

A: "A committee, chosen by the other members. I am afraid I cannot reveal their names to non members."

Q: How does one join the Club?

A: "Invitation by an existing member, sir."

Q: What is the Green Room?

A: "A private meeting room, sir. Where members may invite other members or outside guests for the purpose of speaking to them in the *strictest* privacy."

Q: Is Mr. Donnelley or Dr. Morrison in the Green Room?

A: "I am afraid I cannot divulge any information regarding who may or may not be in the Green Room. It is the Club's strictest rule and one that has never been broken since the founding of the Club."

Q: Where can I get a drink?

A: "The Green Room has a fully stocked bar, sir."

When the heroes are finished questioning James, he produces a small key from his pocket and unlocks the Green Room door. He pushes it open to reveal a wide, carpeted set of stairs leading down to another door. "The lower door is open, sirs. The valet will see to your immediate needs," he says. Once the last hero has passed through the upper door, James closes it behind them and they hear the key turning in the lock.

If the heroes get paranoid and bang on the door to be let out, James unlocks it, raises an eyebrow at them, and says, "The room is for *private* use, sir; strictly no admittance without my approval. You will be perfectly safe." They *are*, in fact, perfectly safe but the strange situation should leave them feeling a little edgy.

SCENE 3: THE GREEN ROOM

The bottom door opens inward into a large circular chamber. In the centre of the room is a small podium, raised a foot off the ground. Surrounding in at a distance of ten feet are twelve leather armchairs, each positioned as if they were a number on a clock face. A single door stands in the wall at the three o'clock position. It is closed (and locked). Aside from the lights, the entire décor is green; the walls, carpet, ceiling, backs of the doors that face into the room, and armchairs are *all* green.

To the left of the door is a small bar, which follows the curvature of the wall. Behind the bar stands a young man in a green steward's uniform. He nods politely as the party enters, then asks what they would like to drink. Anything they want is available (and free!).

The steward, whose name is Watts, has permission from the committee to answer certain questions about the Green Room, but under no circumstances does he discuss any other matter. Again, a series of questions and answers are provided below to help the GM. Watts does not interfere if the heroes wish to look around, though he naturally takes offence if they try to force open the other door, and attempts to prevent them doing so.

Should the heroes be so foolish as to start a fight, his first action is to press a small buzzer behind the bar, which

summons help. The help comes in the form of Malhoon and six other doormen (use the same statistics as for Malhoon, above, but they're Extras).

Q: Is Mr. Donnelley or Dr. Morrison here?

A: "I'm sorry, sir, no names are used by members wishing to use the Green Room. All I can tell you is that your host is a gentleman."

Q: Can you describe him?

A: "Your host will be with you at 9 o'clock, sir. With respect, that is all I am allowed to say on the matter."

Q: What is the history of the Green Room?

A: "The Green Room was founded by Mr. Ezekiel Patterson, a Texan, sir, back in 1873. He paid for the room and laid down the rules of conduct for its use."

Q: Those being what?

A: "Members of the Club may use this room for private meetings, safe in the knowledge that total privacy is guaranteed. Nothing said in the Green Room will be repeated outside of this room. No record is kept of who uses this room, nor the identities of their guests. As far as the Club is concerned, you are not here tonight, sir, neither is your host, and neither am I."

Once the heroes have finished interrogating Watts, they hear the sound of a gong. Watts comes out from behind the bar and moves to the door the heroes entered by. "Please feel free to help yourselves to drinks, sirs. Your host will be with you shortly. When your meeting is over, please wait and I shall return to let you out." Watts then leaves, locking the lower door behind him.

Exactly five minutes later, all the lights save for the one directly over the central podium go out. Any character checking his watch (assuming he has a way of seeing in the dark) sees it is 8.59. A few seconds later, the heroes hear the sound of a door opening, followed by footsteps crossing the room. At precisely 9 o'clock a single figure steps onto the podium and into the light.

SCENE 4: A JUMPY HOST

The figure on the podium is man, probably in his mid-forties. His face shows signs of sleep deprivation, he has apparently not shaven in several days, and his hair is bedraggled. His clothes, though of fashionable cut, are heavily creased, as if he has worn them for several days. The man stoops slightly, as if holding his head up requires more energy than he can muster.

For long seconds he stares into the gloom, his breathing slow but shallow. Suddenly he tenses, his hand darting into his jacket pocket and drawing forth a small revolver, which he waves around wildly. "You're not Morrison!" he cries in a shrill voice, full of panic. "What have you done with him?"

The man is indeed Donnelley and, as his description implies, he has been unable (or unwilling) to sleep for several days. He expects to meet Morrison here and is

naturally alarmed to see the shadowy forms of multiple people. In his sleep-deprived state, he assumes that the heroes are in fact would-be assassins. Deal everyone an Initiative card, including Donnelley, who is on Hold. He fires at a random hero at the end of the round if the party has not allayed his fears (he gets a -2 penalty for firing into near darkness and is Exhausted, giving him another -2 penalty). To allay his initial fears, a character needs to succeed at a Persuasion check and speak a few suitable words.

If any of them draws a weapon (this requires Donnelley to make a Notice check to detect), he tries to interrupt and kill the "assassin" first. The Green Room is completely soundproof, and gunshots go unheard outside.



