

# DUNGEONS & DRAGONS®

## Expert Set Adventure Module

### Master of the Desert Nomads

by David Cook

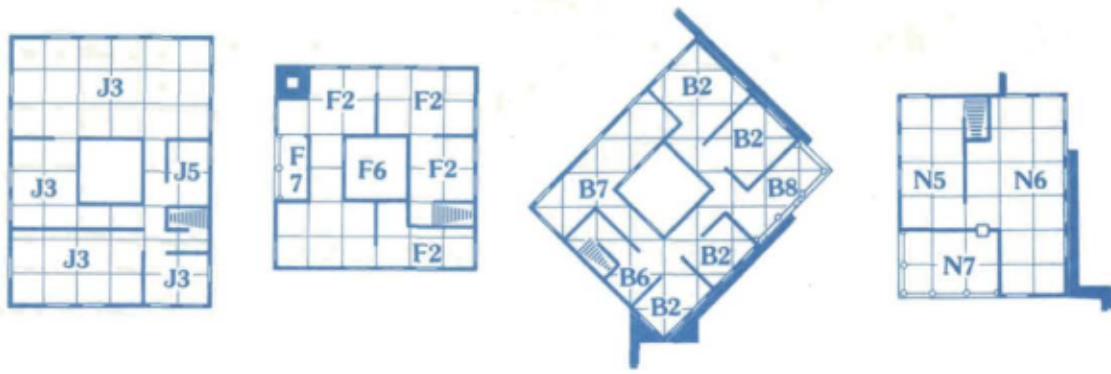
The 1st module in the DESERT NOMADS series.



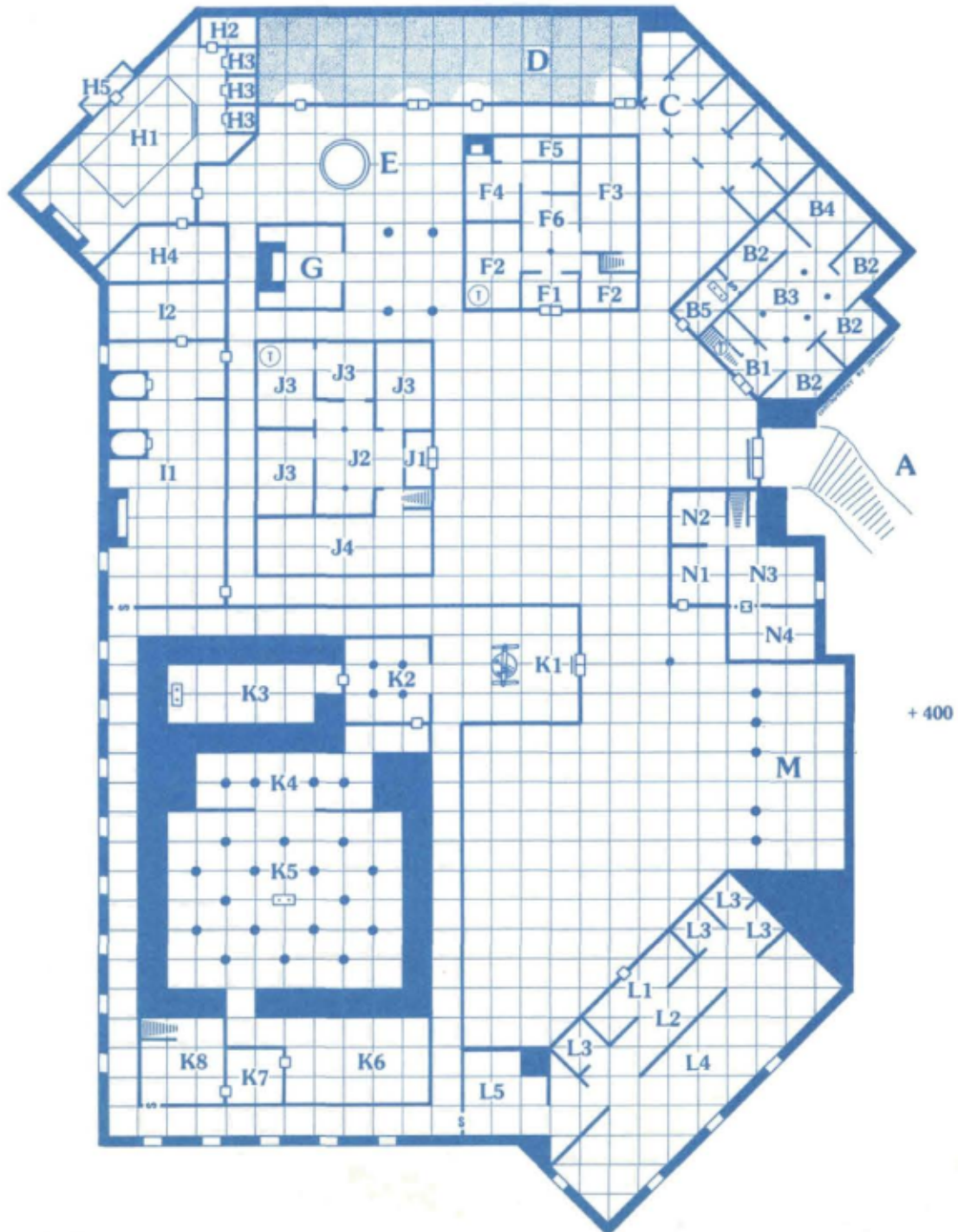
You have been sent on a deadly journey into the wastes of the Sind. Guided only by the reports of a half-dead scout and a scrawled map, you ride straight towards the monstrous armies of the Master.







