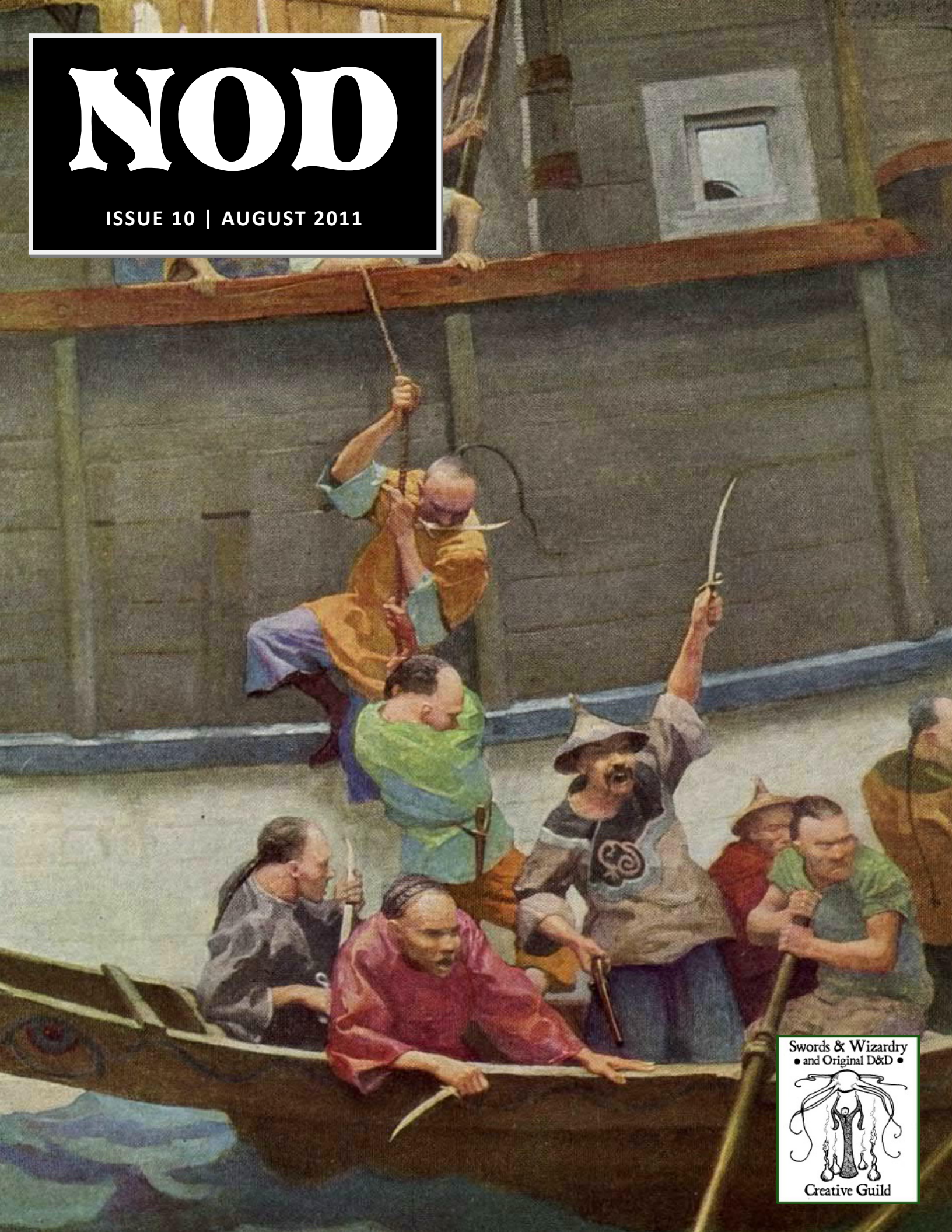


NOD

ISSUE 10 | AUGUST 2011



Swords & Wizardry
• and Original D&D •



Creative Guild

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This issue's hex crawl uses the excellent *Ruins & Ronin*, which spins Matt Finch's *Swords & Wizardry* for dungeon delving in an Asian milieu. Head to Lulu.com to purchase the rules and check out Mike's blog *Sword +1* (<http://swordplusone.blogspot.com/>) for more information on *Ruins & Ronin* and his many other gaming endeavors.



This month, our cover image is by N.C. Wyeth. Painted in 1914 it might depict a gang of wako plying the Jade Sea in this month's hex crawl situated in Mu-Pan. The image was found at the Golden Age Comic Book Stories blog – a must-see for lovers of illustration and classic comic books.

The Leech

By John M. Stater

The Land of Nod, steeped as it is in the magical arts, is no stranger to the hard sciences. Just as the astronomer tracks the movement of heavenly bodies around Nod in their crystal spheres, the physician plumbs the depths of the inner universe of the human body, always in search of more effective treatments to the aches, pains, disorders and illnesses that befall mankind. Clerics, after all, are expensive and dogmatic and generally ill-disposed toward wasting their god given gifts on folks without influence (i.e. the wealthy) or who do not fit into the category of charity cases (i.e. the poor). This leaves the artisan and burgher, the so-called middle classes, out in the cold but for the physician.

In the never-ending search for medical knowledge, it is the magnificent leech that shines above all others. The leech is a class of physician that heads into the field to gather specimens and hone their healing arts on those folk who need them most (or most often) – adventurers. The leech is an adventuring physician, getting its cadavers the old-fashioned way.

Leeches are few and far between, but form a strange and informal brotherhood of like-minded souls. When these brothers meet, they often swap their leechbooks that both may advance their learning, and when they enter a civilized country they have much knowledge to trade with local physicians and healers. But the successful leech must beware, for clerics often view healing as a monopoly of the gods, and often seek petty revenges upon their less-than-holy competition.

The leech is an admittedly odd character class for players who have tried just about everything else. They are not frontline fighters, but can fight about as well as thieves – remember, these aren't dusty little sages we're talking about. Just as a magic-user revolves around his grimoire or spellbook, the leech revolves around a leechbook, recording all of his findings there as he learns to conquer injury, poison and disease.

Leeches are close kin to scientists, and the two classes should get along well enough. Most leeches, as students, did their turn at grave robbing, so they share a bit in common with thieves – though a leech cleanses his conscience with the notion that he did his robbing for the betterment of mankind (those gold fillings were just icing on the cake). Fighters and warriors produce much for leeches to study, but the two professions are ultimately at odds with their ultimate goals. Venturers and leeches both share a love for exploration. It is with clerics that leeches run into trouble, for clerics (and to a lesser extent druids) feel they are horning in on their territory – the healing of wounds and ills. Leeches often remind those clerics that they would not be able to horn in on anything if the priestly set was doing an adequate job of healing.

The Leech

Prime Requisite: Intelligence (13+ grants a +5% bonus to earned XP)

Hit Dice: d6 per level, +1 hit point per level after 9th

Armor Permitted: Leeches need to keep their hands and arms free for surgery, and thus rarely wear armor, though they can get away with leather armor. They can use shields.

Weapons Permitted: Leeches can use small weapons, including clubs, daggers, hand axes, slings and darts.

Special Abilities: Background, leechcraft, chirurgery, surgeon's precision, scholarship

Leech Abilities

Leechbook: A leechbook is as important to a leech as a spellbook is to a magic-user. Without his leechbook, a leech can only use his background abilities and leechcraft ability (see below). The book is usually a leather bound volume with a common lock and 100 pages to be filled with notes, articles and dissertations.



Background: Every leech gets into his profession from one of four backgrounds, chosen for the character at first level.

Apothecary's Apprentice: The apothecary's apprentice gains experience compounding elixirs and tonics, and thus grants his patients an additional +1 bonus to saving throws versus disease and poison.

Barber's Apprentice: A barber's apprentice learns a bedside (or stoolsides) manner, and enjoys a bonus to reactions and obtaining rumors in towns. They also enjoy a +1 bonus to their chirurgery rolls.

Herbalist's Apprentice: The herbalist's apprentice can identify plants on a roll of 1-4 on 1d6.

Medical Student: The medical student spends time robbing graves and dissecting corpses to learn of their anatomy.

They can hide and move silently on a roll of 1-2 on 1d6 and enjoy a +1 bonus to their scholarship.

Leechcraft: The leech is studied and practiced in first aid and general medicine. Provided he has a supply of bandages (costs 5 gp per adventure), a few unguents and tonics (cost 10 gp per adventure) and his tools (leech's tools cost 30 gp), he doubles the normal rate of healing for his comrades and allows them a +1 bonus on saving throws against poison and disease. Supernatural diseases (such as lycanthropy and mummy rot) can only be treated with gold-coated pills which cost 1 gp each.

Chirurgery: When an injury is particularly severe, the leech must turn to chirurgery. A chirurgery roll is made on the turn undead chart, though instead of rolling against the Hit Dice of the undead to be turned, the chirurgeon is rolling against the number of six-sided dice of healing he is trying to impart on his patient. If the roll is unsuccessful, the leech

instead inflicts 1d6 points of additional damage to the patient. Chirurgery takes 1 turn and requires leech's tools.

Surgical Precision: A leech armed with a dagger can make precise strikes against an opponent's anatomy, provided he has studied that anatomy. Assume that all leeches are familiar with the anatomy of their own race plus two other humanoid races at first level. A leech activates this ability by accepting a -3 penalty to hit in combat in exchange for dealing double damage with a successful hit. In essence, the leech has to wait longer for an opening because he is looking to strike a few specific spots. When he does, the damage is more devastating. In a game that doubles damage for a "critical hit", the leech using his precise strike ability gets to triple his damage.

Scholarship: All leech's keep a leechbook, where he records his observations on medicinal herbs, diseases, poisons, animal and weapon wounds and anatomy. Each level a leech gains requires him to fill one page per level of his leechbook with notes. A first level leech begins his career with one page of notes in his leechbook. When he reaches 2nd level, he will have filled another two pages, and so on.

An adventuring leech can further improve his skills by writing scholarly articles and dissertations.

Writing one of these pieces requires the leech to make a scholarship roll. A scholarship roll is a percentile roll, with the chances depending on what kind of piece the leech is writing. Writing a scholarly article takes one week of undisturbed work in a comfortable environment, and fills five pages of the leechbook. A dissertation fills fifteen pages and requires 1 month of undisturbed writing in a comfortable environment.

Scholarly Article: A general tract covers a whole range of ailments – i.e. diseases, poisons, wounds from animals and wounds from weapons. The percentile chance to write a successful (i.e. correct or insightful) article is equal to five times the leech's level. If successful, the leech gains a +1 bonus on chirurgery rolls to treat wounds of the appropriate type or his patients get an additional +1 bonus to save vs. poisons or diseases. If unsuccessful, the leech suffers the opposite until he gains an additional level, at which time he can tear up his old article and, at some point, attempt to write a new one.

Dissertation: Where an article covers a whole range of ailment, a dissertation is more specific. For example, a scholarly article might cover disease in general, while a dissertation covers mummy rot in particular, or axe wounds or the wounds patterns of an owlbear or the poison of a wyvern. For a leech to write a dissertation, it must have encountered and studied his subject first hand. A dissertation can also be written about a specific piece of anatomy, such as the human eye or ear.

The percentile chance to write a successful dissertation is equal to the leech's level. If successful, the leech gains a +3 bonus to treat the condition covered by the dissertation. If unsuccessful, he suffers the opposite until he gains an additional level, at which time he can tear up his old dissertation and attempt to write a new one.

XP	Level	Title	Hit Dice	Attack
0	1	Hospitaler	1d6	+0
1,500	2	Sawbones	2d6	+0
3,500	3	Healer	3d6	+0
6,500	4	Medicus	4d6	+1
14,000	5	Chirurgion	5d6	+1
30,000	6	Archiater	6d6	+2
60,000	7	Physicus	7d6	+2
110,000	8	Doctor	8d6	+3
165,000	9	Leech	9d6	+3
225,000	10	Leech	9d6+1	+4
290,000	11	Leech	9d6+2	+5
360,000	12	Leech	9d6+3	+5

Chim-Chimera-Cheree

By John M. Stater

Illustration by Jon Kaufman

The chimera first shows up in Greek mythology as a unique monster roaming about Lycia in Asia Minor. In its ancient form, it was a lioness with a serpent tail and a goat head arising from its back and capable of breathing fire. One of the spawn of Echidna, the Mother of Monsters, some scholars think it was a representation of a volcano or of the tripartite year. One version of Greek mythological genealogies has Chimera mating with her brother, Orthrus, and mothering the sphinx and the Nemean lion. Chimera was defeated by Bellerophon, with the help of Pegasus and a lead-tipped spear.

Later representations of the Chimera gave it the body of a lion and the heads of a lion, goat and dragon, and it is this form which appears in most fantasy roleplaying games. In modern times, the term corresponds to any creature with features associated with

different beasts, and it is in this vein that I offer these random tables, designed to produce all manner of chimera.

The basic stats of a chimera are as follows:

/ Chimera: HD 9; AC 4 [15]; Atk (see below); Move 9 (Fly 18); Save 6; CL/XP 11/1700; Special: Flight, plus see below.

We modify these stats and determine the monster's appearance by rolling on the following tables. One roll determines the forward half of the monster's body and the right head, another roll determines the rear half of the monster's body and the left head, a third roll determines the center head and a fourth roll determines the creature's tail, provided the Referee wishes it to have a special tail.

Right Head and Front Body

D12	Creature	Modifications
1	Bear	2 claws (1d6+1), 1 bite (1d10+1); gains hug attack for 3d6 damage
2	Cheetah	2 claws (1d3), 1 bite (1d6); increases land speed by +3, can trip with claw attacks
3	Crocodile	1 bite (1d6); replace flight speed with swim speed
4	Eagle	2 talons (1d4), 1 bite (1d8); increases flight speed to 24
5	Hyena	1 bite (1d3)
6	Lion	2 claws (1d4), 1 bite (1d8)
7	Owl	2 talons (1d8), 1 bite (1d6+1); increases flight speed to 20 and flies silently, -2 to hit in bright light
8	Tiger	2 claws (1d4+1), 1 bite (1d8); gains swim speed of 6
9	Tyrannosaurus Rex	1 bite (2d8); clamp jaws and shake for damage in subsequent rounds [front body is same as rear body, not that of a T-Rex]
10	Weasel	1 bite (2d6); clamps down and sucks blood for 2d6 damage per round
11	Wolf	1 bite (1d4+1); can trip with bite attack
12	Wolverine	1 bite/claw (1d6+3); +4 to attack due to ferocity

Left Head and Rear Body

D10	Creature	Modifications
1	Ankylosaurus	1 clubbed tail (1d10); body covered with armored plates for -3 [+3] AC
2	Antelope/Gazelle	1 gore (1d4); increases land speed by +3
3	Bison/Bull	1 gore (1d8)
4	Boar	1 gore (3d4); continues attacking 2 rounds after death
5	Camel	1 bite (1d2); can spit (blind for 1 round)
6	Elephant	1 trunk (1d8), 2 tusks (1d8); never forgets
7	Goat	2 horns (1d4)
8	Rhinoceros	1 horn (2d6); double damage on a charge
9	Stag, Giant	2 antlers (1d8)
10	Triceratops	1 gore (2d8); bony plate grants a -1 [+1] AC

Center Head

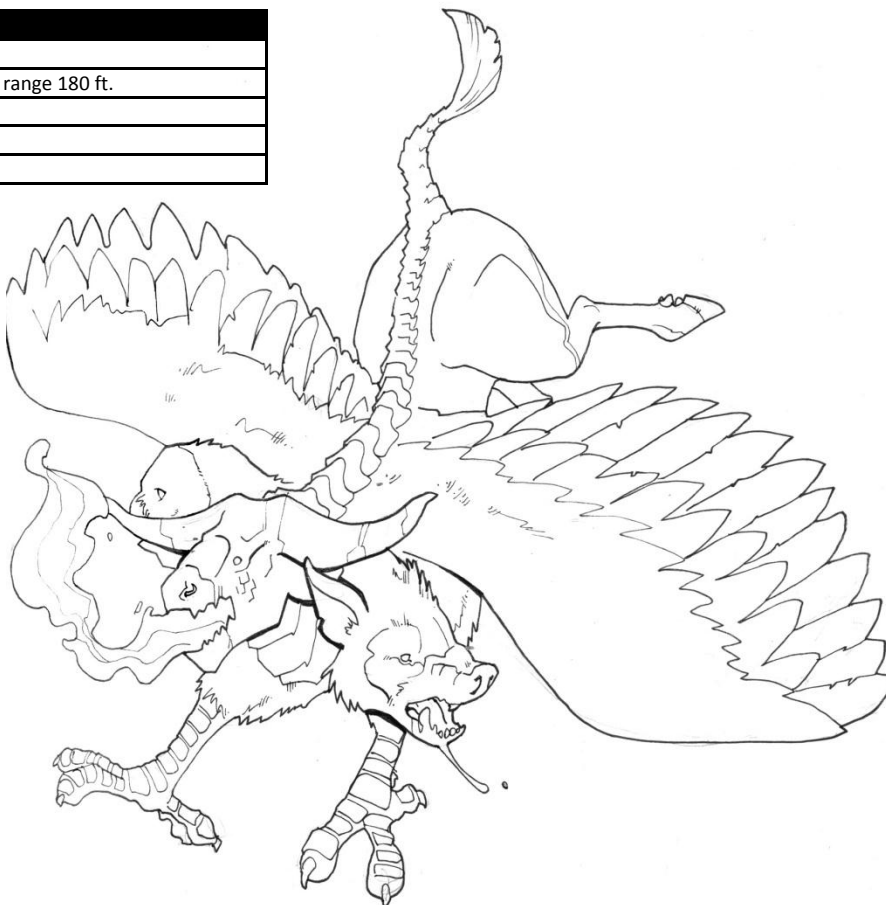
Note: Chimerae with gold dragon, hound archon, lammasu or unicorn heads are Lawful in alignment

D20	Creature	Modifications
1	Basilisk	1 bite (1d8); petrifying gaze
2	Blink Dog	1 bite (1d6); teleport
3	Bulette	1 bite (3d6); body has bony plates for -2 [+2] AC and replaces flight with burrow speed
4	Cockatrice	1 bite (1d3); petrifying bite
5	Coeurl	1 bite (1d8); displacement effect
6	Dragon	1 bite (3d4); breath weapon (3/day) for 3d8 damage; Roll D6: 1 Black, 2 Blue, 3 Gold, 4 Green, 5 Red, 6 White
7	Dragonne	1 bite (2d6+1); roar weakens those who hear it
8	Gorgon	1 gore (2d6); petrifying breath
9	Hell Hound	1 bite (1d6); breathe fire 3/day for 3d8 damage and immune to fire
10	Hound Archon	1 bite (1d8+2); cast spells (bless, continual flame, detect evil, protection from evil)
11	Hydra	1 bite (1d6); regenerate 2 heads if head not destroyed by fire
12	Lamia	Female torso in place of a central head; spells (charm monster and suggestion), touch drains a point of wisdom permanently
13	Lammasu	Spells (dimension door, invisibility x2, protection from evil, 10' radius)
14	Nightmare	1 bite (1d8); breathe brimstone smoke (-2 to hit), become incorporeal
15	Rust Monster	2 antennae (corrode metal, destroying it)
16	Stirge	1 proboscis (1d3); drains 1d4 blood per round automatically with proboscis hit
17	Unicorn	1 horn (1d8); teleport, double damage for charge
18	Vrock	1 beak (1d6); cause darkness, immune to fire, magic resistance (50%)
19	Winter Wolf	1 bite (1d6+1); breathe frost 1/turn (10' range, 4d6 damage)
20	Yith Hound	1 bite (1d6+1); bay (cause fear within 100 ft), magic resistance (10%)

Tail (1 in 6 chance of having a special tail)

Increase the chimera's challenge level by 1 if it has a special tail.

D20	Tail
1-16	None or per rear body
17	Manticore Tail: 6 tail spikes (1d6) per round, range 180 ft.
18	Scorpion Tail: 1 sting (1d4 + lethal poison)
19	Skunk Tail: Spray musk
20	Snake Tail: 1 bite (1 hp + lethal poison)



Demonomicon III

By John M. Stater

Alocer (Alloces, Allocas)

Alocer is a red-faced Great Duke of Hell and a great patron of the sciences. He appears to mortals as an armored warrior astride a nightmare, and wielding a kettenmorgenstern (multi-headed, spiked flail). He has a leonine face with flaming eyes and a booming, raspy voice.

Alocer dwells in a castle with thirteen tall towers, each topped with an observatory and grand telescope. These telescopes, despite being hidden beneath miles of earth, track the stars above as well as gazing upon any place under the Sun as well as the past and future. The interior of his palace is clad in lapis lazuli and the ceilings are set with sparkling gemstones that approximate the heavens.

Alocer's castle is guarded by thirty-six companies of horned devils. He is called upon by anti-clerics and magic-users to learn spells of divination and sound, as well as knowledge about the mysteries of the sky and planets. When invoked, he can ensure that a magic-user finds a good familiar. While Alocer shares his secrets and teaches his spells, he induces people to immorality.

Alocer's horse, Bucephalus, has the legs of a dragon and, despite having no wings, can walk on the wind. He is stark black, with eyes that blaze like his master's.

Alocer attacks as a 18 HD monster. His kettenmorgenstern is a +3 *flail* that deals an additional 1d6 points of lightning damage on a natural "to hit" roll of "20" and causes a thunderous



boom that forces all within 100 feet to save or be deafened for 1d6 hours.

Alocer can use the following spells: At will – *augury, cause fear, comprehend languages, darkness, ESP, protection from evil, 10-ft radius, tongues, true seeing*; 1/day – *divination, meteor swarm, shout*. Once per day he can summon 1d4+1 horned devils that serve until dismissed.

| Alocer: HD 18 (95 hp); AC -3 [22]; Atk 2 buffets (1d6+1) or kettenmorgenstern (1d8+5); Move 12; Save 3; CL/XP 27/6500; Special: Spells, summon demons, +2 or better weapon to hit, immune to fire and lightning, magic resistance (55%).

| Bucephalus: HD 9 (65 hp); AC -4 [23]; Atk 1 bite (1d8+1), 2 hoofs (2d6+1); Move 21 (Fly 35); Save 7; CL/XP 14/2600; Special: Breathe smoke, become incorporeal, immune to lightning and fire, magic resistance (10%).



Amduscias (Amdukias, Ambduscias)

Amduscias is the demon prince of evil fey and holds the rank of Great King of Hell. He appears as a gangly human with clawed hands and feet and the over-sized head of a unicorn. He carries with him a trumpet that opens portals into other worlds and causes fey creatures and plant creatures to flee. When he speaks, he does so with a voice that rolls like thunder and echoes in people's minds and sometimes causing them to lapse into confusion.

Amduscias is a patron of musicians, and he collects the souls of those willing to sell their souls for inspiration or fame. These souls become nupperibo in Hell and serve in his grand

palace, which resembles a great concert hall, in his orchestra of the damned, where they are forced to play compositions from the worst composers in history.

Amduscias commands forty companies in Hell, all garbed in silks and satins. His army consists of twenty companies of drow warriors (all 3rd level fighters) armed with crossbows and pole arms, and twenty companies of vrock demons with raven heads and wings.

Amduscias attacks as a 20 HD monster. He carries no weapons, but his claws strike as *+2 weapons of wounding*. Amduscias can turn fey creatures and plant creatures as a 20th level cleric turns undead. Evil fey and plant creatures are commanded instead of being destroyed.

Amduscias can cast the following spells: At will – *charm monster, detect evil, ESP, glitterdust, protection from evil, tongues*; 1/day – *confusion, shatter, irresistible dance*. He is immune to poisons, fire and mind control. Once per day he can summon 1d6+2 lilin demons or 1d6+6 devil dogs who serve him until they are dismissed.

/ Amduscias: HD 20 (110 hp); AC -3 [22]; Atk 2 claws (1d6+2) and 1 gore (2d6 + poison); Move 15 (F21); Save 3; CL/XP 29/7100; Special: Spells, summon demons, horn carries a deadly poison, +1 or better weapon to hit, immune to poison and fire, magic resistance (60%).

JMS

Land of Nod

Mu-Pan, Part 2

By John M. Stater

This article continues the Asian-inspired hex crawl that first appeared in **NOD 8**. A city from this setting, Yun Bai Du, was featured in **NOD 9**. All three articles are built in part using Mike Davison's *Ruins & Ronin* rules, which are also available via Lulu.com. You will find a description of the Mu-Pan setting as well as descriptions of the geographic regions (including wandering monster tables) in **NOD 8**.

REGIONS

Several regions of Mu-Pan were described in **NOD 8**. Herein are those regions not previously described, plus some additional information on the Celestial Hills.



Black Jungle of Yan

The Black Jungle is an expanse of rugged highlands covered with sub-tropical woodlands of banyans, bamboo and teak. The jungle has always been claimed by the Ying.

Cities: Dinsan [7238], Sin-Kalam [6846]

Strongholds: Abbey of Limpang-Tung [6932], Bridge of Heaven [6748], Lady Mukai [7341], Monastery of the Raging Rat [7034], Unfinished Tower [7529]

Resources: Animal – banteng, fowl, mouflon, pygmy goats; Veg – bamboo, figs, lychee, rice, squash, sun berries, teak, wormwood; Mineral – gold

D20	Monster
1	Albino Apes (1d8)
2	Birhaakamen (1d10+10)
3	Black Bears (1d6)
4	Black Dragon (1)
5	Ferrec (1d6+4)
6	Fire Drakes (1d4)
7	Ghasts (1d6+1)
8	Gnolls (1d10+10)
9	Goblins (1d10+20)
10	Green Dragon (1)
11	Half-Ogres (1d6+10)
12	Headhunters (1d10+15)
13	Karkadann (1d6)
14	Loper (1d10+10)
15	Mimic (1)
16	Monkey Hengeyokai (1d10+10)
17	Ninja (1d10+10)
18	Ophidian pilgrims (1d6+4)
19	Puppeteers (1d6)
20	Snake (1 constrictor or cobra)

Celestial Hills

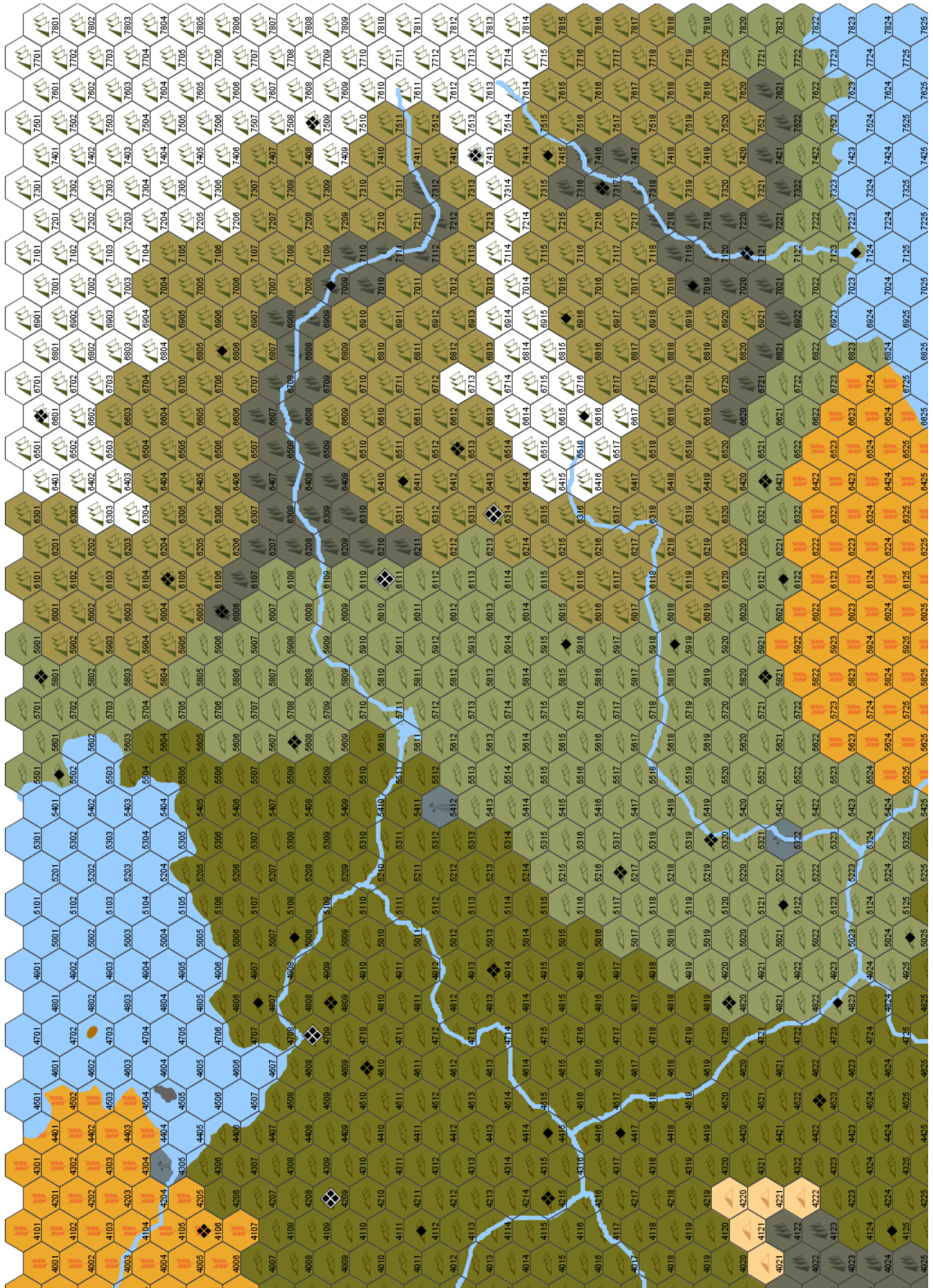
The Celestial Hills are described in **NOD 8**.

Cities: Bojaag [4209], Kemu [5036], Zinda [4709]

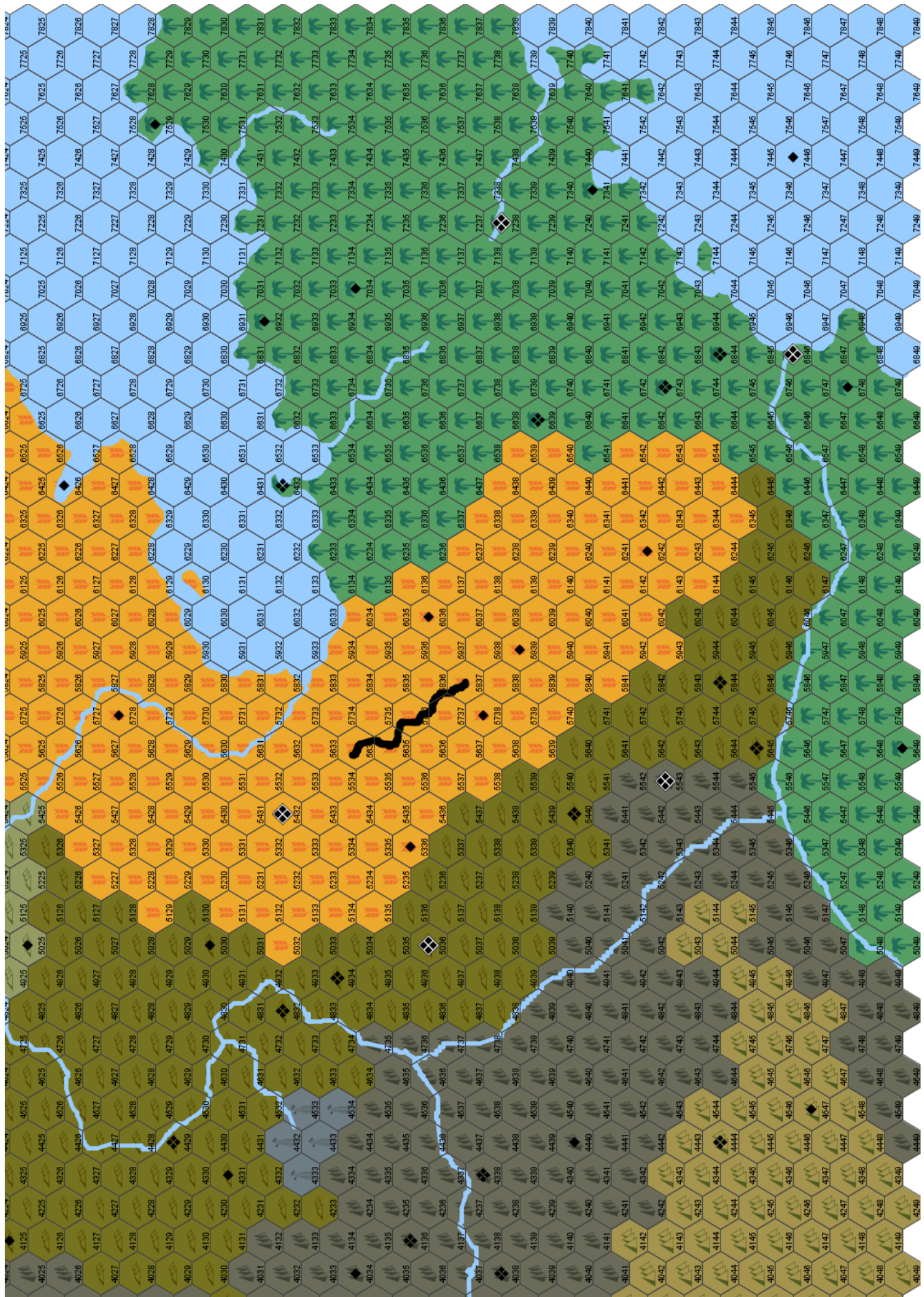
Dungeons: Vault of Tuman [4313]

Strongholds: Abbey of Joodoj [4331], Ancient Flame Monastery [4112], Black Bat Monastery [4417], Oori of the Golden Eyes [5030], Tottori the Teleporter [4125]

Resources: Animal – banteng, boars, cattle, fish, fowl, giant centipedes, goats, quail, silver fox; Veg – barley, cashews, cowpeas, fennel, konjac, matsutake mushrooms, paddy herb, partridge berries, peppermint, plums, red mulberry, rice, rowan berries, saffron, wasabi, wheat, wolfberries; Mineral – beryls, granite, hyacinths, iron



Map created with Hexographer (<http://www.hexographer.com/>)



Map created with Hexographer (<http://www.hexographer.com/>)

D20	Monster
1	Banshee (1)
2	Black Bears (1d6)
3	Boars (1d8)
4	Cave Bear (1d3)
5	Cloud Giants (1d2)
6	Falcon Drakes (1d6)
7	Fox Woman (1)
8	Giant Centipedes (1d6+7)
9	Giant Tuataras (1d6)
10	Gnolls (1d10+10)
11	Hobgoblins (1d10+10)
12	Naga (1d3)
13	Ninja (1d10+10)
14	Oni-Aka Goblins (1d10+20)
15	Samurai (1d10+10)
16	Sphinx (1; Andro- or Gyno-)
17	Troglodytes (1d10+8)
18	Werebears (1d6)
19	Will-o-Wisp (1d4+2)
20	Wolves (1d8+10)

Jade Sea

The Jade Sea is a small sea that stretches between the Celestial Hills and Plain of One Thousand Battles and the dry, dangerous Dragon Hills to the north. Merchant junks ply this sea on their way to the Thule in the far north.

Resources: Animal – dolphins, fish, sharks, shellfish

D10	Monster
1	Aquatic Gargoyles (1d4+5)
2	Dolphins (1d6+6)
3	Merchant Junks (1d4)
4	Monstrous Jellyfish (1d8+5)
5	Ningyo (1d10+20)
6	Oktomon (1d10+10)
7	Samobito (1d8+4)
8	Sharks (1d10+10)
9	Wako (1 ship; 1d10+30 pirates; 8th level bujin)
10	Zhāng-yú-gē (Octopus Man) (1d10+20)

Mountains of Dawn

The Mountains of Dawn occupy the great eastern peninsula of Mu-Pan. The foothills were once home to the Meng people, but they largely disappeared hundreds of years ago, the survivors of that population now mostly engaged in the mercantile trade in Mu-Pan. The foothills are now home to the Nakdani, displaced from their home islands by a terrible cataclysm. The lower portions of the

mountains are covered with woodlands of pine and juniper while the higher elevations are clad in snow all year long.

Cities: Kasuda [6314], Simuj [7413]

Dungeons: Ice Dungeon [7014], Lord Baatag's Tomb [7216], Tomb of the Dragonne Queen [6605]

Strongholds: Abbey of Fu Lu SHou [7019], Abbey of Hish [6916], Abbey of Umborodom [6616], Baatai the Trapper [6411], Master Lun'Chi's Tower [7415]

Resources: Animal – doves, mountain goats, sheep; Veg – barley, buckwheat, liftwood, peas, raspberries, skirrets; Mineral – alexandrite, arsenic, mispickel

D12	Monster
1	Cave Bear (1d3)
2	Cloud Giant (1d2)
3	Dragon Horse (1d4)
4	Mechanical Men (1d10+10)
5	Ninja (1d10+10)
6	Ogres (1d6+4; 50% chance of oni)
7	Oni-Yama Goblins (1d20+10; 50% chance of nilbogs)
8	Sky Worm (1d4+1)
9	Tengu (1d6)
10	Wang Liang (1d4)
11	White Dragon (1)
12	Yuki-Onna (1)

Ronin Hills

The Ronin Hills are a drier, more rugged extension of the Celestial Hills, forming a transition between them and the Mountains of Dawn. Never thickly inhabited, they were granted to the lords of the Nakdani by the Tiger Empress as a means of counteracting the growing resistance to her rule by the native Mu-Panese.

Cities: Ganiz [6111]

Dungeons: Kama-Jo Abbey [4823]

Strongholds: Dawa the Dragon [5502], Eight Immortals Abbey [5122], Kama-Jo Abbey [4823], Kawaga Castle [5919], White Mistress Abbey [5615]

Resources: Animal – bees, carp, elephants, fowl, goats, swine; Veg – grapes, Japanese walnuts, maple syrup, plums, poppies, rice, soko, sorghum, soybeans, sugar pine resin, timber, velvet beans, wheat; Mineral – lead

D12	Monster
1	Aranea (1d6+2)
2	Black Bears (1d6) or Cave Bears (1d4)
3	Ghouls (1d6)
4	Giant Eagles (1d4)
5	Goblins (1d10+20)
6	Hobgoblins (1d10+10)
7	Jackals (2d8) or Wolves (2d6)
8	Ogres (2d6; 50% chance of oni)
9	Oni-Aka Goblins (1d10+20)
10	Salt Drake (1d4)
11	Samurai (2d8+7)
12	Trolls (1d8)

Wako Sea

The Wako Sea is the great southern sea of Mu-Pan. It is a sub-tropical expanse, fairly shallow, that connects with the larger and deeper Sea of Stars.

Resources: Animal – abalone, dolphins, fish, sharks, shellfish; Mineral – pearls

D8	Monster
1	Dolphins (1d6+3)
2	Dragon Turtle (1)
3	Giant Sea Slugs (1d6)
4	Merchant Junks (1d4)
5	Ningyo (1d10+10)
6	Nixies (1d10+10)
7	Samobito (1d6+6)
8	Sharks (1d6+6)
9	Wako (1 ship; 1d10+30 pirates and 8th level bujin)
10	Zhāng-yú-gē (Octopus Man) (1d10+30)

Zakhar Steppe

The Zakhar Steppe is a lowland of yellow-green grasses and scattered trees. It's main inhabitant are a breed of red tigers and the antelope they prey on. It is now home to the imperial city of Khatan.