CLANCY DONNELLEY, FINANCIER

Donnelley financed and accompanied the expedition to India in the hope that the treasures the team brought back would produce a healthy profit when sold to the British Museum. Since they returned, the team members have been killed one by one, leaving himself and Morrison as the last surviving members. He has not slept properly in days and is mentally and physically exhausted.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d4, Gambling d8, Knowledge (financing) d8, Notice d6, Persuade d8, Shooting d6

Charisma: +2 **Pace:** 6 **Parry:** 4 **Toughness:** 5 (currently Exhausted)

Gear: Revolver

Edges & Hindrances: Charismatic, Connections (bankers), Doubting Thomas

SCENE 5: A DESPERATE PLEA

Once the characters have convinced Donnelley they mean him no harm, he apologizes for his behavior.

"I am sorry," he says, his voice weak and strained. "Had you lived through what I have in the last few weeks perhaps your mind would be as unbinged."

Suddenly it dawns on him that if Morrison is not here, then something must have happened to him. "Damn my eyes!" he exclaims. "Morrison! Sirs, I beseech you in the name of all that is good, please aid me! My friend, whom I was to meet here, Dr. Morrison, may be in danger. If anything has happened to him I shall never forgive myself." At this point, he falls to his knees, his eyes wide and his hands locked together in a gesture of pleading. "Please, come with me to his house to check that he is in good health. I beg you, sirs. I am a man of wealth and can pay for your services."

Hopefully the heroes are the good souls Donnelley believes them to be and agree to accompany him (after all, someone has tried to kill them by mistake). If they agree, Donnelley gets off his knees and rushes to shake their hands. "A thousand thanks to you all. Pray God we are not too late. Wait here, I shall ring for us to be let out."

With that, he rushes to the door from which he emerged. A moment later, the heroes hear the sound of a gong ringing twice. Donnelley comes back into the room, his whole body shaking, though whether through anticipation or fear the heroes cannot tell. A minute later, the main door is unlocked and Watts enters the room. Before he can speak, Donnelley rushes past, shouting, "Come on! We have no time to lose! A man's life may be at stake!"

Donnelley bounds up the stairs, and through the upper door. He runs along the corridor, pausing only briefly to grab his hat and coat from James, before heading out into the street, where he flags down a passing cab. James hurriedly hands the characters back their belongings, and wishes them a good night. Ever discreet, James is unruffled by the sudden activity.

Outside, Donnelley shouts at the cab driver to take them to 39 Bakerloo Road, promising the driver a guinea if he gets them there quickly. This is an absolute fortune to a lowly cabbie, and consequently, the characters barely have time to get into their seats before the carriage lurches forward and sets off at a hair-raising speed.

"Sirs," says Donnelley once the carriage is underway, "I cannot thank you enough for accepting the word of what you must believe is a madman. I shall try to explain the background to the situation in which you find me before we reach Morrison's house." He pauses briefly, as if collecting his thoughts.

"My name is Clancy Donnelley and I am by trade a financier. A year ago, Dr. Thomas Morrison came to me seeking financial support for an expedition to India. He was planning to explore an old temple, in which he hoped to find treasures to bring back to London. In return for my investment, I was to be awarded a generous sum of any monies raised from selling the artifacts to the British Museum. After discussing possible sums of money I readily agreed to his venture, and agreed to accompany the expedition.

"The temple was located in a remote part of the sub-continent, far from any major settlements. Oh, it contained a wealth of artifacts! Such wealth in jewelry and statues as would make even the Queen green with envy. But the greatest treasure was a mummified black hand, twice the size of a grown man's, and bedecked in gold rings and bracelets. This was no circus-show forgery, but the relic of some living being of monstrous size. Oh, the museum would pay well for such a trophy.

Ignoring the pleas of our native guides, who claimed fearsome spirits protected the temple, we boxed everything up and shipped them back to London.

"On returning, Morrison set to researching the hand, which he discovered was the legendary Third Hand of Kali, a sacred relic said to be a very limb of the dark goddess herself. I sense that you do not believe me. I cannot blame you, for even I was skeptical at first. Morrison is a man well versed in the study of magic, and set to investigating the hand using all manner of incantations and powders I could not begin to comprehend. I thought him mad, as no doubt you must, until, with my own eyes, I saw the hand move!