# The Evil Abbey



**DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® Expert Set**  
**Wilderness Module X4**

# **Master of the Desert Nomads**

by David Cook

**An Adventure for Character Levels 6-9**



Who is the one who sends unknown terrors into the heart of an army's camp? Is he a man — or something else? What power of his inspires fear into the horrendous legions now marching on the civilized lands? What can you do to stop the one known only as The Master?

**Editor: Michael Williams**

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**DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® Expert Set**  
**Wilderness Module X4**

# MASTER OF THE DESERT NOMADS

## PART 1: INTRODUCTION

**Master of the Desert Nomads** is intended for use with the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® Expert Set. This set expands on the rules given in the D&D® Basic Set. This module cannot be used without the D&D® Basic and Expert rules.

If you intend to play in this module, **stop reading now**. The following information is for the Dungeon Master only, who will use this information to guide the players through the adventure. Knowing what will happen will ruin the excitement and surprise for the players as they face new and unknown situations.

### **Background:**

For years, the Great Waste to the west of the Republic has been the home of nomad raiders. Petty little tribes, both human and otherwise, have roamed this trackless waste, raiding each other and the surrounding settlements. For a while, the local lords easily controlled this banditry. Then the tribes became dangerous: the raiders apparently set aside their feuds and prepared for war. Spies reported massive armies gathering. Shortly, some of the farthest-flung towns were no longer heard from. Heeding their spies and the stories of refugees from the west, the lords and the governor of the Republic sent out a call for arms. Throughout the settled lands, they asked for mercenaries and experienced men to fight the nomad foes. All manner of men answered — peasants, mercenaries, veterans, elves, and adventurers. Among these many came your group.

You were late in arriving, for the main army had already marched. Your party joined the rag-tag lot of reserves going to meet them: the undesirables and unusables of those who came to fight. Along the way there were many quarrels and disputes. Peasants fought for a dead man's boots; drunken mercenaries ransacked a village; men were knifed as old blood feuds broke out.

Finally, the reserves reached a village only recently taken by the main army. Still among the smoking ruins were the signs of nomad enemies — humans, orcs, and other unknown creatures. The commanders halted at this place. Now you have been camped here for several days.

### **Notes for the Dungeon Master:**

**Master of the Desert Nomads** is the first part of a two-part adventure. The second part is **Wilderness Module X5, The Temple of Death**. The same characters are used in both modules, although they may advance in levels as play progresses.

Before playing this module, the DM should read and become familiar with the details and events that appear. This will make playing more enjoyable and faster for everyone. There are eight sections of this module: the introduction, five encounters, one section of new monsters at the end of the module, and a section of pre-rolled characters that may be used with this adventure.

This module gives information in two different ways — boxed and unboxed. The information in the box should be read to the players as soon as they have an encounter or enter a room. The unboxed information is for the DM's use. It may contain facts the players can learn through questioning or actions, but the players must do something to get this information.

This module is designed for 6-8 characters from 6th to 9th level in experience, with about 50 levels total for the party. The party should have a range of all classes. It is suggested that the party have a cleric of 8th or 9th level. All characters should have from two to three magic items including magical swords and armor. All the members of the party should be outfitted for a wilderness adventure.

This adventure combines wilderness and dungeon encounters. The mission the characters will be given requires them to travel cross country and gather information. While on the way, they will have many encounters, some relating to their mission and others that simply add excitement to the adventure. With the exception of the first few encounters and the last one, none of these encounters are set. Instead, they are organized by the type of terrain in which they occur. When the player characters enter that type of terrain, the DM decides when and where on the map each encounter should occur. For example, when the characters are rafting up the river, the DM may have them meet the **Monsters From Below** after a day of travel. In this encounter, if several of the player characters are severely hurt, the DM should wait until the characters are almost to the end of the river before having the next encounter, **The Watchers on the River**. The DM controls the timing of all the encounters. He does not have to worry about the characters missing an important encounter by not going in the right direction.

This module leads the player characters through the first half of a mission that may be completed by continuing play in the second module of this series, **The Temple of Death**. However, if the DM wants to use only this module, it may stand on its own. When the players are given their mission, the DM should not have them try to find the Master, but should instruct them to find the Great Pass and report back its location. Appearances by the Master should be left in to confuse the players and give the DM a starting point for further adventures.

To complete their mission in this module (and the next in the series), the player characters must use stealth. They will travel through large areas of an enemy territory where armies are on the march, preparing for a major war. Obviously, characters who announce their mission or alignment are going to find themselves in serious trouble. When giving the players their mission, the DM should stress the need for secrecy.

The DM should also stress that the mission the player characters are undertaking is an important one. They will discover that their



mission has even attracted the attention of higher beings. Appearing at one point in the module is an "Unknown Benefactor." There is no explanation of who or what this being is, and the player characters are not able to observe it closely. The being only appears in the most absolute of need, but it should not be used to bail the characters out of situations into which they have stumbled through their own stupidity or foolishness! The Unknown Benefactor appears in the module for atmosphere and feeling, not as a cure-all to the characters' problems.