Cities: Khatan [5432]

Dungeons: Sinkhole [6024]

Strongholds: Chigoyuki's Tower [5738], Lord Ben [6242], Nanjiang [5336], Onikuma Monastery [5728], Umborodom's Abbey [6036]

Resources: Animal – antelope; Veg – casabas, ginger root, wheat; Mineral – basalt, opals

D10	Monster
1	Aranea (1d4+4)
2	Axe Beaks (1d8+1)
3	Bonnacon (1d20+50)
4	Lightning Lizards (1d10)
5	Ninja (1d10+10)
6	Oni-Aka Goblins (1d10+20)
7	Samurai (1d10+10)
8	Tigers (1d6)
9	Weretigers (1d6)
10	Zoushou (1d10+10)

EASTERN LOCALES

4003. Kappa Lair: Two rocky promontories rise here, home to peregrine falcons. The promontories hide a stony hollow that contains a slightly brackish pond. Small caves in the sides of the rocks hold the bodies of tall humans with oblong skulls covered in platinum leaf and wearing robes of platinum scales. Each such mummy is easily worth 500 gp due to all of this platinum. The brackish water is home to a gaggle of seven kappa who lounge beneath the water's surface during the day and emerge at night to hunt and cause mischief, for many foreigners believe the promontories to be an excellent campsite and make the mistake of staying the night. The kappa know well enough to leave the platinum-clad bodies alone. Those who disturb the bodies find themselves attacked that night by a luminescent, silvery orb that descends from the sky, attempts to destroy any burglars and then disappears.

| *Kappa:* HD 4; AC 3 [16]; Atk 2 claws (1d6); Move 12 (S12); Save 13; CL/XP 4/120; Special: +1 or better weapon to hit until water is spilled from head.

| *Silvery Orb:* HD 10 (45 hp); AC 0 [19]; Atk 1 bite (2d6); Move F15; Save 5; CL/XP 13/2300; Special: Magic resistance (25%), +1 or better weapon to hit, light rays (6/day, 6d6 damage, double on evil creatures).

4009. Ghost Fires: This hex is filled with terraced fields of barley and wheat and dozens of small, ruined homesteads. The homesteads are blackened, as though by fire, but not truly burned. On close inspection, the fields are overgrown with wild grasses and giant rats (encounters with 1d6+4 of the beasts occur each hour on a roll of 1 on 1d6). At night, one sees weird processions of lights winding through the

fields, apparently towards something. In fact, they are ghost lights (i.e. will-o-the-wisps), and the creatures that drove humans out of the valley. Approaching the ghost lights is dangerous, and although they appear to be heading somewhere, this is an illusion.

| *Ghost Fires*: HD 9; AC -8 [27]; Atk 1 shock (2d6); Move 18; Save 6; CL/XP 10/1400; Special: None.

4013. Weeping Women: On the banks of the Great Canal you might (1 in 6 chance) come across five weeping women washing clothes stained in blood. To their backs, at the crest of the bank, there is a long building with a sloped roof clad in brass and bearing water spouts in the shape of dragons. This building is a shrine to the bodhisattva Chuifu. Her idol in the shrine depicts her as a golden skinned woman, tall, with a handsome, pleasant face, ruby-red lips and eyes closed as though she is laughing. The idol holds a golden scroll. The women are ghosts – banshees – who will react violently to those who approach them without joining their mournful cries.

| *Weeping Women*: HD 7; AC 0 [19]; Atk 1 claw (1d8); Move F12; Save 9; CL/XP 11/1700; Special: Magic or silver to hit, magic resistance (49%), shriek of death, immune to enchantments.

4027. The Harpist: In a region of angry, twisted hills and rushing streams as black as night, a ruined castle sits atop a white bluff ringed with black brambles. There is a 1 in 6 chance that travelers hear the sounds of a konghou (harp) issue from the ruin and joining the trickle of the black streams in a mournful dirge. Boundary stones around the ruin contain the former owner's mon (coat of arms), but these images have been defaced. The ruin is now the lair of Tilagan, a two-headed female oni that entered the castle as a serving woman and then, through a series of cunning murders, turned the people and the noble family against one another until they were destroyed. The bodies, all in a state of advanced decay, still lie in the castle where they fell, a pleasant reminder to the oni of her handiwork. Tilagan's treasure consists of 470 sp, 480 gp and an amber wand worth 95 gp that is of a high enough quality that it can be enchanted with spells.

| *Tilagan*: HD 5+4 (23 hp); AC 4 [15]; Atk 2 nodachi (2d6); Move 12 (F18); Save 12; CL/XP 7/600; Special: Fly, invisibility, darkness 10' radius, human form, sleep, charm person, cone of cold (60' long, 30' wide, 8d6 damage).

Welcome to Nod!

NOD is a sandbox campaign setting, a mega-sandbox if you will, that will eventually detail dozens of geographic regions. This issue of NOD details one half of region J10. The first half of J10 appeared in NOD 4. The region of J11 was described in NOD 1 and NOD 3, and is situated to the south of region J10.

NOD is intended as a place to set fantasy role-playing games – period. Although a few histories and over-arching story lines are hinted at to provide inspiration and a bit of color, they can easily be ignored. NOD attempts to support many different styles of play, from historical to gonzo to science fantasy, but Referees should feel free to ignore anything they do not like or do not think they can use – the integrity of the setting will not be disrupted by doing this!

Above all, have fun! If you find the setting useful, please visit my blog and drop me line – I'd love to hear about how you used the material in your home game!

John M. Stater



4030. Choked Ruins: A small ruined village of seven stone huts sits here beneath the boughs of the great oaks. The huts are crumbled and decayed sand covered with choking vines of jasmine. Should one sight the ruins, they will almost certainly catch, from the corner of their eye, the movement of a graceful maiden ducking behind a wall. This maiden is actually a fox woman and the village is her lair. She will do her best to lead adventurers into a certain crumbling hut with a false floor and a 20-ft deep pit. A sack

containing three tourmalines (20 gp each) is at the bottom of the pit. The fox maiden, Muke by name, has four attendants who dwell in the ruin with her but spend their days hunting in the forest. She possesses 1,310 sp, 1,180 gp and a jasper necklace worth 200 gp.

| *Muke*: HD 8+1 (32 hp); AC 3 [16]; Atk 1 bite (1d6) or weapon (1d6); Move 18; Save 8; CL/XP 10/1400; *Special*: Charm person, entourage, x2 damage from silver.

| *Attendants*: HD 3; AC 5 [14]; Atk 1 weapon (1d6+1); Move 12; Save 14; CL/XP 3/60; *Special*: None.

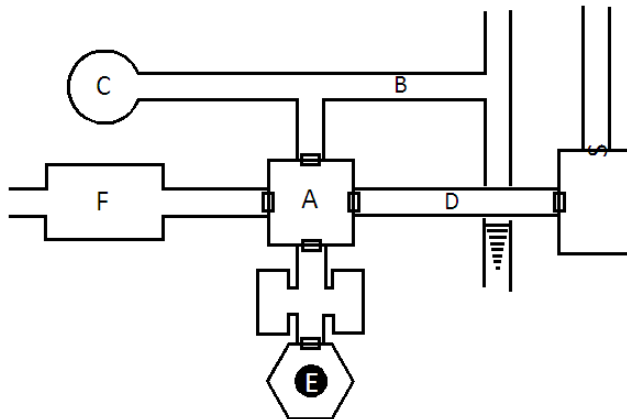
4034. Lonely Tower: Atop a blighted hill that looks as though the life was sucked out of it there is a lonely tower. The tower stands four stories tall and is heavily weathered, the roof having long ago collapsed into the structure, destroying the top two floors. The second floor of the structure is home to three faces that look as though they were burned into the floor and walls. These faces can move in a subtle way – movement without moving, always out of the corner of one’s eye, and they speak as well, in a dusty, coughing voice like that of a smoker on his last lung. The faces speak of terrors under the earth that bubble up when the night is still and the moon breathes madness.

The ground floor is filled with rubbish and the collected detritus of the dozens of adventuring bands that have made their way through the tower and into the underworld below. The entrance is a simple trapdoor – easily found and easily opened, for the underworld welcomes new blood. Beneath the trapdoor there is a 40-ft long shaft with grainy walls and irregularly spaced nodules that can almost be climbed, but not quite (though thieves can do the job without any particular difficulty). At the bottom of the shaft lies chamber A.

[A] The ceiling entrance to [A] is blocked by a steel grate that appears to be securely locked. In fact, it can only be opened from the chamber below or by brute strength. The chamber itself is an arena designed for pit fights between dungeon chickens, their wings clipped to keep them from flying about.

| *Dungeon Chicken*: HD 1; AC 7 [12]; Atk 1 beak or claws (1d2 + poison); Move 6 (F15); Save 18; CL/XP 1/15; *Special*: Poison causes fear and hysteria (as fear, 60% chance drop held objects).

The arena is 10-ft deep with a 3-ft wall around the pit. The walls of the room are covered with dozens of small doors



of every imaginable color there are locked 85% of the time. These doors lead into small tunnels used by rats, giant rats and nezumi-oni to move through the dungeon. The tunnels are too small for halflings, but gnomes might be able to move through them. The tunnels are like a maze, interrupted every so often by burrows and leading to holes in other dungeon chambers. There is a 2 in 6 chance that any passage or chamber in the dungeon is connected to these tunnels. The nezumi-oni and their dueling poultry are found in this room on a roll of 1-4 on 1d6. The nezumi-oni are garbed in silk robes and carry slender daggers of exquisite workmanship.

| *Nezumi-Oni*: HD 1; AC 9 [10]; Atk 1 bite (1d6+poison) or weapon; Save 17; Move 12; CL/XP 2/30; *Special*: Diseased bite.

The chamber also has a human-sized door in each wall. These doors are never locked.

[B] This passage is rigged with a trap involving four spears, one in each wall and one in the ceiling and floor. Each spear is located about two feet after the last, with the first one jutting from the east wall, then the floor, then the ceiling and finally the west wall. The first spear is triggered by stepping on a stone in the floor. Each spear is then triggered by the last spear at one second intervals. Each spear is avoidable by making a saving throw; otherwise the victim suffers 1d6 points of damage from each hit. If the first save is made by fewer than three points, it indicates that the person has moved into position for the next spear rather than backing away from it.

[C] This chamber is circular in shape, with a concave floor and ceiling. Water cascades down the stained walls into the floor, where it drains through small holes into deeper

portions of the dungeon. A glass globe on the ceiling, 12-ft overhead, is a lantern that casts wavering lights on the floor and walls. Folk in the room must pass a saving throw to avoid becoming hypnotized by the lights on the water. In the center of the room there dwells an ochre jelly. If the lit globe in the ceiling is removed, one finds a small stone with a *permanent light* spell cast upon it and attached to the ceiling with a bit of copper wire.

[D] Frightening shapes play across the walls of this hallway, with no apparent source.

[E] The door to this chamber is sealed with red wax. The seal is stamped with the numbers 6, 2 and 4. The wax gives off poisonous vapors (save or die) if melted. The room contains a shaft that leads to the third level of the dungeon. A spiral stair winds around the shaft. The shaft is 50 feet deep and is blocked mid-way by a *wall of force*. Hanging from the ceiling of the chamber on long wires are seven gongs of different sizes. The gongs hang into the shaft, but are higher than the wall of force. The *wall of force* can be dispelled by sounding the gongs in the same order as the numbers on the red seal.

[F] This warm room has twenty copper masks, probably depicting long dead magicians, hanging on the walls. Each mask is worth 5 gp. The backs of the masks are coated with a small swarm of scorpions. There is a small chance (2 in 6) that these small scorpions will be in scurrying about the floors and walls as well.

| *Scorpion Swarm*: HD 8; AC 1 [18]; Atk 1 swarm (2d6 + poison); Move 9 (C9); Save 8; CL/XP 9/1100; Special: Poison (save or 1d4 damage), immune to slashing and piercing weapons, half damage from bludgeoning weapons, normal damage from fire.

4038. Teming: This small village of farmers is situated in a deep valley flanked by steep granite walls. The village consists of thatched cottages and a tea house of reddish bricks. The people collect their water from natural cisterns atop the granite cliffs, piping it down through a series of clay pipes into a central reservoir. The villagers grow rice, wasabi, peppermint and red mulberry trees.

Teming is ostensibly ruled by Qutli, a heavyset man with a face like a sated pig and misty green eyes that show his romantic side. Qutli lives with his sage uncle Nizang, and both men are terrified of outsiders entering the village. Teming is defended by a squadron of shashu no ashigaru

and three apparently tamed tigers that have the run of the village. The tigers are actually villagers that were polymorphed by the yawahu bugbear Bekta [4039], who truly rules the village.

4039. Bekta: Bekta, a yawahu bugbear of advanced age and terrible wickedness, dwells in this hex in the ruins of a great castle, the former home of the Nan Chulan, ruler of Teming [4038] until he and his retainers were destroyed by the bugbear.

The bugbear dwells in the royal crypt in a cemetery behind the fortress. The crypt holds the remains of the former baron's family. His own body is kept beneath a large, flat stone that fell on him in the courtyard of his castle a decade ago. Chulan's ghost now roams the fortress, doing the bidding of Bekta. His treasure consists of 320 sp, 33 gp and 10 barrels of rice wine (30 gallons / 9 gp / 250 lb each).

| *Bekta*: HD 3 (12 hp); AC 5 [14]; Atk 1 weapon (1d6+1); Move 12; Save 14; CL/XP 5/240; Special: Spells (human image, blindness, invisibility, ray of enfeeblement – lose 1d4 strength for 1 hour).

| *Chulan*: HD 7; AC 2 [17]; Atk 1 spectral weapon or touch (1d8 + level drain); Move 15 (Fly 30); Save 9; CL/XP 9/1100; Special: Drain 2 levels with hit, immune to non-magical weapons.

4043. Natural Bridge: The mountains here give way to a deep gorge. Terrible, ghostly cries emanate from the bottom of the gorge (they are actually just drafts wind) which lies 300 feet below. A natural bridge crosses the 80-ft wide gorge, but lies 60 feet below the lip. One can get to the bridge (without the use of the rope – watch those crosswinds) by locating the entrance to a cave about 30 feet behind the lip of the gorge.

The cave entrance is really just a hole in the ground, but the hole can easily be climbed and leads to a small tunnel decorated with friezes of dancing saints. The tunnel leads to the bridge, which is about 4-ft wide with slightly rounded sides. The other side of the bridge has a similar tunnel arrangement.

The bridge is meant only for the righteous (i.e. Lawful). The friezes come alive and attack chaotics and neutrals that enter the tunnels. The friezes from the other side of the bridge join in on this attack.

| *Friezes (10)*: HD 2; AC 4 [15]; Atk 1 strike (1d6); Move 12; Save 16; CL/XP 3/60; Special: Drag into stone, immunities.

4101. Soot Fairies: An ancient foundry rests here, surrounded by crumbling black walls with tall smokestacks still reaching for the sky. The old building is surrounded by piles of slag and overgrown with sunflowers. The foundry is inhabited by thirty tiny fairy creatures that look as though they were made of blackened, shriveled matchsticks, with bulbous heads and ugly faces. The mere touch of these creatures causes flammables to ignite and skin to blister. The creatures hide a treasure of thirty large jaspers (worth a total of 500 gp) hidden beneath a pile of ash, along with 100 gp worth of iron ingots (weighs about 1,000 pounds).

| *Soot Fairies:* HD 1d4; AC 3 [16]; Atk 1 touch (1d6); Move 6 (F15); Save 18 (15 vs. magic); CL/XP 2/30; Special: Touch ignites flammables, cough clouds of burning ash (per spell incendiary cloud) once per day.

4103. Dragon Skull: A cubical skull of a dragon lies half-buried in the soil and golden grasses. A large store of beeswax candles is hidden inside the skull, which has a single, round hole in the forehead.

4106. Galay: The savannah is interrupted here by a cluster of low stone longhouses, partially dug into the soil and shaded by a copse of gangly cedars. The men of Galay are famed as liars of the first order, almost incapable of telling the truth. The women of Galay are almost as bad, though their falsehoods are usually in the form of hollow flattery and teasing seduction. The village is situated on either side of a rushing stream, with an ancient bridge of river stones connecting the two halves of the village. Red lanterns hang from the bridge, but are never lit by human hands. When they are lit, it means that the river nymph Ssuban has arisen from the stream and awaits a handsome young lover on the bridge. Ssuban appears at random intervals, but rarely more than once per month. She takes a young man from the village and returns him as an old man at her next visit with a pocket full of platinum coins.

The village makes a living mining barite (the source of barium) from the rolling hills that surround their village. A council of elders governs the village, their speaker being an



elderly woman named Engey. Engey is a wiry woman with sharp features. She dresses like the men of the village, wearing trousers and a tunic. Engey makes her living trading horses, keeping a fine herd of lean chargers in a large paddock in the village. Engey is a fine guide, and despite her advanced age is happy to rent horses to adventurers and lead them as far as 30 miles from her village at a cost of 2 sp per mile.

Galay is often visited by the wushen Tebtam, a heavy woman with light, golden skin and red hair worn in long braids down her back. Tebtam is always accompanied by a gaggle of noisy song birds and by her animal companion, an ill-tempered goose named Taia.

Galay is defended by a company of light horse archers, all women with complexions and hair like Tebtam's. These warrior women are as boastful and rowdy as any male warriors, and they are known to challenge visiting males to dangerous feats of endurance and skill.

4108. Hot Springs: A patch of hot springs bubbles from the ground here, coating the ground in translucent, poisonous salts and causing nearby vegetation to twist and wither. The hot springs are home to three nymphs, Yemun, Chuka and Manai, who have serpentine tongues and a taste for plum wine.

4112. Volcano Monastery: A lonely mountain stands sentinel here over the hills. The mountain is an ancient volcano, long dormant, with a wide caldera filled with a crystal clear lake and thronged with a thick carpet of crimson grasses. On the shores of this lake there is a monastery dedicated to Ancient Flame style kung-fu. The monastery is governed by Tachi, a gawky man with a pallid complexion and long, straight hair tied with a broad ribbon of ivory-colored silk. Tachi wears long cotton robes embroidered with images of golden koi and fireballs.

The monks are dedicated to pure neutrality and separation from the mortal world. Besides Tachi the place houses four lesser monks (level 1 to 4). These monks are sent out into the world to seek clues to the conjuration of an otherworldly paragon of neutrality called Hashi-Mobara.

| *Tachi, Bujin Lvl 9: HP 27; AC 9 [10]; Save 8 (7 vs death & poison); CL/XP 9/1100; Special: Follow through, fists of iron, headlong charge, ki shout, flurry of blows. Wakizashi, shuriken (6).*

4121. Sand Dunes: This hex is covered with rolling sand dunes and hundreds of small lakes and ponds. Flocks of geese and ducks thrive here, and the nomadic people of the area make their living catching these birds. The people live in small huts woven from grasses and bolstered by marble blocks cut from the bluffs that erupt from the ground like angry fists. Some of the bluffs have been carved into the shape of shouting, screaming saints, and it is not uncommon for chaotic pilgrims to make journeys here to meditate and pray before these weird idols. One such head has a shrunken scroll hidden in a nostril. The scroll is a treasure map written in runes of chaos.

4125. Tottori the Master Teleporter: The shugenja Tottori maintains a strange residence in this hex. Tottori is a master teleporter, having a grand collection of ivory scrolls engraved with golden spells of mystic movement. His residence consists of twenty plush chambers, each one separate from the others and thus only accessibly easily with teleportation spells.

Each chamber is set atop a stone pillar ranging in height from 50 to 200 feet (1d4 x 50 feet) that appears to have been pulled from the limestone bedrock. Each pillar is guarded by a single worm, 6-inches thick and 20 feet long, that dwells inside the pillar. These worms are made of elemental earth and can pass through the stone like a person passes through the water.

Tottori is a miserly woman with generous proportions and an unquenchable thirst for knowledge. She will happily trade her treasures for new spells. Her pride and joy is a maiden acquired in the slave markets of Saturnii that she has named Pear Blossom. Tottori claims the girl is a princess among her people, but this is a fiction – she is merely an unlucky girl captured by slavers. Pear Blossom looks like a waif with green skin and five graceful arms placed evenly around her body. She is a plant creature and coated in a thin sheen of slime that, once it has made contact with flesh, allows her to read that person's mind from any distance. Pear Blossom is a powerful psychic who remains with Tottori for her own mysterious reasons.

| *Tottori, Shugenja Lvl 10: HP 21; AC 9 [10]; Save 6 (4 vs magic); CL/XP 7/600; Special: Spells (5th). Tanto, bo, spellbook, silk robes.*

| *Pear Blossom, Psychic Lvl 8: HP 27; AC 5 [14]; Save 8 (7 vs. traps, 6 vs. mind effects); CL/XP 8/800; Special: Powers (channeling, cloud minds, id insinuation, psychic surgery), surprised on 1 on 1d8. Jingasa, hara-ate-*

gawa, haidate, bo, hankyu & 20 arrows, 100 gp in pouch.

| *Rock Worms: HD 6; AC 1 [18]; Atk 1 touch (see special); Move 9; Save 11; CL/XP 8/800; Special: Touch turns skin to stone – each touch causes 1d4 damage; 5 touches reduces movement by half; at 0 hit points a person is turned completely to stone.*

4133. The Sphinx's Roost: The woodland turns into a limestone plateau here, riddled with winding caves and rills that lead to the top of the plateau. In the middle of the plateau, there is a funnel-shaped pit stained crimson. This pit is guarded by a gynosphinx with the body of a blue-furred tiger and the face of a beautiful woman with prominent fangs that give her a delightful lisp when she speaks. The gynosphinx, Kemu by name, accepts all petitioners to her lair, asking them a riddle (as her race is wont) and then permitting those who answer correctly to descend into the pit to explore the limestone caverns beneath. Those who are stumped by the riddle are attacked and devoured about 3 times in 6.

At the bottom of these caves dwells Uior, a dragon-headed ogre who wields a dadao carved from the shin bone of a giant mountain troll. Uior is sealed behind a gate of lead set with a massive enchanted ruby to seal the door. He is said to command an army of shadowy void warriors.

| *Uior, Sultan of the Void: HD 6; AC -4 [23]; Atk 1 weapon (3d6) or 2 claws (1d6) and bite (1d8); Move 15 (F30); Save 11; CL/XP 15/2900; Special: Breath weapon (cone of fire, 6d8 damage), spells (3/day - darkness, polymorph self), regenerate 5 hp/rd, magic resistance (50%), immune to fire and poison, only harmed by +1 or better weapons.*

[A] This cavern is filled with thousands of etheric filaments that randomly phase into the material plane. The mere touch of one of these filaments inflicts 1d3 point of damage. Each foot moved through the cavern requires a person to pass a saving throw or be cut. Folk in armor can choose to have the filament damage their armor instead, reducing its armor bonus by one. Armor reduced to a bonus of zero is completely ruined.

[B] This cavern opens into a yawning chasm – a cylindrical-shaped cavern that descends 40 feet into the ground. A strong column of air swirls through this cavern, making flight all but impossible for winged creatures and shugenja using the fly spell (save at -4 each round or be dashed against the cavern wall for 2d6 damage, save again or fall to the ground below for 4d6 more damage).

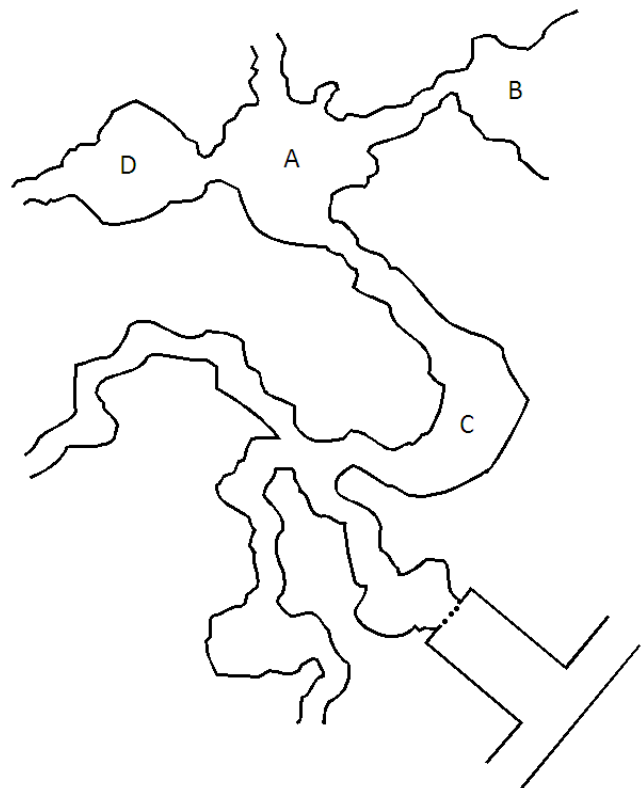
Floating in the middle of the cylindrical cavern are a dozen bronze heads, each depicting an emperor of old and each animated as a guardian. The heads are electrified and each can fire a 1 dice lightning bolt each round from its brow.

| *Electric Head: HD 2; AC 4 [15]; Atk 1 touch or bolt (1d6); Move F18; Save 17; CL/XP 4/120; Special: Electricity.*

[C] This long cavern wraps around in a horseshoe shape. The floor is a gully filled with a trickling stream of water that eventually descends into the earth. This submerged tunnel can be traversed, but one must often hold their breath for an extended period of time.

The soil here is reddish clay and supports tangled vines of jasmine with white flowers. The flowers fill the room with a thick, heady perfume that causes spasms and eventual death. Folk traveling in the room must make a saving throw each turn they spend in it, with a cumulative -1 penalty per saving throw.

[D] This cavern has a floor sunk about 20 feet below the surface of the entrance tunnel. The walls are sheer and slick and the room is filled with a greenish fog. The cavern is a pit inhabited by flesh golems constructed from trolls. The constructs wander the cavern aimlessly, their orders



merely to destroy any living thing they encounter and add its flesh to their own. Many of the creatures have multiple heads (the additions being tormented, mad humans), faced grafted to their stomachs or multiple arms.

| *Troll Golem*: HD 8; AC 1 [18]; Atk 2 claws (2d6) and bite (1d6+1); Move 12; Save 8; CL 11/1700; *Special*: Immune to magic (fire and cold spells slows for 2d6 rounds, electricity damage heals), berserk (1% per round, +1 to hit and damage while berserk, attacks randomly), regenerate 3 hp/rd.

[E] A pale skinned man of enormous size guards this room. The man is apparently blind, but has little trouble finding his opponents by sound and vibrations. The man, Qorch, is a zombie sumo wrestler. The exit to this chamber is barred by an iron portcullis, with a marble hall beyond.

| *Qorch*: HD 9; AC 2 [17]; Atk 2 grabs (1d6+1); Move 9; Save 7; CL/XP 10/1400; *Special*: If both grasps hit he locks people in an iron hold, crushing them for 2d6 points of damage per round.

4136. Bilay: Bilay is a small village of ferreters (men who hunt rabbits with ferrets) on a stream that tumbles through the wooded limestone hills towards the river. The men and their families (about 26 of them) live in timber huts balanced on a rocky limestone promontory stained in brilliant hues of purple, pink and orange from the rain. The base of the hill is defended by sharpened stakes and small spiked pits hidden by straw mats. The pits are designed to cripple more than kill. A squadron of elite shashu no ashigaru (HD 1+1, +1 to hit with bows) defend the village from the heights, raining arrows down on attackers as they attempt to negotiate the stakes and spiked pits. The villagers are an odd sort; zealous practitioners of the old religion of the wushen, they dress only in loincloths.

The village is governed by the Nan Takab, a second cousin once removed of the Chan of Yun. Takab is a fine-boned aristocrat with wavy hair as black as a miser's heart with the temperament of an artist. He dwells in a richly decorated wooden tower with his wife Digan and his children, Chaghin (girl, 12 years old) and Botai (very spoiled boy, age 8). Takab is the patron of Juchi, an armorer, who creates the ornamental armor and weapons Takab prefers to collect.

Juchi is the son of a farrier and is very intense about his craft and art. He has eyes of piercing gray and short, fleecy hair. Honest and inquisitive, his tall, broad-shouldered

physique and square jaw have made him a favorite among the women of the village, especially the lovely baroness.

4138. Troblin Lair: On a broad, sloping plain that rushes down towards the river, there is a field of massive boulders shaped vaguely like large animals. The boulders are moss covered and hide the burrows of a tribe of 38 troblins. The troblins are led by a chieftain called Dashin, a scrawny male who leads by dint of the coruscating purple rays he can shoot from his eyes. Dashin, as overbearing as he is, is the puppet of a large oni dwelling higher on the plain in a rank cave obscured by ancient vines that drip a poisonous, crimson sap that makes the entrance to the cave look as though it is soaked in blood. The oni, Sukab, is immune to the poison, and uses it on his weapons, a pair of curved broadswords.

| *Troblin*: HD 3; AC 8 [11]; Atk 2 claws (1d4) and bite (1d6) or weapon (1d6) and bite (1d6); Move 9; Save 14; *Special*: Regenerate 2 hp/rd.

| *Dashin*: HD 3 (18 hp); AC 8 [11]; Atk 2 claws (1d4) and bite (1d6) or weapon (1d6) and bite (1d6); Move 9; Save 14; *Special*: Regenerate 2 hp/rd, gamma eyes (ranged attack, 3d6 damage + save or troblin mutation).

| *Sukab, Oni*: HD 5+4 (16 hp); AC 4 [15]; Atk 2 nodachi (2d6); Move 12 (F18); Save 12; CL/XP 7/600; *Special*: Fly, invisibility, darkness 10' radius, human form, sleep, charm person, cone of cold (60' long, 30' wide, 8d6 damage).

4142. Agrodaun's Palm: Two centuries ago, an errant warrior saved his companions from a tragedy by wedging his magic shield called the *Outstretched Palm of Agrodaun*. The shield has not been removed in all this time, and if it is removed the side of the mountain may (2 in 6) collapse, killing everyone in the pass. The *Palm* is a +3 *rectangular shield* in the Chinese style, decorated with the image of a large palm (as in a hand, not tree). The shield cannot be bent or broken and once per day can project an invisible sphere of force (10-ft radius) around the holder that lasts for 1 round +1 round per hit point the holder is willing to permanently sacrifice. Un-wedging the shield requires a combined strength of at least 24.

4147. Azer Lair: Through a stone arch in the side of a mountain one can enter the blazing hot lair of a band of seven azer, black-skinned and bulbous-nosed and occupied in the manufacture of weapons for Lei Gong, the Duke of Thunder. Beyond the arch one enters a cavern of glassy basalt, empty and dry, though there is a sheen of moisture at the back of the cavern where a natural slide grants

access to lower caverns. The slide spirals down into the earth about 300 feet and presents a significant obstacle to climbing back up, as it is as smooth as glass.

At the bottom of the slide there is a collection of caverns, all starting out as great bubbles of poisonous gas in a massive flow of lava, and now inhabited by the azer. The largest has a deep pit, maybe miles deep, in which bubbles magma that is used by the azer for their fire. Their anvils surround the magma pit. A few feet away there is a trough dug into the stone in which water flows from another cavern, a cavern of steam blocked by an iron gate traced with silver glyphs and sealed with a complex lock. Steam rises into this chamber from below and condenses to form the stream that feeds the azers' trough. A mihstu inhabits this cavern, and it is the mihstu that the magic gate is designed to thwart.

Other caverns contain the living quarters of the azer, decorated with basalt couches and bronze sculptures that are geometric and abstract, and storage chambers containing their tools, their iron, bronze and adamant ignots and armories with their armor and weapons. The living quarters of the seven brothers holds a gilded cage inhabited by a nightingale, a polymorphed sylph that displeased the Duke of Thunder and now wiles away in the acrid, choking air of the azers' lair until Lei Gong has decided she has suffered enough.

4209. Bojaag: In ancient times, a great meteor struck the earth here, devastating the landscape and burying meteoric iron of exceptional quality in the earth. In time, humans discovered the crater and set up shop, digging into the earth and bringing up their iron, which they smelted using the plentiful woodlands that regrew around the crater as their fuel. In time, a great city grew up around and atop the mines, which are still worked and still produce exceptional iron and all manner of precious stones. The city, Bojaag, now houses 5,000 souls in very close quarters. The city is built on a radial pattern with buildings rising anywhere from three to six stories. At the center of the city there is a wide plaza paved with stone and with a guarded entrance to the mines.

The palace of the Duchess of Bojaag surrounds this plaza, permitting entrance only to the miners and the adventurers needed to clear the labyrinthine tunnels of

monsters. The palace has three ancient stonework towers, gatehouses really, with massive stone doors decorated with friezes of lion heads. Patrols of 3d6 samurai patrol these towers and guard these gates.

Bojaag is surrounded by many miles of fields that supply its excellent breweries with golden wheat and barley. These breweries supply the city's taverns, frequented by the thirsty miners and the men and women that cater to their every need and desire, for the miners of Bojaag keep what they dig from the mines, minus a tithe to the Duchess, and thus are the primary source of wealth in the city-state.

The Duchess of Bojaag is Chaidash, the aunt of the Chan of the Yun and determined to maintain her independence by any means necessary. To this end she cultivates a close relationship with the Jade Empress, housing a large garrison of imperial ashigaru to maintain her control over the heart of the empire. Chaidash is a snappy woman with a quick temper, though she usually apologizes for her harsh words about two days after saying them, often with lavish gifts. She is a short woman with blue eyes and tawny skin and a round, cheerful face.

The city of Bojaag worships Yahn, the Userer of the Gods, in lavish and profane display. His high priestess is Dojin, a plump woman with an unassuming face and a deep and abiding interest in games of chance. She has the common touch, and is much beloved by the avaricious Bojaagi. She and her priestesses wear robes of patterned silk and sable slippers and decorate themselves with jewel encrusted bangles and chokers.

| *Dojin, Sohei* Lvl 6: HP 18; AC 4 [15] front, 7 [12] back; Save 9 (7 vs death & poisons); CL/XP 7/600; Special: Banish undead, spells (4th). *Hanburi, sode, hara-ate, suneate, dadao, prayer beads.*

4215. Nasalm: Nasalm is a village of about 130 peasant families living in pleasant timber cottages surrounded by a moat filled by a rushing stream. The villagers are typical farmers, protective of their crops and livestock and desiring to be left alone. Outsiders are not welcome, and a company of yari ashigaru does its best to keep travelers moving. Nasalm is governed by a mandarin, Ake, a delicate woman with a bland, severe face and timid manner. She dwells in the largest house in the village and rules with an iron fist, despite her seemingly timid demeanor. Ake has an especial love of executions, and employs her older

brother, Simysh, in concocting ever more complicated executions for those who break the law. Travelers are especially prone to fall afoul of the mandarin's laws. The peasants fear Ake, but enjoy watching her spectacles. Nasalm grows cowpeas, wolfberries, cashews and plums and raise fowl for the empire.

4218. Dragon's Gorge: Dragon's Gorge is deep and wide, with walls of granite covered with knotty pines that grow on precarious ledges, some at odd angles. A small stream now flows through the gorge, spilling into an area of geysers and hot springs that themselves feed into a long, deep lake. The lake is inhabited by a gold dragon called Mongiyn, an ancient wyrm that enjoys the medicinal qualities of the lake.

Caves in the sides of the gorge are home to a tribe of 60 lizard men and their 70 mates, 20 hatchlings and 40 eggs. The lizardmen look like geckos and are incredibly adept climbers. Their cave homes are shallow and small, consisting mostly of a fire pit and nest. The lizardmen are armed with throwing clubs and stone knives. They serve the dragon loyally as guardians of the valley. The chief is a lizard samurai called Karn.

| *Mongiyn: HD 11 (44 hp); AC 2 [17]; Atk 2 claws (1d6), 1 bite (3d8); Move 12 (F24); Save 4; CL/XP 14/2600; Special: fire or chlorine breath, magic-user spells.*

| *Lizardmen: HD 2+1; AC 5 [14]; Atk 2 claws (1d3), 1 bite (1d6); Move 6 (Swim 12); Save 16; CL/XP 2/30; Special: Breathe underwater.*

| *Karn: HD 6; AC 2 [17]; Atk 1 sword (1d8) or 2 arrows (1d6); Save 10; CL/XP 6/400; Special: Improved saving throw.*

4229. Free Ladder: An old siege ladder is hidden in the undergrowth in this hex. A skeletal hand skill clings to one of the rungs.

4234. Acrobats: A caravan of entertainers is camping here on their way to perform for the Chan of Yun-Bai-Du [3637]. The company is led by Hiynua, a slender woman with blue-gray eyes and a delicate face. Her company includes jugglers, acrobats and a dancing bear (a werebear named Qasla hiding from fellows she has wronged). Hiynua is a romantic woman, always on the lookout for an eligible husband (her next will be number five) and happy to trade food and company for protection by a band of brave adventurers.

| *Werebear: HD 7+3 (22 hp); AC 2 [17]; Atk 2 claws (1d3) and bite (2d4); Move 9; Save 9; CL/XP 8/800; Special: Lycanthropy.*

4242. Didi Lair: The wooded hills here are resplendent with waterfalls and towering pines. One of these small waterfalls hides the entrance to a wondrous community of strange subterranean dwellers. Behind the waterfall there is a cavern with a large, green pool. The pool flows into a subterranean system of canals and burrows inhabited by many houses of didi, an underground race skilled in the medicinal arts. In their burrows, they keep large archives of medical knowledge, dried and fresh herbs and other powders and extracts useful in the medical arts. The quest of every didi is the *elixir of life*.

A didi is a small humanoid that looks like a skeleton with pale skin stretched over the bones. Their skin is covered with velvety, platinum blond hair. Didi have over-large heads with long, pointed ears. Despite their hideousness, they are a kind people, assuming you can win their trust.

| *Didi: HD 1d4; AC 3 [16]; Atk 1 dagger (1d4); Move 9 (S12); Save 18; CL/XP 1/15; Special: Magic resistance (30%), spells (confusion, continual flame, dimension door, mirror image, ventriloquism, protection from evil 10-ft radius).*

4301. Jin Nomads: A tribe of 190 Jin nomads and their 350 women and 250 children dwell here in a sprawling camp of yurts punctuated by streaming orange banners. The chief of the nomads is Borchu, a tall man with a face like unfinished statuary and blue-gray eyes. Borchu is self-righteous and remarkably well read – a scholar as well as a warrior. His men ride swift warhorses. They wear haramaki-do armor and carry shields, yari and dao. They are known for being slavers, and keep 35 slaves that serve in their tents. Borchu is assisted by six sub-chiefs with 4 HD each. His wife is the exotic and intriguing Jutil.

| *Borchu, Bujin Lvl 7: HP 29; AC 6 [13]; Save 10 (9 vs death & poison); CL/XP 7/600; Special: Follow through. Hanburi, haramaki, suneate, jiujiiebian, daikyu.*

| *Jutil: Shugenja Lvl 7: HP 18; AC 9 [10]; Save 9 (7 vs magic); CL/XP 6/400; Special: Spells (4th). Staff, spellbook.*

4305. Hsiao: The river delta here is wooded with wondrous pines with silvery needles and dark bark. Three Hsiao, giant celestial owls, guard the river delta from the depredations of pirates. Many poor innocents – the victims of raids or other misfortunes – have gathered in the delta area and

live as “natural men”, fishing, digging roots and living in small huts woven from reeds, braches and twigs.

| *Hsiao*: HD 4; AC 3 [16]; Atk 2 claws (1d6) and bite (1d8); Move 3 (F30); Save 13 (9 vs. poison); CL/XP 8/800; Special: Spells (bless, cure light wounds, detect evil, protection from evil 3/day), immune to disease, +1 or better weapon to hit, magic resistance (20%) .

4313. Vault of Tuman: The Vault of Tuman is a multi-tiered building of cyclopean stones. On the seven ledges that circle the building angry little oni-aka goblins patrol with poisoned arrows. The building has a wide gate of stone that requires two teams of oxen to open. There is no other entrance – the goblins dwell in apartments on the higher levels of the building and never venture into the depths guarded by the stone gate. Beyond the gate there is a stair that descends one mile into the earth. At the bottom of the stairs there are caverns containing the treasures of the efreet Tuman and the traps and guardians he has installed to protect those treasures. Among these valuables is the marble head of an ishidzukui-shishi that belongs to the headless statue located in [4323].