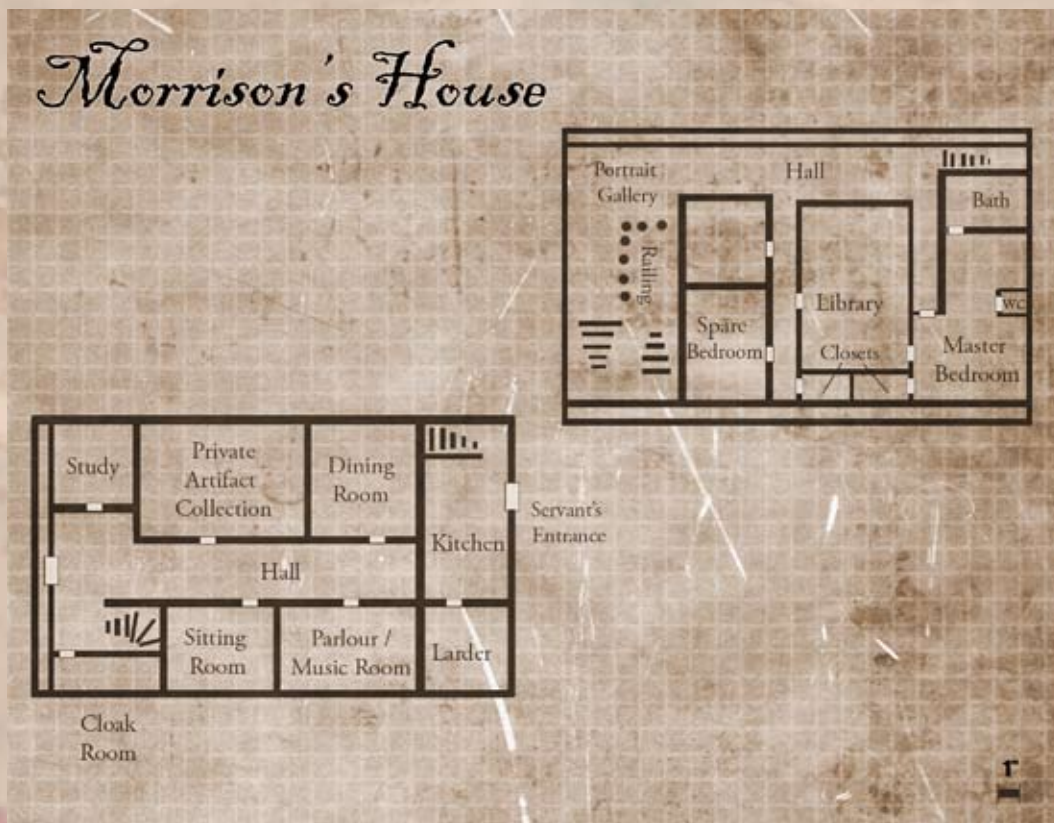
"It flexed its fingers as if it were alive! God forgive me, but I thought only of the money we could make from such a discovery. The expedition members agreed to allow Morrison more time to research the hand before we sold it, though we had made our fortunes selling the other artifacts to the museum.

"Then the killing began. In the last month five of the expedition members died in mysterious circumstances. Mortimer and O'Dowell were found crushed to death, as if by some gigantic snake; Brookes-Forbes was found strangled, Davenport stabbed to death, and just last night Samuelson was found dead in his rooms, apparently killed by a venomous snake. Only Morrison and myself remain, and I pray to God we are not too late to save Morrison. I... we're here!" he says looking out of the window as the carriage slows. "Quick, we must hurry!"

ACT 3: MORRISON'S HOUSE

Morrison lives in a large townhouse in a well-to-do part of the city. Assuming the party doesn't get sidetracked, they arrive at 9.25 p.m. Knocking at the door elicits no response, nor does shouting for Morrison to open the door. Gaining entrance requires the characters to break down the door (Toughness 10), pick the lock, or smash a window. Donnelley gets more and more agitated the longer it takes to gain entrance.

Should the heroes loiter outside for more than five minutes or begin smashing down doors or windows, a concerned neighbor (looking out from her window across the street) calls the police. A two-man patrol arrives ten minutes later. No battle with the authorities is intended, though being found in a ransacked house full of dead people may force the situation. If caught outside, the characters (or Donnelley) should be able to convince the



police they are concerned friends of the householder. The constables then accompany the heroes into the building.

Although a map of the house has been provided, no detailed room descriptions are provided. The GM should create descriptions for rooms based on their function.

SCENE 1: UNINVITED GUESTS

Unfortunately, Morrison is already dead. Although the naga's Thuggee cultists believed him dead in the coach, spies watching his house (which they only located earlier in the day) saw him arrive there. In the last hour, cultists broke in, strangled Morrison, and are still in the process of ransacking his house when the heroes arrive.

The Thuggee band consists of one leader and three cultists. One of the cultists is in the master bedroom, another is in the study, and the leader and a cultist are in the library. They react to any unusual sounds (breaking doors or windows), taking up vantage points behind doors, ready to strike from surprise. Treat them as being on Hold. When the fighting begins, they move to attack, giving up their concealment to use strength of numbers.

Unless Donnelley is specifically told to be quiet, he calls out to Morrison as soon as he enters the house. Naturally, this automatically alerts the Thuggees to the heroes' presence.

The Thuggee leader has discovered Morrison's journal and has been reading it, searching the text for clues.

Unfortunately, he has just managed to break the code Morrison used to conceal his message (see Scene 2). When the heroes' presence is revealed, he leaves the diary on the desk in the library while he investigates the noise. Assuming the fight goes against the Thuggees, the leader jumps through a window to escape (he *must* escape - he has read enough of the diary to lead him to the Hand and his loyalty to the naga is greater than his love of murder).

Once the fight ends, the heroes discover Morrison's journal and a Bible opened to the Book of Obadiah in the library. There is nothing else relevant to the adventure in the house.



THUGGEE LEADER

The Thuggee leader is a bloodthirsty murderer, who takes great delight in strangling his victims. Only the indomitable will of the naga can keep him in check.