This module contains maps of the Evil Abbey (on the inside cover), a wilderness map of the Great Waste, the Bandit Attack, the

Village of Pramayama, and the Buried Temple. The wilderness map is designed to be joined to the upper left edge of the wilderness map that appears in **Module X1, The Isle of Dread**, but it is not necessary to use these maps in this way. The wilderness map has many locations named on it that are not described in the module so that the DM may incorporate the map into his campaign, filling out these place names with whatever information or details are desired. This way, the wilderness map may be used for later adventures.

To begin play in the module, start with the first encounter of the following section.

## PART 2: KEY TO THE SETTLED AREAS

**General Information:** The settled lands form the Western outpost of the Republic. This is a very poor region and is normally not well-defended. The land along the Asanda River is dry and stony. It cannot support many crops and is only thinly settled by humans. Those who live here survive by raising cattle, fishing, and irrigating fields to grow crops — a constant job since both annual floods and the desert destroy fields.

When the player characters arrive with the reserve forces, nearly all of the settlers will be gone from this area. They have either left, going back to the safer lands, or have been killed. There are signs

everywhere of the passage of a large army — burned buildings, broken weapons, stragglers, graves, bones, and scavenging animals. If the players tell the DM they want to do something heroic or adventurous on the journey, the DM can inform them that they are too late. There is really nothing in this area to do.

On each day that the characters travel in the settled lands, the chance for an encounter is 1-2 on 1d6. The DM should then roll 1d20 and consult the following table to determine what has been encountered. Beside each number is the time of the encounter, either daytime (D), night (N), or anytime (Any).

### Settled Lands Encounter Table

Die Roll	Time	Encounter
1-2	Any	3-30 Brigands (AC 6; HD 1; hp 4 each; #AT 1; D 1-8 [sword] or 1-6 [shortbow]; MV 120'; Save F1; ML 8; AL C)
3	N	2-12 Bugbears (AC 5; HD 3+1; hp 14 each; #AT 1; D 2-8; MV 90'; Save F3; ML 9; AL C; surprise on 1-3)
4	Any	1-4 Gargoyles* (AC 5; HD 4; hp 18 each; #AT 4; D 1-3/1-3/1-6/1-4; MV 90'/150'; Save F8; ML 11; AL C; immune to <b>sleep</b> and <b>charm</b> )
5	N	3-18 Gnolls (AC 5; HD 2; hp 10 each; #AT 1; D 2-8; MV 90'; Save F2; ML 8; AL C)
6	N	2-8 Hellhounds (AC 4; HD 5; hp 30 each; #AT 1; D 1-6 or breath; MV 120'; Save F5; ML 9; AL C)
7	D	2-4 Lions (AC 6; HD 5; hp 28 each; #AT 3; D 2-5/2-5/1-10; MV 150'; Save F3; ML 9; AL N)
8	D	2-8 NPC's (all variable)
9	Any	1-6 Ogres (AC 5; HD 4+1; hp 20 each; #AT 1; D 1-10; MV 90'; Save F4; ML 10; AL C)
10-14	D	2-20 Peasants (AC 9; HD ½; hp 2 each; #AT 1; D 1-4 (dagger); MV 120'; Save Normal Human; ML 5; AL N or L; will have 1-4 rumors per group)
15	D	1-8 Robber Flies (AC 6; HD 2; hp 8 each; #AT 1; D 1-8; MV 90'/180'; Save F1; ML 8; AL N; surprise on a 1-4)
16	D	1 Tarantella (AC 5; HD 4; hp 24; #AT 1; D 1-8 + poison; MV 120'; Save F2; ML 8; AL N, causes dancing)
17-19	D	2-20 Veterans (AC 2; HD 2; hp 14 each; #AT D 1-8 [sword] or 1-6 [bow]; MV 120'; ML 6; AL L or N; will know 1-6 rumors per group)
20	N	3-30 Zombies (AC 8; HD 2; hp 12 each; #AT 1; D 1-8; MV 120'; Save F1; ML 12; AL C; immune to <b>sleep</b> and <b>charm</b> ; always strike last)



The brigands, bugbears, gargoyles, gnolls, and hellhounds will all be under the command of the Master, although only indirectly (i.e. through his army, spies, or other agents). Any who survive an encounter with the player characters will report the events to their leaders. This is yet another means the Master has of keeping track of the party.