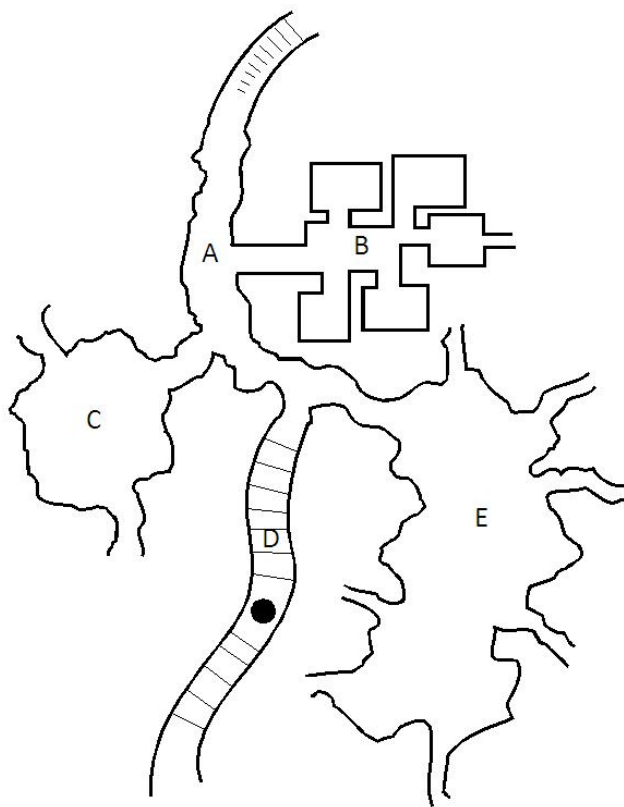
[A] This humid passage sometimes floods due to the weird tides of a nearby subterranean sea (1 in 20 chance when encountered, 1 in 100 chance of this happening while being explored). The passage is riddled with cave polyps.

| *Cave Polyp*: HD 4; AC 5 [14]; Atk 1 tentacle (1d6 + poison); Move 0; Save 13; CL/XP 6/400; Special: Poison (save vs. paralysis), swallow whole, immune to mind effects.

[B] These plush chambers are home to the five grandees – the wicked spawn of the efreet Tuman and his various elemental and non-elemental lovers. The grandees look like squat men with glistening skin and over-wide mouths filled with small, pointed teeth. They have leering eyes and wear beards and mustachioes. They are garbed in flowing silks that are worth 300 gp each. The grandees all differ slightly in appearance. Jinshu has bronze skin, Yanqi has black skin, Hui has gray skin and is covered in ash, Huo has reddish skin and blazing eyes and Yanjiang has bright red skin and is the stoutest of the band.

| *Jinshu & Yanjiang*: HD 6 (22 hp); AC 0 [19]; Atk 1 strike (2d6); Move 6; Save 11; CL/XP 8/800 Special: Half-damage from non-metallic weapons, can heat metal as the spell.

| *Yanqi*: HD 4 (13 hp); AC 2 [17]; Atk 1 strike (1d6); Move 15; Save 13; CL/XP 8/800; Special: Composed of smoke – can only be harmed with +1 or better weapons, can enter a person's lungs (saving throw allowed) with a successful strike, causing 2d4 points of damage per round in



burning and choking damage until expelled with a successful strength check.

| *Hui*: HD 4 (15 hp); AC 2 [17]; Atk 1 strike (1d8); Move 12; Save 13; CL/XP 8/800; Special: Energy drain (save or lose 1 level permanently), raise a cloud of ash that chokes and blinds as stinking cloud.

| *Huo*: HD 5 (20 hp); AC 4 [15]; Atk 1 strike or sword (1d8); Move 12; Save 12; CL/XP 8/800; Special: Wall of fire, immune to fire, cast spells as a 5th level shugenja. Wears bronze gloves and wields a steel katana.

[C] This cavern is a miracle – green and moist and cool in a broiling dungeon of fire! Large green flower spikes thrust up on the periphery of the cavern and in the center of the cavern there is a porphyry gazebo. Inside the gazebo there is a well of pure, cool water to slake one's thirst.

Ah – if only this was all true! In fact, the room is covered with a powerful hallucinatory terrain effect. The green plants are iron spears driven in the stone floor of the cavern. The gazebo is real enough, but it contains a well of molten lead (3d6 damage if touched or swallowed).

[D] This long tunnel is perfectly round and filled with acrid smoke. Spaced every five feet there is a ring of blue metal that runs the circumference of the tunnel. Once one has passed three of these rings, the rings begin to electrify –

first at the ends of the tunnel and then inward, one per round. Stepping through one of these electrified rings causes 2d6 points of electricity damage (save for half). In the middle of the tunnel there is a 20-ft deep pit (spiked at the bottom) and filled with the same smoke. Just three feet beneath the top of the pit there is a secret door that leads to deeper portions of the dungeon.

[E] This large cavern leads to many small cave complexes inhabited by female hermits – former unwilling members of Tuman’s harem. They now scrounge out their survival in the dungeon as barbaric hunters. Each is savage and cunning and almost devoid of compassion. They primarily survive on water that condenses on the walls of the cavern, collecting in small pools that are bitter to the taste. They eat the fire bats that throng the cavern, catching them in metal nets and dousing them in the water. Of course, they need not be cooked.

| *Hermits: HD 4 to 6; AC 6 [13]; Atk 1 weapon (1d8) or fists (1d4); Move 15; Save 11 to 13; CL/XP varies; Special: Surprise on roll of 1-4 on 1d6.*

| *Fire Bat: HD 2; AC 4 [15]; Atk 1 bite (1d6); Move 9 (F15); Save 16; CL/XP 3/60; Special: Half of bite damage is from heat, leave trails of fire, those who come into contact with them must pass a saving throw or their flammable items (including hair) catch on fire.*

4323. Headless Statue: Atop a marble platform reached by a wide stair ornately carved there is a single, headless statue of an ishidzukui-shishi, also carved from marble. If the construct’s head is returned and reattached, it will serve as a loyal mount for a lawful bujin or sohei. The head is located in the dungeon in [4313].

| *Marble Ishidzukui-Shishi: HD 5+2 (21 hp); AC 1 [18]; Atk 1 stone claw (1d6); Move 9; Save 12; CL/XP 7/600; Special: Resistance to cutting weapons (50%), immune to piercing and wooden weapons.*

4331. Abbey of Joodoj: An abbey dedicated to Joodoj, the bodhisattva of vegetation and fertility, has been constructed here at the head of a wooded valley cultivated by the fourteen nuns of the abbey and their abbess, Baatai. The valley’s has terraced fields growing the five sacred grains and rutabagas.

Baatai is the abbess of the monastery. She is a plump woman of sixty winters with high cheekbones and vibrant green eyes. Cynical and taciturn, she does not welcome strangers to the monastery, though she will provide hungry strangers with boxes of steamed rice and vegetables and skins of water and then send them on their way.

She and her priestesses wear green robes and wear their hair in thick braids that they pile atop their heads like coiled snakes.

| *Baatai, Wushen Lvl 9: HP 38; AC 9 [10]; Save 6; CL/XP 10/1400; Special: Spells (5th), turn undead, headlong charge, ki shout, elemental spirits. Equipment, prayer beads.*

4336. Banog the Bold: Here lies the tomb of Banog the Bold, an ancient warlord that once ruled the surrounding lands with wit, wisdom and an iron fist. Banog’s tomb is sunk beneath the glassy surface of sluggish river. The tomb is constructed of ivory marble and rests just a few feet beneath the surface of the clear water. The only entrance to the tomb is underneath it, and thus inaccessible unless the tomb is raised. This can be done by throwing a garland of lotus flowers onto the river surface and chanting the seven great battles of Banog in chronological order.

The waters around the tomb are guarded by a darakel. No flowers or recitals of battles can ward this creature. The entrance to the tomb is a hidden circular trapdoor that must be turned counterclockwise to open it – turning it clockwise causes the tomb to sink back beneath the water, crushing anyone underneath it.

Ghostly illusions of candles float in the tomb chamber, casting a wavering, gray light on the surroundings and washing out all color. Sitting on a wooden throne is the mummified remains of Banog, thankfully not undead. The mummified corpse of Banog has an iron box chained around its neck. Inside the locked box are 60 gp and an onyx sculpture of a horse worth 300 gp. Strapped to the corpses back and hidden beneath its funeral clothes is a +1 *wakizashi*.

| *Darakel: HD 10; AC 6[13]; Atk 1 bite (3d6), 1 tail (2d6); Move 12 (12 swim); Save 5; CL/XP 11/1700; Special: Poison breath (3/day).*

4338. Qarj: Qarj is a small village of farmers living in humble cottages surrounded by a how wall of dried mud bricks bristling with bamboo spikes and a side moat filled by a nearby river that they diverted to water their rice paddies, tea and a variety of tropical fruits. The valley is also thick with mullein, a medicinal herb with yellow flowers that can be used as proof against poison gas (+3 to save) and makes a paralysis poison with which the villager’s 10 shashu no ashigaru coat their arrows.

The whole valley of Qarj is humid and tropical all year round due to their ownership of a many-armed idol from the southern jungles. The idol maintains the tropical climate so long as it is fed with human blood. The idol is called Ogotch, and appears to be a lanky youth with angular features carved into a body of granite covered with faces. Ogotch has six heads and six arms. Because of the sacrifices, there are many ghosts walking the valley. The ghosts are the unwilling servants of Ogotch and do not disturb the villagers too much.

The village is led by the elder Jineg, a farmer by trade, with a small frame and pinched face. Jineg is as stubborn as a mule, and though he dislikes his valley's deity, he is not about to rock the boat. The idol's high priestess is Again, a sage woman with golden skin and amber eyes. Again is devious and soft-spoken, and quite adept at finding victims for her god's monstrous appetite.

4348. Weasel Shrine: In a gaudy shrine of brass and pine painted bright red there lives a giant weasel. The weasel commands a flight of twenty flying monkeys to force travelers to visit his shrine and pay a tribute of foodstuffs and gold. The weasel is actually a disguised dragon, Yardoc, a huge, young wyrm that looks like a 20 ft long, one-ton serpentine toad colored a brilliant scarlet. A massive boulder located about 90 yards north of the shrine, in a hollow, dragon's treasure is hidden in a pit. It consists of 290 pp, 4,530 gp, 440 sp and a coat of fox skins worth 100 gp that makes one immune to illusions.

| *Yardoc: HD 11 (11 hp); AC -2 [21]; Atk 2 claws (1d4), bite (1d6) and tail whip (1d6); Move 10 (F10); Save 4; CL/XP 15/2900; Special: Breathes a giant wad of goo that hardens on the skin and reduces movement by 3 and AC by 1 with each hit, the goo is dissolved by alcohol, surrounded by a thick fog (as fog cloud) that forces those who breathe it to save vs. disease.*

| *Flying Monkey: HD 2+1; AC 6 [13]; Atk 2 claws (1d3) and bite (1d4); Move 9 (F18); Save 16; CL/XP 3/60; Special: If both claw attacks, the monkey can grasp and lift the person, rising 10 feet in altitude per round.*

4403. Samurai of Lanterns: In the midst of the wind-swept plain, among the tall golden grasses stalked by tigers and nibbled on by antelopes, there is a lonely shrine carved from a glistening blue stone and housing a simple idol of painted wood, weathered by years spent in the open air. The idol is a man sitting in the lotus position, a loose saffron robe on his shoulders and a serene smile on his

face. At the foot of the idol, there is a crystalline sarcophagus, inside of which there is the perfectly preserved corpse of a lovely maiden.

The maiden is the wife of the infamous Tamaag, a warrior who betrayed the Jin at the battle of the Six Earthly Dragons, a battle the Jin fought against the army of a Ying emperor 2,300 years ago. The Jin were scattered, their estates seized and their eldest children carried away into slavery in the south. Tamaag was double-cursed, losing his family and friends and suffering the death of his eldest daughter, for the crafty White Serpent Emperor broke his every promise. Fleeing from the Jin, Tamaag found himself in this shrine and prayed to Saint Nasar for guidance and help. The saint appeared to him and charged him with undoing the evil he caused. He bound Tamaag into his armor with iron chains hung with hundreds of slim lanterns that burned with ghost fire. Tamaag would have to seek out the survivors of his treachery and undertake a quest for each one, being unable to die of natural causes until he had. With each success, a lantern would be extinguished and fall from his burden.

Tamaag now has seventeen lanterns hanging from his chains. When he douses the final lanterns, he will be saved and his daughter will be restored to life. There is a 1% chance that Tamaag will be at the shrine or coming to it when adventurers visit it. If any harm is done to the shrine or Tamaag's daughter, he will hunt the responsible parties until their dying day. Under his o-yoroi armor, Tamaag is a mere skeleton with burning red eyes. He hides his face with a mask of Saint Nasar painted in lacquer.

| *Tamaag: HD 12 (60 hp); AC -1 [20]; Atk 1 weapon (1d10+2); Move 12; Save 3; CL/XP 12/2000; Special: Fear aura, find target, +1 or better weapon to hit, immune to cleric turning, magic resistance (60%).*

4410. Drowsy Goddess: A colossal 80-ft tall statue of a strange entity stands here overlooking the landscape. The entity, perhaps a forgotten god, appears to be an Amazonian woman in scale armor with the face of a koi, with heavy-lidded eyes that still bear a luminous blue pigment that glows in the night. In the presence of the statue (i.e. the entire hex) it is impossible to speak a lie. Those who do lie will fall into a deep slumber, during which they are tortured with terrible nightmares for 1 week to punish them for their wicked ways.

4415. Cloud Giant: A lanky giantess has made her home here atop a cloud that covers the entire hex and appears each day at sunset. The sunbeams shining through the cloud crystalize and allow one to climb to the top of the cloud, where the giantess, Dalun, has her castle. Dalun has skin like a desert sunset during a sandstorm and eyes as blue as the sky. She dwells with her seven children in her castle, which is filled with her sculptures, many of which can be animated by her voice. She does not seek the company of others, and has a cruel streak when dealing with unwanted visitors.

| *Cloud Giantess: HD 42; AC 2 [17]; Atk 1 weapon (6d6); Move 15; Save 3; CL/XP 13/2300; Special: Hurl boulders, spells as 6th level shugenja.*

4417. Black Bat Monastery: A monastery dedicated to Black Bat-style kung-fu and the search for serenity and enlightenment has been constructed here atop a singular rise of limestone covered with flowering vines and scrawny hemlocks. It is inhabited by 23 monks and their abbot, Subourt. Subourt is a tall, thin man with a well-defined physique and high cheekbones. He is handsome but for the absence of his two front teeth, lost to an ogre's club. Subourt is standoffish with men, but quite romantic (often too romantic) with women. He and his monks wear black tunics and leggings and go barefoot and bare-headed.

| *Subourt, Bujin Lvl 10: HP 34; AC 9 [10]; Save 7 (6 vs death & poison); CL/XP 10/1400; Special: Follow through, parry blows, parry death blow, fists of iron, mighty leap. Kusari-gama, hankyu.*

4420. Ruined Castle: A ruined castle here is still inhabited by the undead remnants of its ancient garrison, along with their leader, a wraith called Mai. The lot was besieged and succumbed to a plague that kept the invaders from taking possession of the castle. They attempted to burn it, but the risen dead within squelched the flames and lived on. In all, there are forty skeleton warriors in the castle, along with the aforementioned wraith. The touch of any of the undead force one to save vs. disease or succumb to the same plague, which works like mummy rot but causes the flesh to slough off the bones and the stricken to rise after death as a skeleton.

4425. Black Oxen: Atop a lightly wooded hill there is an ancient carving of a black oxen, its head surmounted by enormous horns that play host to a flock of giant doves. The doves are the pets of a guardian naga called Geyn. Geyn dwells inside the hillside in a number of interlocking

rooms carved from the stones and decorated with a wondrous number of chimes. The chimes are set off by phantom winds and cause those who hear them (except for Geyn, of course) to be affected as though by a random potion. Naga has secret entrances to her lair atop the hill.

| *Geyn, Guardian Naga: HD 11; AC 3 [16]; Atk 1 bite (1d6 + poison), 1 constrict (1d8), 1 spit (poison); Move 18; Save 4; CL/XP 13/2300; Special: Poison, constriction, spells (cure light wounds x2, hold person, silence 15 ft radius, cure disease, cure serious wounds).*

4429. Maidan: This large fishing village on the Grand Canal is a collection of cramped stone houses with colorful tile roofs separated by narrow lanes that reek of fish. The village is surrounded by a thick rampart of packed earth patrolled by a company of formidable yari ashigaru. The place is governed by Juchuk, a distant relation to the Chan of Ying. Juchuk is a slender woman with a long face, thin but inviting lips and eyes that burn with ambition. She is aggressive in battle, wielding an ivory-handed dueling sword, and married to a scatter-brained oaf named Menua, a close cousin to the Chan.

Maidan has a number of ferries that cross the river here. The people have ancient compacts with the river spirits, who leave their vessels intact given the proper tribute. The toll is steep, and the village makes a handsome profit on the spice merchants coming to Ying from the far north.

Juchuk and her husband have a treasure of 690 sp, 270 gp and a small wooden box containing 3 pounds of chili powder (worth 900 gp) imported from the mysterious west. Juchuk intends to use his money to purchase a mercenary army and someday challenge her chan.

| *Juchuk, Kensei Lvl 6: HP 29; AC 6 [13]; Save 10 (8 vs. death & fear); CL/XP 6/400; Special: +1 hit and damage with nodachi, life-saving parry, natural defenses. Nodachi, crisp robes.*

4432. Swampy Lowlands: This hex is a mucky lowland fed by dozens of small streams. The ground is spongy and moist and there is thin woodland of black willows. The center of the hex is covered in a few feet of black water. The hex is inhabited by about twenty oni-aka goblins, the servants of the massive hydra that rules the swamp. The goblins favorite tactic is to sneak up on a party and steal something valuable, leading them into the swamp and to the lair of the hydra.

The hydra of the swamp is easily three times the size of a normal hydra. Its necks (it has nine) are thirty feet long and allow the beast, who keeps its body underwater in a pit filled with its treasure, to “surround” its prey while goblins wait to pick off any folk who attempt to flee.

| *Oni-Aka Goblin*: HD 1; AC 6 [13]; Atk 1 bow or tachi (1d6); Move 9; Save 17; CL/XP 1/15; Special: Fire resistant.

| *Hydra*: HD 9 (54 hp); AC 5 [14]; Atk 9 heads (1d8); Move 9; Save 6; CL/XP 12/2000; Special: None.

4434. Fox of Nine Tails: A level clearing in the woods has been decorated with a chalk outline of a nine-tailed fox. The outline measures forty feet by forty feet. The end of each tail is a portal to a random location in Mu-Pan. One activates a portal by stepping into it at sundown while clapping their hands loudly.

4440. Master of Constellations: There is a tall tower of golden bricks that dominates the landscape here. The tower seems to be the source of a thick, clammy mist that fills the hex. Folk walking through the mist feel as though they are being watched and sometimes touched.

The tower belongs to Tagab, a tall, studious shugenja who goes by the moniker “Master of Constellations”. Tagab is an astrologer and diviner who lures the distraught and desperate to his tower to read their fortunes. Those he finds pleasing or fascinating (he’s quite eccentric and often takes a strange fancy to people) he makes his prisoner, holding them in one of the many rooms of his tower.

Tagab has as a staff of (nearly) unseen servants that appear as floating star sapphires. His tower is guarded by the mist – actually a monster that congeals from the mist and appears as a great, blubbery shape with dozens of beady eyes. The creature is covered in wriggling, hair-like tendrils and a luminous gray slime.

| *Mist Monster*: HD 12 (46 hp); AC 9 [10]; Atk 1 bite (1d8); Move 18; Save 3; CL/XP 12/2000; Special: Surprised on roll of 1 on 1d8, immune to cold, slime (save vs. charm monster).

| *Tagab, Shugenja Lvl 10*: HP 18; AC 9 [10]; Save 6 (4 vs magic); CL/XP 7/600; Special: Spells (5th). Tanto, bo, spellbook.

4444. Buran: Buran is a small village of swarthy hunters. The village is composed of a number of stone huts surrounding a tall, marble tower. The entire village sits on a man-made mound of stone and soil surrounded by a

wooden palisade. The men and women of the village shave their bodies and wear nothing but long shifts. The village is defended by a company of bandits.

The village is ruled by the shugenja Yelgebbaa, a dark spellbinder with the face of an angel wrapped in shadowy locks and azure robes that highlight her lithe figure. Yelgebbaa is every shrouded in weeping mists. She dwells in a tall marble pagoda surmounted by four statues – Yelgebbaa’s children, who sought to betray and overthrow their mother and take possession of her little kingdom.

Qutlik is a very young dragon (5 feet long, 500 lb) with a genius-level intellect, shimmering gray scales that suggest a moon hidden by the clouds. Qutlik is the ever-present companion, student and sometimes rival of the shugenja Yelgebbaa.

| *Qutlik*: HD 4 (4 hp); AC -1 [20]; Atk 2 claws (1d6) and bite (1d10); Move 10 (F10); Special: Breathes a line of acid.

| *Yelgebbaa, Shugenja Lvl 10*: HP 25; AC 9 [10]; Save 6 (4 vs magic); CL/XP 7/600; Special: Spells (5th). Gun (staff), shuriken (3), spellbook.

4449. Shadow Bears: A trio of rothran, shadowy ursine humanoids dwell in an ancient ruin on a green knoll once grazed on by the nimble forest cattle of the south. The ruin is composed of hundreds of large limestone blocks that appear to have once been a tower. The upper blocks were covered in friezes of moon maidens and rabbits and appear to be covered in a sheen of eternal frost.

The bears claim the lowlands as their domain, and make it their business to know who walks across their land. Magic items carried into the hex are always confiscated.

| *Rothran*: HD 5; AC 3 [16]; Atk 2 claws (1d6), 1 bite (1d10); Move 9; Save 12; CL/XP 7/600; Special: Immune to magic weapons, magic resistance (90%)

4502. Antique Chest: An antique chest is half-buried in the soil here. It is rusted, but a bit of oil and some muscle will cause it to open. The contents of the chest, which weighs 200 pounds, consist of 1d3 randomly generated mundane pieces of equipment.

4505. Island of Dust: This island was once covered by lush grasses and macaque peach (kiwifruit) trees, but the destruction of the islands of the Nakdani sent a wave over the island that carried away the soil and sowed what remained with salt. The island is now inhabited by two

factions – the men of the barren high plateau and the men of the shore, which is covered with scrub. The only fresh water comes from springs on the plateau, making the men of the plateau the island's masters. They demand a heavy tribute in shellfish from the men of the shore, as well as taking their most beautiful daughters to be their wives.

The fresh spring on the plateau arose after the disaster. It followed a trio of pearl-skinned demons that looked like glistening children with black eyes that burrowed up from the underworld. The spring does provide plenty of sweet water, but those who drink from the spring itself lose their ability to sympathize with others, gradually becoming cold and humorless and thoroughly chaotic.

The men of the high plateau live in burrows, while the men of the shore dwell in little huts of driftwood.

4508. Weretigers: A band of three weretigers, former lords and kin of the Tiger Empress, dwell here in crumbling ruins beneath a limestone overhang. Grisly trophies hang outside the ruins, which were once some sort of way station, to ward off visitors. The weretigers, called Yengiis, Jiniz and Ane, are all female. They are now clothed in peasants rags and unarmored. Yengiis wields a tetsubo stained with blood while her comrades wield nodachis. They currently have no plan other than survival. They have 540 gp and 3,200 sp in leather satchels buried in the dirt floor of one of the chambers.

| *Weretiger:* HD 6; AC 3 [16]; Atk 2 claws (1d4), 1 bite (1d10); Move 12; Save 11; CL/XP 7/600; *Special:* Lycanthropy.

4513. Khida the Beautiful: A wicked dragon sheathed in scales like bronze daggers has taken up residence in this area, driven from Nasalm [4215] by a band of brave dragon hunters (who were not brave or foolish enough to follow the beast). Khida fancies himself "the beautiful" and is perhaps the epitome of draconic vanity. His main source of enjoyment comes from fouling pure waters and making the lands of men unlivable. He does this by coughing up porous, poisonous stones from its gullet into wells and springs, tainting the water for years.

Khida is a small (200 lb) bipedal dragon with the aforementioned bronze scales and large wings.

| *Khida the Lovely:* HD 5 (25 hp); AC -1 [20]; Atk 2 claws (1d6), 1 bite (1d12), tail snap (1d4); Move 10 (F10); Save 12; CL/XP 9/1100; *Special:*

Regenerates 2 hp/round unless struck by electricity, breathes poison gas (30-ft diameter cloud, save or die), bite severs limbs on a natural roll of 20 (saving throw negates)

4523. Kete Village: A village of kete, humanoids with blazing bodies of white skin surrounded by heat auras, is situated here. The kete have black eyes and toothless mouths, giving them a gibbering language that sounds comical to most human ears. They have no hair and wear tunics and kilts of steel scales or rings. The kete have long been loyal to the empire, regardless of the ruler.

The village houses 70 males, 50 females and 50 children. It is composed of glass walls of greenish glass. A dome in the center of the village holds its sacred fire. The village is ruled by Solik, a wushen that specializes in fire charms. He can animate the sacred fire as a 9 HD fire elemental.

The village has a treasure of 2,550 gp.

| *Kete:* HD 1; AC 4 [15]; Atk 1 strike (1d3 + 1d4 fire); Move 12; Save 17; CL/XP 3/60; *Special:* Blurry aura gives attacks against them a 10% chance of missing, once per day can turn their aura into a sheath of fire that deals 1d4 damage to all within 10 feet, resistance to fire (50%).

| *Solik, Kete Wushen Lvl 4:* HD HP 7; AC 9 [10]; Save 11; CL/XP 4/120; *Special:* Spells (2nd), turn undead, headlong charge, parry blows. *Equipment,* prayer beads. *Yari,* platinum arm band worth 200 gp.

4547. Qatu of the Nine Fingers: Qatu is an elder shugenja that lost a finger to the belly of a tiger whose skin now forms her cape. Qatu is a tall, big-boned woman with gray-green eyes and dull brown hair worn in thick braids. Her tower is a pagoda of fulgarite bricks bound in copper bands. The roof is peaked, and electricity courses down the length of the building, making it very dangerous to approach without invitation or some manner of protection. A raiju is bound in a globe of glass in the roof of the building, powering the pagoda's defenses and other bizarre devices kept by the shugenja.

Qatu has a treasure of 1,930 sp, 2,500 gp, a rose quartz worth 200 gp, 22 black bear skins worth 5 gp each, a brass locket holding the skin of a human thumb (worth 5 gp with or without the skin), a brass toe ring worth 95 gp and, four blue tiger pelts (25 gp each) and her greatest treasure, a strange salt-glazed jug shaped like a squat samurai. The jug holds a giddy wine in which resides the essence of Manai, a warrior who adventured with the shugenja in olden times before tangling with a lich and winding up in his curious, strange state.

| *Qatu, Shugenja* Lvl 10: HP 22; AC 9 [10]; Save 6 (4 vs magic); CL/XP 7/600; Special: *Spells (5th)*. *Tanto, shuriken (5)*, *spellbook*.

| *Raiju*: HD 6; AC 4 [15]; Atk 2 claws (1d8) and bite (1d6); Move 12 (C12); Save 11; CL/XP 10/1400; Special: +1 weapon to hit, immune to lightning, shocking touch, magic resistance (10%).

4601. Hypnotic Jellyfish: A tribe of semi-sentient jellyfish lives along the coast, apparently attracted to a strange statue sunk in the muck at the bottom of the sea. The statue looks like a small humanoid with a dome-like head and three-fingered hands carved from granite and covered in sea slime. The jellyfish have a hive mind, and thus cannot be surprised. The bloom of jellyfish numbers 1d3 x 100 and acts as a single entity. When reduced to zero hit points, the bloom will have lost enough members to disperse, taking 1d4 weeks to reform.

| *Jellyfish Bloom*: HD 10; AC 6 [13]; Atk 1d4 stings per combatant (1d4 + save or be stunned); Move S6; Save 7; CL/XP 12/2000; Special: *Act as hypnotic pattern spell while still attacking*.

4604. Cherek, Chan of the Jade Sea: The pleasure barque of the suzerain of the Jade Sea, a sinuous dragon called Cherek, often visits this hex due to its exceptional beauty. The barque looks like a hemisphere of coral-colored metal that can achieve whatever depth its master desires. The hemisphere is 200 feet in diameter and fitted with a massive couch of gold. Two dozen aquatic gargoyles held with 80-ft long bronze chains surround the barque at all times as its protectors. A school of web-fingered mermaids with grey-green skin and billowing crimson hair entertain Cherek and feed him delicate morsels plucked from the sea. Cherek is usually accompanied by his ministers, a brass dragon called Noger and a copper dragon called Kipchech.

A secret door beneath the couch holds a small treasure of 9,685 gp in coins stamped with a spiral pattern and a suit of *cursed haramaki-do -1*.

| *Cherek, Ancient Gold Dragon*: HD 12 (96 hp); AC 2 [17]; Atk 2 claws (1d6), 1 bite (3d8); Move 12 (Fly 24); Save 3; CL/XP 15/2900; Special: *Fire (90-ft cone, 30-ft wide at base) or chlorine breath (cloud 50-ft long, 40-ft wide, 30-ft hide, save or die), spells as 8th level shugenja*.

| *Noger, Brass Dragon*: HD 7 (42 hp); AC 2 [17]; Atk 2 claws (1d4), 1 bite (3d6); Move 12 (Fly 24); Save 9; CL/XP 9/1100; Special: *Fear or sleep breath*.

| *Kipchech, Copper Dragon*: HD 8 (48 hp); AC 2 [17]; Atk 2 claws (1d6), 1 bite (2d10); Move 9 (Fly 24); Save 8; CL/XP 10/1400; Special: *Spit acid or breathe slowing gas*.

4610. Bojar: Bojar is a small village of goat herds located a day's ride from the Meng city-state of Artuk. The people of Bojar are a ragged, rawboned lot, and tough as nails. The goats they herd are, in fact, giant goats as large as horses. They graze on the grass and honeysuckle that cover the village mound, itself topped by a thick stone wall patrolled by a squadron of shashu no ashigaru. At the bottom of the hill there is a wide moat filled with water diverted from a stream that flows into the Sonossur River.

Bojar is ruled by the Nan-bo Qasur, a portly woman always snacking on dumplings and other viands, but drinking only water, for she believes alcoholic beverages are detrimental to one's health. The villagers still ferment goat's milk in stone jugs they bury near their homes, but take care never to drink it in Qasur's presence. Qasur has a husband who serves in Khatan and three spoiled children.

The village also has a master healer named Muli, a thin woman with coarse hair and short temper. Muli owns a simple masakari that, unbeknownst to her, is a powerful magical relic, a +2 axe that can be cast up to one mile away at any target, who must pass a saving throw or be automatically hit for maximum damage.

4624. Shadow Pond: There is an old ruin here that was once a castle. The place has lost its roof and the stones are slowly crumbling. In the castle's central garden there is a strange fishing pool of black water. The pool is surrounded by iron-hard reeds that produce a hateful screech when touched by the wind. The pool is inhabited by several stark, white koi – the souls of lovers who committed suicide rather than be parted. Touching one of these koi drains one level per round, leaving a person a withered husk. The pool is composed of both water and shadow, and allows shades from the Underworld to enter the Material Plane during the new moon. The ruin is now infested with shadow rats. Encounters with 2d6 of the bothersome creatures occur whenever one enters the ruin or garden. Besides the reeds, the garden supports a species of white chrysanthemum useful to shugenja who wish to ensnare the minds of others.

| *Shadow Rat*: HD 1; AC 3 [16]; Atk 1 bite (1d4 + 1d3 strength); Move 15 (C9); CL/XP 4/120; Special: *Disease, strength damage, incorporeal, shadow blend, surprise on roll of 1-3 on 1d6*.

4703. Wako Lair: There is a small island here that is home to a village of wako (i.e. pirates) called the Bai-Dao (One Hundred Swords). The island supports 250 wako and about 150 “civilians”. The wako have three junks at their disposal, all three armed with two swivel cannons and a brace of rockets. Naturally, they prefer close combat so they can seize the ship.

The wako are commanded by Baotang, a tall, lithe, pantherish woman with wavy hair and sparkling blue eyes. Baotang sometimes visits Artuk, posing as a merchant to learn about the comings and goings of merchant vessels and to unload some contraband. Her lieutenant, Mayn, commands one of her vessels on raids. Mayne is not as tall as Baotang, but makes up for it with ferocity. She lost the tip of her tongue to the imperial authorities, and now speaks with a distinct lisp.

The third ship is usually under the command of Baotang’s paramour, a mousy shugenja called Jin. Jin is a small man with lank hair and dull, brown eyes that turn a brilliant crimson when he is performing his magic. It is said he is possessed by a powerful demon (not true).

The island is, essentially, a mountain poking its head up through the waves. The lower portions of the mountain are covered with hardwood forest and green meadows grazed on by black goats. The mountain is a dormant volcano and it holds two secrets. The first is the nest of a phoenix, the divinely appointed guardian of the island. The pirates do not, in general, threaten the island’s secrets, so the phoenix leaves them alone.

The second secret is hidden deep within the volcano, in the form of a complex of passages and caverns ordained by the gods and hiding a magical chair made of solid silver and adorned with amethyst intaglios carved in the shape of prowling cats. A person sitting in the chair can command it to fly or use it to teleport 1/day anywhere in creation. The entrances to this dungeon (there are four) are scattered around the base of the mountain. Each of these tunnels is blocked by a massive stone elephant that animates to attack if foes appear capable of dislodging it. Simply climbing the slopes of the mountain carries with it a curse, forcing people to pass a saving throw at -5 or be polymorphed into albino apes.

The wako’s treasure consists of 130 cp, 1,900 sp, 2,235 gp, an alabaster figurine of a dragon turtle (worth 1,250 gp) and one pound of cardamom (worth 15 gp).

| *Captain Baotang, Bujin Lvl 10: HP 33; AC 7 [12]; Save 7 (6 vs death & poison); CL/XP 10/1400; Special: Follow through, combat sense, flurry of blows, mighty leap, parry the death blow. Haramaki-do, katana, wakizashi, shuriken (10).*

| *Mayn, Bujin Lvl 6: HP 19; AC 3 [16]; Save 11 (10 vs death & poison); CL/XP 6/400; Special: Follow through, headlong charge, sundering chop. Kabuto, haramaki-do, haidate, masakari, daikyu.*

| *Jin, Shugenja Lvl 7: HP 17; AC 9 [10]; Save 9 (7 vs magic); CL/XP 6/400; Special: Spells (4th). Tanto, shuriken (5), spellbook.*

| *Wako: HD 1+1; AC 4 [15]; Atk 1 weapon (1d6); Move 12; Save 17; CL/XP 1/15; Special: None. Haramaki, suneate, haikyu, wakizashi.*

| *Phoenix: HD 9 (33 hp); AC 0 [19]; Atk 2 talons (2d6) or beak (1d8); Move 6 (F30); Save 7; CL/XP 14/2600; Special: +1 or better weapon to hit, immune to fire, magic resistance (25%), can cast all fire spells as a 12th level shugenja or sohei.*

| *Albino Ape: HD 4; AC 6 [13]; Atk 2 claws (1d3), 1 bite (1d6); Move 12; Save 13; CL/XP 4/120; Special: Hug and rend.*

| *Stone Elephant: HD 15 (60hp); AC 5 [14]; Atk 1 trunk (2d6), 2 gore (2d6), 2 trample (3d8); Move 6; Save 3; CL/XP 17/3500; Special: +1 or better magic weapon to hit, immune to most magic.*

4709. Zinda, City of Merchants: Zinda is a mercantile city that trades primarily with the city-states of Azdak and Azsor in the northern land of Thule. The city is built around a great harbor, with wide streets radiating from the water to walls about 8 miles away. The walls are strong and stout and patrolled by bands of samurai and shashu no ashigaru loyal to the king.

Zinda is odd in the extreme. It is the last great stronghold of the surface Meng and heir to their odd customs. The city consists of the aforementioned wide streets, which serve as malls. Each street is dedicated to a different product, be it a resource like fish or a product like armor or weaponry. The quality of the goods is lowest near the water and highest near the walls, and each of the radiating streets has a gate named after its associated product. In general, the radiating streets sell resources while the cross streets sell manufactured goods. The merchants on these crowded streets stand on platforms, announcing their bargains and clanging bells to get people’s attentions. They often hire attractive young men and women to show off their products, and competition for these models is intense.



Assume that a character can draw their charisma in silver pieces for each day of modeling.

In between the streets are the family compounds. Everything in Zinda revolves around the family, and all people within the city walls must belong to one of the Meng families (more on this later). These compounds have walls anywhere from 20 to 30 feet tall, and doors are always set 10 feet above the street, reachable by stairs. Within the compound are one or more buildings, usually tall, housing the members of the family and their servants.

Even the bureaucracy in Zinda is controlled by the families, which offices and honors being traded as one would trade gold or fish. Even the office of the king is traded, and is not as lucrative as one might imagine given the level of responsibilities associated with it, and the need to pay for the city-state's army and navy.

Visitors to Zinda can only enter the city walls by being adopted by one of the families. These adoptions are handled by a group of families that specializes in the

practice, with the price to join the family related to how useful the person might be to the family while they remain in the city-state. High level adventurers are often paid to join a family, while visiting merchants and farmers must pay a small fee and a percentage of their goods. While a family member, one must obey their "father" and is subject to his punishments for dishonoring the family.

The city is surprisingly strict, with the feared Ministry of Vice and Virtue making sure no gambling, prostitution or other shady pursuits occur in city limits. Their control does not extend to the harbor, though, so all of the city-state's brothels and gaming houses (and there are many) are in the form of houseboats.

At each summer festival, Zinda opens its sea gates and allows the ocean to flow into the lower portion of the city, flooding the streets. Naturally, the poorer merchants who work these streets are none too happy with this arrangement, but the king pays each of them for their lost business. The flooding allows sea peoples – ningyo, zhāng-yú-gē (octopus men), samobito, some aquatic fey – to

enter the city and trade and mingle with the land dwellers. The festival reaches its height when the king greets the Sea Chan Cherek and his retinue and pays them a tribute of three chosen maidens, who are polymorphed into ningyo and go to dwell with the Sea Chan until the next festival. The maidens from the last year are received into the household of the king and his daughters.

4714. River Gorge: The Tauku River descends into a gorge here with 120 ft tall sides. A clan of 12 stone giants dwells on the top of the gorge and controls passage through it, demanding a tribute of goods (foodstuffs, cloth, etc) and eschewing precious stones and metals. The giants have spikes driven into the cliff walls to allow them to descend the cliffs down to the river to collect their toll.

| *Stone Giant: HD 9+3; AC 0 [19]; Atk 1 club (3d6); Move 12; Save 6; CL/XP 10/1400; Special: Throw boulders.*

4729. Stone Table: An ancient stone table inlaid with jade and gold stands at the top of a rugged hill (-15% to climb) about 40 feet tall. The lower slopes are covered with pepper bushes. It is said that the table can heal any wound and cure any disease, as well as provide prophetic visions to any who lay upon the table, and this is half true. The real magic table does these things, but it is not located atop the hill. Rather, it is located about 300 yards to the north in a small, damp cave. This table is carved from the stone and adorned only with carven glyphs of power. Besides these powers, it attaches to the person a companion spirit that imposes a series of three taboos (chosen by the Referee) that persist for a period of 5 years. Breaking a taboo has the effect of breaking a *geas*. The ornate table is actually a hungry mimic.

| *Mimic: HD 7 (24 hp); AC 6 [13]; Atk 1 smash (2d6); Move 2; Save 9; CL/XP 8/800; Special: Mimicry, glue.*

4739. Colossal Skeletons: In a dry cave obscured by tall trees there are three colossal humanoid skeletons. In life, these creatures must have stood 40 ft tall. The bones appear to be made of crystal clear glass. Touching a bone brings on a vision of doom that lasts only a moment. For the rest of the day, the person who had a vision must pass a saving throw each time they go into combat or suffer a -2 penalty to hit and make saving throws during that fight.