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d10, Guts d8, Intimidate d8, Stealth d10, Throwing d8

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 8; **Toughness:** 6

Edges & Hindrances: Block, Combat Reflexes, Command, Fervor, Bloodthirsty, Loyal (the naga)

Gear: Curved dagger (Str+1); throwing knives (Str+1), garrote (adds further +2 to attack and damage with The Drop)

THUGGER CULTISTS (3)

These fanatical warriors are utterly loyal to the naga. Some do it because they are evil at heart; the naga's gaze has charmed others.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d4, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d8, Guts d6, Intimidation d6, Stealth d6, Throwing d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 5

Gear: Curved dagger (Str+1); throwing knives (Str+1), garrote (adds further +2 to attack and damage with The Drop)

CONSTABLES (2)

Constables Brown and Whittle are typical members of the constabulary.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d8, Guts d8, Streetwise d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 6

Edges & Hindrances: Brave

Gear: Baton (Str+1)

SCENE 2: MORRISON'S JOURNAL

All being well, the heroes are now in possession of Morrison's journal. The contents can be found in Handout #1. There is a hidden message in the text and the Bible references are the clue. Firstly, Donnelley and Morrison never read the Bible together, a fact he is quick to point out if asked. Secondly, the chapter/verse numbers do not exist and the last one is incomplete. This fact can be discovered with a Common Knowledge check at -2 penalty for any Christian character (which will be most in Victorian England!), or through a Knowledge (religion) check if there are any Christian clergy in the party.

The chapter and verse numbers identify key words; the line breaks in the journal indicate paragraphs. Starting at the beginning of the second paragraph, the one that starts "I fear they...", the heroes need only count along a number of words equal to the reference. From there, they count a number of words equal to the second number, and so on. When a number is on a new line, they should begin counting at the start of the next paragraph.

By the end of the journal page, they should have the message "HAND IN WATERLOO STATION PLATFORMTEN LOOSE STONE CLOCK." Morrison hid the hand earlier in the day, under a loose stone beneath the clock on platform ten of Waterloo Station. A Common Knowledge check reveals that platform ten is actually the underground station.

The journal now suggests two possible courses of action—visit the British Museum or head straight to Waterloo Station. Cautious players, seeing the reference to protective amulets, are likely to want to head for the Museum. Yes, it is closed, but a little breaking and entering shouldn't be beyond a team of Rippers on a mission!

The Museum is also very unlikely to let artifacts out of their sight, so theft is the only real course of action here. Others may want to grab the Third Hand of Kali before any villains can get their hands on it. Splitting up does cause a slight problem; the battles ahead are tough enough, even for a full party.

If the party is having trouble deciphering the journal, they can continue reading it on the way to the British Museum (the obvious clue). Should they insist on splitting up, they are going to lose the Hand but discover the naga's lair. Wise heroes grab the amulets *before* venturing into the serpent's nest.

If push comes to shove, Donnelley can act as the voice of reason, warning that the party is stronger together, and becoming fearful and agitated if they plan to split up. Ultimately, though, it is their decision and they should be free to get killed in whatever manner they choose!

If your player's having trouble working this out, you're going to have to give them a clue. If you have a Bible lying around, give them a copy to look through—they'll soon learn the verses listed aren't real, which should get them thinking. Once again Donnelley can offer hints and insights if needed, and if all else fails a Smarts roll (-4) can crack the



code. That should drain the team of a few much-needed bennies if they're struggling.

ACT 4: BRITISH MUSEUM

The main entrance of the British Museum, the greatest storehouse of antiquities from across the Empire, is located in Great Russell Street.

The modern Museum has changed considerably since the late Victorian era, but still retains the basic shape in places.

SCENE 1: BREAKING AND ENTERING

This is the 1890's. Infrared beams and movement detectors are many decades away. Nightwatchmen armed with batons provide security for the establishment, in addition to simple alarms on the doors and windows. Breaking and entering through the main door is a bad idea, as three watchmen patrol that route. One of the back doors, however, provides much easier ingress.

Breaking into the British Museum requires applying brute force to one of the stout doors (Toughness 12), picking the lock (at -2 penalty due to the quality), or using the keys from a watchman (who has no intention of just handing them over without a fight).

Whatever way they gain entrance, the door or window is alarmed. A successful Notice check (-2) reveals the thin wires linking the portal to an alarm bell. Cutting the wire disables the alarm (closed circuits do not yet exist). Should an alarm be sounded, four nightwatchmen reach the area only a minute later, and then begin searching the building for intruders. The GM will have to handle any botched entry.

Donnelley knows the location of the Asiatic Gallery, having visited it many times since returning from India. Assuming the team brought him along, finding the gallery presents no problem. If they insisted on leaving him behind, a hero who visits the museum regularly can guide them straight to the gallery with a Smarts roll. Otherwise they have d6 x 10 minutes searching before finding what they're looking for, during which time they must dodge the nightwatchmen walking the halls.

NIGHTWATCHMEN

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d8, Guts d8, Streetwise d6

Pace: 6; Parry: 6; Toughness: 6

Gear: Baton (Str+1)



SCENE 2: THE ASIATIC GALLERY

If the heroes are having an easy time of the adventure so far, have them make a Stealth check while they creep through the Museum to avoid alerting any guards to their presence. The idea is not to get them caught, just to keep them on their toes (and maybe soak up a couple more bennies).