## Rumors

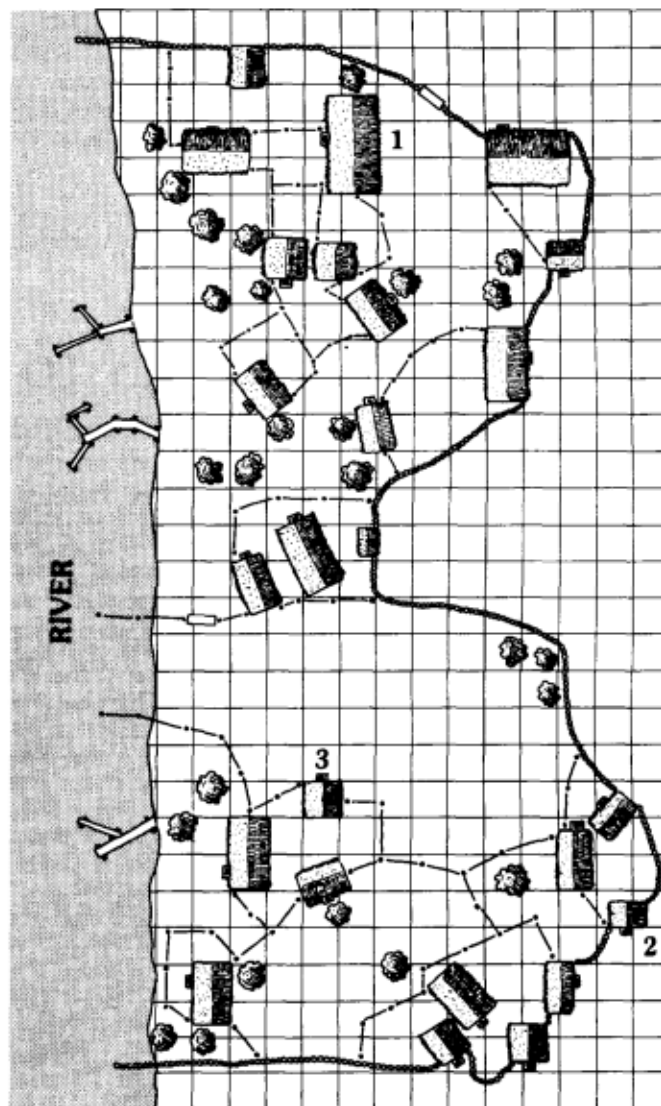
If the player characters are able to talk with any friendly humans, they may learn some of the current rumors, true or false. The DM should not just give the rumors to the players; they must ask for information from the NPC's. To determine what rumors the characters learn, roll 1d20 and consult the following list.

### Die Roll Rumor

- |    |   |
|----|---|
| 1  | The desert raiders took no slaves. They killed my brother, a strong worker! (True)  |
| 2  | Dragged at the head of the attacking army was a monstrous horrible idol too hideous to describe. (False)  |
| 3  | Flying things darkened the sky when the attackers came to my village. (True)  |
| 4  | The Republic Field Army has been destroyed. (True)  |
| 5  | A survivor told me he heard two soldiers talking about the "things from the Black Mountains." He said they were afraid of them and what they would do. (True) |
| 6  | The army of the desert raiders has scattered and fallen apart! (False)  |
| 7  | We saw a small band of men fleeing across the desert, pursued by a black, flying shape. (True)  |
| 8  | The raiders must be guided by some ungodly force! (True)  |
| 9  | I tell you, I saw it with my own eyes! The raiders are all zombies! (False)   |
| 10 | They cannot be killed! Dead men rise up and fight again in their ranks! (False)   |
| 11 | Some caravans, carrying rare chemicals and unknown goods, are able to cross the desert unharmed. A scout told me so. (True)                                   |
| 12 | A foul stench precedes the coming of the raiders. It terrified all the men. (Partially true)  |
| 13 | Scouts sent against the might of the evil army have never returned. We find their skulls on stakes. (True)  |
| 14 | Their leaders are able to raise great sandstorms from calm weather. (False)   |
| 15 | The source of their power is a great chariot beyond the snowy peaks. This I saw in a vision. (True)   |
| 16 | I was offered the chance to convert or be killed. Luck was with me and I escaped. (False)   |
| 17 | They attacked us on the night of a full moon. Their army was nothing but accursed monsters. (False)   |
| 18 | I used to adventure, and I saw their army. It wasn't much — only a mangy lot of desert men with some orcs and foul beast men. (Partially true)                |
| 19 | They are ruled by the Master. Beware for his eyes are everywhere! Trust no one! Trust nothing! (True)   |
| 20 | Destroy that being called the Master and you destroy them all. (Partially true)   |

**THE VILLAGE OF PRAMAYAMA:** The adventure for the characters begins in the small village of Pramayama, a human farming village located on a bank of the Asanda River. The buildings are made of dried mud brick with thick walls and high, narrow slit windows. The many fences inside the village are made from palm tree logs and woven reed rope. Surrounding the village is a crude palisade (log wall) made from palm tree logs, woven palm

## The Village of Pramayama



leaves, and thorn bushes. A small battle was recently fought here, and the village shows the effects. When the player characters arrived, the palisade was broken in many places and the insides of some of the buildings were burned, but by now the palisade has been repaired and the soldiers have tried to fix up the remaining buildings. There are only two villagers remaining in the town. All their food (grain and cattle) has been taken or driven away.

### 1. Commander's House

This is the largest house in the village, although it does not look any better than the others. The commander of the reserve force and his followers have taken it over to use as their headquarters. The commander (a 14th level fighter) will never meet with the player characters. If they wish to talk to the commander or have information they want to give him, they will meet with the fighter Sarras (AC 0; F10; hp 65; #AT 1; D by weapon; MV 40'; Save F10; ML 10; AL L) armed with a **sword +2**. Also present in the house are 4 bodyguards (AC 1; F6; hp 35; #AT 1; D by weapon; MV 40'; Save F6; ML 9; AL L) armed with crossbows and swords.