4749. Giant Beetles: A clutch of twenty giant, flying beetles with viridian shells cling to the walls of an ancient

quarry here. The walls of the quarry are decorated with glossy black sculptures of demonic faces that look as though they burst out of the walls, for the stone in the quarry does not match the stone of the faces.

| *Giant Arcane Beetle: HD 5; AC 3 [16]; Atk pincers (2d6); Save 12; Move 12; CL/XP 7/600; Special: Arcane Reflection.*

4807. Hobgoblins: A tall redoubt of impenetrable basalt set with bronze gates looks over the coast. The place has been inhabited by a tribe of 320 hobgoblins for as long as any can remember, the creatures crawling up from the underworld hundreds of years ago and spending the intervening centuries hardening their defenses. The heights of the fortress rise as three slim towers, ornately carved into depictions of oni and demons. From the mouths of these demons there jut small cannons (3d6 damage, 400 yard range) pointed at sea and land. A total of 30 cannons are contained in these towers.

The hobgoblin warriors of the Purple Worm tribe (they claim they followed a purple worm to their fortress) wear haramaki-do and wield naginata, testsubo and short bows. They dwell with 460 overbearing females and 880 young cadets. Their master is the warlord Gaukoo, who is ever accompanied by his bodyguard of 18 oni-yama.

The Purple Worms worship the worms as the Great Devourers of the World below, working endlessly to collapse the world above and destroy the lands of men. Their high priest is Mauroo, a crooked old hobgoblin who wears armor cured from purple worm hide and carries a long staff with purple worm teeth running the length (treat as a naginata for combat).

The hobgoblin treasure consists of 750 sp and 167 gp hidden under a pile of offal and a hi-jacked cargo of velvet (3 yards, weighs 30 lb and worth 9 gp) and 30 pounds of calamus (worth 8 gp per pound).

| *Gaukoo: HD 4+4 (17 hp); AC 3 [16]; Atk 1 weapon (1d6+2); Move 9; Save 13; CL/XP 4/120; Special: None.*

| *Mauroo: HD 4+1 (15 hp); AC 4 [15]; Atk 1 weapon (1d6+1); Move 9; Save 13; CL/XP 5/240; Special: Spells as 3rd level sohei.*

4809. Tain: Tain is a small village of wealthy miners living in brick cottages. The village is set atop a tall hill with ragged sides covered by thorn bushes that hide a 20-ft deep waterless moat. The bones of many hobgoblin invaders

[4807] line the bottom of the moat, and at night one often hears the sickening snap and crunch of the bones.

Tain has 30-ft high walls and massive gates of steel, unadorned save for a grid of 36 spikes – arranged in six rows and six columns. The gates can only be opened by solving the riddle of the spikes, and none alive know the answer, necessitating the people enter and leave via large wicker baskets attached to winches atop the walls. Space is at a premium in Tain, and the inconvenience of bringing food into the village has driven the people to keep an astounding number of goats, fowl and swine in the city, and to grow vegetable gardens atop their roofs.

Tain's miners work in the granite hills surrounding the village, heading out during the day in small parties accompanied by two or three highly trained, crossbow-armed ashigaru of the village (HD 1+1) and returning at night with a sack of beryls.

The village is ruled by the mandarin Yelgunsa, an aggressive, manipulative woman with a wrinkled face and a willowy figure. Yelgunsa enjoys the power that comes from the wealth produced by Tain, but despises everything else about the village there is to despise. She is assisted by Hagy, a fragile sage with black hair, amber eyes and a melancholy and perpetually bored disposition. Hagu is a cat hengeyokai with a taste for tales of pain and suffering.

4811. Banshee: A stone road extends from the Tauku River to Zinda. Those walking the road often (66% chance) come across an aged woman with lank hair, eyes sealed shut, with clawed fingers and tattered robes. The woman bears a great burden of sticks on her back and wails a mournful song, singing of terrible dooms that are to befall the people she meets. She uses the people's names in these songs. People who ask her if they might ease her burden are given a toothless smile and handed a stick, which can be used one time as a wand of turn undead (as a cleric of 6th level). Those who do not are cursed and spat at as they pass. Once behind them, the woman throws her sticks at them, one each round. The sticks become white snakes that attack as cobras. Their venom causes a person to shift into the ethereal plane whenever they are stressed or frightened (i.e. roll a saving throw whenever a situation becomes tense) for 1 hour.

4816. Red Goblins: This hex is filled with steaming pits and boiling mud. It is home to a tribe of 60 oni-aka goblins, who raid into the surrounding countryside for food and then return to their home to feast on the raw meat and sing low, sonorous songs of their victories.

4820. Kurobiz: Kurobiz is a large village in the Ronin Hill situated around a series of shallow ponds in which the people keep large, golden carp. Long, low, stone houses are situated between the ponds. The village is surrounded by a wooden picket and it has a tall watch tower built in the center and always manned by two samurai. The ponds are fed by a lazy stream.

Two companies of samurai defend the village, a prized possession of the empress, for the carp of Kurobiz are more intelligent than any others raised in the empire. A gravel road makes its way through the hex from Khatan into the north. Because many travelers and merchants take this road, the people have turned one of the long houses into a simple roadhouse staffed by two or three women serving rice wine and pickled plums. Because of the merchant traffic and their favored position in the empire, the people charge ridiculous taxes on visitors, tripling the cost of equipment, food and lodgings in the village.

Kurobiz is ruled by its elder, an honest, friendly sandal weaver called Sanjo. Sanjo is a thin man with limbs like a spider that move in a blur when he is working. He has two children and a wife named Sako.

4823. Kama-Jo Abbey: An abbey dedicated to Sish, the Destroyer of Hours and God of Time. The abbey is a great castle of three levels built atop an ancient hill that hides a deep, dark dungeon. The sohei have made a few forays into the dungeon, but have found only death and less treasure than they can collect as tolls from traveling merchants. The entrance to the dungeon is barred by thick, iron gates set in the floor. The castle is surrounded by a village of 250 cowherds, who can provide a company of militia and a squadron of yari ashigaru.

Kama-Jo is commanded by Koki, a wiry woman, attractive and as somber as any other priest of Sish. She wears armor lacquered black and wields a fierce naginata with a bladed head made to look like a tongue extending from the mouth of a lion with ruby

chips for eyes (worth 400 gp). Her priests number thirteen, and they armed and armored similarly to their abbeess.

| *Koki, Sohei* Lvl 10: HP 28; AC 5 [14]; Save 5 (3 vs death & poisons); CL/XP 10/1400; Special: Banish undead, spells (5th). *Hanburi*, sode, haramaki-do, prayer beads, naginata and uchi-ne.

[A] The dungeon, from its construction and what decoration that has survived the millennia, looks to have been the creation of the ancient ophidians. The entry cavern is a long, limestone cavern that slopes downward, gently at first, and then more sharply, ending in a pool. The ceiling of the cavern drips with jade water that is slightly sticky. This water, collected in the pond, stains people's skin with phosphorescence, causing them to glow and thus making it harder for them to sneak up on others. Tapping an iron weapon on the ground before the pool causes the water to swirl into a column, revealing an ancient stone trapdoor that can be opened with a sturdy bronze ring.

[B] This room has four exits and smooth, white walls. Each exit is blocked by a curtain of light (red, green, blue and amber) that acts as a force wall. A porcelain statue of a dancing goddess holding a bowl filled with little candies colored red, green, blue and amber. To pass through the curtains, one must throw a similarly colored candy through the field, which disrupts it for 10 minutes. Eating the candies has the following adverse effects:

Candy	Effect
Red	Your blood flows more freely for the remainder of the day, increasing damage by +1 per die from edged weapons
Green	You exude a sour smell that is heavenly to oozes; there is an additional 1 in 6 chance of an ooze encounter each hour for the remainder of the day
Blue	You tremble uncontrollably when under pressure, suffering a -1 penalty to hit and 1 point penalty to AC
Amber	Your body doubles in weight, reducing your movement by half

[C] This vast, hollow cavern has a floor composed of irregular granite columns and a domed ceiling from which pours orange gas, cold to the touch, down the walls and onto the floor. The gas is cloudy and thick and does not rise more than two feet high.

In several places in this room there are deep pits dug into the columns. The pits are filled with the orange gas, and in

them dwell a race of orange-skinned cyclops. The gas enables them to regenerate damage as trolls as long as they are in their pits. In all, there are six cyclops in the cavern, and each has a treasure that should be rolled randomly and separately.

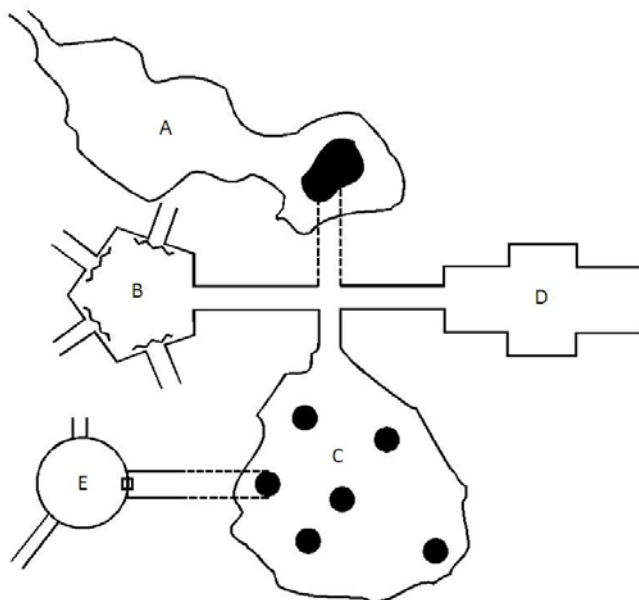
| *Cyclops*: HD 13; AC 3 [16]; Atk 1 club (2d6); Move 12; Save 3; CL/XP 13/2300; Special: None.

[D] This large chamber is filled with hundreds of beautiful spectral dancers, all dancing in unison to the sound of invisible chimes and twanging strings. The dancers sometimes seem to notice folk walking through the chamber, and other times they appear to be completely unaware of visitors. Any *anti-magic* or *dispel magic* spell cast in the room causes an affected dancer to shift into the material plane as a wight with chalky skin and wild hair.

| *Wight*: HD 3; AC 5 [14]; Atk 1 claw (1 hp + level drain); Move 9; Save 14; CL/XP 5/240; Special: Drain 1 level with hit, hit only by magic or silver weapons.

[E] This chamber is a cylinder with a 15-ft diameter base and rising 60 ft tall. One enters at the top, and there are two exits at the bottom. A chain hangs down the middle of the cylinder, and all along the walls of the cylinder there are small alcoves. In each alcove there stands an imp with a magic gong. The gongs, when struck, cause ropes to animate and attempt to strangle anyone in reach.

| *Rope*: HD 2; AC 7 [12]; Atk 1 strike (1d3); Move 9; Save 16; CL/XP 3/60; Special: Successful attack forces one to save or be strangled for 1d3 damage per round until a strength check is passed. In addition, folk



climbing the ropes must save each round or plummet.

4832. Keche: A small band of hunters has constructed a village here in the green hills, where they use snares to capture giant centipedes. The centipedes are not edible, but their bristles are valued for use in brushes and their poison is used by the alchemists of Khatan to make anti-venom for imperial soldiers. The people of Keche have a resistance to poison (+2 to save).

The village is composed of stone cottages and is surrounded by a triple palisade interspersed with moats that are filled with brambles. It is defended by a company of shashu no ashigaru.

In the center of the village there is a small stone temple, largely unadorned, that contains an idol of Wohoon, the Lord of Noises in the Night. His priest is a rotund man with pale skin and a long face with jowls that jiggle as he speaks. Amuli is his name and he is cynical and bossy, quoting proverbs while tapping people with his horsehair fan.

The village is governed by its elder, Taga, and athletic woman with close-cropped hair under a silk scarf. Taga is resourceful and brave, and much taken with a man who can fire a bow.

4911. Gnoll Lair: A tribe of 170 gnolls and their 60 females and 200 cubs dwell in these hills, moving around constantly between three cave systems, all of which have multiple escape tunnels. The gnolls survive by hunting and taking slaves in raids on surrounding human villages. They currently have 20 ill-treated slaves.

The gnoll warriors wear hide armor and tattoo their faces with broad lines meant to denote their matrilineal descent. The chieftain of the tribe is Burl, a large male who wields a nodachi (clumsily) that he took from a human samurai. The gnolls share their lair with 10 giant hyenas. They worship the demon lord Amduscias, a Prince of Hell that grants his shaman, Kuzh, a 5th level wushen.

The tribe's treasure consists of 120 cp, 1,976 sp and 118 gp kept in leather sacks branded with a demon face.

| Burl: HD 4; AC 4 [15]; Atk 1 bite (2d4) or weapon (1d10); Move 9; Save 13; CL/XP 4/120; Special: None.

| Kuzh, Gnoll Wushen Lvl 5: HD 2; AC 5[14]; Atk 1 bite (2d4) or weapon (1d10); Move 9; Save 16; CL/XP 2/30; Special: None.

4914. Buri: Buri is a fortified village. Once surrounded by a rampart and moat, a stone wall is now under construction, for the villagers fear the arrival of the Nakda in the Ronin Hills. For generations, the men of Buri have gone to war with the nearby gnolls, but they have found the gnolls stupid and lazy compared to the sly and aggressive Nakda.

The villagers primarily keep herds of cattle, though they earn more money by smuggling goods from north to south to avoid the imperial tax collectors – though this dislike of taxes does not keep them from collecting high taxes from visitors. They dwell in long houses made of mud brick.

Buri is ruled by an elder named Yenghin. Yenghin has the looks of a Jin, with red hair and green eyes. He is lanky, with a jutting jaw and has his people's love of horses, keeping several. He has worked as a barber and surgeon, having arrived in the village 50 years ago as a northern mercenary to fight the gnolls. The village is defended by a company of militia and a squadron of ashigaru.

4922. Forest of Legs: The forest of thin pines in this hex gradually turns into a forest of giant, stone legs. The legs are limestone and carved from the "living rock" as some people say. They once held aloft a create limestone cavern that was apparently pulled apart in ancient times. The woodland of stone legs is inhabited by giant blue eagles and silver foxes, and a few of the legs serve as the roosts of hermits, devout wushen who seek enlightenment through the denial of comforts like regular meals and bathing.

4934. Ten: The village of ten is inhabited by 500 farmers living in brick houses. The village is surrounded by an earthen rampart anchored by five stone towers linked by underground tunnels to a multi-level keep in the center of the village. The village is ruled by the mandarin Mulai, a heavy woman with shoulder-length hair and golden-brown skin. Mulai is a cynical woman, a merchant grasping for power and legitimacy. She has several children, all very polite and quiet and in eternal fear of their mother. The children are studious and bright, and the two oldest sons serve as her bodyguards and factotums.

The villagers of Ten grow rice in flooded fields and search for matsutake mushrooms in the woodlands surrounding the village. The mushrooms have a spicy aroma and are highly favored in cooking, thus bringing a good price.

Within the village there are hundreds of creeping partridge berry vines and coups containing quail.

5008. Fortress-Reservoir: The Sonossur River runs through a stone tunnel here topped by a stout fortress. The tunnel has channels that divert the water into ancient reservoirs about 40 feet below the ground. The reservoirs are vast, but they are not filled with water, suggesting that it drains away through another channel. In fact, it does. This channel, behind a secret door in one of the reservoir chambers, gives access to a subterranean canal that heads back into the mountains, the secret vaults of the Meng, who were driven underground when the Nakda invaded their lands. The canal is defended by a number of giant bronze serpents that lurk beneath the water and are capable of overturning small boats.

The fortress above the reservoirs was destroyed by the invading Nakda long ago and is now abandoned.

| *Giant Bronze Serpent: HD 6; AC 3 [16]; Atk 1 bite (1d6 + poison); Move 12; Save 11; CL/XP 7/600; Special: Non-lethal paralysis poison.*

5021. Salty Eggs: In a cramped little cave a pack of ethereal rats has hit the mother lode – a nest of drake eggs. The eggs belong to salt drakes, who are now circling around the hilltop mad with rage. The protestations of the salt drakes have brought a drought onto the region, effecting farms up to five hexes away. The salt drake's treasure consists of 1,900 sp and 5,050 gp.

| *Salt Drake: HD 11; AC 1 [18]; Atk 2 claws (1d8) and bite (1d6); Move 15 (F60); Save 4; CL/XP 13/2300; Special: Spit salt (60-ft long cone, 30-ft wide at base, 3d6 points of damage), regenerate 2 hp/round.*

5025. Mining Camp: There is a mining camp here where slaves captured in battle pulling lead ore out of the ground. The slaves look sickly, and they and their overseers (men-at-arms with whips and iron-shod clubs) have recently been forced to hide in their dusty mines because an athatch, the child of an oni and a captive maiden, has come down from the mountains to steal their stores.

| *Athatch: HD 11 (50 hp); AC 3 [16]; Atk 1 or 2 weapons (3d6 or 2d6/2d6)/1 bite (1d6+1); Move 15; CL/XP 15/4300; Special: Poison (nausea) spit, darkness, levitate, phantasmal force, reduced damage from cold, fire, gas, electricity, polymorph into other giant types.*

5028. Giant Tuataras: A guru named Bumban, sits on a woven mat on an old stone bridge that crosses a wide, deep gully crawling with giant tuataras. The subtle scale

patterns on the tuataras are encoded messages from the Underworld which the holy man reads, attempting to draw wisdom from the writings.

| *Bumban, Wushen Lvl 5: HP 7; AC 9 [10]; Save 10; CL/XP 5/240; Special: Spells (3rd), turn undead, deflect missiles, ki shout. Nine-ring broadsword, shuriken (9), prayer beads.*

5030. Oori of the Golden Eyes: The bodhisattva Oori of the Golden Eyes is a patron of traveling judges and seekers of the truth. An abbey has been constructed here in her honor. The abbey is constructed of ivory-colored granite and set on the side of a mountain. The slopes beneath the abbey are riddled with the caves of a village of dwarves who forge weapons and chains for the wandering judges (sohei) that man the walls of the abbey. The sohei of Oori wear maroon robes, flat hats and curled slippers. The abbot is Oghotai, a ruggedly handsome man who is unfeeling and harsh. He commands 15 sohei.

| *Oghotai, Sohei Lvl 10: HP 23; AC 6 [13]; Save 5 (3 vs death & poisons); CL/XP 10/1400; Special: Banish undead, spells (5th). Haramaki, haidate, jiujiiebian, prayer beads.*

5036. Kemu: Kemu is a bustling city on a flat, sandy plain crossed by dozens of steams and bordered by pure marshes. The city was built on the site of a tremendous battle between the southern Ying and northern Jin and is now in the possession of the Ying.

Kemu has a population of 2,500 men, women and children. Is it built on a radial pattern with narrow, twisty streets. The city walls are made of stone and overgrown with creeping figs. Kemu has two wooden gates and five wooden towers. The people worship Roon the Traveler, keeping a large, marble temple with a golden idol. The people raise crops of barley, mushrooms, fennel, rowan berries (used for setting dyes), saffron and wolfberries. They use the wolfberries to brew gouqi jiu and the barley to brew shochu. The most lucrative business in the city-state, however, is smuggling, the criminals of the city moving goods from north to south without paying the imperial taxes.

Kemu is governed by Dugel, the Philosopher King. Dugel is a fragile man, cold-hearted but craving attention from women – he has forced man a maid and matron into his bed. All property in the city-state belongs to him and he distributes it equally to all (though some are more equal

than others). This enforced equality has created great want in the city and helped to stoke a thriving black market.

| *Dugel, Shugenja* Lvl 4: HP 11; AC 9 [10]; Save 12 (10 vs magic); CL/XP 3/60; Special: Spells (2nd). Tonfu, spellbook.

5102. Eye of the Deep: An enraged eye of the deep is trapped beneath the waves here in a bubble of glass blown from the fire of the gold dragon CheriK [4604] that rules the waves. The glass is 1 foot thick and keeps the monster within in a state of suspended animation. It is said that the eye, Dhuli-thoigot, knows many secrets of the deep.

5104. Sealed Coffins: Four sealed coffins of marble and lead fell into the waves here from a creaky old junk that was tossed in a storm. Twelve shark men patrol these waters, guarding the coffins. The coffins contain vrykolakas transported from the Motherlands by carrack.

| *Vrykolakas:* HD 7; AC 2 [17]; Atk 1 bite (1d6 + level drain); Move 12; Save 9; CL/XP 10/5; Special: Level drain, shape change, summon.

| *Shark Man:* HD 6+1; AC 4 [15]; Atk 2 weapons (1d8); Move 12 (S24); Save 11; CL/XP 7/600; Special: Amphibious, ki shout, ruby blood, magic resistance (10%).

5122. Eight Immortals Monastery: A monastery of white stone has been built here atop a wide, dusty plateau. The monastery has 15-ft walls and simple, wooden buildings. The monks of Eight Immortals monastery is governed by an abbot named Muhin, a courteous studier of the stars, lean of body and weathered of face with deep blue eyes. His students, thirteen monks, train in Springing Tiger kung-fu.

| *Muhin, Bujin/Shugenja* Lvl 9: HP 30; AC 9 [10]; Save 8 (5 vs magic); CL/XP 11/1700; Special: Follow through, fists of iron, mighty leap, parry blows, swift motion, spells (5th). Naginata, hankyu, spellbook.

5140. Fey Samurai: A fairy knight in the trappings of a samurai has made camp here. He has been wandering the land searching for an honest man, for it is the kiss of an honest man that will awaken the Silver Maiden who sleeps beneath the mountains.

| *Fairy Knight:* HD 10 (39 hp); AC -1 [20]; Atk 1 katana +1 or yari +1; Move 9; Save 5; CL/XP 10/1400; Special: Double damage from silver, challenge (saving throw to refuse single combat).

5144. Yinoyon: Yinoyon is a storm giant, charged with the governance of the weather in this region of Mu-Pan. He is unwillingly assisted in this by the draconic chan of the seas, CheriK [4604], and must spend much of his time quelling his storms or turning them into gentle rains.

Yinoyon dwells in a magnificent wooden castle built atop a tall, rugged peak covered in pines and hemlocks. A footpath grants access to the castle and is generally left unguarded, for what has Yinoyon to fear? He dwells alone, despising the company of others of his kind and only begrudgingly accepting the occasional presence of his wife, Tumay, storm giantess of the regions to the south. For company he has a trio of draconic giant eagles who fly through the region collecting rumors and news for their lord and gathering up abused women, who he fetes and protects in his castle. Thirty such women dwell on the mountain with Yinoyon, and though they are permitted to leave whenever they wish, few ever do.

Yinoyon is 21 feet tall with maroon skin, silvery eyes and a shaved head onto which complex patterns of dragons, lions and kilin have been tattooed. He wears a long mustache and shaggy mutton chops.

| *Yinoyon:* HD 15+5 (63); AC 1 [18]; Atk 1 weapon (6d6); Move 15; Save 3; CL/XP 16/3200; Special: Throw boulders, control weather.

5146. Sangu's Rest: Sangu was a powerful ninja lord who fell in battle while attempting to slice the scaled throat of a mist dragon who dwelled beneath a waterfall that fell out of the nearby mountains. The dragon was sleeping, but caught scent of the ninja and ultimately defeated the ninja, sending a massive stone slab after him as he fell into the water below. The body has remained well preserved in the freezing pool of water and still wears a *ring of invisibility*.

5209. Falcon Drakes: The falcon drakes are thick in the tall, grey ridges that run across this hex towards the river. The valleys between these ridges are overgrown with dove trees and home to silver foxes. Trappers from Zinda travel to the valleys to trap the foxes for their pelts.

Falcon drakes are small dragons that are related to pseudodragons. They have blue-gray scales that lighten to a very pale green on their bellies and white tipped wings. Older falcon drakes are fairly intelligent (equivalent to an intelligence score of 7 or 8) and used by shugenja and nobles as couriers.

| *Falcon Drake:* HD 5; AC 4 [15]; Atk 2 claws (1d4) and bite (1d4+1); Move 12 (F24); Save 12; CL/XP 7/600; Special: Immune to mind reading, ESP, can project memories plucked from others as illusions, can stun sentient creatures with a memory overload (save to negate).

5217. Yelgen: The farmers of Yelgen live in fear of their mandarin, an ambitious, pock-marked reformer named Chamong. Chamong is small and bland, with an insistent voice like a terrier. Although honest, he is also determined to “modernize” Yelgen, creating all manner of rules and regulations to “improve” the people and their methods of farming. Chamong is fascinated with magic, and has some minor spell casting ability. Many villagers have left the village rather than tolerate the controlling Chamong, leaving the village strangely empty.

The farmers grow sorghum, using it to brew an alcoholic beverage called baijiu. They also keep fowl and bees and tend copses of maples, tapping them for syrup.

One man that hasn’t left the village despite his hatred of Chamong is the alchemist Naimang. Naimang primarily works as a potter, producing all manner of brilliant glazes for his pots. He dabbles in more complex alchemical operations, but his products have a 15% chance of failure when they are used. He is currently concocting a fairly large cache of explosives to rid the village of its reformer. Naimang is stubborn and self-effacing, with sparkling sapphire eyes. He is heavy-set, but quite nimble.

| *Chamong, Shugenja Lvl 1: HP 1; AC 9 [10]; Save 15 (13 vs magic); CL/XP 2/30; Special: Spells (1st). Jo staff, spellbook.*

5227. Bonnacon Herd: This district is home to a large herd of bonnacon, and a somewhat flighty herd at that. The grassy hills and trees show many signs of burning, and more than a few bonnacon carcasses are evident, victims of “friendly fire”, so to speak. Long-legged buzzards constantly patrol the sky, waiting for accidents. Encounters with the herd, or at least portions of it numbering 2d6 x 20 animals, occur on a roll of 1-4 on 1d6.

Attacks on the bonnacon have a 1% chance of drawing the attention of the bonnacon lord, called Choupi by the Mu-Panese and worshipped as a minor deity of comical rudeness to authorities. Choupi appears as an old man with a large, bloated belly and long, wispy beard. He carries a staff to which is fixed three gourds.

| *Bonnacon: HD 3; AC 6 [13]; Atk 1 bite (1d3) or 1 kick (1d4); Move 15; Save 14; CL/XP 4/120; Special: Cone of dung (120’ long, 50’ base, 1d6 damage +1 per round from burning).*

| *Choupi: HD 13 (70 hp); AC 6 [13]; Atk 1 bite (1d6) or 1 kick (1d8); Move 15; Save 3; CL/XP 18/3800; Special: +1 or better weapon to hit, immune*

to mind effects and illusions, immortal, change shape, stinking cloud 3/day, cloudkill 1/day, cone of dung (120’ long, 50’ base, 1d6 damage +1 per round from burning).

5320. Sukomi: This small village of jovial peasants is composed of stone houses surrounded by an earthen rampart clad in granite and topped by iron spikes. The village sits in a canyon thick with grape vines, and the peasants are of course well known for their wine. The vines are stem from a massive plant creature that dwells beneath the soil. The creature is worshipped by the people of the canyon in the form of a green-skinned giant called Kamor. Kamor is usually depicted holding a keg of wine on one shoulder and a wooden staff in the other.

The canyon is walled at both ends, with both walls gated and defended by a company of shashu no ashigaru. The village is ruled by the Nan-bo Mushim, a very clever and political woman, heavy set, with a pretty face and a sharp tongue. She and her nobles are Nakda, the peasants under her rule Meng. Mushim has a calculating tutor named Kine. Kine is an unusually confident man with gray hair. He is wiry with a weathered face and carries a walking stick that bears many notches, though he never reveals what they represent.

5322. Bog: The Ciphur River becomes a bog in this hex. The bog is inhabited by trolls, the largest of which, Chager, owns a magic drinking horn of black horn set with rubies. The horn gives its possessor a +3 bonus to AC, but imposes a -1 penalty to hit. Many frogs with odd, swirling colors on their skins dwell here. Their poisonous hides are a panacea highly valued by wushen and physicians.

5336. The Lady of the Nanqiang: Nanqiang is a stronghold called the “Southern Wall”. It guards an ancient highway into Khatan, one of one three such roads into the imperial domain. The stronghold is constructed around the highway, making it a tunnel. The Lady in question is Nega, a scheming, seemingly loyal subject of whoever currently holds the throne. Nega adores horses and raises a fine herd of them that are purchased exclusively by the empress for her cavalry.

5408. Magic Fountain: There is a limestone cavern here in which drips enchanted waters into a shallow pool stained electric blue. The water of the fountain staves off death, but only barely retards aging – perhaps halving it. At the

same time, it links the drinker to the pool. Drinkers who try to leave the pool are affected as though by a geas.

Living under the cavern there is a tribe of troglodytes in service (out of fear) to the shugenja Qorchon, who dwells in the cavern, depending on its waters to keep himself alive. Qorchon is now 120 years old, and his time is growing very short.

Beneath the troglodyte caverns lies the body of the demon A'meggologabo imprisoned in ice.

| *Troglodytes*: HD 2; AC 4 [15]; Atk 2 claws (1d3), Bite (1d4+1) or by weapon with shield (1d8); Move 12; Save 16; CL/XP 3/60; Special: Stench, chameleon skin.

| *Qorchon, Shugenja* Lvl 10: HP 24; AC 9 [10]; Save 6 (4 vs magic); CL/XP 7/600; Special: Spells (5th). Bo stick, spellbook.

5412. Cave Bear: An old cave bear dwells here in a deep, ancient cave overlooking a steaming marsh created by mineral springs. The cave bear drinks from the marshes and, due to their healing nature, has managed to live to the ripe old age of 100.

At the bottom of the marsh lies the magic parasol of the ancient Meng kings. The parasol was lost in the marsh as the Avenging Peacock King and his retinue fled from the invading Nakda and were ultimately caught and destroyed. It is now encrusted with salt. The parasol is constructed of adamant. When folded, it can be used as a +3 *tetsubo*. Unfolded, it creates a protection from evil, 10-ft radius effect around the holder and makes them immune to fire.

| *Cave Bear*: HD 7 (24 hp); AC 6 [13]; Atk 2 claws (1d6+1), 1 bite (1d10+1); Move 12; Save 9; CL/XP 7/600; Special: Hug.

5416. Golden Eagles: Giant golden eagles orbit a pinnacle of marble that juts up from the hills. The birds have constructed a nest there, and they are agitated by the presence of an invisible goblin in their nest. The goblin took the time to climb the pinnacle to pluck a tail feather for his master Tottori [4125], but now is afraid to climb down. If they see travelers, the male will approach them and give a low bow. If any are capable of understanding his speech, he will plead with them to remove the invader, for they know by his scent he is a servant of Tottori and they want no trouble with the shugenja.

| *Giant Eagle*: HD 4; AC 7 [12]; Atk 2 talons (1d4), 1 bite (1d8); Move 3 (Fly 24); Save 13; CL/XP 4/120; Special: None.

5432. Khatan: Behold, traveler, the splendors of Khatan, seat of empire set in the tall, tiger-infested grasses of Zakhar. Many cities in Mu-Pan have had the honor of the imperial throne, but none were built specifically for the imperial court, and none were ever so opulent.

Khatan houses the imperial court and all imperial bureaucrats are trained there and keep an apartment there, no matter where they are currently deployed. All of the empire's noble families maintain residences in Khatan by imperial decree, and all families must maintain members in that address all year round who ages add up to no less than 100 years, by decree of the Tiger Empress. This decree continues to stand under the Jade Empress as a means of keeping the nobles under the empire's thumb. Naturally, this has led to a very crowded city-state, for Khatan has large, thick walls and all who dwell in Khatan must be inside those walls after dark, on pain of death.

The walls of Khatan are made of basalt quarried nearby [6329]. This stone has been stained green, to give the city-state the appearance of jade walls. The walls are octagonal in layout, with an outer wall (40' tall, 20' thick), two inner walls (50' x 30' and 70' x 40'). The imperial compound lies at the center of the city-state, with walls 100 feet tall and 50 feet thick. The compound wall is a fortress in and of itself. Within the compound is the imperial palace, composed of forty buildings connected by gardens. The compound wall, usually called the Imperial Redoubt, has no gates, with ingress and egress possibly solely by the use of magic. High ministers of the court know the secret of passing the walls, and powerful magic ensures that they will die before they can reveal the secret.

Outside the Imperial Redoubt is the inner ward, or the Ward of the Golden Peacock. Here lie the ministries of the empire and their army of clerks and bureaucrats. Herein are also the mansions of the ministers. The inner ward is a rolling parkland of hills, orchards, gardens, jade shrines to the various gods of the realm and picturesque buildings of ebony and teak, with sloped roofs clad in brilliantly colored tiles. There are now over 50 imperial ministries, including the Ministry of Epidemics, Ministry of Medicine, Ministry of Exorcism, Ministry of Fire, Ministry of Waters and Ministry of Thunder and Storms. The clerks of each ministry differentiate themselves by the color and embroidery of their robes. Their masters wear silks

embroidered with gold thread and set with precious stones. One enters the inner ward through a single, massive gate that points to the Sea of Stars. This gate's frame is clad in actual jade – easily 1 million gp worth – carved into the shapes of the gods, demigods and spirits of Mu-Pan, one holding another, and the topmost bearing on their shoulders a representation of the celestial heavens in obsidian set with zircons. These “celestial heavens” bear the imperial crest. The gates themselves are 30-ft tall and composed of solid teak, 2 feet thick, banded with polished steel and carved with characters representing the history of the empire. Craftsmen are still working on engraving this history. About one half mile separates the inner wall from the imperial wall.

The middle ward, or Ward of the Leaping Tiger, houses the noble families, their retainers and the merchants and artisans that serve them. The middle ward is approached by four gates (east, west, north and south), each guarded by a stone construct set into the wall above the gate. The eastern guardian is an azure dragon, the western guardian a white tiger, the northern guardian a black tortoise and the southern guardian a vermillion eagle. The middle gates are 6-inch thick steel and stained to match the color of its guardian. These gates are 20 feet tall and heavily guarded. The streets within are broad and clean, and there are many small parks. A grassy sward circles the inner wall, and here nobles gather to practice their skill at arms and play cuju (ancient Chinese football). About 0.75 miles separate the middle wall from the inner wall.

The outer ward, or Ward of the Lapping Waves, is inhabited by the commoners that make a city-state go – herdsmen who keep all manner of animals within the walls, artisans, merchants, soldiers, thieves, etc. About one mile separates the outer and middle walls, and much of it is given over to grazing land and farmland. Most of the buildings in the outer ward are bunched around the gates in the middle wall, since out of those gates much of the city-state's money flows. The outer wall has eight gates, the gates named for the constellations they face.

In all, Khatan has a population of about 35,000 people living within its walls, which almost fill the entire hex in which it sits, as they stretch 5 miles from one outer gate to its opposite. The city is patrolled by 700 ashigaru and supports 900 holy men and women (about 30 having class

levels in wushen or sohei), 20 shugenja, an unknown number of ninja and 175 noble families.

5440. Banoyan: Banoyan is a small village. The men of Banoyan are hunters by trade, riding down wild boars on swift horses originally bred on the steppe. The hunters use bows and long boar spears to kill their prey, eating the pork and selling the bristles to traveling merchants.

Banoyan consists of a long line of brick buildings built on terraces on the tallest hill in the hex. The hill is surrounded by a rampart and moat. The villagers are the golden-skinned descendants of a deep incursion into the Celestial Hills by the Jin.

The village is ruled by Botu, a mandarin of the imperial court. Botu is a fat man with a plain face and curly hair. He is naïve, but emotionlessly manipulative, and adores chess. Botu is willing to bestow wondrous gifts to those who can best him. He plays every day, even in the rain, in a teak pavilion on the village green, and the villagers are beginning to find the games tedious.

Botu's most frequent competitor is Taba, a master healer and physician with a hollow-cheeked face who looks like the very spirit of death. He speaks ever in hushed tones, but becomes loud and brash when trying to save a life.

5502. Dawa the Dragon: Dawa the Dragon is an alu-demon. Exiled from her home for unnecessary cruelty to the peasants, she is in the process of constructing a small fort by the sea. She has enlisted the support of a company of hobgoblins armed in haramaki-do and carrying naginatas. The fort now consists of a wooden palisade on a steep embankment and a few blockhouses.

| *Dawa the Dragon:* HD 6 (20 hp); AC 1 [18]; Atk 1 sword (1d8) or 2 claws (1d4); Move 12 (F18); Save 11; CL/XP 10/1400; Special: Spells, vampiric touch, immune to poison, magic resistance (15%), telepathy 100 ft.

5507. Labyrinth Trail: There is a hunter's trail weaving through this hex, over hill and dale and through woods. The trail leads nowhere, and is in fact a labyrinth marked with simple goblin glyphs carved into the trees. The labyrinth runs about 12 miles, the center being a meadow of honeysuckle frequented by giant bees, 1d10+6 of which are encountered there on a roll of 1-4 on 1d6.

| *Giant Bee:* HD 3; AC 3 [16]; Atk 1 sting (1d6 + 2d6 poison); Move 6

(F18); Save 14; CL/XP 5/240; Special: None.

5510. Phantom Dogs: A strange creature roams these hills in packs. The animal looks something like a pit bull with short, light brown fur and oversized fangs. Embedded in the creature's head there is a random *ioun stone*. The monsters, called phantom dogs by the Mu-Panese are found nowhere else, and they are especially savage. They lurk in abandoned ruins of villages and fortresses, of which there are several in this area, being as it was at the center of fighting between the retreating Meng and the invading Nakdani.

The phantom dog is a true phantasm, a strange projection of the stone and possessed of the stone's powers. It's tiny size makes it difficult to hit in combat, for even magic weapons cannot harm the creature's non-existent flesh. The creature can attack with its snapping jaws, provided its victim does not pass a saving throw against the illusion of being bitten, and its piercing, high-pitched bark causes 1 point of intelligence damage per round to those within 60 feet who can hear it. The phantom hound's bite cannot, alas, kill, but it can cause people to fall unconscious for 1d6 hours when they fall to 0 hp. Such victims awake with all of their hit points lost during the battle with the hound restored. Phantom hounds can see invisible creatures and they are immune to all mind affects. They can only be destroyed by destroying the *ioun stone* that projects them, leaving that stone unusable. A dispel magic spell causes the found to fade, but it returns when the duration of the dispel is spent. Encounters with packs of 1d4+2 phantom dogs occur on a roll of 1-3 on 1d6 in this hex.

| *Phantom Hound:* HD 3; AC -1 [20]; Atk 1 bite (1d4) or bark (1 intelligence); Move 12; Save 14; CL/XP 5/240; Special: Bark, immaterial, see invisible.

5514. Free Pole: There is a 10-foot pole lodged in an abandoned gopher hole in this hex, though people have only a 1% chance of finding it when they pass through.

5520. Ogre Skeleton: At the bottom of a wash there is a slab of stone riddled with rusty iron spikes. The waters in the wash flow over the stone. Impaled on the spikes is the skeleton of an ogre wearing a rotting leather eye patch. Underneath the patch there is a large sphere of black marble that is warm to the touch. If inserted in an eye socket, the sphere gives the person the ability to see auras

of alignment and thus see the outlines of invisible creatures. If swallowed (save or choke to death, save at -3 for halflings and other small creatures, no save for ogres and other giants) it transforms a person into a black dragon (of an age category equal to the swallower's level or hit dice divided by two) for as long as the stone remains in their system, usually one week. Once they have returned to normal, they will discover that they have gained a terrible ulcer, reducing their constitution by 1 point. A second swallowing of the stone kills them.