At last, the characters reach the Asiatic Gallery, home to the collection of antiquities brought back by Morrison's expedition to India. The gallery is long and wide, divided by a series of open archways. Display cases line both walls, as well as filling the centre of the gallery, thus dividing it in two walkways. At the far end, against the central wall, is a large statue of the goddess Kali.

Black skinned and with a mouth showing protruding white fangs and a lolling tongue, the goddess appears to be dancing. She has four arms. In one hand she holds a mighty sword; in a second a freshly severed human head; a third is raised in a gesture of peace, and her fourth grasps for power. Around her neck is a garland of human skulls, and around her waist a skirt of severed arms.

Three Thuggees, one of them a priest, stand in front of the statue. They appear to be grabbing something from one of the display stands. On the floor, at the feet of the statue, lies the body of a man, perhaps a watchman judging by his uniform (he has been strangled).

On hearing any sound, the Thuggee priest orders his minions to attack the heroes. He remains by the statue. The fight against the Thuggees should be over quickly - it is not the main focus of the scene. Should the priest be Wounded, his blood sprays over the statue behind him. This animates the statue, but it does not move until one or more of the heroes approaches within 2", at which point it leaps to attack.

Following the destruction of the statue, the heroes may search for the serpent amulets mentioned in the journal. They are in the case the Thuggees were looting and a Notice check is required to pick them out from among all the other treasures. There should be one less than the total number of heroes.

What about the nightwatchmen? If the fight makes a lot of noise (such as gunshots, smashing displays cases, or destroying statues), feel free to have several watchmen turn up. None of them are particularly brave, and the sight of a living statue probably causes most of them to flee. Those that remain are hostile to the statue *and* the heroes - who they assume are thieves.



Once the main antagonists are down, the heroes must either fight or roleplay their way out of being arrested. The details of this encounter are left to the GM, but Rippers caught breaking into the British Museum, destroying artifacts and murdering foreigners (or worse still, nightwatchmen) are arrested and lose at least a few points of Status (depending on how convincing their stories appear).

For future use, any watchman who runs has got enough of a look at one of the heroes to provide the police with a description. Within a few days wanted posters appear in the papers and on street corners. Again, how the hero clears his name is left up to the individual GM.

SERPENT AMULETS

The serpent amulets are made from jade and take the shape of a coiled cobra. When worn around the neck, they grant a +2 bonus to the wearer's Spirit check to resist the naga's Hypnotic Gaze. They do not function against other forms of hypnosis or use of the *puppet* power (such as the gaze of some vampires).

☠ **Thuggee Cultists (2):** See page 7.



THUGGEE PRIEST

The priests of the Thuggee cult are fanatical devotees of Kali.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d4, Vigor d4

Skills: Fighting d8, Guts d6, Notice d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 4

Gear: Curved dagger (Str+1)

Spells: *bolt* (venomous snakes), *entangle* (constrictor), *puppet* (sways); 15 Power Points



MINION OF KALI (GOLEM)

These four-armed humanoids are statues brought to life through the magic of Kali's priests. The statue wields a massive cursed sword. They are mindless combatants, which is precisely what makes them so fearsome.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d4 (A), Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d10, Guts d8, Intimidation d8, Notice d6, Stealth d4

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 8

Gear: Cursed Saber (Str+1d10)

Special Abilities:

- **Construct:** +2 to recover from being Shaken, no additional damage from called shots, half-damage from piercing attacks, not affected by disease and poison.

- **Improved Arcane Resistance:** +4 Armor versus magic, and +4 to rolls made to resist magic effects.
- **Two Fisted:** A Minion of Kali attacks with two weapons with no multi-action penalty. The Minion is treated as being Ambidextrous as well. Although armed with a single sword, it may use one of its remaining hands to punch opponents, or grab improvised weapons from nearby.
- **Weakness (Golem):** Golems take +4 damage from explosions.

ACT 5: ALL ABOARD!

By the time the heroes get to Waterloo Station it is closed. Late night trains are not yet commonplace. However, the gate to platform ten has been jimmied open. On reaching the platform, the heroes see a Thuggee leap onto a two-carriage train that is just pulling out of the station. A pile of stones has been removed from beneath the clock. The Thuggees have already found the Hand and are now making their escape!

SCENE 1: FIGHTING FOR A SEAT

Deal everyone Initiative cards. There are a total of seven Thuggees on the train; four in the rear carriage, two in the front carriage (including the Wild Card leader), and the driver. The rear-most carriage is 12" from the heroes' current location.