Sarras is a very busy man, handling most of the daily work the reserve force demands. Therefore, he will only have a little time to



spend with the players. He will listen and deal with matters that relate to the reserve force (for example when the characters report incidents at their guard post), but will have no patience with wild claims or demands on his time. The first time the player characters come to him (if they do), he will be half-interested. If the characters return again, Sarras will be rude and ignore them. If they persist after this, he will order their confinement. The DM should try to make it clear before this that the player characters will be expected to adventure without anyone else's help. Everyone else is just "too busy" or "too important."

## 2. House of the Mad Hermit

In this dirty, small hut lives one of the two remaining villagers, a mad hermit (AC 9; HD 1/2; hp 2; #AT 1; D by weapon; MV 40'; Save NM; ML special; AL N). He hides inside his hut all day and only appears at night. Everyone (including the PCs) knows of his presence, and most think he is a powerful holy man, touched by a vision from the gods. If the player characters try to talk to the hermit, his behavior will be completely unpredictable. The DM should roll a monster reaction every turn (see D&D • Expert Rulebook, p. 23) to determine how the hermit will behave. If he attacks, he will whip a dirty dagger from under his shirt and leap on the nearest character. At the same time, he will scream at the top of his lungs. This will not attract any attention, though, for the villagers often hear the hermit screaming for no apparent reason.

The hermit does have some valuable information that he may give the player characters if he reacts well to them and if they ask the right questions. He will tell them to "beware the Malakaz of the swamp" and that "the eyes of those not near can see." He will also tell the characters to "seek the lost gate that scorpions guard." He claims not to know what lies beyond the swamp. As the DM runs this encounter, he should mix in incoherent babbling and insane giggles. The hermit has nothing of value.

## 3. The Guide

Staying in this house is the other remaining villager, Pormas Theocrates (AC 7; HD 1/2; hp 4; #AT 1; D by weapon type; MV 120'(40'); Save NM; ML 8; AL N). Pormas is a river guide. If asked by the player characters, he will be willing to guide them up the river to the Sind Desert; however, he must be paid at least 500 gp to take the job. He will not let himself be hired for any less, and will try to get as much money as possible. In bargaining, he will point out the great risks involved — the dangers of the river and the fact that an enemy army is somewhere out there. If the player characters do not hire him, he will give them no information about the desert or the location of the Great Pass. Pormas has only leather armor and no weapons other than a dagger. If the party hires him, he will insist that they provide him with proper equipment, including a camel.

Pormas does have other information: if asked what he knows of the enemy, he will tell how he hid in the mud of the riverbank when the attackers came. The enemy troops were mostly men or creatures very like men. Most of the men rode camels. More importantly, there were a number of other beasts — "monsters of the desert" and unknown flying things. Unlike in previous raids, the attackers did not take slaves. All who were captured by them were eventually killed. Several times he heard mention of "the Master's orders" or "by the command of the Black Master." From the little information he has, he believes the Republic main army has followed the desert raiders into a trap somewhere in the desert. He has no other information.

## Settled Land Encounters

The following two encounters must be played in the order listed. The DM should follow the instructions given, changing or adding as he sees fit. Both encounters should take place while the player characters are in the settled lands.

## 1. The Mysterious Man

To prepare the players for this encounter, the DM should read the following to them:

You have been staying at the village of Pramayama for several days. Very little has happened and certainly nothing exciting. There have been no reports from the main army. Because your group has more experience than the normal soldier, you have been made special scouts and have been given the title "Guides." This has managed to keep you from having to do most of the dull and demeaning work of the ordinary soldier.

Tonight is your night for guard duty. Almost all the villagers are gone and the rest of the army is out searching for food. Only yourselves, the commanders, and a few others remain in the village.

Slowly, the night passes. All seems quiet and normal. Suddenly, well past midnight, you hear a scream from the darkness! Just at the edge of your lantern light, you can make out the forms of several creatures struggling. Human cries mingle with an unnatural hissing.

Fighting just at the edge of lantern range are a soul eater\* (AC 0; HD 10; hp 50; #AT 2; D 1-10/1-10; MV 180'(60'); Save C10; ML 12; AL C; see end of module for more information) and Bishop Guillaume (AC 1; C7; hp 32; #AT 1; D 2-7 [1d6+1]; MV 120' (40'); Save C7; ML 6; AL L). Guillaume has the following spells memorized:

First level: none  
Second level: speak with animal  
Third level: striking  
Fourth level: none  
Fifth level: quest

All his other spells have been cast. Guillaume also has a **ring of protection**, +1 and a **mace** +1. If the party investigates, both the soul eater and Guillaume will see the group. Guillaume will scream for aid, saying that he carries a valuable message. The soul eater will say, in hate-filled tones, "Stay back, helpless beings! This one is pledged to me." If the party attacks the soul eater, it will still concentrate its attacks on Guillaume, but will attack those who get in its way.

If on any round, Guillaume has 10 or fewer hit points, he will try to cast his **quest** spell on a human character wearing plate mail armor. He will throw a tube at the character and say, "Go there and do what should be done in the name of Law and righteousness!"