5543. Fading City: Hidden among the trees of the Cloud Forest there is a fading city designed as five great circles, one inside the other. The city has walls 90 feet tall made of solid granite and dozens of watch towers constructed of pine and manned by 1d4 warriors. The city is further surrounded by a deep, treacherous moat filled with water that boils and bubbles at the approach of outsiders to the city – it is home to a bound water elemental called Lugob that rages at its captivity and delights in taking its frustrations out on intruders. Inside the city there dwell almost 5,000 stone giants. The stone giants have lived here since before the time of the empire, but they are a fading people, their vigor spent, although they beauty of their women is sung about throughout Mu-Pan.

The city is called Warah-Nu, and its queen is Vestubba, a young, fiery giantess who wants to bring his people back from the brink of destruction by interbreeding with the fey folk. To this end, he sends out large patrols of 1d6+7 stone giants seeking to capture elves, hengeyokai and other people with fairy blood.

When not capturing the fey and altering their size that they might become the brides and grooms of stone giants, the people of Warah-Nu mine silver and keep giant goats and sheep.

Vestubba is a tall stone giantess with eyes that burn like green fireballs and long, braided hair of silver. She is a pleasant drinking companion and a fiery speaker, deeply in love with her kingdom and determined to see it survive. Almost 10% of the population is half-giants, standing about one half to three-quarters the size of a normal giant and having some of the abilities of their fey parents. The older stone giants despise this practice, but they fear their

queen's fury and have not yet made their disgust known save in bits of graffiti on the walls.

| *Vestubba*: HD 39; AC 0 [19]; Atk 1 club (3d6); Move 12; Save 6; CL/XP 10/1400; Special: Throw boulders, cast spells as 6th level shugenja.

5548. Lopers: A clan of 30 lopers – a variety of primitive, long-armed hobgoblins that often walk and run on all fours – have settled here in a maze of damp, dank burrows flush with stringy, white fungus and beetles. The clan has but 12 females and nine young, barricaded in the largest chamber in the complex and guarded day and night.

The lopers are led by a large male called Wappo and his two brothers, Boro and Gnar. Wappo and his warriors rarely use weapons (though they are capable), attacking instead with head butts and bites. They do wear hide armor, however, and Wappo wears two magic gauntlets. These gauntlets are made of steel and lacquered violet. They give off a steady, golden glow and allow their wearer to control water (*lower water* and *part water*).

The clan, as violent they can be, are general xenophobic, avoiding most contact with others. Patrols of 1d6+3 lopers encountered in the area attack only if they outnumber their opponents. They are quick to scatter into the hills and woodlands if the battle turns against them, doing their best to lead pursuers away from their lair. The lopers are fond of chewing the fungal strings in their burrows, which are a powerful narcotic, keeping most of the tribe drowsy and inactive, including Wappo and his brothers.

5608. Awarama: Awarama is a large Nakdani farming village of wooden longhouses surrounded by a palisade with wooden towers. Awarama is ruled by its elder, Makaw, a sociable apothecary with a dark sense of humor, black eyes and a keen interest in magic (though he has no magical talent). The village is large enough to support an inn, run by the secretive and unassuming Sani. Sani is a golden skinned ninja who has retired to Awarama to fish and play dice games. His inn is clean and very high in quality, though most consider it a bit overpriced. Still, he serves a fine selection of food and drink and employs the prettiest dancing girls in the Ronin Hills.

The town's farmers grow crops of poppies, velvet beans and wheat, and they draw a sweet resin from the sugar pines that ring their valley. Their most notable work,

however, is in herding a domesticated monster they call nenshougachou. These creatures seem to be mutant geese standing 10 feet tall at shoulder, with wings that have been turned into long forelimbs that curl under like those of a sloth and shaggy white down covering their bodies. When roused to anger, they can deliver dizzying blows and they give off a blinding light when agitated. The creatures are kept in flocks that graze on the hills. When they die by natural causes, the villagers are able to harvest their livers, which are useful to apothecaries and alchemists, and the stones from their gizzards, which look like pebbles with a permanent *light* spell cast upon them.

| *Nenshougachou*: HD 6; AC 7 [12]; Atk 2 strikes (1d4+2); Move 12; Save 11; CL/XP 7/600; Special: *Light* (save vs. blindness).

5611. Dam: The Sonossur River here is blocked by a massive dam that dates back to the earliest days of the empire, when the scions of the Dragon Kings could command armies of genies to do their bidding. The dam rises 400 feet, creating a large lake. The top of the dam is constructed like a battlement, with two large, stone towers. One of these towers contains a winch that operates flood gates capable of sending a torrent of water down the river valley, flooding it and destroying the settlements that have grown up along the river. Both of these towers are held by a gang of minotaurs loyal to the ancient Dragon Kings and charged with holding the dam from all outsiders, including imperial ashigaru.

Running across the top of the dam are two metal rails, once used to move moonstones mined on the southern side of the dam to the northern side of the dam, where there is a long trail winding through the rocky hills. The mines have long since been played out.

The lake behind the dam supports many stands of maples. It is inhabited by several flocks of giant finches with black and orange plumage as well as an old wushen called Kegū. Kegū has assembled a large force of kaeru-ningen (frog men) with which he plans to conquer the river valley and Zinda, once he manages to open the dam's flood gates.

| *Minotaurs*: HD 26; AC 6 [13]; Atk Head butt (2d4), 1 bite (1d3) and 1 weapon (1d8); Move 12; Save 11; CL/XP 6/400; Special: *Never get lost in labyrinths*.

| *Giant Finches*: HD 1d4; AC 6 [13]; Atk 1 beak and talons (1d6); Move 3 (F18); Save 18; CL/XP B/10; Special: *None*.

| *Kaeru-ningen*: HD 1; AC 6 [13]; Atk 1 weapon (1d6); Move 3 (S18); Save 17; CL/XP 2/30; Special: Leap attack.

| *Kegu, Wushen* Lvl 8: HP 24; AC 9 [10]; Save 7; CL/XP 9/1100; Special: Spells (5th), turn undead, mighty leap, swift motion. Dao, hankyu, prayer beads.

5615. White Mistress Abbey: Nestled among the pine-covered hills near an idyllic lake is the Abbey of the White Mistress, a Lawful saint served by seventeen sohei and their abbess, Imbose. The abbey is constructed of teak transported from the southern jungles and the native granite of the hills and comprises a two-story structure with four towers and a paved courtyard. The courtyard holds dovecotes and is shaded by an ancient pine. The abbey's inner sanctum is constructed of stone and has steel doors always kept locked. It contains a white marble idol of the White Mistress, a well-proportioned woman sitting in the lotus position with a sublime look on her pretty face and a white lotus flower held in her left hand.

Downhill from the abbey, on the shores of the lake, there is a small village of fishermen and woodsmen. The woodsmen use pink-tusked elephants to fell and move their timber, while the fishermen pull bighead carp out of the lake. The sisters of the abbey are supplied with fish and garden produce in return for their magic and protection, while timber cutters make gifts of silver and gold to the sisters for the same consideration.

The abbess, Imbose, is a self-righteous, willful soldier of the White Mistress. Lanky and plain, she does her best to control her passions, which often flare when the abbey is visited by outsiders. There is a good chance a handsome adventurer will attract her attention.

The spider people [5814] have infiltrated this monastery.

| *Imbose, Sohei* Lvl 9: HP 27; AC 3 [16]; Save 6 (4 vs death & poisons); CL/XP 9/1100; Special: Banish undead, spells (5th). Haburi, kote, haramaki-do, haidate, nagamaki, prayer beads.

5627. Ancient Pyramid: The vestiges of a stepped pyramid rise here from the grasslands. Now little more than a mound of soil with the upper steps jutting out, it was constructed maybe 3,000 years ago by the fish men when the grassland was a shallow sea. The top of the mound is home to a large idol shaped like a coiled eel. The idol was carved from white marble, and is now missing its head.

5629. Chimera: By the banks of the river there is an old inn of mud bricks with a wickedly peaked roof of blue-glazed tiles. The inn has been abandoned for many years – the back wall has a large hole in it and now serves as the lair of a chimera called Qachir. Qachir has the right head and fore body and legs of an owl, the left head and rear body of an ox, the middle head of a stirge and the tail of a mantichore. Thoroughly chaotic, she has only recently made a lair here and has already attacked a few boats.

The cellar holds a few casks of stagnant water, one of which has a sealed copper flask inside containing a *potion of water breathing*. The chimera has amassed a hoard of 1,680 sp, 710 gp and a cymophane worth 20 gp.

| *Chimera*: HD 9; AC 4 [15]; Atk 2 talons (1d8), beak (1d6+1), gore (1d8), proboscis (1d3 + blood drain), 6 tail spikes (1d6); Move 9 (F20); Save 6; CL/XP 12/2000; Special: Silent flight (surprise on roll of 1-3 on 1d6), -2 to hit with beak and front talons in bright light, drain 1d4 hp of blood per round with proboscis, can fire 6 tail spikes per round up to 180 feet.

5634. Bowler Canyon: A canyon cuts across the grassland from this hex to [5837]. The canyon is used as a trade road, carrying wagon between Khatan [5432] and Sin-Kalam [6846]. The journey is not without danger due to the presence of more than a few bowlers in the canyon. The wreckage of wagons and the bleached bones of oxen stand as mute testimony to the power of the strange elementals. The road is still used, though, because the attacks are infrequent and the water routes are longer. Encounters with 1d4+1 bowlers happen on a roll of 1 on 1d6.

5645. Hazan: Hazan is a farming village of terraced fields and low stone walls has been constructed here in the midst of a wide elbow of a stream heading to the Jruas River. The village is home to 600 peasants governed by Targay, a mandarin of the empress and one of her favorite servants. The village grows rice and rice paddy herb, and the peasants keep banteng with reddish hides and white rumps in pens located in the woodlands and protected by gangs of armed cowherds and their guard dogs.

The village is constructed around a lake and surrounded by a wall of spiked mud bricks. In the middle of the lake their rises a castle of red marble, the fortress of the mandarin and the two companies of yari ashigaru based in Hazan. One enters the village through one of two wooden gates that are always left open. As one enters a gate, they find themselves walking as though through a dream and

challenged by a tall sphinx with the torso and head of a beautiful woman and the body of a banteng.

The sphinx presents the person with a scene - there is a pile of silver coins as tall as a man and a single, rusty sword lying at the bottom of the pile sticking straight up. Atop the pile of coins there sits an infant, unstable and sure to fall. The person is told to claim that which they find most valuable. Once they have done this, the sphinx asks them why they chose what they chose.

If the sphinx is pleased by their answer, it allows them to proceed, and they soon emerge into the village, their prize having disappeared. If not, they are still permitted to pass through, but find themselves exiting through the other gate. Further attempts to enter can only be made once the person has attained a higher level. One can simply climb the walls, but then they must face a company of spear armed militia and the expert shashu no ashigaru of the red castle in the lake.

The people of Hazan are a happy lot, pleased with their mandarin and proud of their strange home. They foster the largest population of hengeyokai of any village in the empire and wear vibrantly colored clothes. The mandarin, Targay, is a pudgy man with a round, chubby face. Unlike his people, he is consumed with responsibility and of a melancholy disposition, though he retains his kind, gentle and generous nature.

5649. Fortress of the Dead: An old stone fortress stands here, abandoned but in perfect condition. The walls of the white fortress are covered with creeping vines and the lion-headed spouts on the walls are stained with years of rain. The strange fortress has a single entrance with no gate. The entrance is a mere 2 feet wide, forcing folk to enter with only light armor and by walking sidewise.

Inside the white walls, there is a large courtyard – a lichfield filled with three dozen spears, stuck into the ground and topped with terracotta death masks. If magic items are brought into the courtyard, the masks whirl to life, flying about and attempting to affix themselves to the faces of any intruders. A successful mask forces a person to save each round or fall under the possession of its animating spirit, a warrior killed by a hag's curse in this fortress two dozen years ago. These spirits have but a

single quest – to kill the hag queen of the southern jungles and thus put their souls to rest.

| *Death Mask: HD 1d6; AC 6 [13]; Atk 1 touch (possession); Move F15; Save 18; CL/XP 1/15; Special: Attack as 5 HD monster, possession.*

5706. Glass Shrine: The grassy hills here play host to a shrine of glass panels that gleam in the sunlight. The shrine has four entrances, each open to the air. Inside the shrine, despite the glass walls, one discovers that it is dark as pitch save for a spot of light in the center of the room. In this spot of light there are two white jugs of wine. Drinking from one jug gives one the gift of glory, which translates as a +2 bonus to hit in combat, but an inability to resist fighting or flee from a hopeless fight. The other brings godliness – i.e. a *protection from evil* effect so long as the person lives up to seven virtues: Rectitude, Courage, Benevolence, Respect, Honesty, Honor and Loyalty.

5713. Abandoned Monastery: This old monastery has 20 foot tall walls of gray stone, a two-story hall containing an empty sanctum, barracks, a kitchen and pantry. The courtyard is an overgrown garden containing an ancient peach tree that has been cleaved in twain. The courtyard and monastery ruins are now home to three black bears. A secret door in the monastery's lower barracks grants access to a set of catacombs containing the preserved bodies of thirty sohei in polished suits of armor and holding naginatas.

| *Black Bears: HD 4+1; AC 7 [12]; Atk 2 claws (1d3), 1 bite (1d6); Move 9; Save 13; CL/XP 4/120; Special: Hug.*

5718. Goblin Lair: A tribe of 180 oni-aka goblins with 60 females and 220 young dwelling in burrows of a dry gully that leads to the river. The goblins are ruled by a powerful war chief – perhaps the greatest goblin warrior to ever live – a massive male named Yeg who wears bits of armor plundered from victims and carries a shimmering +1 *katana* inset with beryls. Yeg and his people are known for the large piercings in their noses, ears and lips.

Cracks in the gully allow flammable gas to seep into the gully, collecting when there is no appreciable wind. The goblins have learned to bottle this gas, making fiery grenades that they hurl in combat, with each goblin carrying two or three of the bottles and tinder.

If the gas that collects in the gully is set off (a favorite past time of the goblins), it inflicts 8d6 points of damage to everyone in the gully.

| *Oni-Aka Goblin*: HD 1; AC 6 [13]; Atk 1 weapon (1d6); Move 9; Save 17; CL/XP 1/15; Special: Fire resistant.

5728. Onikuma Monastery: Named for a great brown bear that still lurks in these parts, Onikuma Monastery predates the construction of Khatan [5432]. It is a square monastery with underground living cells for the monks and a large court and garden for exercise and martial arts. The monks practice Brown Bear style kung-fu, being primarily concerned with catching glimpses of enlightenment through rigorous, almost tortuous exercise. The monastery houses 20 monks under the tutelage of a gaunt, grizzled old abbot named Nayany, an overbearing man with a rough voice and a club foot.

Nayany despises the empire and would like to strike a blow against it. To that end, he has sent emissaries out to the various humanoid tribes of Mu-Pan eliciting their support in a grand siege of Khatan via a tunnel he and his monks have been constructing for the past decade. They have been aided in this endeavor by a tribe of 100 mogura-jin led by a nasty little killer called Qan.

| *Nayany, Bujin Lvl 10*: HP 28; AC 9 [10]; Save 7 (6 vs death & poison); CL/XP 10/1400; Special: Follow through, combat sense, fists of iron, iron hold, parry blows. *Tetsubo, uchi-ne*.

5731. Zoushou Lair: A tribe of bizarre creatures called zoushou dwell here. The tribe numbers 76 males and only 13 females, with 21 young. Zoushous look like four humanoid legs joined together and topped with a large grotesque head. They have bright, purple skin. The creatures wear no clothing and they carry no weapons, though their long toes allow them some ability to grasp objects and manipulate them clumsily. Zoushou are loyal subjects of the empire and are, in all, quite peaceful and intelligent. Their leader is a female called Bul-Mon-My.

Zoushou live off the grasses, squatting in the grass and using their long tongues to pull it into their mouths.

| *Zoushou*: HD 4; AC 7 [12]; Atk 2 stomps (1d6); Move 12; Save 13; CL/XP 5/240; Special: X-ray vision (per the ring) 3/day - can use to bombard people with radiation, dealing 2d6 points of damage.

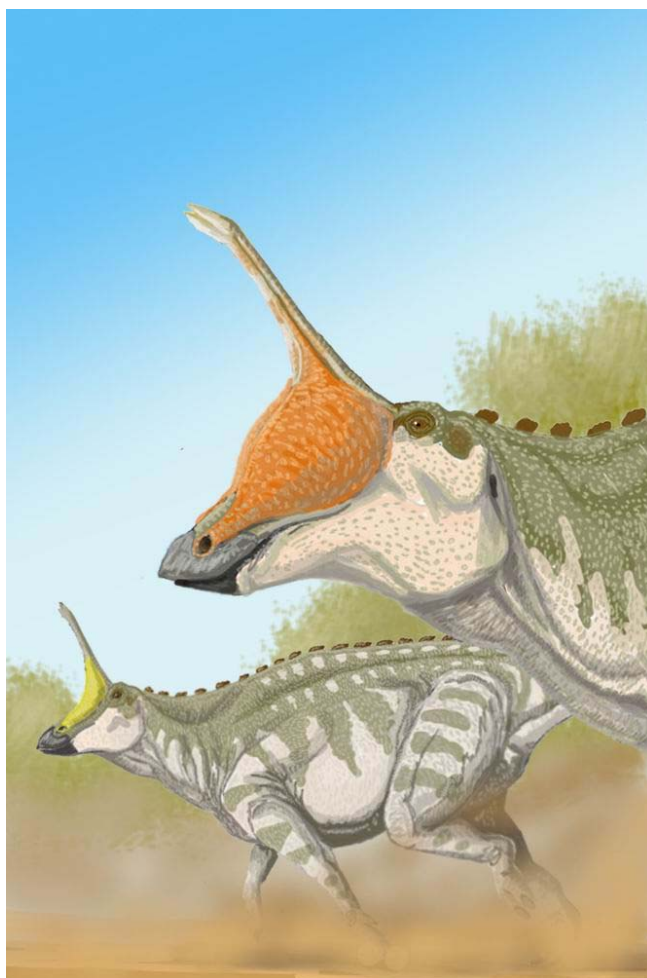
| *Bul-Mon-My*: HD 6; AC 6 [13]; Atk 2 stomps (1d6); Move 12; Save 11; CL/XP 7/600; Special: X-ray vision (per the ring) 3/day - can use to

bombard people with radiation, dealing 2d6 points of damage, cast spells as 6th level wushen.

5738. Chiguyuk's Tower: The shugenja Chiguyuk keeps her tower here, a tower that appears to be built of human bones, but is in fact merely carved limestone. The tower rises 50 feet and has a commanding view of the grassland. Herds of tsintaosaurus, single-horned duckbilled dinosaurs dwell here, as the grasslands here are depressed and marshy. The higher ground supports smaller herds of stegosaurus.

All of these creatures are the "pets" of Chiguyuk, a tiny woman, lithe and lively, with luminous eyes and swathed in robes of celestial blue. She teaches six apprentices in her tower the arts of the necromancer, and sells her services to the empress when she requires prophecy.

The tower is guarded by eight animated skeletons of dinosaurs outside and a company of skeletal warriors inside. Chiguyuk's ultimate design is the summoning of



Orcus that he might impregnate her apprentices and produce a clutch of cambions to help her conquer Mu-Pan.

| *Chiguyuk, Shugenja* Lvl 10: HP 21; AC 9 [10]; Save 6 (4 vs magic); CL/XP 7/600; Special: Spells (5th). Gun staff, spellbook.

| *Skeletal Dino*: HD 6; AC 4 [13]; Atk 1 strike (1d10); Move 15; Save 11; CL/XP 6/400; Special: None.

| *Tsintaosaurus*: HD 12; AC 5 [14]; Atk 1 strike (1d10); Move 12; Save 3; CL/XP 12/2000; Special: None.

| *Stegosaurus*: HD 15; AC 2 [17]; Atk 1 bite (1d8), 1 spiked tail (4d6); Move 9; Save 3; CL/XP 15/2900; Special: None.

Image of Tsintaosarus by ДуБзѢ

5801. Himagi: Himagi is the “village of the sages”, started by a band of Nakdani wise men who wished a place to preserve the ancient scrolls of their history. The leader of the sages, Karakema, is a paunchy man with unruly hair and a pierced nose (the nose-stud is enchanted, allowing him to smell falsehoods – he acquired it in Kirikersa).

The villagers are mostly goat herds and mohair weavers living in thatched cottages. It is surrounded by a palisade with wooden guard towers. It is defended by a company of shashu no ashigaru.

| *Karakema, Shugenja* Lvl 6: HP 11; AC 9 [10]; Save 10 (8 vs magic); CL/XP 4/120; Special: Spells (3rd). Tanto (3), uchi-ne, spellbook.

5810. Bridge of Graves: The Sonossur River narrows here, enough that it is crossed by a wide, stone bridge that effectively blocks navigation further upriver. The bridge is built of pale stones speckled with gold and crimson, with guardian dragons carved on both sides. The sides of the bridge there are lined with limestone sarcophagi, the lids carved to resemble the people interred within.

The “people” within the sarcophagi are now ghouls, looking like tallow-skinned men and women in tattered, faded robes and carrying curved swords. The bridge is safe to cross in daylight, but at night, the twenty ghouls of the bridge attack any who would cross.

| *Ghoul*: HD 2; AC 6 [13]; Atk 2 claws (1d3), 1 bite (1d4); Move 9; Save 16; CL/XP 3/60; Special: Immunities, paralyzing touch.

5814. Spider People: The rocky hills here are pierced by a large cavern complex choked with webs. Herein dwell a tribe of aranea, shapechanging spider people who would see the Nakda driven from the hills and their dominion re-

established. They have already infiltrated White Mistress Monastery [5613].

The caverns are crude, but contain furniture and pieces of art that point to the high civilization of the spider people, first displaced by the Meng and then the Nakda. Their population now numbers 20 males, 10 females and 5 young. In the light of day they appear to people as tall men and women with small eyes and puckered lips with porcelain plates distending their earlobes. At night, they take on their natural form, feeding on guests they think are of no other use to them.

The aranea have a treasure chamber containing 16,500 sp and 16,700 gp. Their most valued treasure is an ancient bronze bell. The bell is cracked, but still produced a clear, deep tone. When sounded, the bell summons all arachnids within 50 miles to it and places them under the command of the arachnid who struck the bell. Non-arachnids can summon the spiders, but not command them.

| *Aranea*: HD 4; AC 6 [13]; Atk 1 bite (1d6 + poison); Move 12; Save 13; CL/XP 7/600; Special: Webs, Spells.

5821. Hino: Hino is a small village of deceitful herdsmen living in thatched houses. Their village is shaped like a crescent moon, sitting atop a terrace that wraps around a large hill. The terrace rises 30 feet above the surrounding land, making the village fairly defensible. Atop the grassy hill, the men of Hino graze their cattle, among the finest in all of Mu-Pan and dedicated solely to feeding the imperial household. The village is ruled by its elder, a cynical man named Nishi who is married to the village’s healer, Hida.

Hino is defended by a single company of samurai in service to the empress and resentful of having to guard a herd of cattle in the sticks while their fellows feast in Khatan.

5844. Tolik: Tolik is a large village inhabited by miners who work in the nearby granite quarry (and also find a few hyacinths) and by peasants who grow konjac and boil it into moyu doufu, which they turn into bricks, wrap in rice paper and then ship throughout the empire.

The village has a stone wall about 30 feet tall patrolled by a company of archers. There is a wide moat that sports brightly colored ducks. When the village is threatened, nine of the ducks transform into guardian drakes.

The houses are mostly wooden, with a few stone granaries and a tower used as a barracks and stable for a company of proud samurai.

| *Samurai*: HD 1; AC 0 [19]; Atk 1 weapon (1d6); Move 9 (18 mounted); Save 17; CL/XP 1/15; Special: None.

The village's claim to fame is its large, rowdy tavern, the Fox and Peach. The tavern is owned by Gera, a muscular Jin woman with golden-brown skin, long black hair worn in braids piled high on her head and held with hair sticks and black eyes almost as black as her heart. Gera is a swaggering ex-soldier who seems to invent new curses on a daily basis. She always carries a set of throwing knives and a lead-weighted club to handle her rowdy guests.

The tavern is surrounded by a large courtyard that features several colored wooden idols of monks. The tavern has rooms on its two upper stories, and is a meeting place for traders moving north and south.

The village is governed by Qachid, an analytical herbalist and cunning woman that runs the local apothecary and controls the drakes, her own invention.

| *Guardian Drake*: HD 7; AC 2 [17]; Atk 2 claws (1d6) and bite (1d8); Move 15 (F15); Save 9; CL/XP 8/800; Special: Immune to fear, goes berserk (+1 to hit and damage) when village is threatened.

5846. Birhaakamen Lair: Massive banyans cover much of this hex, some spreading up to one mile in diameter, their massive air roots spanning the river, making navigation tricky – almost like boating through a cathedral. The banks of the river are covered with thick ooze, and further back from the water there is a thick carpeting of ferns.

Dwelling atop these massive banyans (there are eight in the hex) are tribes of birhaakamen (bird men) differentiated by their plumage and constantly at war over mates, for it is the custom of males to kidnap their mates. The creatures hunt small animals in the woodlands and feast on the figs of the banyan.

| *Birhaakamen*: HD 1+3; AC 6 [13]; Atk 2 claws (1d2) and beak (1d3) or by weapon (1d8); Move 12 (Fly 18); Save 17; CL/XP 2/30; Special: Fly.

5848. Earth Mephitis: The woods here are pocked with sinkholes and subterranean rivers and springs. The chaotic landscape is inhabited by a great variety of insects and birds and a gang of earth mephitis who claim the land as their own. The earth mephitis look like little statues carved

from turquoise with obsidian tortoise shells on their backs. The mephitis tend large, fantailed goldfish in their subterranean pools.

| *Earth Mephitis*: HD 3; AC 3 [16]; Atk 2 claws (1d4); Move 12 (F15); Save 14; CL/XP 6/400; Special: Regenerate 1d4 hit points per round while underground, transmute rock to mud 1/day, alter size 1/day (enlarge), breath cone of rock shards 3/day (15' cone, 1d8 damage)

5916. House of Clones: At the foot of the mountains there is an old manor built of wood, with domed towers and a peaked roof. The manor has extensive gardens of cherry trees, creeping junipers, roses, chrysanthemums and ponds of goldfish. The manor is home to a secret society of men and women who are clones – created by a shugenja, Jutem, as part of his plan to conquer the empire. The men and women are clones of nobles now largely deceased, aged and replaced by their sons or daughters, or removed from power with the change of imperial control.

The clones are now unable to serve their original purpose, but they are still ambitious and possessed of a desire to rule. They have thus begun the slow task of gathering an army of humanoids from the mountains, their first target being the port of Artuk.

5919. Kawaga: The river valley here is dotted with three small hamlets, all belonging to Kawaga Castle and its lord, the illustrious Sakat of the Singed Mustache. Sakat earned his nickname as a young adventurer hunting dragons in the days before the sinking of Nakda. He is now an 80-year old man, though still in relatively good health. Once an aggressive ruler, he is now content to rule his small domain and play with his grandchildren, nieces and nephews.

The villagers of Kawaga are mostly ex-soldiers of Sakat or the children and grandchildren of his soldiers. They are a warrior breed that loves a good fight. They grow crops of rice in the damp river valley, as well as Japanese walnuts, plums and soy beans.

Kawaga has a temple dedicated to the Bodhisattva Shida of the Lion's Mane, who appears as an elegant maiden carrying a parasol decorated with clouds and wearing a crown of walnut leaves. Her hair is wild and tussled, like the mane of a lion. The temple is overseen by the sohei Kiko, a lanky man with a round face and beady, blue eyes.

| *Sakat, Bujin* Lvl 10: HP 33; AC 5 [14]; Save 7 (6 vs death & poison);

CL/XP 10/1400; Special: Follow through. Hanburi +1, hara-ate-gawa, haidate, sanjiegun, hankyu.

| *Kiko, Sohei Lvl 6: HP 24; AC 4 [15] front, 7 [12] back; Save 9 (7 vs death & poisons); CL/XP 7/600; Special: Banish undead, spells (4th). Kabuto, sode, hara-ate, jitte (2), prayer beads.*

5939. Spider Fortress: There is an ancient fortress here constructed of pale stones that look as though they have seen numerous sieges and battles. The fortress is in relatively good shape, but its interior is clogged with spider webs (some unnaturally large) and skeletons clad in bits of armor and holding old, rusted weapons.

A secret door in the stronghold's great hall gives access to a series of subterranean vaults where dwell a clutch of aranea, spider people wise in the ways of magic. The aranea are fifteen in number, and they are currently undertaking to infiltrate temples throughout Mu-Pan. Their leader is a female called Ssimad. The aranea have animated the skeletons in the stronghold above and can control them by the click of their fingers or mandibles. There are forty skeletons in all.

| *Aranea: HD 4; AC 6 [13]; Atk 1 bite (1d6 + poison); Move 12; Save 13; CL/XP 7/600; Special: Webs, spells as a 4th level shugenja.*

6003. Statue: This hex holds the remains of a Meng village. The village consisted of about 50 homes in a narrow valley. The villagers apparently worked quartz mines. The village has been burned and pillaged, but one large house whose roof collapsed holds a small statue of an elegant three-tailed cat carved from rose quartz. In the presence of sharp sounds like the trilling of a flute or a piercing scream, the statue redoubles the sound and throws it out as a wave of sonic energy in a radius 2d4 x 10 feet. The wave inflicts 3d6 points of damage and causes deafness in those who have no ear protection and fail a saving throw.

6006. Oshigayanyo: This is a small village of peasants living in wooden cottages under the boughs of pines and junipers. The men of Oshigayanyo pray to the earth, prostrating themselves before squat idols carved from salt and licking these idols to show their respect. The village is ruled by a mandarin called Mugai, a tiresome oaf assigned by the Tiger Empress. The small village has escaped the notice of the imperial authorities, so Mugai still governs here with the help of a company of shashu no ashigaru.

6020. Plateau of Jackals: Much of this hex is taken up by a rugged plateau of rocky outcroppings and long grass. The plateau is surrounded by an abyssal chasm that exhales foul gases (save or suffer 1d6 points of burning damage to the lungs). In the south, there is a single wooden bridge with a 10 foot gap in its center and signs of burning – perhaps the work of a fire breathing dragon.

The plateau is hunted by three packs of jackals. Each pack contains 1d3 x 10 animals. There was once a sprawling village of grass huts in the center of the hex, but those huts have long since been burned to the ground. The village is now a series of shallow graves, many disturbed. Night encounters with ghouls (1d6+1) occur on a roll of 1-3 on 1d6. The ghouls have burrows into the earth, most of them rather small, but some networking into a series of deeper tunnels that smell of the same acrid smoke of the chasm, but without the negative effects.

The ghouls of the plateau number 30 in all. Roll treasure for them randomly as they are encountered – their burrows can also be generated randomly. They go no deeper than 3 levels, and at the bottom level there dwells their chief, an oversized brute called Myan. Myan possesses the great treasure of the plateau, a pair of +1 *sode* constructed of leather scales dyed black and ornamented with ivory carvings. The *sode* give the wearer an acid touch (1d6 damage) and likewise cause any weapon they wield in anger to drip with acid, causing an additional 1d6 points of damage per hit.

6024. Sinkhole: A rank wind blows from a sinkhole that swallowed up about 1 mile of grassland here. The sinkhole is 100 feet deep at the center, and portions of the perimeter allow one to walk down into the sinkhole with relative ease.

At the bottom of the sinkhole there are multiple caves, some too small even for halflings, others large enough for giants to access without stooping. The following are some examples of what lies beyond these tunnels:

[A] In the last days of the Tiger Empress, one of her generals, Baniz, lead a small army to the sinkhole to hide themselves from the vengeance of the empress' enemies. The army took heavy losses moving through the underworld, but eventually conquered a tribe of kobolds.

The humans have now lived underground for a decade and are almost more monster than man. They have pallid skin and white eyes and can now see in the darkness as well as most humanoids. The humans now number 55, including three sergeants and their commander, Baniz. Their kobold slaves number 30, and they are in a miserable state of distress. They are kept busy expanding the tunnels and chambers of the humans and constructing the traps and deadfalls ordered by the paranoid General Baniz.

| *General Baniz, Bujin Lvl 6: HP 19; AC 5 [14]; Save 11 (10 vs death & poison); CL/XP 6/400; Special: Follow through. Kabuto, hara-ate-gawa, suneate, tanto, shuriken (7).*

[B] These large tunnels are home to a tribe of fire giants and their oni-aka goblin servants. The fire giants number twenty in all and their servants 100. The giants work a dozen large forges, constructing weapons and armor for themselves and other humanoids. In addition, they delve deep in search of large, metallic egg-like meteors. These meteors are extremely difficult to crack, but contain 1d3 ioun stones each. The king of the giants, Khechuk, has four such stone – clear (sustains him without food or water), pink (+1 hp per hit dice), iridescent (sustains him without air) and pearly white (regenerate 1 hp/hour).

| *Khechuk: HD 11+14 (64 hp); AC 3 [16]; Atk 1 weapon (5d6); Move 12; Save 4; CL/XP 12/2000; Special: Hurl boulders, immune to fire, need not eat, breath or sleep, regenerate 1 hp/hour.*

[C] This cavern seems to be the source of the rank wind that blows through the sinkhole. It contains an ancient lake of slime inhabited by eight nunnoad and their “mother”, a colossal creature that looks like a whale-sized beast with the head of a frog and supported on a mass of black tentacles. If destroyed, the thing explodes in a mass of gore, a kukkoad rising from the gore to avenge its mother.

| *Nunnoad: HD 5; AC 1 [18]; Atk 2 claws (1d6); Move 12 (S15); Save 12; CL/XP 8/800; Special: Breath cloud of gas (10-ft radius, 5d6 acid damage) 3/day, immune to mind control and reading – stun those who try and fail a saving throw, regenerate 2 hp/rd, resistance to acid (50%), magic resistance (50%).*

| *Kukkoad: HD 9; AC -1 [20]; Atk 2 claws (1d6 + 1d6 cold); Move 12 (S15); Save 7; CL/XP 12/2000; Special: Breath 15-ft cone of cold (8d8 damage) 3/day, immune to mind control and reading – stun those who try and fail a saving throw, regenerate 2 hp/rd, magic resistance (50%), resistance to cold (50%).*

| *Frog Thing: HD 16; AC 4 [15]; Atk 1d6 tentacles on all within 30 feet (1d6+1 plus slime); Move 6; Save 3; CL/XP 20/4400; Special: Slime (save or paralyzed for 1d4 rounds), +1 or better weapon to hit, immune to fire.*

[D] This tunnel lead to the gates of a subterranean city of the dead inhabited by all manner of pseudo-undead creatures – that is, creatures that look like zombies, ghouls and vampires, but are in fact alive. The city is ruled by a mummified high priest called Botebt. Botebt seeks a mate, and his loyal people have answered his call by capturing a maiden. They have placed the maiden in a deep slumber and are holding a funeral for her. She has been wrapped in silks and a death mask affixed to her face and is lying on a palanquin borne by pseudo-ghouls in red silk robes. The woman will be placed in an air tight tomb and allowed to suffocate. She will then be exhumed and turned into a mummy bride by Botebt.

| *Botebt: HD 6+4 (32 hp); AC 3 [16]; Atk 1 fist (1d12); Move 6; Save 11; CL/XP 7/600; Special: Rot, hit only by magic weapons, spells as 12th level sohei.*

6028. Signpost: An ominous signpost stands here composed of a skeleton with four arms pointing in the four cardinal directions. If asked what lies in any direction, it whispers the word “Death” in a hoarse, choked voice.

6030. Shrines of Slid: There are dozens of small stone shrines here in the shallows of the sea. The area is patrolled by a large pod of twelve dolphins that permit none to approach the shrines, which are actually crypts of the high priests of Slid.

| *Dolphin: HD 2; AC 6 [13]; Atk 1 bite (1d6); Move 0 (Swim 24); Save 16; CL/XP 2/30; Special: Cast spells as wushen of level 1d4+1.*

6033. Puzzle Chest: A puzzling chest composed of hundreds of small juniper cubes that can be pressed inward or pulled outward (though not separated) lies beneath the waves here in the hulk of a massive treasure junk. The junk lies on the edge of a deep crevasse inhabited by chuul, and each turn spent exploring the junk carries with it a 1 in 6 chance of causing it to lurch further into the crevasse. After three lurches, the junk topples 500 feet into the crevasse.

The weird chest can only be opened by pressing one’s face into the juniper cubes and speaking the word “T’kal”. If this is done and the face removed, the impression of the face speaks (per a magic mouth), asking one the following riddle:

“A family of thirty brothers was born, the littlest brothers before the biggest. Who are they?”

If one answers with “teeth”, the chest opens, revealing a +2 *kabuki* traced in electrum and bearing scaly dolphins of gold. The helm allows one to breathe and move freely underwater. One time only they can summon a dolphin steed that will serve them faithfully as long as it lives.

6036. Umborodom’s Abbey: There is an ancient fortress-monastery constructed here of red bricks and tall, peaked roofs of copper. The roof is covered with hundreds of tall, copper spires that attract lightning. The monastery is dedicated to Umborodom, whose hound was the thunder. The monastery is inhabited by 16 low-level sohei and their abbees, Deneg, a temperamental woman with blue-gray eyes and a powerful hatred of the Jade Empress, who quells her lovely storms and keeps her “hounds” hungry.

The “hounds” are three lightning elementals that dwell within a golden matrix that serves as the monastery’s idol. The monastery is surrounded by a village of red brick buildings inhabited by about 150 tin miners. The mines are of ancient vintage, but still producing tin and a few tourmalines and topaz each month. Tourmalines are claimed by the sohei and topaz by the empress.

The sohei of the monastery wear blue armor and carry large, steel-shod mallets.

6102. Wang Liang: The mountain valleys here are rife with poplars and long, pale grasses. At the center of these valleys there is a swampy area surrounding a rocky outcropping holding the ruins of a Meng fort. The fort is empty save for a polished silver mirror underneath a sable pelt covered with mildew.

The mirror lies in the bottom of a 10-ft deep pit trapped with iron spikes. The spikes are lodged in the sides of the pit, springing out when anything heavier than 30 feet touches the floor and inflicting 3d6 points of damage (no saving throw).

Inside the mirror a wang liang called Bumbudr has been trapped with powerful spells that would take a shugenja of at least 6th level to free (using *dispel magic*).

| *Wang Liang:* HD 3; AC 3 [16]; Atk 2 claws (1d6) and 1 bite (1d6); Move 12; Save 14; CL/XP 9/1100; Special: Spells, poison, regenerate 1 hp/rd,

only harmed by silver or magic weapons, immune to poison, half damage from fire.

6106. Tun: This portion of the mountains has a deep valley coursed by many swift streams that flow into deep, cool ponds surrounded by tall magnolias. Fishermen from the small village of Tun catch fish in these ponds, trap birds in the surrounding woods and trap mountain goats.

The village is often visited by the wushen Juchaz, a short, stubby man with a greedy appetite for food and a considerate, peaceful nature. He teaches the village children and counsels their parents.

The fishermen are defended by a company of militia. Their ruler is Taiji, a spiteful woman who believes she was sent to Tun as a punishment for opposing the settlement of the Nakda. She is hefty and muscular and has an equally hefty husband named Qutlunn and three children.

| *Juchaz, Wushen* Lvl 6: HP 28; AC 9 [10]; Save 9; CL/XP 7/600; Special: Spells (4th), turn undead, ki shout, swift motion. Gun staff, uchi-ne, prayer beads.

| *Taiji, Bujin* Lvl 4: HP 16; AC -1 [20]; Save 13 (12 vs death & poison); CL/XP 4/120; Special: Follow through. O-yoroi, wakizashi, uchi-ne.