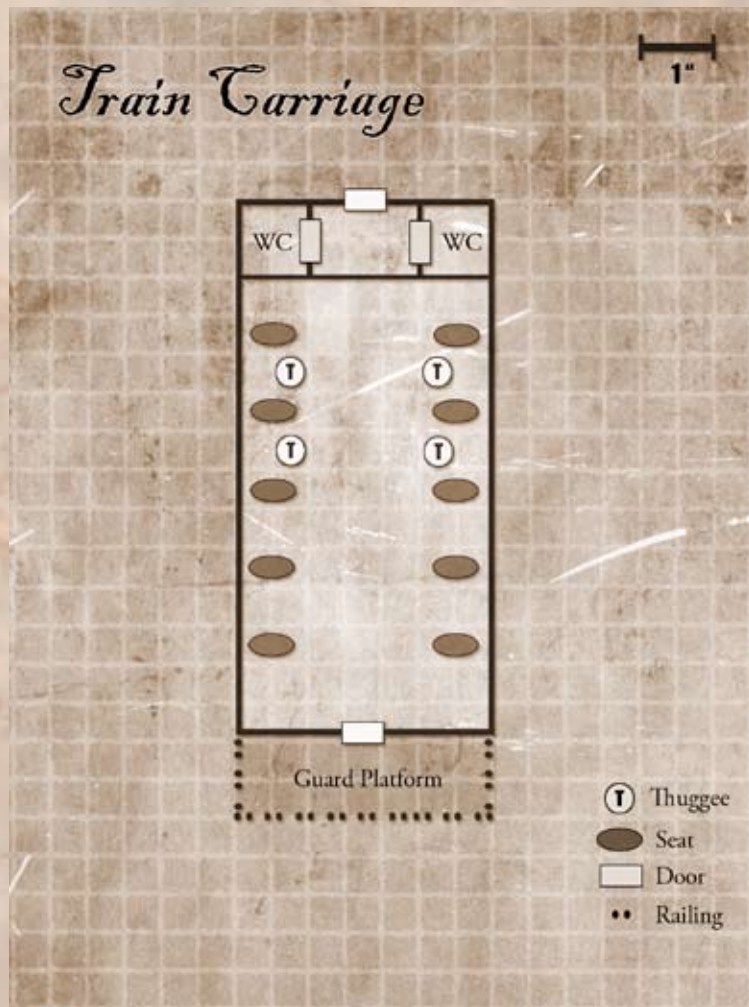
The train moves on the Thuggees' Initiative card, accelerating 2" every round until it reaches its top speed of 10". Jumping onto it requires the heroes to run until they are within an inch or two and then make an Agility roll (with the -2 multi-action penalty) to jump onto the rear deck.

The four Thuggees in the rear carriage begin as marked on the map. They try to keep the heroes pinned down by throwing knives for as long as possible, using the seats as Medium Cover (-2 penalty).

Characters running down the central aisle may move at their normal rate; those wishing to clamber over the seats are treated as if moving while crouching.

Remember, even characters in the central aisle receive Medium Cover (the Thuggees can only see their upper bodies). When the heroes get within 2", the Thuggees draw their knives and engage in melee combat.

On round five, the Thuggee leader (who is in the first carriage) disconnects the rear carriage from the train. This takes his entire action for the round. The carriage slows by 5" per round (on the Thuggees Initiative card), coming



to a complete halt two rounds later. The rest of the train continues to move at 10" per round.

Any number of things could go wrong in this fight. Fast moving characters may manage to board the train in one Action, then battle their way through to the first carriage before the train is unhitched. No problem. The odds of such heroics working are very slim. A lone hero that manages to make it to the first compartment must also face a Thuggee Extra and the leader, and probably on his own. Don't kill him; just throw him from the train!

Whatever happens, the train *must* escape.

☠ **Thuggee Leader:** See page 6. He retains any Wounds he took in the battle at Morrison's house.

☠ **Thuggee Cultists (6):** See page 7.

SCENE 2: THE ABANDONED TRAIN

Having won their battle against the thugs, the heroes find themselves in an underground rail tunnel. If they continue to follow the train (it's not as if it can take a side road), they find it apparently abandoned half a mile further up

the track. In actuality, two Thuggees are hiding on the roof of the remaining carriage and try to attack from surprise using their garrotes.

Once the Thuggees are dispatched, the heroes can investigate the area. Those who succeed in a Notice check (the area is pitch black unless the heroes bring a light source) discover a patch of wall that is of slightly different color to the rest. This is a secret door leading directly to the naga's underground lair. Opening it requires a Strength roll with a -2 penalty.

☠ **Thuggee Cultists (2):** See page 7.

ACT 6: PALACE OF THE NAGA

The naga has taken over a series of abandoned access tunnels and storage rooms all but forgotten after the underground line was completed several years ago. From here, her network of cultists has spread across London, tracking those who stole the Third Hand of Kali. The passageways and chambers are brick-lined, dank, and lit only by a small number of torches (treat as Dim Lighting).

CHAMBER 1: ENTRANCE TUNNEL

Though high enough to allow an average size person to walk upright, the tunnel is quite narrow—barely six

feet wide. Small alcoves were built into the wall to allow people to pass each other.

Two cultists are hiding in the alcoves marked on the map. When the heroes open the secret door, the Thuggees hear the sound and draw their knives. They attack from Surprise and fight to the death.