If the soul eater is defeated, it will dissolve and Guillaume will collapse to the ground. It will be obvious to all that he is exhausted. He appears to have been in the desert for many days. His clothes are caked in dust, and sand has worked down into his armor, rubbing sores and cuts into his skin. His face is dry and sunburnt and his lips are cracked. He has no equipment except his plate mail armor and his magical items. The soul eater, on the other hand, will return to attack the Master, who will suspect that the creature failed its mission. The Master will defeat the soul eater, and this will not affect his statistics as given in the next module.

If alive after the fight, Guillaume will explain that he has a mission of great importance. With or without the party's consent, he will cast his **quest** spell on a player character who wears plate mail armor. If necessary, he will explain that great dangers demand this action, and though it troubles him to cast the spell, it must be done. He will give the tube to the character, with the same instructions as above. He is almost incoherent and will not be able to give more details about what must be done.

The tube contains a crude map to the Highlands beyond the Great Pass. Next to a large red blot on the Highlands is scrawled: "O Gods, guide me to destroy this temple of death..." The rest of the map shows some of the terrain, though not in any detail.

Since their job is to guard the camp and report all unusual incidents to Sarras, characters will be expected to bring Guillaume (alive or dead) to the leader and make a report, after which they will be sent back to their post. Nothing more will happen that night. The next day they will be ordered to the commander's house. Sarras will tell them that they are needed for a mission of grave importance and great risk. He will order the player characters to travel beyond the Great Pass and find the Temple of Death. He does not know what they should do once they get there, and will tell them that they must use their own judgement. Somehow, he thinks, the temple is connected with the outcome of the war. He will give the characters Guillaume's map. The map is very crude, he points out, and does not show how to reach the Great Pass. Therefore, the first part of the mission is to reach the Republic main army and learn more from their scouts. The army is somewhere in the desert, chasing the enemy. He will tell the player characters that scouts have reported a caravan west of the town, beyond the Salt Swamp. They are to join this caravan and travel with it into the Sind Desert. The caravan leaves soon, and to reach it in time, the characters must take a boat up the river and across the swamp. Finally, because of the importance of their task, Sarras stresses the need for secrecy. Agents of the enemy might be anywhere. The player characters should be very careful.

The instructions that Sarras gives the players should assure that they will follow whatever character (if any) Guillaume has **quested** in the section above.

## 2. The Evil Patrol

After the players have received their mission from Sarras, the DM should allow them time to prepare. If the players ask about the guide, Sarras will vouch for the man's loyalty and suggest that he be hired. Sarras will not be able to give the characters money, magic or any other assistance except a boat, nor will he be able to spend any more time with the characters. The reserves are setting out from the village today and he must work on other details of the campaign. If Guillaume is still alive, he will not be able to add any more information except that his scouting party was attacked by horrible beasts and only he escaped alive. He will be able to use his spells to heal any wounded party members. From this point on, the players will be on their own.

By the time the boat is ready to leave, it will be late in the day. The DM should read the following to the players.

You are at one of the small docks, preparing to leave. The sun hangs low over the river, making it shine like red glass. The commander and the remaining troops have already left the village and marched into the desert. Except for the remaining villagers, the place is deserted. As you are loading the boat, you hear a low throbbing sound, like a distant drumbeat. The crickets and the frogs stop their singing. Everything is suddenly still.

If the characters scan the horizon, they will see nothing unusual. However, if a character looks toward the setting sun, there is a possibility equal to his chance to find secret doors that he will see something. About a mile away, a large, winged creature flies in a slow circle above the river. The sound seems to be the beat of its wings. It will circle for about 10 minutes and then fly away. The player characters will not be able to see the creature clearly, but half an hour later (before the loading is finished), the party will hear the beating sound again. Again, if the party looks to the sky in the west, they will have the same chance as before to see the flying creature. This time it is flying down the river towards the



characters. As it gets closer, the characters will be able to see a figure riding on its back. The creature is a wyvern (AC 3; HD 7; hp 44; #AT 2; D 2-16/1-6 + poison; MV 90'(30')/240'(80'); Save F4; ML special; AL C) and the figure riding on its back is a magic-user (AC 9; M 6; hp 19; #AT 1; D 1-4 + spells; MV 120'(40'); Save M6; ML 10; AL C). He has the following spells memorized:

**First level: magic missile, shield**  
**Second level: levitate, mirror image**  
**Third level: haste, lightning bolt**

He also has a ring of spell storing that contains the following spells: **haste** and **lightning bolt** (D 6-36).