6111. Ghost Town: These dusty hills are crossed by numerous trails, for the hills once hosted the grand city-state of Ganiz. Ganiz is now a ghost town – literally. Travelers see wisps of people walking through ghostly streets and the outlines of buildings when one squints or looks away from the sun. The buildings and people are more pronounced in the moonlight. The people move slowly and are completely unaware of the living. They are almost certainly not undead, as they are unaffected by turning and cannot be spoken to using the *speak with dead* spell. Likewise, they do not seem to inhabit the Ethereal Plane, for they still appear as ghostly images in that place and the Astral Plane. Sages do not know what to make of the phenomenon and prefer to ignore it and avoid the hex.

6115. Midnight Snack: An icy cold stream holds several slabs of fatty meat. The meat is suspended from chains attached to rocks on the banks of the stream, and were left by hill giants.

6125. Yunua the Lord of Iron: Yunua dwells in a hidden cavern in the side of a rocky outcropping. Yunua is called the Lord of Iron due to his studies into the control of that



metal. His is a tall, rangy man with eyes like molten steel. Yunua is a quiet man who seeks peace and quiet to conduct his research. He has three apprentices, Tanas, Tukai and Taipcha, all the sons of Khatan's nobility. The product of his magical science is are three animated iron statues cast in the form of "the maiden that got away". The maidens, silent and unfeeling as they are, are his constant companions and bodyguards, and he has a deep regard for them as things to be worshipped and adored. His workshop is taken up with pieces of an iron golem that is to be his masterpiece. It is shaped like a thunder demon, complete with a large mallet. Yunua intends it as a weapon to drive the Nakda from Mu-Pan, as he is of the Meng blood and cares little for the regard shown those pirates by either the Tiger Empress or Jade Empress.

| Yunua, Shugenja Lvl 9: HP 22; AC 9 [10]; Save 7 (5 vs magic); CL/XP 7/600; Special: Spells (5th). Tanto, shuriken (5), spellbook.

| Iron Maidens: HD 4; AC 1 [18]; Atk 2 fists (1d8); Move 12; Save 13; CL/XP 5/240; Special: Non-magical metal weapons must save or be stuck fast in the statue.

6203. Mountain Goblins: A tribe of 100 oni-yama goblins claims this territory, living in a cluster of high caves on a mountainside. The area is little traveled, and the mountain goblins seem content enough to hunt goats and mountain birds and ignore humanity. The mountain goblins are ruled by Tulai, a warty old bastard who carries an iron staff he took from an adventuring shugenja. He uses the staff as a simple weapon, but it is actually a magic staff that radiates a *protection from evil*, 10-ft radius effect when struck hard on the bare stone.

6226. Merchant Camp: A large caravan of merchants has made camp here, heading from the shallow bay in 6426 to the river. The merchants carry calico, tea, pepper and other goods from Djangala and beyond. There are ten wagons in the caravan pulled by oxen and a company of ashigaru armed with naginata accompanying it.

6228. Onyx Fountain: In a dry, sandy hollow that pierces the cliffs there is a strange fountain of pure onyx. The fountain appears to be empty to those with a wisdom

lower than 18, but those of a higher mind the fountain produces waves of purple radiance in which one can glimpse strange geometries that rise to the sky and flutter into untold dimensions of sight and sound. Those whose eyes linger too long on these waves must pass a saving throw or slowly dematerialize into planes better left unseen, returning seemingly in no time at all, but with their hair stark white and a leaping maw attached to their body.

| *Leaping Maw: HD 1; AC 4 [15]; Atk 1 bite (1d6); Move 0 (Teleport 30ft); Save 17; CL/XP 2/30; Special: Teleport, occupy host, attack against unarmored AC, drain 1 wisdom per month, killed by dimension door within 10 feet, removed by teleport, otherwise must kill host to destroy.*

6242. Lord Ben: The Lord Ben, an old warrior grown fat and placid, commands the southern grasslands from his fortress on behalf of the empress. He commands a squadron of samurai known as the Golden Blades as well as a squadron of horse archers. Lord Ben supported the Jade Empress during her march to Khatan and expected a better fief than he received. He now resents her and her rule and would see her undone.

The castle is surrounded by dozens of mud brick buildings that house a population of 300 peasants who grow casabas, ginger root and wheat. The village is surrounded by stone walls and six stone towers. The village has a shrine to Yarni-Zai. The shrine is tended by the wushen Quchir, a charming, generous woman recently ambushed in the night by a vampire recently arrived from the jungles of Djangala. She was not killed by the vampire, but did lose four levels during the attack and is under the vampire's control. The vampire is named Ramarit is now resting comfortably underneath the floor of the shrine.

| *Ben, Bujin Lvl 10: HP 44; AC 7 [12]; Save 7 (6 vs death & poison); CL/XP 10/1400; Special: Follow through, mighty leap, parry blows, parry death blow, swift motion. Sode, haramaki, tonfa, shuriken (10).*

| *Quchir, Wushen Lvl 2: HP 4; AC 9 [10]; Save 13; CL/XP 3/60; Special: Spells (1st), turn undead, parry blows, parry death blow. Equipment, prayer beads.*

6302. Cyclops: A lonely cyclops dwells in these mountains, accompanied by a cave bear. The cyclops plays a long flute carved from the thigh bone of a white dragon. The flute charms avian creatures within one mile and can send blasts of hot wind roaring down the valleys. Flying creatures must pass a saving throw or be knocked from the

sky by this broiling wind and it inflicts 3d6 points of damage to those hit by it.

| *Cyclops: HD 12; AC 2 [17]; Atk 1 weapon (2d6) or boulder (2d6); Move 15; Save 3; CL/XP 12/2000; Special: Rock throwing.*

| *Cave Bear: HD 7 (27 hp); AC 6 [13]; Atk 2 claws (1d6+1), 1 bite (1d10+1); Move 12; Save 9; CL/XP 7/600; Special: Hug.*

6314. Kasuda, City of Agrodaun: Kasuda is a religious city of 10,000 people constructed atop a large, flat plateau where rise five iron towers called the Fingers of Agrodaun. Each tower is 80 feet tall and 40 feet wide and long and is composed of a single casting of iron that apparently rose from the ground wholly formed. The walls between the towers are composed of stone rising 60 feet high with a great, black gate. The city, being holy to Agrodaun, is crowded with pilgrims, miners who pull mispickel and arsenic out of the plateau, trappers who work in the surrounding valleys and farmers who scratch a crop of skirrets and peas out of the unforgiving ground.

The city is ruled by the lawful sohei of Agrodaun, who make some money on the side by hiring out as mercenary defenders of hopeless (and lawful) causes. They rule from an immense central fortress with ramparts clad in bronze.

The city-state's priest-king is Kiga, a muscular man with a heavy, plain face, close-cropped hair and golden eyes. He has not yet pledged his loyalty to the empress, nor does he plan to do so.

6329. Ban: Ban is a small village of miners who work the basalt cliffs here, delving for opals and quarrying large blocks for construction. Their quarrying has moved the cliffs back about 1 mile. The village has also moved, little by little as the cliffs have receded. They build their huts from the basalt blocks and top them with wooden roofs.

Ban is ruled by the mandarin Temuj, a stubborn, athletic warrior-maiden who lost an arm fighting for the Jade Empress and now toils at a "desk job" she detests. The village also has a healer named Cheri, a secretive, sullen woman with beautiful, deep eyes.

| *Temuj, Bujin Lvl 5: HP 25; AC 4 [15]; Save 12 (11 vs death & poison); CL/XP 5/240; Special: Follow through, deflect missiles, ferocity. Jingasa, kote, haramaki, haidate, nine-ring broadsword, hankyu.*

6331. Floating Hulk: A large junk floats in this hex, held in place by an anchor. The junk is now a ruin, listing to the

left, with the remains of several bodies hung over the forecastle. The hulk is devoid of habitation but does hold a store of twenty perfect pearls worth at least 1,000 gp each. Alas, these pearls are cursed. They attract the avarice of all nearby, driving men and women to any end to gain possession of the pearl.

6335. Fire Drake: An old fire drake called Magny dwells here in a rocky cave that emits sulfuric fumes and a steady trickle of acid that collects in a yellow pool beneath the cave entrance. The fire drake holds the last known copy of the *Scrolls of Yelgemu the Thrice-Wise*. The scrolls hold many wondrous secrets, as well as the following shugenja spells: *Invisibility II*, *light II*, *massmorph*, *sleep*, *transform I*.

| *Fire Drake:* HD 4 (11 hp); AC 4 [15]; Atk 1 bite (1d6); Move 9 (F30); Save 13; CL/XP 6/400; *Special:* Breath weapon, pyrophoric blood, resistance to fire (50%).

6337. Serpent Pool: From the vestiges of a sacred mound constructed of limestone there trickle the waters of a sacred spring. Serpents (and ophidians) from around Mu-Pan make a pilgrimage here at least once in their life to bathe in the waters of the pool and be blessed by their ancient Mother.

6411. Baatai the Trapper: A curious shugenja dwells here in a small hut constructed of fresh-cut pine boughs. The shugenja is a wiry man with bushy white hair and eyebrows and a gap-toothed smile. He might be found laboring over a forge, his anvil and tools all traced with golden glyphs of power. He constructs small, hollow globes of silver that are covered with a web of golden tracery that is impossibly complex.

The metallic spheres surround spheres of glass made of crushed gemstones and sand and are capable of trapping creatures inside of them, holding them in suspended animation in a tiny demi-plane of warm, golden mists.

The shugenja, Baatai, has already trapped three monsters inside his spheres, a raiju, fire drake and kappa. Creatures held in the sphere can be released by the bearer's command and must then pass a saving throw or be affected as per *charm monster*.

Should a band of adventurers have any fair maidens among them, Baatai makes them his primary target.

| *Baatai, Shugenja Lvl 9:* HP 22; AC 9 [10]; Save 7 (5 vs magic); CL/XP 7/600; *Special:* Spells (5th). Tanto, shuriken (6), spellbook.

6415. Nilbogs: The local goblin tribe has given into a plague of nilbogism. The goblins dwell in cliff dwellings, the small entrances carved to look like the mouths of grotesque, distended faces. Most of the "mouths" are trapped with crossbows (save or 1d8 damage). The tribe numbers 200 males, 120 females and 300 young in smaller family groups (there are 40 burrows in all). Each burrow contains about 100 gp of treasure in leather sacks or hidden beneath smelly piles of pelts and furs.

| *Nilbog:* HD 1d6; AC 4 [15]; Atk 1 weapon (1d6); Move 9; Save 18; CL/XP 1/15; *Special:* Damage reversal (gains hit points when struck with weapon instead of losing it, damage by curative magic), spatio-temporal reversal (confusion 20-ft radius).

6416. Jaagiyn the White Wurm: High in the snowclad peaks, in a burrow bored into a glacier, dwells Jaagiyn, a great, white wurm of ancient pedigree, voracious appetite and wicked temperament. Every year or so Jaagiyn must burrow deeper into the glacier, creating a new entrance slide with a deep pit beneath it to catch travelers walking across the glacier. Her treasure consists of 1,280 sp, 640 gp, ebony aquamanile set with olivines (worth 765 gp) and a cursed *sai* -1.

| *Jaagiyn:* HD 7 (56 hp); AC 2 [17]; Atk 2 claws (1d4), 1 bite (2d8); Move 9 (Fly 24); Save 9; CL/XP 9/1100; *Special:* Breathes frost (cone 70-ft long and 30-ft wide).

6421. Bynua: In the hills overlooking the grasslands there stands the last unconquered Meng village. The village is situated atop an uneven plateau, upon which the peasants grow soko (celosia) and soybeans and keep small swine.

The village is a collection of small wattle-and-daub huts, each of a tall, conical shape and colored brightly, as is common with the Meng. The village is ruled by Borchin, Bo of Bynua. Borchin is a fragile man, a young astronomer with thick glasses and a delicate face. Despite his slight figure and scholarly appearance, he is devious and charismatic and dabbles in magic.

The village is defended by a squadron of shashu no ashigaru supported by the bowyer Taisu, a lazy man with an athletic build and a penchant for the flute.

| *Borchin, Shugenja Lvl 3:* HP 9; AC 9 [10]; Save 13 (11 vs magic); CL/XP 3/60; *Special:* Spells (2nd). Gun staff, spellbook.

6426. Traders: There is a large, semi-permanent gathering of traders here – men and women who receive goods from ships that anchor off the coast and then move them into Khatan. The imperial authorities established Khatan where they did because they feared attacks by sea or river.

The traders number 1d8+10, with each trader possessing 1d3 wagons pulled by oxen. Each wagon is driven by the trader or a muleskinner and guarded by 1d3+1 ashigaru. The caravan is led by a piao-ke.

You can roll the contents of the wagons using the tables in the Venturer article in **NOD 2**.

| *Paio-ke, Bujin Lvl 5: HP 29; AC 7 [12]; Save 12 (11 vs death & poison); CL/XP 5/240; Special: Follow through, combat sense, mighty leap, parry death blow, swift motion. Haramaki-do, nine-ring broadsword, uchi-ne.*

| *Trader: HD 3; AC 5 [14]; Atk 1 weapon (1d6); Move 12; Save 14; CL/XP 3/60; Special: None.*

6432. Naimud: The rocky coast here is home to a village of fishermen in caves that have been carved and worked into cozy little homes. Their boats are tethered below, reachable via rope ladders. In these boats they fish for sharks and dive for large, coral-colored abalone.

The village houses about 50 fishermen and their families. They are a rugged folk, the equivalent of men-at-arms armed with long knives and javelins. Their main source of entertainment is gambling, which often takes dangerous forms with visitors who show off their money.

The village elder is a wiry woman named Dane. Dane is aggressive and gregarious, badgering people with her questions and always looking out for the safety and wellbeing of her village and people. The village also enjoys the ministrations of Batai, an old wise woman and healer.

6433. Mimic: A hillside here features a large, red door. The door is oval and appears to be made of wood, with brass fittings made to look like dragons. The door has a lock that seems to defy opening and is fixed so securely in place that it would take tremendous strength to open it. This is, of course, because the door is a mimic. Less scrupulous adventurers send novices to this door with promises of a vast underworld full of treasure behind it.

| *Mimic: HD 7 (48 hp); AC 6 [13]; Atk 1 smash (2d6); Move 2; Save 9; CL/XP 8/800; Special: Mimicry, glue.*

6435. Brimstone Portal: Atop a gurgling little waterfall, with banks clad in weathered, mossy stones there is a large, triangular sculpture of brassy metal. When people approach, the triangle emits a sound like distant thunder and gives off an odor reminiscent of brimstone.

Making contact with the triangle turns it into a portal to a demi-plane of burning red sands and basalt promontories. The demi-plane is inhabited by dragonnes, including a strange sub-set of intelligent dragonnes, about human-sized and possessed of great sorcerous knowledge.

While the portal can be activated by touching it, it only permits creatures to pass from the portal into Mu-Pan – and there is a 3 in 6 chance that a passing dragonne does exactly that. To pass from Mu-Pan into the other world, one must strip down and coat themselves in dragonne fat. A tiny scrawl of alien glyphs around the edges of the portal explain this process.

| *Dragonne: HD 9; AC 2 [17]; Atk 2 claws (1d6), 1 bite (2d6+1); Move 18 (Fly 9); Save 6; CL/XP 10/1400; Special: Roar (save or -1 to hit for 1 turn).*

6438. Lightning Lizards: This hex is riddled with burrows occupied by lightning lizards. During the day they sun themselves and at night they sleep away under the ground. The lizards are aggressive, and encounters with 1d6 of them occur on a roll of 1-3 on 1d6. Beneath the grasses and hills, the soil is heavily ferrous, and the area around a burrow can be highly magnetic, slowing characters in heavy, ferrous armor and imposing a -1 penalty to attack with ferrous weapons.

| *Lightning Lizard: HD 5; AC 3 [16]; Atk 2 claws (1d4), 1 bite (1d8) or Lightning Blast (4d6); Move 12; Save 12; CL/XP 7/600; Special: Lightning blast (2/day, 5d6 damage).*

6447. Demon Cave: A gaping cave overlooks the river here. It is occupied by a demon kept trapped in the cavern by a series of silver glyphs worked into the cave mouth. Nothing less than prying one of the glyphs out or casting dispel magic will release the demon.

The demon was placed here to guard Maager, a +3 *katana* that was pulled from molten adamant deep within the earth and worked into shape by oni. The sword is thoroughly evil and impregnated with darkness, casting it in a 60-ft radius and erecting walls of solid darkness (as strong as iron) once per day. The sword provides a magic

resistance (10%) to the holder. Maager must drink at least 1 hit point of blood per day, and if drawn from the owner these hit points are permanently lost.

The demon Baniz is short and broad, with six insect legs, orange, bristly skin and membranous wings. It has a serpentine head with curled, black horns, three glossy black eyes and a huge, tusked mouth. The creature is surrounded by the metallic tang of blood, and can spit streams of thick, boiling blood three times per day, the blood burning the skin of its victims.

| Baniz: HD 10 (50 hp); AC -1 [20]; Atk 4 pincers (1d8), 1 bite (1d6+1); Move 9; Save 5; CL/XP 11/1700; Special: Magic resistance (60%), demonic magical powers (darkness 10' radius, fear, levitate, polymorph), immune to fire and acid, spit blood (3/day, 60-ft steam, 6d6 damage).

6511. Akaas: Akaas is a small village of loutish woodsmen built inside a large crater. The rim of the crater is surrounded by a wooden palisade patrolled by groups of 1d3+4 yari ashigaru (20 in all) armed with explosive throwing batons (see below). The village is located roughly in the center of the crater, which is 3 miles in diameter. It consists of about twenty wooden cottages.

The crater is filled with tall poplars with bronze-colored bark. These trees are infused with an explosive, lighter-than-air gas that allows them to levitate about 40 to 50 feet off the ground. When fresh, the wood is quite explosive (thus the throwing batons), causing 1d6 points of damage in a 10-ft radius when impacted. After they have dried, they begin to float and are no longer explosive, though they do burn readily. The empire claims ownership of all trees, using them to create small, floating platforms and quick sky-junks. These items are very rare, and most existing sky-junks disappeared when the Tiger Empress was ousted from power.

Askaas is governed by an imperial mandarin named Kel. Kel is a tall, heavy man who is cautious and formal in his manner, but still sociable. Despite his formal exterior, he is very kind to children and has adopted several.

6519. Tomb of the Purple Dragon Emperor: The Purple Dragon Emperor was of Ying extraction, and never terribly popular what with the crushing taxes and daily executions. When his death seemed eminent, this tomb was constructed in the wilds. It consists of a cavern complex

clad in purple marble and hung with (now) faded tapestries telling of the glorious rise and reign of the empire – and also his rebirth. The plan was to turn the Purple Dragon Emperor into a mummy that he might reign from beyond the grave, but whether by a disloyal subject or a simple error, the process was not completed, and he now sits as a desiccated husk wrapped in silk on a marble throne with an army of 100 zombies in armor and wielding naginatas and wakizashi stationed around him as his bodyguard.

Around the periphery of the central chamber there are five marble sarcophagi holding the bodies of the Purple Dragon Emperor's harem. The bas-reliefs atop the sarcophagi reveal them to have been charming, exotic beauties, and these bas-reliefs are actually dergenie commanded to stop any plundering within the tomb.

The sarcophagi contain not only the wrapped corpses of the harem women, but also 2,327 sp and 103 gp

| Dergenie: HD 2; AC 4 [15]; Atk 1 strike (1d6); Move 12; Save 16; CL/XP 3/60; Special: Drag into stone, immunities (everything but fire, cold and weapons), earth magic deals 1d8 damage per spell level, remain in contact with stone or lose 1 hp per turn, cannot cross barrier of fire or water.

| Zombie: HD 2; AC 4 [15]; Atk 1 weapon or strike (1d8); Move 6; Save 16; CL/XP 2/30; Special: Immune to sleep and charm.

6528. Oni-Aka Goblins: A tribe of 60 oni-aka goblins dwells here along the coast in a promontory of basalt riddled with small tunnels. Eerie music fills the air around the mound, though it is often drowned out by the honking and roaring of the seals that sun themselves on the rocky coast beneath the promontory. The goblins are led by a trio of chiefs, Qadan, Dolun and Daniz, each with 4 HD.

At the center of the mound there is, embedded in the stone, a large, magic pipe cast in adamant. It is the source of the eerie music, the many tunnels of the mound supplying an inhalation and exhalation of the sea air. If it can be removed (which would take about 1 week of work by skilled stone-cutters), it is capable of casting charms and suggestions in the hands of a flutist.

6542. Axe Beaks: The vast, empty grasslands are interrupted here by a ruined temple. The temple is composed of 100 stones, tumbled and piled, some about 20 feet from the mass. Many of these stones are decorated with the faces and bodies of nymphs and their very

forward suitors. One of these stones contains a ruby worth 3,000 gp and cut in such a way as to act as a key to the doors in the Tomb of the Dragonne Queen [6605]. The hex is inhabited by axe beaks – encounters with 1d6 of the terrors occurs on a roll of 1-3 on 1d6.

6549. Sukhir: Sukhir is a young adult dragon that maintains a warm and cozy lair here among the snowy peaks. During the day, she can be found sunning herself or riding the currents. Sukhir is covered with golden feathers that turn buff on her chest. She is 12 feet long and weighs about 1,000 lb. Her lair is a simple cave, about 400 feet long and angled downward and then upward, so that the actual lair is located higher than the entrance. Melting snow has created a small pond of icy, fresh water in the middle. Sulhir maintains a smoldering fire pit to make the place more comfortable for her.

| *Sukhir: HD 12 (48 hp); AC 0 [19]; Atk 1 bite (1d10), tail club (1d10); Move 12 (F24); Save 3; CL/XP 14/2600; Special: Regenerate 3 hp/round unless damaged with acid, breath line of acid (3/day, 60-ft long), when tail knob strikes ground it causes a tremor (save or knocked prone).*

6601. Cavemen: A clan of cavemen (85 men, 65 woman and 46 children), elk worshippers, dwell here in a complex of caves. The valleys beneath their lair are thick with elk, silver foxes and a variety of birds. The cavemen hunt with atlats. Their lair is protected by six totems – natural pillars of salt topped with the preserved heads of elks. The cavemen are ruled by Ban, a 5 HD warrior. His mate is Agin, who can cast spells as a 3rd level wushen.

6605. Tomb of the Dragonne Queen: The Dragonne Queen was among the last of the Meng rulers. Her tomb is an elaborate affair hidden deep within the mountains and among the pines. The tomb consists of a hall carved from the living stone and decorated with faded paintings of the queen's life. These paintings hide three secret doors, two of which lead to traps, the third leading to the final resting place (and treasure trove) of the ancient queen.

These chambers actually rotate from left to right. They are always in the order of trap – trap – treasure. All three doors can only be opened by inserting the ruby from [6542] into a small depression in the door. The two traps are as follows:

[A] This chamber is circular, with three bas-reliefs of white dragons against the walls. In the middle of the room there

is a crystal throne, upon which sits the wrapped body of the queen decked out in at least 10,000 gp worth of jewels. The corpse and treasure is an illusion. Stepping into the center of the room and touching the illusion causes the dragons to each breath a *cone of cold* (6d6 damage).

[B] This circular room holds a standing sarcophagus of gleaming gold (actually brass on limestone – worth about 100 gp). Opening the sarcophagus causes a shower of acid to pour down from the ceiling. The acid causes 6d6 points of damage the first round and then an additional 1d6 points of damage per round until neutralized with salt.

[C] This circular room holds a slab, upon which lies the body of the queen preserved in wax. Around the slab is a royal treasure of 2,840 gp, a terracotta box holding 2 pounds of nutmeg (worth 500 gp per pound) and a very ornate, pretty bottle containing deadly poison.

6610. Magmin: The landscape here dips into a deep, basalt basin. In many places, the cliffs are sheer, and outcroppings of obsidian abound. At the deepest part of the basin there are magma pools that bubble and spit. A shugenja named Naima has captured a magmin from one of the pools in a magic circle and is questioning it about the vaults beneath the White Mountains, while her partner, a bored samurai named Akara looks on. The two know that there is an entrance within the basin to the underworld, and believe the magmin can provide them with the location. They are happy to join forces with the party, and while brave enough they are not honest.

| *Magmin: HD 2 (4 hp); AC 2 1[7]; Atk 1 burning touch (1d8 plus combustion); Move 12; Save 16; CL/XP 3/60; Special: Touch causes fires, immune to fire, metal weapons that strike a magmin must save or be melted instantly.*

| *Naima, Shugenja Lvl 5: HP 12; AC 9 [10]; Save 11 (9 vs magic); CL/XP 4/120; Special: Spells (3rd). Gun staff, tanto (3), spellbook.*

| *Akara, Bujin Lvl 7: HP 3d6+1; AC 2 [17]; Save 14 (13 vs death & poison); CL/XP 3/60; Special: Follow through, ferocity. Kabuto, kote, hara-ate, haidate, jo staff, shuriken (7).*

6616. Abbey of Umborodom: An abbey dedicated to Umborodom, whose hound is the thunder, has been built atop a tall peak. A winding stair connects the abbey to the valley below, the stairs being carved from the living stone, very narrow and steep, and sometimes winding through caverns. In these two caverns, there are secret doors that connect with caverns deeper in the mountain where the

monks bury their dead (casting them in bronze and then ornamenting them with complex engravings) and store their treasures.

The abbey is commanded by Temaag, an aging wushen with a deep resentment of the Nakda invaders, though he does his best to hide his distaste. Temaag is handsome and well-muscled, with a ponderous intellect and monumental patience. Under him are sixteen lesser wushen.

The vault within the mountain contains not only monetary treasure, but also three ancient relics of the wushen. There is a twisted bronze rod that can fill an area 500-feet in radius with a brilliant light that is treated just as natural sunlight, a bronze pectoral inset with opals that can create a solid wall of light (per a wall of force) once per day, and a set of chimera-hide gauntlets that can fire a searing ray once per day. These rays deal 4d6 points of damage to normal creatures and 4d8 points of damage to the undead.

| *Temaag, Wushen Lvl 10: HP 33; AC 9 [10]; Save 5; CL/XP 11/1700; Special: Spells (5th), turn undead, fists of iron, sundering chop, elemental spirits. Sanjiegun, prayer beads.*

6623. Mine of Death: A gold mine here was caved in long ago. There are old, rusted picks and other accoutrements of mining scattered around the entrance. One can delve about 50 feet into the mine before reaching the caved-in section, which is 20 feet long. Behind the cave-in there are twelve leper zombies.

| *Leper Zombie: HD 1; AC 6 [13]; Atk 1 claw or bite (1d6); Move 9; Save 17; CL/XP 3/60; Special: Disease, those slain animate as leper zombies*

6636. Earth Stone: These jungles hold a cave complex where lies a *stone of controlling earth elementals*. The stone looks like a tablet of solid emerald. It lies in a deep pit, the walls of which are carved with bas-reliefs of yellow-skinned demons with long tongues and triple horns.

The stone rests on a pedestal carved to look like a demonic hand, the stone lying in the palm. Any attempt to grab the stone causes the hand to close (save or arm is caught and crushed for 2d6 damage) and five of the demon bas-reliefs to come to life and leave the wall. The “demons” are actually a single demon, a glabrezu, who begins the game with four *mirror images* (per the spell).

Worse yet, poisonous gas begins seeping into the pit, filling one foot of the pit per round. Those who come into

contact with the gas must save each round or fall dead asleep. Should a group be rendered unconscious, they will awake to find themselves in the deep mines of the subterranean mogura-jin as slaves.

Even if the demons are defeated, the place is further defended by twenty crumblers (rock men) each armed with two metal rods that, when clanged together, cause 1d6 points of sonic damage to all within 10 feet (double to crystalline creatures or objects) and *deafness* in those who fail a saving throw.

| *Crumbler: HD 1; AC 4[15]; Atk 1 thrown rock (1d4) or fist (1d4); Move 0; Save 17; CL/XP 2/30; Special: Immunities.*

| *Stone Demon: HD 10 (40 hp); AC -3 [22]; Atk 2 pincers (2d6), 2 claws (1d3), 1 bite 1d4+1; Move 9; Save 5; CL/XP 11/1700; Special: Magic resistance (60%), immune to fire, demonic magical powers (at will - darkness 10-ft radius, fear, levitate, polymorph self).*

6639. Quanan: There is a village here occupied by 280 halflings, former slaves of the Tiger Empress who were freed by the Jade Empress and given this land. The halflings have 235 goodwives and 105 wee ones. They dwell in sod houses and keep pygmy goats and chickens, as well as growing gardens of squash, wormwood and lychee. They keep 64 war ponies and four guard dogs. The village mandarin is Unua, a Meng scholar with a fascination for the little folk of the north. Some of the halflings were taken from the land of Yore and are thus plump and round faces, with auburn to brown to golden blonde hair, but most were captured from the Golden Steppe, being taller, lankier and having golden brown skin and black hair.

| *Halfling: HD 1d6; AC 3 [16]; Atk 1 weapon (1d6); Move 6; Save 18; CL/XP B/10; Special: None.*

6720. Tengu: A trail heading into the mountains is guarded by three bulbous-nosed tengu. These particular tengu claim they are here to aid travelers, warning them that the trail ahead is flanked by dozens of angry pines that throw their needles like porcupines unless properly cowed. The trees are frightened by loud noises – one must bang bits of metal and scream at the top of their lungs.

The tengu are lying – there are no such trees, though they will gladly supply volleys of their own slim darts if travelers deign to ignore their warning. They will explain that at the end of the trail there is a cave wherein lives an old hermit capable of answering any question.

When (or if) characters reach the hermit, they will find a haggard old man with long white hair and a long, white beard. The man is happy to answer any question, but he is very deaf and will find it quite difficult to hear anyone who has been screaming at trees for the last hour of travel.

| *Tengu: HD 5; AC 2 [17]; Atk 1 weapon; Move 9 (F24); Save 12; CL/XP 7/600; Special: Spells as 5th level shugenja.*

6733. Yuletho: The shallow, warm waters on the coast here are home to Yuletho, an enormous creature that combines the features of a gorilla and an octopus. The creature has smooth, green skin, four tentacles and a gorilla-like head with a poisonous beak. This portion of the coast is avoided by most sailors.

| *Yuletho: HD 12 (38 hp); AC 9 [10]; Atk 1 bite (1d6), 2 arms (1d10); Move 15 (S18); Save 3; CL/XP 15/2900; Special: Immune to electricity, those struck by the arms must save or be grappled and squeezed for 1d10 damage, poisonous bite (save at +1 or die).*

6735. Puppeteers: Four worm-like puppeteers have managed to charm themselves onto the necks of a band of adventurers. They are using the adventurers to get themselves into the Meng underworld, where they hope to find a way back to their home star.

| *Puppeteer: HD 1d4; AC 3 [16]; Atk Bite (1 plus enthrall); Move 3; Save 18; CL/XP 1/15; Special: Charm monster, enthrall (save or under complete control), immune to ESP and other mental spells, telepathy.*

| *Naimam, Bujin Lvl 5: HP 22; AC 5 [14]; Save 12 (11 vs death & poison); CL/XP 5/240; Special: Follow through, estimate foe, iron hold, parry blows. Hanburi, hara-ate-gawa, haidate, dao, shuriken (6).*

| *Suny, Shugenja Lvl 6: HP 15; AC 9 [10]; Save 10 (8 vs magic); CL/XP 4/120; Special: Spells (3rd). Tanto, shuriken (8), spellbook.*

| *Qoryn, Ninja Lvl 6: HP 18; AC 9 [10]; Save 9 (7 vs. death & poison); CL/XP 3/60; Special: Move silently, hide in shadows, climb sheer surfaces, backstab x3, read languages. Jo staff, tanto (2), hankyu.*

| *Sawa, Sohei Lvl 5: HP 13; AC 6 [13] front, 8 [11] back; Save 10 (8 vs death & poisons); CL/XP 5/240; Special: Banish undead, spells (3rd). Jingasa, hara-ate, jiujielbian, shuriken (8), prayer beads.*

6743. Qorchun: Qorchun is a small village of ill-tempered hunters at the end of a long, crude road that extends to a small bay on the Wako Sea. The road is paved in blocks of chalk and is very rough and almost nonexistent in some stretches. The village is a cluster of chalk houses on a tiny plateau with steep sides and a single narrow stair guarded by a squadron of ashigaru.

The village is ruled by an elder named Qoaiji, a husky old man as ill-tempered as his people (or more so). He brooks no interference from outsiders, even imperial troops, and has three trained shar-pei to see his will done.

The hunters keep shar-pei and primarily hunt the black bears that roam these hills, taking them for their meat and their furs. They arm themselves with spears and bows.

| *Shar-Pei: HD 2; AC 3 [16]; Atk 1 bite (1d6); Move 15; Save 16; CL/XP 2/30; Special: None.*

6748. Southern Arch: A small valley here is spanned by a brilliant arch of gleaming white stone, referred to by the locals as the *Bridge of Heaven*. The valley beneath the arch, which was manufactured but seems to be carved from a single, large piece of stone, there is a domed abbey of ivory-colored stone. The dome is clad in bronze. The abbey is dedicated to Bumbo, the bodhisattva of fertility and growth. Bumbo appears as a curvaceous matron with the head of a sheep with golden wool. Her idol sits in the lotus position and holds a bowl of rice in one hand and a bowl of cashews in the other. A tourmaline worth 100 gp is set in the idol's forehead as a third eye.

The abbey grounds are grazed by a herd of wondrous sheep with golden wool that gleams like the sun. The wool tarnishes if the sheep leave the valley, but here it can be spun into cloth-of-gold, which it is.

The abess is Chakai, a hulking and unforgiving man with ten underlings. His valley is currently overcrowded with refugees from small farmholds due to ogre attacks. The hexes around this one are being raided by a band of twenty ogres from the southern jungles.

| *Chakai, Wushen Lvl 10: HP 23; AC 9 [10]; Save 5; CL/XP 11/1700; Special: Spells (5th), turn undead, combat sense, parry blows, elemental spirits. Kama, hankyu, prayer beads.*

6806. Beacon Tower: A reddish tower has been constructed here atop a sheer cliff of granite studded with small alexandrites. The tower was constructed as one of a series of beacon towers, meant to warn the people of the lowlands of impending attacks by the oni of the mountains. Those other towers have been dismantled or crumbled over the years, as the ogre menace was gradually reduced to an annoyance by the forces of the empire.

This surviving tower is three stories tall, the interior holding living quarters for about four people, a storage room/kitchen and the top holding a large, tarnished bronze basin that once acted like a massive oil lamp.

The tower has now been infested with crabnipedes, and would hardly be worth notice if not for the magical peach that lies now in the hands of a skeletal visitor lying upon a dusty couch. Shugenja who see the peach can tell instantly that it is magical – it practically throbs with energy and is likely to give them a headache if they stay in its presence for long. It is a peach of immortality, the taste of which forces mere mortals to pass a saving throw or be burned to a crisp. Those who survive enjoy one hundred years of life without aging and generally good health (+4 bonus to save vs. poison and disease.)

| *Crabnipe*: HD 4; AC 4 [15]; Atk 4 claws (1d4), 1 bite (1d6 + paralysis); Move 6 (Swim 12); Save 13; CL/XP 5/240; Special: Paralysis poison (1d6 turns).

6808. Buried Treasure: There appears to be the vestiges of a treasure mound here, complete with a broken spade. Digging into the mound reveals a large cave bear skull and nothing more.

6811. Silver Dragon: An old, silver-scaled wyrm dwells here amidst the ruins of Sanoyon, an old village that mined a bluish metal called cobalt (along with arsenic, sulfur and iron). The dwelled in the caves above and grew tired of the foul fumes emitted by the mining operation. The dragon, Jinyn, is about the size of a human being, with no forelegs and a body and head reminiscent of a turtle.

| *Jinyn*: HD 5 (25 hp); AC 8 [11]; Atk 1 bite (1d4); Move 12 (F24); Save 12; CL/XP 8/800; Special: +1 or better weapon to hit, breath cone of fire.

6818. Alchemist: In the mountains surrounding the Uncanny Valley there is an alchemist named Touktem. Touktem is a small, hunched man with mottled skin, a wide mouth and leering eyes. A brilliant alchemist, he is capable of brewing poisons, anti-venoms and potions of *polymorph other*, which is uses liberally on those who displease him, changing them into toads. He keeps these toads in little cages in his laboratory, taking excellent care of them.

6828. Shark Men: A clan of 46 shark men dwells beneath the waves here in a palace of gold and crystal with tiles of mother-of-pearl and furniture carved from black stone.

The palace is surrounded by gardens of anemone and kelp. The lesser shark men serve in the palace and herd the giant sea turtles that the shark men use as beasts of burden and war. The palace is ruled by a gold dragon called Tebtai. His palace guard consists of twelve shark man shugenja.

The shark men have a treasure of 16,000 sp, 15,100 gp and a silver ring worth 5,000 gp.

| *Tebtai, Gold Dragon*: HD 11 (44hp); AC 2 [17]; Atk 2 claws (1d6), 1 bite (3d8); Move 12 (Fly 24); Save 4; CL/XP 14/2600; Special: Fire or chlorine breath, spells as 4th level shugenja.

| *Shark Man*: HD 6+1; AC 4 [15]; Atk 2 weapons (1d8); Move 12 (S24); Save 11; CL/XP 7/600; Special: Amphibious, ki shout, ruby blood, magic resistance (10%).

| *Palace Guard, Shugenja Lvl 3*: 6+1; AC 4 [15]; Atk 2 weapons (1d8); Move 12 (S24); Save 11; CL/XP 8/800; Special: Amphibious, ki shout, ruby blood, magic resistance (10%), spells as 2nd level shugenja.

6836. Natural Springs: The Claw River originates here as a series of natural springs on a grassy tableland. The water springs from the ground pure and cold and supports several small herds of mountain sheep and three karkadanns who prey on them.

| *Karkadann*: HD 10; AC 3 [16]; Atk 1 gore (2d6); Move 12; Save 6; CL/XP 10/1400; Special: None.

6842. Tili: Tili is a small village of hunters and trappers who work the tangled, verdant hills here, sending their wares on to Sin-Kalam. The hunters primarily prey on wild mouflon, selling their meat and hides. Some villagers pan gold from the river while others grow rice on terraced fields and brew a fine choujio highly favored by the Chan of the Ying, who sits in Sin-Kalam.

The village is ruled by the elder Guqa, a goldsmith and wealthy merchant with a rotund body and mournful face. He talks constantly about the good old days and has never gotten over the death of his wife. His rival in the village is Merke, a scholarly sage and priest of Yarni-Zai.

6846. Sin-Kalam: Sin-Kalam is the dark city of the Ying. It is a vibrant city-state that would be more vibrant if it were not for the corruption. The city takes in a large amount of cargo from the Motherlands and Kirikersa, sending it along the river and the Grand Canal to the center of Mu-Pan. The city is ostensibly ruled by the Chan of the Ying, but is actually ruled by a number of competing tongs. Of course,

the tongs are actually dominated by a single entity, known as the Lord in the Shadows, who might be a ninja lord, ancient black dragon or a revolving number of gang leaders. In any event, he controls a secret army of ninja.

Shopkeepers, artisans and even noble families pay the tongs for protection. People communicate with the tongs via colored lanterns hung in front of their houses. Each tong has a different code. The people of Sin-Kalan are surprisingly mellow, leaving things like vengeance and justice to the tongs, as one tong demands payment from another for a wrong done by one of their customers. The tongs show up once per month to collect their so-called “assessments”.

Since the tongs are all under control of the Lord in the Shadows, they are composed mostly of petty bureaucrats who swagger about with their swords displayed, often stare people (or each other) down in the streets and throw their weight around, but never get into fights. The tong members are considered normal humans (1d6 hit points) rather than warriors. Ironically, about 1% of adults in the city-state are actually members of the Lord in the Shadows secret ninja army (roll 1d3 for level), leaving the normal citizenry more dangerous than the thugs.