CHAMBER 2: CULTISTS' BARRACKS

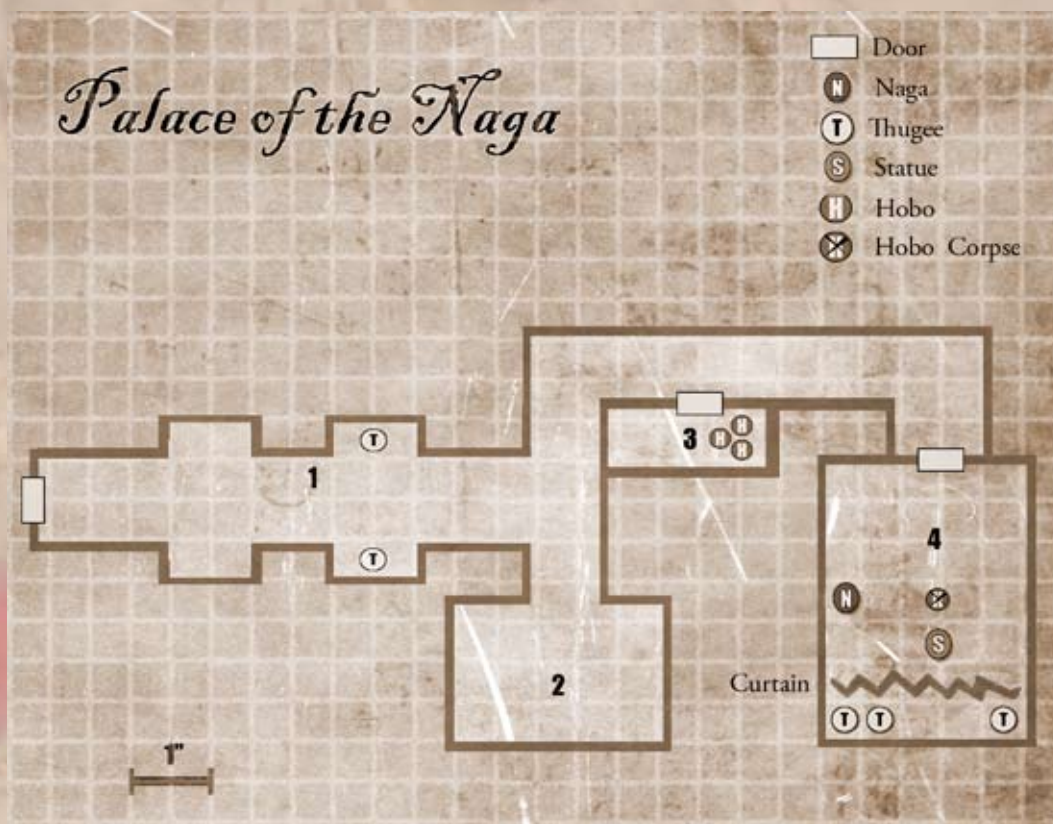
This small chamber holds ten sets of sleeping mats and a table. Plates of leftover food stand on the table. The Thuggees own nothing of any value. Given that they are expecting trouble after the train battle, there are no cultists here.

CHAMBER 3: HOLDING CELLS

The door to this chamber is locked (only the naga has the key). It counts as a standard door for the purposes of breaking it down. Listening at it (requiring a Notice check), reveals only faint shuffling sounds.

Inside are three hobos, kidnapped off the streets as sacrifices to Kali. They are tied and gagged. They are eternally grateful if released, but are unwilling to fight. They tell their rescuers that guards took away one of their number an hour ago, though they do not know where. As soon as they are released they ask where the exit is located, running off as they are they are told.

Treat the prisoners as Innocents (see *Rippers*).



CHAMBER 4: TEMPLE TO KALI

The stout door to this chamber is unlocked and opens inward when pushed. Beyond is a large chamber (a former storeroom). At the back of the room is a large black curtain, spanning the entire wall (it actually conceal a small area in which four cultists are hidden). Before it stands a tall statue of Kali. It has the same description as per the Minion of Kali in the British Museum, but this one is just a statue (not that the heroes know that). Resting between its legs is a large, black, mummified hand—the Third Hand of Kali. A burning brazier stands on either side. Between them lies the body of a hobo. He has been strangled as a sacrifice to Kali.

Against the right wall, her hands in manacles cemented into the wall, is a stunningly beautiful Indian maiden. On seeing the heroes, she cries out to them in accented English. “Help me! Before they come back! Please! They killed that man!” If asked, she says that her name is Nadine, and that her father is an Indian noble visiting London. Men dressed in unusual Indian costume kidnapped her earlier in the day from outside her hotel. She says her father is very rich and will pay well for her safe return. Heroes with the Heroic Hindrance are “forced” to rescue her by their very nature.

The maiden is, of course, the naga, shapechanged to human form to catch the heroes off guard. Any hero who goes to her aid is subjected to her Hypnotic Gaze as she thanks them for saving her (this is a very subtle attack - just ask the player to make a Spirit check without saying why).

If her plan works, she uses her puppet to attack his comrades, causing a distraction as she shapechanges back to snake form (note: the description says her hands were in manacles - it never said she was secure!). If her plan fails, or she sees a snake amulet around her rescuer’s neck, she immediately shapechanges to snake form, calling on her cultists behind the curtain to attack.

Cunning players may choose to secure the room before liberating the maiden. Should they approach the curtain, she calls out, “Be careful! They went that way!” This is a warning to her minions, who attack from Surprise if the curtain is pulled aside. She then shapechanges and joins the fray.

Once the naga has been slain, any surviving cultists stab themselves through the heart as a final act of devotion. The heroes have stopped the threat and retrieved the Third Hand of Kali.

So what does the Third Hand do? Whatever you, the GM, wants it to. It may be nothing more than a harmless religious relic, surrounded in myth. Morrison’s arcane experiments may simply have summoned harmless spirits, which used the Hand to try and communicate with him. Alternately, it could amazing arcane abilities and open up a whole string of adventures in India as the heroes investigate its powers and battle to save the British Raj from the machinations of the Cabal.