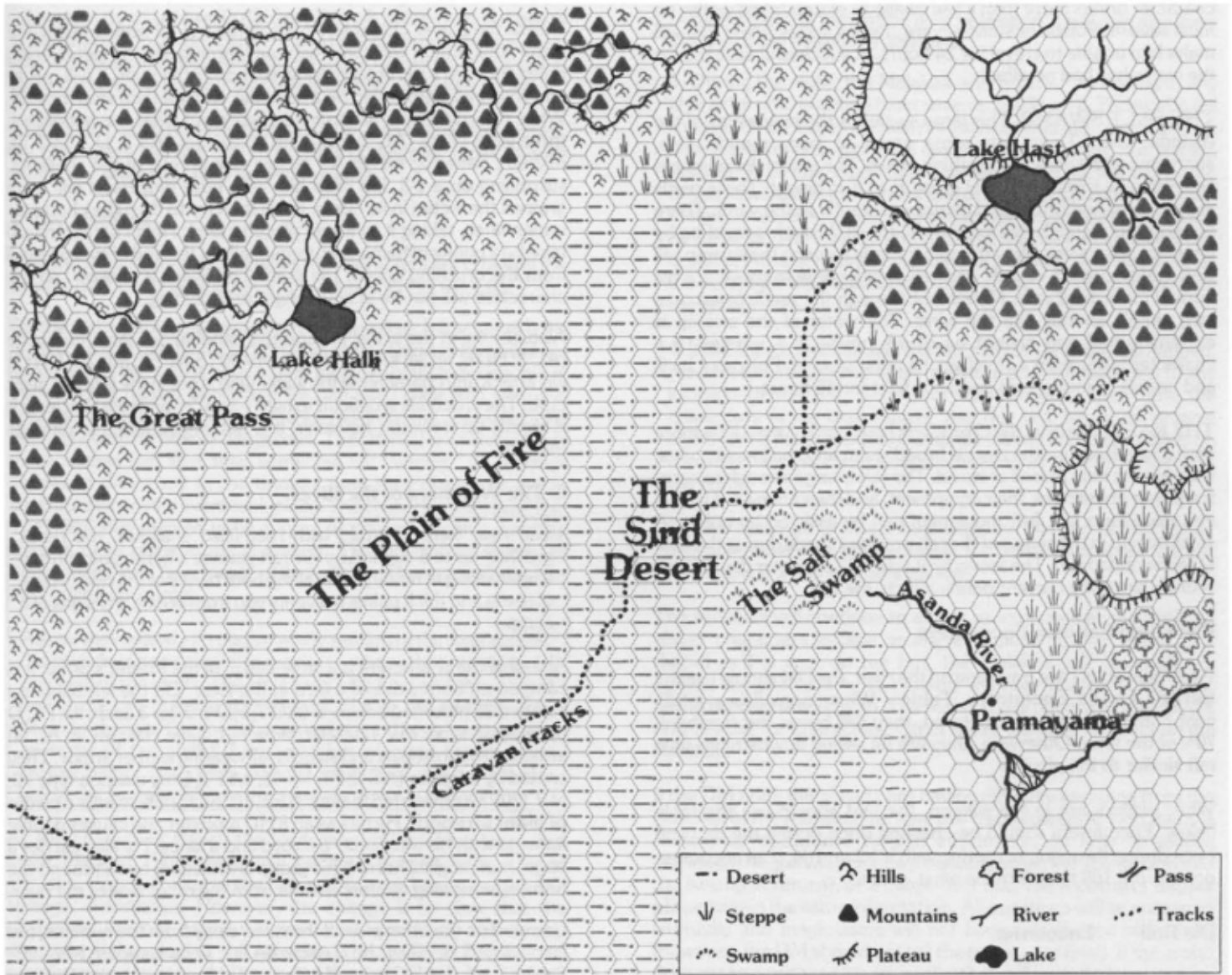
The wyvern does not need to make morale checks if the magic-user is alive. If the magic-user is slain, the wyvern will have a morale of 7.

As soon as the wyvern is within 240 yards, the magic-user will cast his **haste** spell from the ring on three trolls (AC 4; HD 6+3; hp 40, 32, 28; #AT 3; D 1-6/1-6/1-10; MV 120'; Save F6; ML 10(8); AL C) hiding along the riverbank 240 yards from the boat. On the next round, the trolls will charge to the boat (moving double speed) and attack (six attacks each). Meanwhile, the wyvern will close to 180 yards and the magic-user will cast his **lightning bolt** from the ring at the party. After this, the magic-user will dismount, cast his **shield** spell to improve his armor class, and let the wyvern attack the party. Then the magic user will cast his other spells as best he can. If he has five or fewer hit points left, he will mount the wyvern and flee.

The magic-user is also carrying 500 gp, a dagger, and an amulet carved in the shape of a skull. This is an **amulet of finding**. Any person with one of these amulets may see everything the wearer sees through the eyes of other amulets of this kind. The Master has one of these items and will know the success of the attack and who the player characters are. The Master keeps his amulet in a cloth bag around his neck, so the player characters will only see blackness at the other end, if they discover the power of the amulet (which they must guess). If a player character wears this amulet, the Master will be able to keep track of the group's progress, and the party will not be able to surprise any of his followers.



# The Wilderness Map of the Great Waste



## PART 3: KEY TO THE ASANDA RIVER

**THE ASANDA RIVER:** This river starts in a large salt marsh on the edge of the Sind Desert. Water rises from underground through a layer of natural salts, and bubbles up into the marsh. From the marsh, the river gradually forms and flows to the east. Its currents are slow, so it does not carry much silt downstream with it. The water is brackish (salty to the taste) and is a murky blue-green. Most plants do not do well when given water from the river, and the water must be purified before it can be drunk safely. If a character drinks more than a few swallows of unpurified water, he must save vs. Poison or suffer severe cramps and sickness that will make him unable to travel for 24 hours. A successful save means the water has had no effect.