No people in Sin-Kalam are permitted to own silver, gold or copper save the king and the Lord in the Shadows. Coins brought into the city-state must be exchanged for porcelain tokens marked with black (copper), blue (silver) and red (gold) glyphs. There is a 10% fee charged for this exchange of metal for porcelain.

All trade in the city is conducted in wide, circular plazas. Merchants are clustered in the center of the plaza around a tall platform on which stands a city magistrate who essentially acts as an auctioneer. Samurai are stationed around the merchants and throughout the plaza holding a series of flags. Customers call for what they want and what they'll pay, which is communicated by the flags to the magistrate. The merchants then bid for the businesses. The transaction is then facilitated by the samurai, in their black lacquered armor, who take a 10% cut from both sides. This makes Sin-Kalam a more expensive city than it should be.

6905. Fire Snake: A fire snake dwells in a pit atop an ancient stone semi-pyramid. The pit is fed by a

brotherhood of wushen who dwell like wild men in the mountains, collecting bunches of sticks on their backs for the little “pet of Inzana” atop the temple.

| *Fire Snake:* HD 2; AC 2 [17]; Atk 1 bite (1d4 + paralysis); Move 9 (C12); Save 16; CL/XP 4/60; Special: Paralysis, immune to fire, double damage from cold, surprise (4 in 6).

6916. Abbey of Hish: The weird god of silence has an abbey here built as a series of freestanding brick buildings surrounding a geyser that is holy to the god (or so claim his priests). The abbey houses seventeen morose sohei, men and women in black lacquered armor who carry tetsubo and wear tabi on their feet. They are sworn to silence, speaking using the sign language common to the priests of Hish. The abbot is Temur, a large man who is as solid as stone and implacable as the tides.

| *Temur, Sohei Lvl 10:* HP 29; AC 4 [15]; Save 5 (3 vs death & poisons); CL/XP 10/1400; Special: Banish undead, spells (5th). Hanburi, sode, hara-ate-gawa, haidate, naginata, uchi-ne, prayer beads.

6923. Leper Monks: A band of leper zombies disguised as monks are traveling through this hex. The zombies wear black robes and veiled turbans hung with dozens silver bells. They seek entry into the Uncanny Valley to steal a special clock for their master, Yunua [6122].

| *Leper Zombie:* HD 1; AC 6 [13]; Atk 1 claw or bite (1d6); Move 9; Save 17; CL/XP 3/60; Special: Disease, those slain animate as leper zombies

6925. Oni-Aka Wako: Not a drink from a tiki bar, but a vicious band of goblin pirates. They occupy a creaky junk that has been painted bright red (so it will go faster). There are 30 goblins in all armed with bows and long knives, as well as three catapults that they use to launch bags of diseased rats onto enemy vessels. The leader of the wako is Yemunli the Cat, a cat hengeyokai ninja. Yemunli appears as a slender woman with a morose face and cold eyes.

| *Yemunli the Cat, Hengeyokai Ninja Lvl 8:* HP 15; AC 9 [10]; Save 7 (5 vs. death & poison); CL/XP 4/120; Special: Move silently, hide in shadows, climb sheer surfaces, backstab x3, read languages, assume cat form. Nagamaki, hankyu.

| *Oni-aka (Red Goblin):* HD 1; AC 6[13]; Atk 1 weapon (1d6); Move 9; Save 17; CL/XP 1/15; Special: Fire resistant.

6932. Abbey of Limpang-Tung: Limpang-Tung, the Dancing Lord, has an abbey here on the coast. The abbey is a spacious, sprawling complex of gardens, shrines and buildings constructed of bright, blue bricks. The place is alive with music and dancing night and day, with the

upkeep left to a tribe of servile goblins dressed in silks and satins and armed with hook swords.

The abbess is Qasar, a graceful, seductive priestess garbed in silks. The lesser priestesses number eleven. They are married to Limpang-Tung, and thus completely chaste (in theory, anyways). Many ships send boats to visit the abbey when they pass, wishing blessings for a good voyage.

| *Qasar, Sohei* Lvl 10: HP 27; AC 6 [13]; Save 5 (3 vs death & poisons); CL/XP 10/1400; Special: Banish undead, spells (5th). Hanburi, haramaki, sode, nine-ring broadsword, prayer beads.

7009. Blazing Bridge: The Sonossur River flows through a gorge here, with small waterfalls pouring from the porous rock and into the river. The gorge and river are crossed by a high bridge, set 60 feet above the water. Along the length of the bridge there are seven large braziers, always aflame. In each brazier there sits a skeleton, its bones charred and black. These skeletons are undead - blazing bones – and placed as guardians. They always challenge folk crossing the bridge, though they do not pursue folk who leave the bridge, instead returning to their places.

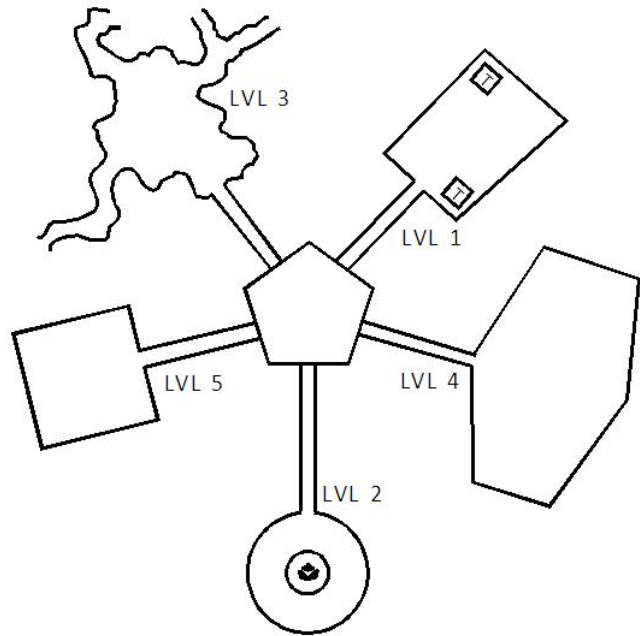
At roughly the center of the bridge there is a secret trapdoor that leads into a tunnel that runs the length of the bridge. To the south, the tunnel leads to the quarters of Dorjeb, a shugenja of the banned Vermillion Order. His rival, Kabok lives in quarters to the north. The two despise one another and constantly plot and plan one another's demise. Each has a small coterie of undead creatures and servitor daemons, including a succubus double agent they use to gather material for spell research.

| *Dorjeb, Shugenja* Lvl 7: HP 18; AC 9 [10]; Save 9 (7 vs magic); CL/XP 6/400; Special: Spells (4th). Tanto, shuriken (4), spellbook.

| *Kabok, Shugenja* Lvl 7: HP 20; AC 9 [10]; Save 9 (7 vs magic); CL/XP 6/400; Special: Spells (4th). Tanto, shuriken (4), spellbook.

| *Blazing Bones:* HD 3; AC 4 [15]; Atk 2 claws (1d4 + 1d4 fire); Move 12; Save 14; CL/XP 4/120; Special: Immune to fire.

7014. Ice Dungeon: In the eternally snow clad peaks of there is a circular gateway barred with silver bars. This gateway leads to a large (60 feet wide), pentagonal chamber covered in ice. The ice seems to have flown from the ceiling, forming a pillar in which one can see a figure. This ice is impervious to damage from anything less than a +3 weapon and fire, even magical fire, does not melt it.



This central pillar is surrounded by five trapdoors that give way when stepped on (a 3 in 6 chance each round if people are looking at the central pillar). These trapdoors lead to icy chutes that descend to each of the five levels of the dungeons below, in which is hidden The Maiden with the Piercing Voice. She alone can crack the icy pillar and release the avenging angel Laas, a movanic deva trapped here millennia ago by evil dragons.

[LVL 1] The chute deposits adventurers at one end of a long hall. The hall is quite frigid, with white walls and a black ceiling and floor. The floor is pierced in places with small holes about 2 inches in diameter that are quite hard to see (as find secret doors). Underneath the floor there is a small black pudding capable of bubbling up through these holes to attack and then escape back into the holes, though bubbling up and back down takes 2 rounds. Two trap doors in the ceiling, equally difficult to find and covered in a layer of ice (8 points of damage from piercing weapons or 4 points of damage from heat to remove), lead to the remainder of the level.

| *Black Puddings:* HD 6; AC 6 [13]; Atk 1 attack (3d8); Move 6; Save 5; CL/XP 7/1700; Special: Acidic surface, immune to cold, divides when hit with lightning.

[LVL 2] The chute deposits adventurers in a cramped tunnel that leads to a large, circular gallery clad entirely in white marble. At the center of this room there is a statue composed of three warrior maidens armed with swords,

standing atop a circular dais, facing the walls, their swords raised above their heads and touching at the points.

These statues are Marrosian statues, created by the ophidians and guardians. The three exits from this room are illusions cast upon the solid walls. The only real exit is the dais, which is really an elevator leading to the rest of this dungeon level.

| *Marrosian Statue*: HD 3; AC 1 [18]; Atk 1 stone weapon (1d8); Move 12; Save 14; CL/XP 5/240; Special: Soul Chill, Slashing/Piercing Resistance.

[LVL 3] The ice chute that leads to the third dungeon level deposits adventurers in a vast series of frigid caverns coated in ice. Deadfalls and deadly icicles are common here, and the entrance cavern is the lair of a deasic, also known as an ice creeper.

| *Deasic (Ice Creeper)*: HD 9; AC 3 [16]; Atk 1 smother (2d6) or 3 ice daggers (1d4); Move 6; Save 6; CL/XP 10/1400; Special: Smothers, explosion of shards, immunities.

[LVL 4] The chute to level four leads to a large, vaulted chamber clad in dark gray stone and silver highlights. The chamber is littered with bones and filled with the melodies of ghostly flutes. At the back of the chamber there is a great pile of treasure – coins, baubles, jewels – underneath a sleeping white dragon. At least, it appears to be a white dragon. In fact, it is a dragolem, a construct clad in the skin of several white dragons. Up close, the beast almost appears to be some manner of undead.

The treasure is composed of 30,000 copper coins; the jewelry and other baubles are made of tin, the gemstones are colored glass. The treasure is not entirely worthless, though, as there are several large, pentagonal coins that, when pressed into similarly shaped depressions on the walls, open the secret door in the chamber.

| *Dragolem*: HD 8 (23 hp); AC 2 [17]; Atk 2 claws (1d6), 1 bite (2d10) or breath; Move 12 (F24); Save 8; CL/XP 11/1700; Special: Breath, Immunities.

[LVL 5] The fifth chute leads to a square chamber, 30 feet wide and long with a 20-ft high ceiling. The floor is tiled in obsidian and marble – black and white – and the walls are obsidian. The room is quite chilly, but the walls are intensely hot (1d6 points of damage if touched). On the far wall there stands a large, brass construct. Attached to the construct's back there is a coffin of translucent steel in which is held The Maiden with the Piercing Voice in

suspended animation. The maiden wears an unadorned iron crown that can be activated by inserting stones held by the stone maidens in [7706].

Stepping on an obsidian tile causes the room to become, instantly, as hot as an oven, dealing 1d4 points of damage per round to any living creature not immune to fire.

| *Brass Man*: HD 10; AC 4 [15]; Atk 1 slam or weapon (3d6); Move 6; Save 5; CL/XP 12/2000; Special: Spit molten brass (6d6), +1 weapon to hit, slowed by lightning, healed by fire, immune to spells.

7019. Abbey of Fu Lu Shou: The three star gods, Fu, Lu and Shou, have an abbey here. The abbey is populated by a dozen hunched, ancient men who have made themselves immortal by ingesting quicksilver, but also made themselves frail, sickly and slightly mad. The monks dress in crimson robes and have mouths filled with gold teeth. The primary product of the abbey is the false flesh worn by the mechanical men of the Uncanny Valley.

The abbey is a small castle made of the brown-green stone common to the area. The abbey is two stories tall, the lower story containing an alchemical laboratory with a dozen copper vats, the upper story having living quarters and libraries. At the center of the upper story there is a 30-ft tall spire of gleaming crystal that projects the circling stars on the walls of the abbey's inner sanctum.

Just south of the abbey lies Yemuku, a human farming village that grows barley, buckwheat and raspberries. The village is known for the beauty of its women – strong, healthy women much sought after for their courage and charming personalities.

7034. Monastery of the Raging Rat: The Ying have built a monastery here dedicated to raging rat-style kung-fu and the study of the Scrolls of Master Tulan, a series of scrolls containing the wisdom of the founder of the order.

The monastery consists of a dozen domes (about 4 feet tall) constructed of marble the color of aged ivory. The domes are entered through the top. Under the domes are chambers dug into the earth. These chambers are connected via bricked tunnels. The monastery houses five lesser monks under the tutelage of Tabort, the abbot. Tabort is a round man with a cheerful face and a decidedly snippy attitude. He and his monks dress in black tunics, wrapping their legs and arms in white bandages.

| *Tabort, Bujin Lvl 10: HP 41; AC 9 [10]; Save 7 (6 vs death & poison); CL/XP 10/1400; Special: Follow through, ki shout, headling charge, mighty leap, combat sense. Nagamaki, shuriken (9).*

7111. Star Freighter: A long, sleek ship is moored here in the river – much further upriver than it could ever have traveled had it come from the sea. The ship is fifty feet long, with a 10-ft long brass beak in the front, two levels of ports along the sides for oars (below) and weapon fire (above), no masts and the upper deck is completely enclosed. The ship is made from glossy, greenish-black wood and decorated with brass fittings.

The crew consists of sixty human slaves below deck (the oarsmen), seventeen dakon merchants, their captain Yost and his coterie of five human dancing girls. The humans are tall and graceful, with dark spring green skin, large, buff eyes and over-long earlobes. The dakon come from Veneris, having arrived via the Astral Plane with the help of the brass beak. The beak is activated by striking it with a tuning fork stuck in the captain's sash.

The lower hold of the ship is filled with barrels and crates of strange viands from the jungles of Veneris being delivered to Kasuda [6314]. A large, iron box deftly locked holds a captive coeurl on its way to the arenas of Saturnis.

The captain has lost his way and will be found with his dakon crew sitting atop their vessel and consulting strange, wire models - maps of the Astral Plane.

| *Coeurl: HD 6+6 (30 hp); AC 2 [17]; Atk 2 tentacles (2d4); Move 15; Save 5; CL/XP 7/600; Special: Improved saving throws, telepathy.*

| *Dakon: HD 2; AC 4 [15]; Atk 2 claws (1d6); Move 12 (C12); Save 16; CL/XP 2/30; Special: None.*

7121. Mechanical Village: There is a small village of herdsmen here. The herdsmen are the mechanical folk of the Uncanny Valley. The villagers keep sheep and doves, using the latter to produce wool for their own clothing and for export to the empire. They are ruled by San-Guan, a mandarin of the valley's Primarch.

7124. Temple of Slid: There is a large temple of Slid here



on the island in the delta of the Fast River. The temple consists of a series of square structures built of jade-colored marble. These structures measure about 15 feet wide and long and 12 feet tall, with floors and ceilings of marble, four pillars in each corner. Curtains of water flow from the roof, providing privacy for the people inside.

Interspersed between these structures there are slick stone causeways that cross shallow pools that connect to the sea. These pools are inhabited by all manner of sea life, including playful (though slightly frightening) ningyo and nixies, small sharks, sea stars and slugs, sea urchins and all manner of fish.

The temple houses 18 priests who wear nothing but white loincloths and large necklaces of silver bells. They are led by Tagu, a fine-boned woman with gray-green eyes.

About one mile away there is a fishing village of men and women dedicated to Slid. They dress as the priests, adding only bits of jewelry made from shells and driftwood. The villagers collect shellfish and dive for pearls.

| *Tagu, Crab Hengeyokai Wushen Lvl 9: HP 23; AC 9 [10]; Save 6; CL/XP 10/1400; Special: Spells (5th), turn undead, deflect missiles, parry blows, elemental spirits, assume crab form. Dao, shuriken (6), prayer beads.*

7132. Ghosts: This hex is strewn with natural tunnels through ancient, hardened lava flows. The tunnels are crawling with ghosts (encounter with 1d4 on a roll of 1-3 on 1d6) who mostly feed on the carrion of animals of the region – seals on the shore, birds, etc. They relish the chance to feed on humanoids, and are cunning in the way they stalk, wear down and eventually overcome them.

The ghosts worship what appears to be an ancient basalt idol of a grinning god with a gap-toothed smile and a domed skull. The idol is actually a large, ancient mimic. The ghosts bring the idol their left overs and any treasures they might come across. There are currently 50 cp, 200 sp and 720 gp piled up around it.

| *Ghost: HD 4; AC 4 [15]; Atk 2 claws (1d3), 1 bite (1d6); Move 14; Save 13; CL/XP 5/240; Special: Stench, paralyzing touch.*

| *Giant Mimic: HD 9 (28 hp); AC 6 [13]; Atk 1 smash (2d6); Move 2; Save 9; CL/XP 8/800; Special: Mimicry, glue.*

7139. Ferec: A small tribe of fox centaurs cavort here amid the long grass and mandarin trees. They dwell under rattan lean-tos and mostly keep to themselves, hunting the

mouflon that roam the hills. The ferec number thirty, and they are insatiably curious about outsiders.

| *Ferec: HD 6+3; AC 7 [12]; Atk 2 weapons (1d6) and 1 bite (1d4); Move 18; Save 11; CL/XP 6/400XP; Special: Cannot be surprised.*

7207. Keeper of the Flame: A hermit who calls himself the “Keeper of the Flame” lives in a cottage here in the mountains. A mountain giant from the deeper Mountains of Dawn came along at some point in the night and decided to take a rest on the cottage. It is now in terrible shape, of course, and the “Keeper of the Flame” is trapped inside. Mountain giants are well known to be slow of mind, and there is every chance this one will sit for up to a week. The hermit is an old warrior who retired here to escape the tumult of the outside world. His only companion is an old chow chow he calls Gojo. He has become slightly mad in his old age – he keeps no “flame”, though if asked about it he will weave quite a tale, saying it is a magic weapon, a hidden princess or some kind of scroll.

| *Mountain Giant: HD 18; AC 2 [17]; Atk 1 club (6d6); Move 12; Save 3; CL/XP 19/4100; Special: Throw boulders.*

| *Keeper of the Flame, Bujin Lvl 8: HP 27; AC 5 [14]; Save 9 (8 vs death & poison); CL/XP 8/800; Special: Follow through, ferocity, headlong charge, ki shout. Do-maru, haidate, wakizashi, tanto, shuriken (5).*

7214. Snow Maiden: A yuki-onna lurks here, around an old, frozen tower that serves as a spiral stairway deep into the mountains and ultimately to the vaults of the Meng.

| *Yuki-onna: HD 5 (18 hp); AC 7 [12]; Atk 1 strike (1d4); Move 12; Save 12; CL/XP 10/1400; Special: Breath weapon (10-ft cone of cold, 3d6 damage), camouflage, only harmed by silver weapons, spells (charm person, fear (gaze), gaseous form, gust of wind).*

7216. Lord Baatag’s Tomb: The Meng warlord Baatag was interred in a subterranean tomb here. The entrance is sealed with a slab of marble inset with a bronze bas-relief of Baatag carrying his famous pair of war fans. The slab can be moved with a total strength of 60.

[A] The entrance chamber is decorated with holy symbols and talismans hanging from the ceiling like wind chimes. If the chimes are all sounded simultaneously – by wind for example – everyone in the room is teleported into the dungeons beneath the Mountains of Dawn, where dwell the subterranean Meng.

[B] This long hall is lined with terracotta warrior statues and the walls decorated with captured standards and daishō hung on the walls. At the end of the hall there is a pair of bronze doors chained from the inside. The chains are attached to plugs in the back wall of the crypt. If pulled, the plugs release several tons of sand into the crypt, completely burying it. There is a secret trapdoor in the floor of the hall beneath one of the terracotta statues. It leads to a tunnel to a second trapdoor in the crypt.

[C] The crypt of Baatag is a small chamber sided with orange and red marble with fittings of brass. The body of Baatag was cremated and is kept in a brass urn. The ashes are enchanted, rising and attacking any who would plunder the tomb, which contains 250 cp, 490 sp, 290 gp, a jade lion worth 85 gp and a banded agate worth 135 gp.

| *Baatag: HD 3 (20 hp); AC 2 [17]; Atk 1 touch (1d6 fire + level drain); Move (F15); Save 14; CL/XP 5/240; Special: All within 10 feet of the swirling mass of ashes must pass a saving throw each round or cough and choke, unable to attack, those within 10 feet who do not close their eyes are blinded for 1d4 turns, +1 or better weapon to hit.*

7218. Gorge of Giant Robots: This gorge into the Uncanny Valley of mechanical men is defended by four giant robots. The robots, like the other mechanical men of the valley, are composed of steel clockworks and covered in a sort of false flesh that looks dead and clammy. The robots have the general shape of sumo wrestlers.

| *Giant Robot: HD 20 (80hp); AC 3 [16]; Atk 1 weapon or fist (4d10); Move 6; Save 3; CL/XP 18/3800; Special: Poison gas, immune to all weapons +2 or less, slowed by lightning, healed by fire, immune to most magic.*

7223. Shore Giants: A clan of shore giants dwells here – on the shore, you know, because it's not just a clever name. The giants are about 10 feet tall with well-proportioned, lanky bodies, long, bleached hair, tanned skin and prominent noses. The men wear armor of shagreen that is sometimes inset with steel rings. They carry spears and serrated daggers and live by casting nets into the water and pulling out tons of fish.

| *Shore Giants: HD 8+1; AC 3 [16]; Atk 1 weapon (2d8); Move 15; Save 8; CL/XP 9/1100; Special: Throw boulders.*

7226. Pirate Junks: There are three pirate junks here, searching for prey. The wako are led by Oshiza, an alu-demon. The wako wield wakizashi and do not wear armor.

| *Oshiza: HD 6 (20 hp); AC 1 [18]; Atk 1 sword (1d8) or 2 claws (1d4); Move 12 (F18); Save 11; CL/XP 10/1400; Special: Spells, vampiric touch, immune to poison, magic resistance (15%), telepathy 100 ft.*

7236. Headhunters: A primitive tribe of head hunters dwells here. The tribe is all that remains of what was once a very large tribe that ruled these wooded hills before the coming of the Ying from the southern jungles. The tribe consists of 80 men, 55 women and 65 children and dwells in a village of rattan huts surrounded by a log palisade. The tribesmen keep gardens of roots and vines and hunt the animals of the woods with poisoned spears. The Ying have not finished off this last tribe because they pose little threat and because they trade with them for their poisons.

The tribe is ruled by its witchdoctor, Koh. He has a bodyguard of eight sub-chiefs. The tribe's totem is a banteng, represented by a wooden idol clad in the hide of a banteng. There are three pits surrounding the idol in which are kept four sacrificial victims – enemies of the state traded to the headhunters by the Ying.

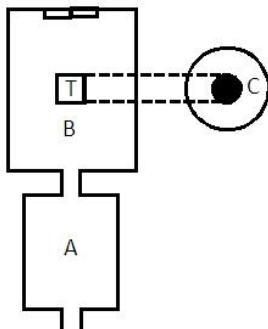
The men of the tribe wear bulky ornamental jewelry carved from wood. They carry shortbows and war clubs. The witchdoctor chief carries a large axe with obsidian blades for relieving victims of their heads.

| *Sub-Chief, Headhunter Lvl 3: HP 22; AC 9 [10]; Save 13 (11 vs. death & poison); CL/XP 4/120; Special: Track outdoors, alertness. Club.*

| *Koh, Wushen Lvl 8: HP 27; AC 9 [10]; Save 7; CL/XP 9/1100; Special: Spells (5th), turn undead, combat sense, estimate foe. Club, fetishes.*

7238. Dinsan: Dinsan is a city of 6,000 people situated atop a plateau that rises 200 feet above the surrounding landscape and looks over the source of the Dragontail River. The city is quite ancient and the buildings show their age. Although the people are productive, growing sweet, golden berries (sun berries) and turning them into a very potent liqueur favored by the Ying nobility.

The city is notable for seven grand constructions. The first is a central tower with a single, large wooden gate. This tower is the entrance to the plateau, as it connects with a tunnel that spirals up through the plateau. This tunnel is guarded by albino apes chained to the walls. The roof of



the tower is conical and set with six mirrors. As the sun hits these mirrors, it sends a beam of light to strike the face of one of the six statues.

The six statues represent the six founders of the city. Each of the founders is represented by a faction in the city, and while the face of a faction's founder is illuminated, that faction governs the city absolutely. This makes for rather confused government, though the locals are fairly used to the arrangement and almost take pride in it.

The first faction was founded by Binua, a priestess of Inzana. Her sohei are now commanded by Temang, a muscular woman with a round face and long grey hair. The sohei wear armor lacquered red and brass masks meant to depict Inzana, the sun maiden. The sohei are warlike and easily annoyed, and demand almost constant tribute to their goddess and her sacred monkeys.

The second faction are the samurai descended from the army of Chireng and now ruled by Agchaan. Agchaan is a straight-forward, brash woman with fiery green eyes. Agchaan is big boned and has a small-featured face. She and her samurai rule with wisdom and restraint, following the bushido code zealously.

The third faction are the shugenja of the White Order, a band of moralists who outlaw alcohol, gambling and promiscuous behavior while they are in charge. They are all ascetics who wear simple white loincloths and who anoint their bodies with the oil of stinging herbs. The White Order was founded by Manalch and governed by Haampi, a small man with a thin face and sunken eyes.

The fourth faction are the ninja of Geri, the so-called Jade Prosperity Society. The ninja are a crime syndicate of smugglers and assassins who run protection rackets even when they are not in power. The ninja are ruled by Uncle Take, a secretive man, tall, with a long face, who runs a shop of calligraphers and keeps white mice.

The fifth faction are the wushen of Geran, a monkey hengeyokai who preached the values of laughter and festivities. The city takes on a Mardi-Gras atmosphere while the monkey lords are in power (though not all of them are monkey hengeyokai). The wushen are governed, loosely, by their eldest member, Mudar. Mudar is a willowy man with a heart-shaped face. He and his priests

dress in silk tunics and pantaloons, carry staves and wear monkey masks.

The sixth factions are the descendants of the slaves who constructed the city-state and the tunnel through the plateau. They are no longer slaves, and most of the time work on repairing buildings and constructing new buildings. When they are in power, however, they run rampant through the city destroying the work they had done and causing new destruction – though never to the houses of the other factions or the central tower. They are led by the half-ogre Suhaz.

| *Temang, Sohei* Lvl 6: HP 20; AC 3 [16]; Save 9 (7 vs death & poisons); CL/XP 7/600; Special: Banish undead, spells (4th). Kabuto, haramaki-do, haidate, masakari, prayer beads.

| *Agchaan, Bujin* Lvl 6: HP 6d6+1; AC -1 [20]; Save 11 (10 vs death & poison); CL/XP 6/400; Special: Follow through. O-yoroi, dadao, daikyu.

| *Haampi, Shugenja* Lvl 5: HP 19; AC 9 [10]; Save 11 (9 vs magic); CL/XP 4/120; Special: Spells (3rd). Bo staff, spellbook.

| *Uncle Take, Ninja* Lvl 7: HP 23; AC 9 [10]; Save 8 (6 vs. death & poison); CL/XP 4/120; Special: Move silently, hide in shadows, climb sheer surfaces, backstab x3, read languages. Bo staff, hankyu.

| *Mudar, Wushen* Lvl 5: HP 14; AC 9 [10]; Save 10; CL/XP 5/240; Special: Spells (3rd), turn undead, parry blows, parry death blow. Kama, prayer beads.

| *Suhaz, Half-Ogre*: HP 7; AC 9 [10]; Save 16 (15 vs death, 12 vs. poison & disease); CL/XP 1/15; Special: Follow through, ogre's ferociousness, open door on 1-4 on 1d6.

7317. Qutloy: A thin, dirt road winds through the valley on its way to a cluster of mud brick huts. The huts compose a small village of mechanical men. The bricks of the huts are glazed a bright yellow. Beneath the village, in tunnels lined by similar bricks, there is an abbey dedicated to Tvastar, the patron deity of the mechanical men, who appears as a gleaming, winged mechanical man with gold skin and deep, black eyes. Tvastar is served by the high priestess Kot-Xa, a refined mechanical woman with a jealous streak. Kot-Xa oversees nine lesser priests.

| *Kot-Xa, Mechanical Sohei*: HP 19; AC 2 [17]; Save 6 (4 vs death & poisons); CL/XP 9/1100; Special: Banish undead, spells (5th), no need for food, water, etc. Yari, jingasa, prayer beads.

7319. Blood Lake: There is a high mountain lake here with a mirror surface. The mechanical men of the Uncanny Valley avoid it for the terrible spirit that dwells within and manifests as a giant face on the surface of the lake. Those

who see the face must pass a saving throw or be drawn into the water and drown.

7328. Ancient Sword: A stone hand and sword stick up through the sand at the bottom of the sea. The hand is connected to an arm and nothing else, and is all that remains of the warrior maid Mamud. The sword is a +1 *katana*, +3 vs. the undead.

7341. Lady Mukai: Mukai is a slight woman and an excellent archer. A Ying of common lineage, she is shy and reserved in her tower, but as savage as any headhunter on the battle-field. She has in her employ nine bujin who are as savage as their mistress and Jinas, a rather tiny, fragile shugenja. Mukai rose up through the ranks in the army of the King of Ying, having been discovered as a foundling on the streets of Sin-Kalam by the King when she staged a daring robbery of his purse.

| *Mukai, Bujin* Lvl 10: HP 42; AC 4 [15]; Save 7 (6 vs death & poison); CL/XP 10/1400; Special: Follow through, ki shout, parry blows. Kote, do-maru, haidate, kamas (2) and hankyu.

| *Jinas, Shugenja* Lvl 6: HP 15; AC 9 [10]; Save 10 (8 vs magic); CL/XP 4/120; Special: Spells (3rd). Tanto, spellbook.

7413. Simuj: Simuj is a town of 2,000 Meng set high in the mountains in a deep valley somewhat warmer than the surrounding peaks, though still frigid in the winter. The city has five stone towers, each bearing an elemental glyph (earth, fire, water, air and wood) that, in times of struggle, can be used to summon an elemental (a treant in the case of elemental wood). The summoning occurs when a gong atop the tower is struck.

The city contains an entrance to the deeper vaults of the Meng, and serves as a major trading post with the subterranean Meng. The city has no law other than the knife, and people dwell in conclaves within the city-state.

7415. Master Lun'Chi Tower: There is a tall, thin tower here of white marble. The tower has a conical roof of green copper tiles and rests on a strange courtyard composed of hundreds of bronze gears that turn eternally, turning the tower with them. On the periphery of this weird plaza there are bronze poles. Huddled around each pole are a number of clockwork overseers, which look like 3-ft tall wooden dolls. These creatures can travel up to 2 hexes away to deliver orders received via the poles, which

conduct electricity delivered from the tower and through the clockwork plaza. These electrical impulses are generated in 1 of every 4 rounds, delivering 3d6 points of electrical damage to living creatures touching the plaza when they do. The movement of the gears makes crossing the plaza doubly difficult – those who try must pass a dexterity check or have their feet wrenched in the gears for 2d6 points of damage and a loss of half their normal movement rate for 1d3 days.

The tower is occupied by Lun'Chi, a clockwork brain gear that serves as suzerain of the Uncanny Valley and the sole ruler of the mechanical men therein. His tower is defended by a dozen clockwork warriors and five clockwork swarms.

| *Clockwork Swarm:* HD 4; AC 2 [17]; Atk 1 swarm (1d6); Move 15; Save 13; CL/XP 7/600; Special: Distraction, minimum damage from slashing and piercing weapons, self-repair.

| *Clockwork Warrior:* HD 3; AC 2 [17]; Atk 1 slam (1d8); Move 9; Save 14; CL/XP 4/120; Special: Self-repair.

| *Lun'Chi:* HD 5 (30 hp); AC 7 [12]; Atk None; Move 0; Save 12; CL/XP 3/60; Special: Control clockworks, dream.

7433. Silver Man: A strange man with silvery skin and large, globular eyes of deep azure, roams the jungle here collecting small pieces of a massive mechanical beast. The beast, when it functioned, allowed the man to travel between worlds, but an unfortunate clash with a party of shugenja left it destroyed and scattered. Over the years, monkeys and other creatures scattered it even more. The man has now gathered about 75% of the construct together in a deep cave. Encounters with the silver man occur on a roll of 1-2 on 1d6 in this hex. He will question people, cautiously, about finding bits of his construct. Bits of the construct are found 1% of the time, and usually appear as silvery metal in weird shapes.

| *Silver Man:* HD 7 (32 hp); AC 1 [18]; Atk 1 ray (sleep or hold person) or 2 blades (1d6+1); Move 15; Save 9; CL/XP 8/800; Special: Rays, immune to mind effects.

7446. Chazan's Lair: The dragon Chazan dwells here in an ancient, submerged tower. She is an enormous dragon, 55 feet long, though most of that is tail, with six legs and webbed feet. Her scales are black with burnished bronze on the edges. Chazan is a cunning beast, coiling up in the tower and sleeping much of the time, leaving her mate, a shark man called Itsugi to manage her territory and affairs. He holds a golden horn that, if sounded, summons her

immediately to his aid. The merchants who travel through these waters are aware of Chazan and gladly pay Itsugi tribute when he rises from the waves and boards their ships. Chazan's horde consists of 1,890 gp.

| *Chazan: HD 10 (40 hp); AC 4 [15]; Atk 2 claws (1d8), bite (1d12); Move 12 (F30, S30); Save 5; CL/XP 13/2300; Special: Breathes frost that covers a 50-ft radius area dealing 1d6 damage to all within the area and coating them with frost, reducing their movement by half.*

7509. Cavemen: A small band of primitive hunters dwells here in an old, ramshackle tower. The tower's decoration suggests it was erected by the ophidians in ancient times. The cavemen number 12 and they have a store of meat (about 20 weeks of unpreserved rations) and quite a few pelts and hides (about 50 gp worth).

| *Caveman: HD 1+1; AC 7 [12]; Atk 1 weapon (1d6+1); Move 12; Save 17; CL/XP 1/15; Special: None.*

7511. Jutab's Invisible Palace: Jutab is a cloud giant matron with deep blue skin, long silver hair, gray-green eyes, small (almost pretty) tusks and a long, sharp nose. Charming and cunning, she is a trader who provides assistance in the form of her ogres and oni servants.

The mansion is constructed of ancient, chipped marble and warped wood. The interior is always humid and warm. The mansion is located adjacent to what appears to be a cliff with a 400-ft deep chasm below it. The mansion is invisible from the outside, but from the inside appears normal.

The mansion features several windmill towers that turn long, magnetic posts wrapped in copper wire, generating electricity and running several alien gadgets kept in the manor, including the heaters and pumps that maintain the tropical environment in the mansion. The largest room in the mansion is used as a conservatory, housing tropical plants and birds under a glass ceiling.

Jutab's treasures include 950 sp, 1,500 gp and a bronze vase worth 600 gp.

| *Jutab: HD 12+3 (49 hp); AC 2 [17]; Atk 1 weapon (6d6); Move 15; Save 3; CL/XP 13/2300; Special: Hurl boulders.*

7529 Unfinished Tower: A white tower is currently under construction here along the coast. The tower is built of white stones and is about half-finished, with the owner, the shugenja Tsusa, and his seven apprentices dwelling in the lower portion in rather cramped quarters. At night, the

cold wind blowing in from the sea makes the place rather uncomfortable, despite a large hearth and the heavy robes worn by Tsusa and his apprentices. Tsusa is a very small, stout man who always wears a black hood and robe. He has pale skin, and despite his odd appearance is a rather romantic and carefree man, and quite a good companion. His wine cellar is beyond compare. Tsusa has a guardian angel that watches over him and his tower, acquired due to services rendered to the Jade Empress.

| *Tsusa, Shugenja Lvl 9: HP 21; AC 9 [10]; Save 7 (5 vs magic); CL/XP 7/600; Special: Spells (5th). Bo staff, spellbook.*

| *Movanic Deva: HD 8; AC -1 [20]; Atk 1 weapon (3d6); Move 18 (F36); Save 8; CL/XP 15/2900; Special: Immunities, +1 weapon to hit, magic resistance (55%), magical abilities.*

7537. Giant Wasp Nest: On the side of a hill there is a mud nest built by giant wasps. The nest holds 30 giant wasps, who range over this entire hex and those surrounding it. Encounters with 1d3+3 giant wasps occur in this hex on a roll of 1-3 on 1d6.

| *Giant Wasp: HD 4; AC 4 [15]; Atk 1 sting (1d4 + poison), 1 bite (1d8); Move 1 (F20); Save 13; CL/XP 6/400; Special: Paralyzing poison, larvae.*

7619. Sky Worms: A nest of six sky worms dwells in this hex, hunting in the surrounding valleys. The worms dwell atop an ancient, abandoned temple of Agrodaun carved out of the peak of a mountain. The temple was long ago looted, although there are four garnets (worth 100 gp) sitting in a large, bronze brazier atop the temple where a sacred fire was kept burning. The worms live in the rooms beneath this brazier and have a treasure of 70 cp, 480 sp, 475 gp and a moss agate worth 95 gp dropped by adventurers who have sought to destroy them.

| *Sky Worm: HD 3+1; AC 6 [13]; Atk 1 bite (1d6) and 1 tail lash (1d4); Move 6 (F18); Save 14; CL/XP 4/120; Special: Fly, protect rider.*

7706. Stone Maiden: These mountains are inhabited by three stone maidens – nature spirits that look like beautiful women carved from stone. Each stone maiden has a separate dwelling and powers associated with that dwelling.

The first sister, Gombor, dwells on a high mountain peak amidst the snow and ice. Gombor's cavern is deep and frigid. She shares it with three cave bears with glistening silver fur and haunting blue eyes.

The second maiden is Danaim, who dwells in the lower mountains near a subterranean vent that sends hot, poisonous steam through her crystalline dwelling. She shares her dwelling with five thoqqua, strange elemental creatures that melt their way through rock and stone.

The third sister is Mongka, who dwells in a grotto on the shores of a subterranean lake, where the ice of Gombor's high mountains is melted into water by the vents in Danaim's deep vaults. The lake is inhabited by tiny, blind fish and large water beetles.

Each of the three sisters holds a magical stone that fit into an iron crown located in [7014]. These three stones, when affixed, turn the crown into a magical artifact that bestows on a person the following powers: *Protection from evil*, 10-ft radius, immunity to fire, cold and petrification, *water breathing*, *cone of cold* (1/day) and *fireball* (1/day) as a 10th level spell caster.

| *Stone Maiden*: HD 10; AC 0 [19]; Atk 1 sword (1d8) or 2 fists (1d6); Move 12 (B12); Save 5; CL/XP 10/1400; Special: Animate rocks, +1 weapon to hit, magical abilities.

| *Silver Bears*: HD 6; AC 6 [13]; Atk 2 claws (1d6), 1 bite (1d10); Move 9; Save 11; CL/XP 6/400; Special: Hug.

| *Giant Water Beetles*: HD 3; AC 3 [16]; Atk 1 bite (3d6); Move 9; Save 14; CL/XP 4/120; Special: None.

| *Thoqqua*: HD 3; AC 1 [18]; Atk 1 slam (1d6 + 2d6 fire); Move 12 (B9); Save 14; CL/XP 4/120; Special: Those touched must save or catch on fire, double damage from cold, immune to fire.