☞ **Thuggee Cultists (6):** See page 7.



NAGA - HUMAN FORM

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d10, Spirit d10, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d8, Guts d10, Intimidate d8, Knowledge (Kali cult) d10, Notice d6, Persuade d10, Stealth d6, Taunt d8

Charisma: +4; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 6

Special Abilities

- **Hypnotic Gaze:** The naga can use the *puppet* power using Smarts as her arcane skill. She may only affect one target at a time, and has 15 Power Points.
- **Living God:** The naga’s cultists worship her as a living god. She has the Command and Fanaticism Edges with respect to her followers.
- **Strong Willed:** The naga cannot be swayed by threats or taunts. She receives a +2 bonus to defend against Tests of Will.
- **Very Attractive:** The human form of the naga is that of a beautiful Indian woman.





THE NAGA - SNAKE FORM

Traditionally nagas are the guardians of Indian temples and are considered a force for good. The Cabal, however, has lured this particular specimen, to the forces of darkness. She sees a chance to remove the British from India, returning the country to Indian rule under the Rajas, albeit under her direct control and with the worship of Kali as the state religion. She is intelligent, cruel, and ruthless in the pursuit of her goals.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d10, Spirit d10, Strength d12, Vigor d10

Skills: Fighting d8, Guts d10, Intimidate d8, Knowledge (Kali cult) d10, Notice d10, Persuade d10, Stealth d4, Taunt d8

Pace: 7; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 11

Special Abilities:

- **Bite:** Str+1.
- **Constrict:** The naga may choose to constrict a foe in her coils and does so by making a Fighting attack. The round she entangles and each round thereafter, she causes damage equal to Str+3. The prey may attempt to escape by getting a raise on an opposed Strength roll. Given her large size, she may constrict one foe and bite another, suffering the standard multi-action penalty.

• **Hypnotic Gaze:** The naga can use the *puppet* power using Smarts as her arcane skill. She may only affect one target at a time, and has 15 Power Points.

• **Large:** Attackers receive a +2 bonus to attack rolls against the naga.

• **Living God:** The naga's cultists worship her as a living god. She has the Command and Fanaticism Edges with respect to her followers.

• **Poison:** A victim who suffers a Shaken or Wound from the naga's bite must make a Vigor check at -2 or be paralyzed for 2d6 minutes.

• **Quick:** The naga is frighteningly quick for her size, and redraws cards of 5 or less.

• **Shapechange:** As an action, the naga can change into female human form with a Smarts roll at -2. Changing back into naga form requires a Smarts roll.

• **Size +4:** The naga is 15' long and about a foot in diameter.

• **Strong Willed:** The naga cannot be swayed by threats or taunts. She receives a +2 bonus to defend against Tests of Will.

REWARDS

Each surviving character receives 2 experience points for their good work and a £10 bonus (per person) from their Ripper lodge if they return the naga's corpse for scientific study (£20 if the beast is somehow brought back alive).

If Donnelley survives, he becomes a useful ally for the team. Assuming the mission is a success and he has been treated respectfully, any surviving member of the team can treat him as a Connection.

This is a group Edge, only usable by the survivors of this adventure. The Edge is removed when the last original team member dies or retires. His access to very large sums of cash, as well as his many contacts among the elite of London society, makes him a valuable asset to the Rippers and in time he may be an ideal candidate for a Recruitment adventure.

The naga can be harvested for raw materials. She does not have a creature type like other monsters, and can only be ripped to create Demon Hide, Fiend's Blood, and Mesmeric Eye implants.

REALITY CHECK

The naga is a creature of Indian mythology. It is supposedly a good being and a servant of the gods.

Kali, though usually portrayed as a dark deity is actually the consort of Siva and her origins lie with very early Indian female deities incorporated into later Hindu myth.



HANDOUT 1: JOURNAL

Remember the verses we read together, my friend?

Exodus 11,13 Psalms 8,16 Chronicles 14,

49

Leviticus 12,23

Obadiah 2

I fear they are onto me. I have hidden the Hand somewhere safe. Donnelley, if anything happens to me you must have faith in me. How the enthusiasm we shared at Waterloo has soured in these last few weeks. Before I die, I feel it is my station to detail my findings for posterity. I hope this journal provides a suitable platform for you to warn others of our folly at ignoring local superstition.

The artifact we coveted so dearly is the indeed the Third Hand of Kali. According to Vedic myth, Kali is a beneficial goddess, but I fear the truth is more frightening. The image of her as a blood drinking goddess is true! She has visited me the past ten nights in my dreams. She is both beautiful and evil, tempting me with promises of power and seducing me with her heavenly body. Oh, that I were stronger!

The creature that seeks the Hand is an ancient being, set loose by forces of darkness beyond my ability to comprehend. This creature, known as a naga, is a demonic serpent, similar to the stone statues we found. It is an old power, one capable of capturing the minds of men. But have hope, for there is a way to resist its lure!

Eight o'clock has just struck - I must be quick if I am to make my appointment with you. Donnelley, I pray we find salvation! I have just heard a noise downstairs. My God man, they are here! I must finish quickly and hide this work. In the Asiatic Gallery of the British Museum are a number of snake amulets. You must...

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