7715. Ninja Lair: In the lofty peaks, where snow tumbles down the slopes as icy streams and waterfalls and mountain goats graze on impossibly small ledges, a clan of ninja called the Thundering Roar Brotherhood. These ninja, like many, are drawn from the Ying peoples of the south. Their mansion in the mountains looks like a series of small caverns almost impossible to reach (one must climb a sheer wall 200 feet to reach even the lowest cave). Within, though, these caves and tunnels have been carved to look like the halls and chambers of a palace. Within dwell 100 ninja led by the jonin Batar, an aging but handsome man with graying temples and piercing blue eyes. Jonin rules his people with wisdom and restraint, but brooks no serious challenge to his authority from within or without.

| *Batar, Ninja Lvl 10*: HP 26; AC 8 [11]; Save 5 (3 vs. death & poison); CL/XP 5/240; Special: Move silently, hide in shadows, climb sheer surfaces, backstab x4, read languages, use scrolls. Dao, shuriken.

7727. Kelp: The coast here is thick with kelp – strands that measure as long as 100 feet and form a thick mat that sometimes clings to oars so tightly that the oars must be severed to allow a ship to move through. Underneath this green canopy is complete darkness, and it is here that a tribe of 30 oktomon dwell, praying to primordial gods of darkness and despair. The oktomon are all blind and shun the outside world, though they sometimes raid vessels on moonless nights, carrying sailors into the depths as sacrifices to their weird deities. These skeletons are added to a great idol of darkness that now stands 30 feet tall.

| *Oktomon*: HD 3; AC 6 [13]; Atk Up to 4 weapons (1d8); Move 12 (Swim 18); Save 14; CL/XP 4/120; Special: None.

7735. Gnolls: The woods here are thick and sub-tropical and ruled by a tribe of 170 gnolls so cunning and clever that their presence has never been stamped out by the Ying. They mostly dwell underground in a network of tunnels difficult to navigate by non-gnolls. The tribe has 60 females and 200 cubs. They mostly focus their raids on deeper caverns inhabited by orcs, bugbears and goblins, rather than on the human lands above. The gnolls are ruled by Mun, a war-chief criticized by his young warriors for shunning the human targets on the surface. Mun knows too well the reprisals of the humans, whose attacks have already reduced his tribe from 2,500 gnolls just two decades ago.

The gnoll's treasure consists of 2,860 sp and twelve wolf skins (worth 8 gp each).

| *Gnoll*: HD 2; AC 5 [14]; Atk 1 bite (2d4) or weapon (1d10); Move 9; Save 16; CL/XP 2/30; Special: None.

| *Mun*: HD 4; AC 4 [15]; Atk 1 bite (2d4) or weapon (1d10); Move 9; Save 13; CL/XP 4/60; Special: None.

7739. Goblins: A tribe of 250 goblin males, 160 females and 150 young dwell here in the cone of a dormant volcano. The coast is mostly igneous rock and covered by all manner of sub-tropical trees and shrubs. The goblins' treasure consists of 276 gp and a turquoise worth 105 gp. They are divided into seven warring families, each led by a 2 HD goblin warrior.

| *Goblin*: HD 1d6 hp; AC 6 [13]; Atk 1 weapon (1d6); Move 9; Save 18; CL/XP B/10; Special: -1 to hit in sunlight.

7822. Statue: A colossal statue of the first emperor stands here, its legs and feet defaced by Nakdani invaders and its

upper portions the nesting place of seagulls and other birds. The statue is made of limestone and looks out to the sea. There is a trapdoor at the top that leads into a small chamber in the head, behind the left eye. This eye is pierced with a small hole that looks, on Midsummer's Day, at a distant star. Anyone looking at this star on this day through this hole finds themselves transported there.

New Race: Zhāng-yú-gē (Octopus Man)

Relatives of the Oktomon, the zhāng-yú-gē are more civilized, though they still have brusk, lusty personalities. Zhāng-yú-gē are capable of existing in and out of water, though they are slower on water than on land and their boneless bodies make them less dexterous and rugged out of water as well. They make up for this with peerless courage and a complex weaving combat style.

Zhāng-yú-gē can advance as bujin (or fighting-men) up to 6th level (7th level if they have a strength score of 13 or higher) or bujin/shugenja (fighter/magic-users) up to 4th level. On land, their dexterity and constitution scores are temporarily lowered by 2 points each. Zhāng-yú-gē can wield three weapons, two weapons and a shield or two shields and a weapon. For each weapon they carry into combat, they receive a +1 bonus to hit. For each shield they carry into combat, they receive a -1 [+1] bonus to Armor Class. A zhāng-yú-gē's rubbery flesh, much more resistant than that of a normal octopus, grants them a -1 [+1] bonus to Armor Class.

Although capable of living outside of water, zhāng-yú-gē suffer +1 point of damage per dice from fire damage. They have a natural swim speed of 15 and a natural land speed of 9. Once per day, they can spew a stream of ink behind them. In water, this acts as a fog cloud that lasts for 3 rounds. On land, it must be used as a ranged attack, with a successful attack blinding one opponent for 1d6 rounds. Zhāng-yú-gē can see in the dark as well as elves.

| / Zhāng-yú-gē: HD 1; AC 5 [14] in water or 4 [15] on land; Atk 1 weapon (1d8); Move 9 (S15); Save 17; CL/XP 1/15; Special: +2 to hit in combat, +1 point per die of fire damage, spew ink, 10% chance of casting spells as 1d4 level shugenja or magic-user.

Monstrous Evolutions

Writer: John M. Stater

Illustrator: Jon Kaufman

We've all seen the beast people in fantasy literature – the cat girls, wolf men, etc. Want a new fantasy race, just chop off an animal's head, stick it on a human body and throw in a personality inspired by animal folklore.

This is all well and good, of course, and an old issue of NOD had a lengthy article on the Beast People of Nabu, so I'm not knocking it. In a fantasy world, though, you would expect some monster people to show up eventually. If owlbeats are as much a part of the natural fantasy world as wolves, though, why no owlbear men?

This article aims to deal with this terrible oversight. The monster people are given statistics for the Pars Fortuna game, since anything weird or odd has a natural home there, but they should be just as usable with your favorite old school fantasy roleplaying game.

Ustte

The ustte are humanoid insects that stand about 4 to 5 feet tall. They have hard, chitinous skin of steel gray, smallish, roundish heads that bear two glossy, black eyes and long, feather-like antennae, wide, slit mouths with long, red tongues (for lapping up corroded metal) and six limbs - two legs, two large arms (like a humans arms) and two smaller, vestigial arms below them. From their abdomen they have long tails that end in "propeller" shaped protrusions.

The ustte dwell wherever there is iron to mine, for though they can corrode most metals and live off of them, iron is their preferred diet. Families consist of a male and multiple females (the species produces roughly three females to one male). Each female is capable of producing a single brood. Broods always consist of four children. These children are given the same name and live with one another as a unit until young adulthood, when they might join with other ustte to form a new family.

Ustte lairs are usually subterranean, though close to the surface. Ustte respect a powerful physique and a sharp, insightful mind. They compete constantly – in athletic games, tests of skill and craftsmanship and in contests of poetry. Ustte literally wear their "honors on their sleeves" in the form of tracings in gold or silver ink on their chitin. Non-ustte see these fanciful shapes as tattoos, but to an ustte they are a record of their life's accomplishments and very important.

Racial Abilities

Ustte have thick carapaces that give them a natural Armor Class of 12. Their delicate antennae can detect metals, from iron and copper to gold and platinum, up to 120 feet away, assuming they can conceivably be scented. The touch of their antennae is corrosive to non-precious metals (silver, gold and platinum). Any metal object touched by these antennae (requires a melee attack) has a 1 in 6 chance of being corroded to the point of being useless. Ustte feed on iron and steel, though they can consume other corruptible metals in their place, requiring one pound of metal each day to survive. This makes copper coinage very attractive to ustte adventurers, and some carry the metal as rations.

Class Abilities

Ustte are driven to excel as warriors and artists. Their prime requisite is Charisma. Ustte roll 1d6+2 per level for hit points (+2 per level after 9th). They can wear light and medium armor and use shields and any weapon weighing 3 pounds or less. Ustte are precise warriors, studying the fence as an art and fighting the way a sculptor sculpts. Their passion and drive give them a +2 bonus to save vs. fear effects if already engaged in combat and their ability to draw their opponent into a mistake give them a cumulative +1 bonus to hit and damage every round their foe fails to hit them in melee combat, up to a total of +5. This resets whenever the ustte scores a hit on an

opponent. It is for this reason that ustte prefer not to win initiative. This bonus is lost if the ustte is aided in combat by another (i.e. another attacks the same target they are fighting). Whenever an ustte defeats a superior foe in combat, they may apply a new design to their carapace and will always compose a song in their own honor.

Level	Experience	Hit Dice	Hit Bonus	Saving Throw
1	0	1	+0	14
2	2,000	2	+0	13
3	4,000	3	+1	12
4	8,000	4	+2	11
5	16,000	5	+2	10
6	32,000	6	+3	9
7	64,000	7	+4	8
8	128,000	8	+5	7
9	256,000	9	+6	6
10	350,000	+2 hp	+7	5
11	450,000	+4 hp	+7	4
12	550,000	+6 hp	+8	4

Eaoro

The eaoro are a race of tall, bulky humanoid that dwell in farming villages in the midst of wooded regions. They value their privacy; the only eaoro most folk will ever meet are those who must begrudgingly leave their enclaves to trade and those who have suffered exile from their community due to sinful behavior.

Eaoro are sexually dimorphic, the males being much larger than the females. Male eaoro stand about 7 to 8 feet tall, with rather short legs and long, arms. They have narrow shoulders, giving their bodies a distinct "triangular" shape, but are thickly muscled. Females are shorter, averaging 5 to 6 feet in height, and have longer legs and shorter arms. Males are hairier than females, and both sexes have heads covered with feathers rather than hair. Their skin is naturally pale, their eyes large (and telescopic) and they have black, hooked

beaks in place of mouths.

Eaoro are vegetarians, though certainly not pacifists. They dwell on farmsteads composed of a central longhouse constructed of stone and logs, maybe one or two outbuildings for storage and a surrounding rampart of earth and stone that stands about 5 feet high. Farmsteads support a family of a bonded male and female, their young (anywhere from three to twelve children) and maybe older relations incapable of surviving on their own. These farmsteads are situated quite near to one another. Eaoro communities are referred to as clusters and usually consist of 20 to 100 farmsteads. Somewhere in the cluster there is a hill cleared of trees that serves as the cluster's moot.

Eaoro are deeply religious, believing in litany of sins handed down to them from their forebears. When conflicts arise, eaoro must submit themselves to judgment by the moot. Sins are tallied, and judgment always goes to the less sinful eaoro. If this doesn't cause eaoro to strive for righteousness, it certainly drives them to strive for sneakiness and to pry into the lives of their neighbors, keeping a close "sin count" in case a conflict should arise. Eaoro with too many sins to their names are usually exiled from the community.



While all eaoro are taught magic from a young age, male eaoro tend to be better warriors than magicians and females better mages than warriors. For this reason, each is considered separately in terms of class abilities.

Racial Abilities

Eaoro are born farmers - even those who have since been cast out of eaoro society. This gives them a knack for predicting the weather and in all other matters related to the growing of crops and mending of farm implements. They also have a knack for casting cantraps. All eaoro start the game knowing three random cantraps. They can only cast them by making a spell roll and suffer the consequences of failure just like any other spell caster. Their innate strength gives eaoro males a +2 bonus to their strength score and a -2 penalty to their dexterity score at character creation. Females have a bonus and penalty of +1 / -1. These modifications cannot improve a score beyond 18 or lower it below 3. Since most eaoro adventurers are outcasts from their communities and have had to live for an extended time in the wilderness and then on the fringes of society, they have a knack for wilderness survival and pick pocketing.

Class Abilities – Female Eaoro

Female eaoro have Intelligence as their prime requisite. They roll 1d6+1 per level for hit points (+2 per level after 9th) and can use light armor, shields and any weapons.

Female eaoro are magicians, and thus can cast magic spells. They have no particular skill at casting a certain kind of spell, being dabblers at the art. They are skilled at picking pockets, palming small objects and at bluffing.

Level	Experience	Hit Dice	Hit Bonus	Saving Throw
1	0	1	+0	14
2	2,500	2	+0	13
3	5,000	3	+1	12
4	10,000	4	+1	11
5	20,000	5	+2	10
6	40,000	6	+2	9
7	65,000	7	+3	8
8	95,000	8	+3	7
9	285,000	9	+4	6
10	385,000	+2 hp	+4	5
11	515,000	+4 hp	+5	4
12	645,000	+6 hp	+5	4

Class Abilities – Male Eaoro

Male eaoro have Strength as their prime requisite. They roll 1d6+2 per level for hit points (+2 per level after 9th) and can use light armor, medium armor, shields and any weapons.

Male eaoro are skilled at picking pockets, palming small objects and bluffing. They are known for their ability to present a frightening display when they enter combat, forcing all creatures with 1 hit dice or less to pass a saving throw or flee. Creatures backed into a corner or defending their loved ones will not flee.

Level	Experience	Hit Dice	Hit Bonus	Saving Throw
1	0	1	+0	15
2	1,500	2	+0	14
3	3,000	3	+1	13
4	6,000	4	+2	12
5	12,000	5	+2	11
6	25,000	6	+3	10
7	50,000	7	+4	9
8	100,000	8	+5	8
9	200,000	9	+6	7
10	300,000	+2 hp	+7	6
11	400,000	+4 hp	+7	5
12	500,000	+6 hp	+8	4

Phantastes, Part 7

By George MacDonald

This month, we continue our serialization of George MacDonald's *Phantastes*, an early work of fantastic fiction that inspired such esteemed authors as J. R. R. Tolkien, C. S. Lewis and Lewis Carroll.

XIX

*"In still rest, in changeless simplicity, I bear,
uninterrupted, the consciousness of the whole of Humanity
within me."*

- SCHLEIERMACHERS, *Monologen*.

*"... such a sweetness, such a grace,
In all thy speech appear,
That what to th'eye a beauteous face,
That thy tongue is to the ear."*

- COWLEY.

The water was deep to the very edge; and I sprang from the little boat upon a soft grassy turf. The island seemed rich with a profusion of all grasses and low flowers. All delicate lowly things were most plentiful; but no trees rose skywards, not even a bush overtopped the tall grasses, except in one place near the cottage I am about to describe, where a few plants of the gum-cistus, which drops every night all the blossoms that the day brings forth, formed a kind of natural arbour. The whole island lay open to the sky and sea. It rose nowhere more than a few feet above the level of the waters, which flowed deep all around its border. Here there seemed to be neither tide nor storm. A sense of persistent calm and fulness arose in the mind at the sight of the slow, pulse-like rise and fall of the deep, clear, unrippled waters against the bank of the island, for shore it could hardly be called, being so much more like the edge of a full, solemn river. As I walked over the grass towards the cottage, which stood at a little distance from the bank, all the flowers of childhood looked at me with perfect child-eyes out of the grass. My heart, softened by the dreams through which it had passed, overflowed in a sad, tender love towards them. They looked to me like children impregably fortified in a helpless confidence. The sun stood half-way down the western sky, shining very soft and golden; and there grew a second world of shadows amidst the world of grasses and wild flowers.

The cottage was square, with low walls, and a high pyramidal roof thatched with long reeds, of which the withered blossoms hung over all the eaves. It is noticeable that most of the buildings I saw in Fairy Land were cottages. There was no path to a door, nor, indeed, was there any track worn by footsteps in the island.

The cottage rose right out of the smooth turf. It had no windows that I could see; but there was a door in the centre of the side facing me, up to which I went. I knocked, and the sweetest voice I had ever heard said, "Come in." I entered. A bright fire was burning on a hearth in the centre of the earthen floor, and the smoke found its way out at an opening in the centre of the pyramidal roof. Over the fire hung a little pot, and over the pot bent a woman-face, the most wonderful, I thought, that I had ever beheld. For it was older than any countenance I had ever looked upon. There was not a spot in which a wrinkle could lie, where a wrinkle lay not. And the skin was ancient and brown, like old parchment. The woman's form was tall and spare: and when she stood up to welcome me, I saw that she was straight as an arrow. Could that voice of sweetness have issued from those lips of age? Mild as they were, could they be the portals whence flowed such melody? But the moment I saw her eyes, I no longer wondered at her voice: they were absolutely young - those of a woman of five-and-twenty, large, and of a clear gray. Wrinkles had beset them all about; the eyelids themselves were old, and heavy, and worn; but the eyes were very incarnations of soft light. She held out her hand to me, and the voice of sweetness again greeted me, with the single word, "Welcome." She set an old wooden chair for me, near the fire, and went on with her cooking. A wondrous sense of refuge and repose came upon me. I felt like a boy who has got home from school, miles across the hills, through a heavy storm of wind and snow. Almost, as I gazed on her, I sprang from my seat to kiss those old lips. And when, having finished her cooking, she brought some of the dish she had prepared, and set it on a little table by me, covered with a snow-white cloth, I could not help laying my head on her bosom, and bursting into happy tears. She put her arms round me, saying, "Poor child; poor child!"

As I continued to weep, she gently disengaged herself, and, taking a spoon, put some of the food (I did not know what it was) to my lips, entreating me most endearingly to

swallow it. To please her, I made an effort, and succeeded. She went on feeding me like a baby, with one arm round me, till I looked up in her face and smiled: then she gave me the spoon and told me to eat, for it would do me good. I obeyed her, and found myself wonderfully refreshed. Then she drew near the fire an old-fashioned couch that was in the cottage, and making me lie down upon it, sat at my feet, and began to sing. Amazing store of old ballads rippled from her lips, over the pebbles of ancient tunes; and the voice that sang was sweet as the voice of a tuneful maiden that singeth ever from very fulness of song. The songs were almost all sad, but with a sound of comfort. One I can faintly recall. It was something like this:

Sir Aglovaile through the churchyard rode;
SING, ALL ALONE I LIE:
Little recked he where'er he yode,
ALL ALONE, UP IN THE SKY.

Swerved his courser, and plunged with fear
ALL ALONE I LIE:
His cry might have wakened the dead men near,
ALL ALONE, UP IN THE SKY.

The very dead that lay at his feet,
Lapt in the mouldy winding-sheet.

But he curbed him and spurred him, until he stood
Still in his place, like a horse of wood,

With nostrils uplift, and eyes wide and wan;
But the sweat in streams from his fetlocks ran.

A ghost grew out of the shadowy air,
And sat in the midst of her moony hair.

In her gleamy hair she sat and wept;
In the dreamful moon they lay and slept;

The shadows above, and the bodies below,
Lay and slept in the moonbeams slow.

And she sang, like the moan of an autumn wind
Over the stubble left behind:

Alas, how easily things go wrong!
A sigh too much, or a kiss too long,
And there follows a mist and a weeping rain,
And life is never the same again.

Alas, how hardly things go right!
'Tis hard to watch on a summer night,
For the sigh will come and the kiss will stay,
And the summer night is a winter day.

"Oh, lovely ghosts my heart is woes
To see thee weeping and wailing so.

Oh, lovely ghost," said the fearless knight,
"Can the sword of a warrior set it right?

Or prayer of bedesman, praying mild,
As a cup of water a feverish child,

Sooth thee at last, in dreamless mood
To sleep the sleep a dead lady should?

Thine eyes they fill me with longing sore,
As if I had known thee for evermore.

Oh, lovely ghost, I could leave the day
To sit with thee in the moon away

If thou wouldst trust me, and lay thy head
To rest on a bosom that is not dead."
The lady sprang up with a strange ghost-cry,
And she flung her white ghost-arms on high:

And she laughed a laugh that was not gay,
And it lengthened out till it died away;

And the dead beneath turned and moaned,
And the yew-trees above they shuddered and groaned.

"Will he love me twice with a love that is vain?
Will he kill the poor ghost yet again?

I thought thou wert good; but I said, and wept:
'Can I have dreamed who have not slept?'

And I knew, alas! or ever I would,
Whether I dreamed, or thou wert good.

When my baby died, my brain grew wild.
I awoke, and found I was with my child."

"If thou art the ghost of my Adelaide,
How is it? Thou wert but a village maid,

And thou seemest an angel lady white,
Though thin, and wan, and past delight."

The lady smiled a flickering smile,
And she pressed her temples hard the while.

"Thou seest that Death for a woman can
Do more than knighthood for a man."

"But show me the child thou callest mine,
Is she out to-night in the ghost's sunshine?"

"In St. Peter's Church she is playing on,
At hide-and-seek, with Apostle John.

When the moonbeams right through the window go,
Where the twelve are standing in glorious show,

She says the rest of them do not stir,
But one comes down to play with her.

Then I can go where I list, and weep,
For good St. John my child will keep."

"Thy beauty filleth the very air,
Never saw I a woman so fair."

"Come, if thou darest, and sit by my side;
But do not touch me, or woe will betide.

Alas, I am weak: I might well know
This gladness betokens some further woe.

Yet come. It will come. I will bear it. I can.
For thou lovest me yet - though but as a man."

The knight dismounted in earnest speed;
Away through the tombstones thundered the steed,

And fell by the outer wall, and died.
But the knight he kneeled by the lady's side;

Kneeled beside her in wondrous bliss,
Rapt in an everlasting kiss:

Though never his lips come the lady nigh,
And his eyes alone on her beauty lie.

All the night long, till the cock crew loud,
He kneeled by the lady, lapt in her shroud.

And what they said, I may not say:
Dead night was sweeter than living day.

How she made him so blissful glad
Who made her and found her so ghostly sad,

I may not tell; but it needs no touch
To make them blessed who love so much.

"Come every night, my ghost, to me;
And one night I will come to thee.

"Tis good to have a ghostly wife:
She will not tremble at clang of strife;

She will only hearken, amid the din,
Behind the door, if he cometh in."

And this is how Sir Aglovaile
Often walked in the moonlight pale.

And oft when the crescent but thinned the gloom,
Full orb'd moonlight filled his room;

And through beneath his chamber door,
Fell a ghostly gleam on the outer floor;

And they that passed, in fear averred
That murmured words they often heard.

'Twas then that the eastern crescent shone
Through the chancel window, and good St. John

Played with the ghost-child all the night,
And the mother was free till the morning light,

And sped through the dawning night, to stay
With Aglovaile till the break of day.

And their love was a rapture, lone and high,
And dumb as the moon in the topmost sky.

One night Sir Aglovaile, weary, slept
And dreamed a dream wherein he wept.

A warrior he was, not often wept he,
But this night he wept full bitterly.

He woke - beside him the ghost-girl shone
Out of the dark: 'twas the eve of St. John.

He had dreamed a dream of a still, dark wood,
Where the maiden of old beside him stood;

But a mist came down, and caught her away,
And he sought her in vain through the pathless day,

Till he wept with the grief that can do no more,
And thought he had dreamt the dream before.

From bursting heart the weeping flowed on;
And lo! beside him the ghost-girl shone;

Shone like the light on a harbour's breast,
Over the sea of his dream's unrest;

Shone like the wondrous, nameless boon,
That the heart seeks ever, night or noon:

Warnings forgotten, when needed most,
He clasped to his bosom the radiant ghost.

She wailed aloud, and faded, and sank.
With upturn'd white face, cold and blank,

In his arms lay the corpse of the maiden pale,
And she came no more to Sir Aglovaile.

Only a voice, when winds were wild,
Sobbed and wailed like a chidden child.

Alas, how easily things go wrong!
A sigh too much, or a kiss too long,
And there follows a mist and a weeping rain,
And life is never the same again.

This was one of the simplest of her songs, which, perhaps, is the cause of my being able to remember it better than most of the others. While she sung, I was in Elysium, with the sense of a rich soul upholding, embracing, and overhanging mine, full of all plenty and bounty. I felt as if she could give me everything I wanted; as if I should never wish to leave her, but would be content to be sung to and fed by her, day after day, as years rolled by. At last I fell asleep while she sang.

When I awoke, I knew not whether it was night or day. The fire had sunk to a few red embers, which just gave light enough to show me the woman standing a few feet from me, with her back towards me, facing the door by which I had entered. She was weeping, but very gently and plentifully. The tears seemed to come freely from her heart. Thus she stood for a few minutes; then, slowly turning at right angles to her former position, she faced another of the four sides of the cottage. I now observed, for the first time, that here was a door likewise; and that, indeed, there was one in the centre of every side of the cottage.

When she looked towards the second door, her tears ceased to flow, but sighs took their place. She often closed her eyes as she stood; and every time she closed her eyes, a gentle sigh seemed to be born in her heart, and to escape at her lips. But when her eyes were open, her sighs were deep and very sad, and shook her whole frame. Then she turned towards the third door, and a cry as of fear or suppressed pain broke from her; but she seemed to hearten herself against the dismay, and to front it steadily; for, although I often heard a slight cry, and sometimes a moan, yet she never moved or bent her head, and I felt sure that her eyes

never closed. Then she turned to the fourth door, and I saw her shudder, and then stand still as a statue; till at last she turned towards me and approached the fire. I saw that her face was white as death. But she gave one look upwards, and smiled the sweetest, most child-innocent smile; then heaped fresh wood on the fire, and, sitting down by the blaze, drew her wheel near her, and began to spin. While she spun, she murmured a low strange song, to which the hum of the wheel made a kind of infinite symphony. At length she paused in her spinning and singing, and glanced towards me, like a mother who looks whether or not her child gives signs of waking. She smiled when she saw that my eyes were open. I asked her whether it was day yet. She answered, "It is always day here, so long as I keep my fire burning."

I felt wonderfully refreshed; and a great desire to see more of the island awoke within me. I rose, and saying that I wished to look about me, went towards the door by which I had entered.

"Stay a moment," said my hostess, with some trepidation in her voice. "Listen to me. You will not see what you expect when you go out of that door. Only remember this: whenever you wish to come back to me, enter wherever you see this mark."

She held up her left hand between me and the fire. Upon the palm, which appeared almost transparent, I saw, in dark red, a mark like this



which I took care to fix in my mind.

She then kissed me, and bade me good-bye with a solemnity that awed me; and bewildered me too, seeing I was only going out for a little ramble in an island, which I did not believe larger than could easily be compassed in a few hours' walk at most. As I went she resumed her spinning.

I opened the door, and stepped out. The moment my foot touched the smooth sward, I seemed to issue from the door of an old barn on my father's estate, where, in the hot afternoons, I used to go and lie amongst the straw, and read. It seemed to me now that I had been asleep there. At a little distance in the field, I saw two of my brothers at play. The moment they caught sight of me, they called out to me to come and join them, which I did; and we played together as we had done years ago, till the red sun went down in the west, and the gray fog began to rise from the river. Then we went home together with a strange happiness. As we went, we heard the continually renewed

larum of a landrail in the long grass. One of my brothers and I separated to a little distance, and each commenced running towards the part whence the sound appeared to come, in the hope of approaching the spot where the bird was, and so getting at least a sight of it, if we should not be able to capture the little creature. My father's voice recalled us from trampling down the rich long grass, soon to be cut down and laid aside for the winter. I had quite forgotten all about Fairy Land, and the wonderful old woman, and the curious red mark.

My favourite brother and I shared the same bed. Some childish dispute arose between us; and our last words, ere we fell asleep, were not of kindness, notwithstanding the pleasures of the day. When I woke in the morning, I missed him. He had risen early, and had gone to bathe in the river. In another hour, he was brought home drowned. Alas! alas! if we had only gone to sleep as usual, the one with his arm about the other! Amidst the horror of the moment, a strange conviction flashed across my mind, that I had gone through the very same once before.

I rushed out of the house, I knew not why, sobbing and crying bitterly. I ran through the fields in aimless distress, till, passing the old barn, I caught sight of a red mark on the door. The merest trifles sometimes rivet the attention in the deepest misery; the intellect has so little to do with grief. I went up to look at this mark, which I did not remember ever to have seen before. As I looked at it, I thought I would go in and lie down amongst the straw, for I was very weary with running about and weeping. I opened the door; and there in the cottage sat the old woman as I had left her, at her spinning-wheel.

"I did not expect you quite so soon," she said, as I shut the door behind me. I went up to the couch, and threw myself on it with that fatigue wherewith one awakes from a feverish dream of hopeless grief.

The old woman sang:

The great sun, benighted,
May faint from the sky;
But love, once uplighted,
Will never more die.

Form, with its brightness,
From eyes will depart:
It walketh, in whiteness,
The halls of the heart.

Ere she had ceased singing, my courage had returned. I started from the couch, and, without taking leave of the

old woman, opened the door of Sighs, and sprang into what should appear.

I stood in a lordly hall, where, by a blazing fire on the hearth, sat a lady, waiting, I knew, for some one long desired. A mirror was near me, but I saw that my form had no place within its depths, so I feared not that I should be seen. The lady wonderfully resembled my marble lady, but was altogether of the daughters of men, and I could not tell whether or not it was she.

It was not for me she waited. The tramp of a great horse rang through the court without. It ceased, and the clang of armour told that his rider alighted, and the sound of his ringing heels approached the hall. The door opened; but the lady waited, for she would meet her lord alone. He strode in: she flew like a home-bound dove into his arms, and nestled on the hard steel. It was the knight of the soiled armour. But now the armour shone like polished glass; and strange to tell, though the mirror reflected not my form, I saw a dim shadow of myself in the shining steel.

"O my beloved, thou art come, and I am blessed."

Her soft fingers speedily overcame the hard clasp of his helmet; one by one she undid the buckles of his armour; and she toiled under the weight of the mail, as she WOULD carry it aside. Then she unclasped his greaves, and unbuckled his spurs; and once more she sprang into his arms, and laid her head where she could now feel the beating of his heart. Then she disengaged herself from his embrace, and, moving back a step or two, gazed at him. He stood there a mighty form, crowned with a noble head, where all sadness had disappeared, or had been absorbed in solemn purpose. Yet I suppose that he looked more thoughtful than the lady had expected to see him, for she did not renew her caresses, although his face glowed with love, and the few words he spoke were as mighty deeds for strength; but she led him towards the hearth, and seated him in an ancient chair, and set wine before him, and sat at his feet.

"I am sad," he said, "when I think of the youth whom I met twice in the forests of Fairy Land; and who, you say, twice, with his songs, roused you from the death-sleep of an evil enchantment. There was something noble in him, but it was a nobleness of thought, and not of deed. He may yet perish of vile fear."

"Ah!" returned the lady, "you saved him once, and for that I thank you; for may I not say that I somewhat loved him? But tell me how you fared, when you struck your battle-axe into the ash-tree, and he came and found you; for so much

of the story you had told me, when the beggar-child came and took you away."

"As soon as I saw him," rejoined the knight, "I knew that earthly arms availed not against such as he; and that my soul must meet him in its naked strength. So I unclasped my helm, and flung it on the ground; and, holding my good axe yet in my hand, gazed at him with steady eyes. On he came, a horror indeed, but I did not flinch. Endurance must conquer, where force could not reach. He came nearer and nearer, till the ghastly face was close to mine. A shudder as of death ran through me; but I think I did not move, for he seemed to quail, and retreated. As soon as he gave back, I struck one more sturdy blow on the stem of his tree, that the forest rang; and then looked at him again. He writhed and grinned with rage and apparent pain, and again approached me, but retreated sooner than before. I heeded him no more, but hewed with a will at the tree, till the trunk creaked, and the head bowed, and with a crash it fell to the earth. Then I looked up from my labour, and lo! The spectre had vanished, and I saw him no more; nor ever in my wanderings have I heard of him again."

"Well struck! well withstood! my hero," said the lady.

"But," said the knight, somewhat troubled, "dost thou love the youth still?"

"Ah!" she replied, "how can I help it? He woke me from worse than death; he loved me. I had never been for thee, if he had not sought me first. But I love him not as I love thee. He was but the moon of my night; thou art the sun of my clay, O beloved."

"Thou art right," returned the noble man. "It were hard, indeed, not to have some love in return for such a gift as he hath given thee. I, too, owe him more than words can speak."

Humbled before them, with an aching and desolate heart, I yet could not restrain my words:

"Let me, then, be the moon of thy night still, O woman! And when thy day is beclouded, as the fairest days will be, let some song of mine comfort thee, as an old, withered, half-forgotten thing, that belongs to an ancient mournful hour of uncompleted birth, which yet was beautiful in its time."

They sat silent, and I almost thought they were listening. The colour of the lady's eyes grew deeper and deeper; the slow tears grew, and filled them, and overflowed. They rose, and passed, hand in hand, close to where I stood; and

each looked towards me in passing. Then they disappeared through a door which closed behind them; but, ere it closed, I saw that the room into which it opened was a rich chamber, hung with gorgeous arras. I stood with an ocean of sighs frozen in my bosom. I could remain no longer. She was near me, and I could not see her; near me in the arms of one loved better than I, and I would not see her, and I would not be by her. But how to escape from the nearness of the best beloved? I had not this time forgotten the mark; for the fact that I could not enter the sphere of these living beings kept me aware that, for me, I moved in a vision, while they moved in life. I looked all about for the mark, but could see it nowhere; for I avoided looking just where it was. There the dull red cipher glowed, on the very door of their secret chamber. Struck with agony, I dashed it open, and fell at the feet of the ancient woman, who still spun on, the whole dissolved ocean of my sighs bursting from me in a storm of tearless sobs. Whether I fainted or slept, I do not know; but, as I returned to consciousness, before I seemed to have power to move, I heard the woman singing, and could distinguish the words:

O light of dead and of dying days!
O Love! in thy glory go,
In a rosy mist and a moony maze,
O'er the pathless peaks of snow.

But what is left for the cold gray soul,
That moans like a wounded dove?
One wine is left in the broken bowl! -
'Tis - TO LOVE, AND LOVE AND LOVE.

Now I could weep. When she saw me weeping, she sang:

Better to sit at the waters' birth,
Than a sea of waves to win;
To live in the love that floweth forth,
Than the love that cometh in.

Be thy heart a well of love, my child,
Flowing, and free, and sure;
For a cistern of love, though undefiled,
Keeps not the spirit pure.

I rose from the earth, loving the white lady as I had never loved her before.

Then I walked up to the door of Dismay, and opened it, and went out. And lo! I came forth upon a crowded street, where men and women went to and fro in multitudes. I knew it well; and, turning to one hand, walked sadly along the pavement. Suddenly I saw approaching me, a little way off, a form well known to me (WELL-KNOWN! - alas, how weak the word!) in the years when I thought my

boyhood was left behind, and shortly before I entered the realm of Fairy Land. Wrong and Sorrow had gone together, hand-in-hand as it is well they do.

Unchangeably dear was that face. It lay in my heart as a child lies in its own white bed; but I could not meet her.

"Anything but that," I said, and, turning aside, sprang up the steps to a door, on which I fancied I saw the mystic sign. I entered - not the mysterious cottage, but her home. I rushed wildly on, and stood by the door of her room.

"She is out," I said, "I will see the old room once more."

I opened the door gently, and stood in a great solemn church. A deep-toned bell, whose sounds throbbed and echoed and swam through the empty building, struck the hour of midnight. The moon shone through the windows of the clerestory, and enough of the ghostly radiance was diffused through the church to let me see, walking with a stately, yet somewhat trailing and stumbling step, down the opposite aisle, for I stood in one of the transepts, a figure dressed in a white robe, whether for the night, or for that longer night which lies too deep for the day, I could not tell. Was it she? and was this her chamber? I crossed the church, and followed. The figure stopped, seemed to ascend as it were a high bed, and lay down. I reached the place where it lay, glimmering white. The bed was a tomb. The light was too ghostly to see clearly, but I passed my hand over the face and the hands and the feet, which were all bare. They were cold - they were marble, but I knew them. It grew dark. I turned to retrace my steps, but found, ere long, that I had wandered into what seemed a little chapel. I groped about, seeking the door. Everything I touched belonged to the dead. My hands fell on the cold effigy of a knight who lay with his legs crossed and his sword broken beside him. He lay in his noble rest, and I lived on in ignoble strife. I felt for the left hand and a certain finger; I found there the ring I knew: he was one of my own ancestors. I was in the chapel over the burial-vault of my race. I called aloud: "If any of the dead are moving here, let them take pity upon me, for I, alas! am still alive; and let some dead woman comfort me, for I am a stranger in the land of the dead, and see no light." A warm kiss alighted on my lips through the dark. And I said, "The dead kiss well; I will not be afraid." And a great hand was reached out of the dark, and grasped mine for a moment, mightily and tenderly. I said to myself: "The veil between, though very dark, is very thin."

Groping my way further, I stumbled over the heavy stone that covered the entrance of the vault: and, in stumbling, descried upon the stone the mark, glowing in red fire. I caught the great ring. All my effort could not have moved

the huge slab; but it opened the door of the cottage, and I threw myself once more, pale and speechless, on the couch beside the ancient dame. She sang once more:

Thou dreamest: on a rock thou art,
High o'er the broken wave;
Thou fallest with a fearful start
But not into thy grave;
For, waking in the morning's light,
Thou smilest at the vanished night

So wilt thou sink, all pale and dumb,
Into the fainting gloom;
But ere the coming terrors come,
Thou wak'st - where is the tomb?
Thou wak'st - the dead ones smile above,
With hovering arms of sleepless love.

She paused; then sang again:

We weep for gladness, weep for grief;
The tears they are the same;
We sigh for longing, and relief;
The sighs have but one name,

And mingled in the dying strife,
Are moans that are not sad
The pangs of death are throbs of life,
Its sighs are sometimes glad.

The face is very strange and white:
It is Earth's only spot
That feebly flickers back the light
The living seeth not.

I fell asleep, and slept a dreamless sleep, for I know not how long. When I awoke, I found that my hostess had moved from where she had been sitting, and now sat between me and the fourth door.

I guessed that her design was to prevent my entering there. I sprang from the couch, and darted past her to the door. I opened it at once and went out. All I remember is a cry of distress from the woman: "Don't go there, my child! Don't go there!" But I was gone.

I knew nothing more; or, if I did, I had forgot it all when I awoke to consciousness, lying on the floor of the cottage, with my head in the lap of the woman, who was weeping over me, and stroking my hair with both hands, talking to me as a mother might talk to a sick and sleeping, or a dead child. As soon as I looked up and saw her, she smiled through her tears; smiled with withered face and young eyes, till her countenance was irradiated with the light of

the smile. Then she bathed my head and face and hands in an icy cold, colourless liquid, which smelt a little of damp earth. Immediately I was able to sit up. She rose and put some food before me. When I had eaten, she said: "Listen to me, my child. You must leave me directly!"

"Leave you!" I said. "I am so happy with you. I never was so happy in my life."

"But you must go," she rejoined sadly. "Listen! What do you hear?"

"I hear the sound as of a great throbbing of water."

"Ah! you do hear it? Well, I had to go through that door - the door of the 'Timeless' (and she shuddered as she pointed to the fourth door) - 'to find you; for if I had not gone, you would never have entered again; and because I went, the waters around my cottage will rise and rise, and flow and come, till they build a great firmament of waters over my dwelling. But as long as I keep my fire burning, they cannot enter. I have fuel enough for years; and after one year they will sink away again, and be just as they were before you came. I have not been buried for a hundred years now." And she smiled and wept.

"Alas! alas!" I cried. "I have brought this evil on the best and kindest of friends, who has filled my heart with great gifts."

"Do not think of that," she rejoined. "I can bear it very well. You will come back to me some day, I know. But I beg you, for my sake, my dear child, to do one thing. In whatever sorrow you may be, however inconsolable and irremediable it may appear, believe me that the old woman in the cottage, with the young eyes" (and she smiled), "knows something, though she must not always tell it, that would quite satisfy you about it, even in the worst moments of your distress. Now you must go."

"But how can I go, if the waters are all about, and if the doors all lead into other regions and other worlds?"

"This is not an island," she replied; "but is joined to the land by a narrow neck; and for the door, I will lead you myself through the right one."

She took my hand, and led me through the third door; whereupon I found myself standing in the deep grassy turf on which I had landed from the little boat, but upon the opposite side of the cottage. She pointed out the direction I must take, to find the isthmus and escape the rising waters.

Then putting her arms around me, she held me to her bosom; and as I kissed her, I felt as if I were leaving my mother for the first time, and could not help weeping bitterly. At length she gently pushed me away, and with the words, "Go, my son, and do something worth doing," turned back, and, entering the cottage, closed the door behind her. I felt very desolate as I went.



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