**THE SALT SWAMP:** This large swamp is the headwater of the Asanda river. There are some areas of large muddy flats, encrusted with salt, where nothing grows. The rest of the swamp is covered with thick reeds that grow up to 8' in height. These reeds are very dry and brittle and clatter constantly in the wind. There are no trails through this swamp. All travel through it must be by boat. Any character who attempts to wade through the swamp will sink 1 foot every 5 rounds and will only be able to move 1/3 his normal movement rate. Movement through the reeds (even on a raft) simply sounds like the wind. The water of the swamp is extremely foul and cannot be drunk unless it is purified. If a character takes even a small sip, he must save vs. Poison or be ill and unable to move, cast spells, or fight for 48 hours.

**THE RAFT:** The boat the characters have been given is little more than a raft. Because the river is broad, calm and shallow at points, rafts are the best means of travel. The raft is large enough to carry the player characters, their equipment, and their animals. There is one mast for a sail, but movement can be assisted by poling. A small lean-to in the center of the raft provides shade during the heat of the noonday sun. The movement rate is 12 miles per day (30' per round), since the current barely affects the raft.

### River Trip Random Encounters

While characters are travelling on the river, the DM should use the **Settled Lands Encounter Table**. When non-flying intelligent humanoid are encountered, they will be on the riverbank 70% of the time. Otherwise, they will be sailing downstream on a raft similar to the players'.

While players are in the swamp, the DM should use the table below. Encounters should be checked once during the day and once during the night, occurring with a 1-2 on 1d6. If an encounter occurs, roll 1d8 to determine what is met.

Die Roll	Encounter
1	1 Hydra (AC 5; HD 5-12; hp 40-96; #AT 5-12; D 1-10 per head; MV 120'; Save F5-12; ML 9; AL N)
2-4	1-4 Giant leeches (AC 7; HD 6; hp 32 each; #AT 1; D 1-6 (blood suck); MV 90'; Save F3; ML 10; AL N)
5-6	4 Swamp Termites (AC 4; HD 1+1; hp 5 each; #AT 1; D 1-3 or poison or hull damage; MV 90'; Save F1; ML 10; AL N)
7	1-10 Giant Bats (AC 6; HD 2; hp 12 each; #AT 1; D 1-4; MV 30'/60'; Save F1; ML 8; AL N)
8	1 Black Dragon (AC 2; HD 7; hp 45; #AT 3; D 2-5/2-5/2-20 or acid breath; MV 90'/240'; Save F7; ML 8; AL C)

All the creatures encountered will be out of their lairs, hunting for food. They will not be unwary or asleep. All (except the termites) will consider the characters a good dinner.

### Encounters on the Asanda River

**Encounters #1 and #2** should occur, in either order, before players reach the swamp: it is suggested that both occur some distance upstream from the village of Pramayama. **Encounter #3** should occur while the characters are crossing the swamp.

#### 1. Monsters From Below

Unless the player characters have some way of seeing under the water, this attack will come without warning. As the raft is being poled through a particularly slow section of the river, it will quiver and shake as if grounded on a sandbar, and will then stop moving. While the characters are trying to figure out what has happened, three giant crabs (AC 2; HD 3; hp 20, 16, 13; #AT 2; D 2-12/2-12; MV 60'; Save F2; ML 8; AL N) will rise up out of the shallows, surprising on a 1-3. If a crab hits with both pincers, it will have gripped the victim in its claws. It will then try to drag the character underwater, taking it to a safe place to feed. Held characters will take 2-12 points of damage automatically at the end of every round from the crushing grip of the crab. The water is shallow, so the characters will not be in any danger of drowning.

Also lurking in the water around this sandbar is a large crocodile (AC 3; HD 6; hp 36; #AT 1; D 2-16; MV 90'; Save F3; ML 7; AL N). It will attack any character in the water who is not in the grip of a giant crab. The crocodile is difficult to fight (-2 on "to hit" rolls) because it is mostly underwater; however, it is not large enough to damage the raft.

#### 2. The Watchers of the River

The river here is broad with reed-filled shallows, the reeds growing up to 6' high. As your raft rounds a bend, you can see smoke rising at many points along both banks of the river. A line of reeds and thick palms prevents you from seeing any signs of a camp.

Ahead of the characters is a large patrol of the Master's army. It is camped on both sides of a ford in the river. On the left bank are camped 25 mounted bowmen (AC 7; HD 1/2; hp 3 each; #AT 1; D by weapon type; MV 120'/240' mounted; Save NM; ML 8; AL N) armed with shortbows and swords, all wearing leather armor. They are led by a fighter (AC 2; F7; hp 46; #AT 1; D by weapon type x2; MV 120'/120' mounted; Save F7; ML 10; AL C) who wears a **girdle of giant strength**. He hits as an 8 HD monster and causes double damage with his weapons, a sword and a lance. He also carries a large, non-magical horn. If his group is attacked, he will sound the horn, summoning reinforcements from the other side of the river.

Camped on the other side of the river, away from the humans, are 20 orcs (AC 6; HD 1; hp 6 each; #AT 1; D by weapon; MV 120'; Save F1; ML 8; AL C) armed with short swords and bows. Bullying them around are 8 bugbears (AC 5; HD 3+1; hp 18; #AT 1; D by weapon +1; MV 90'; Save F3; ML 9; AL C) armed with giant mauls (D 1-10). This group is led by 2 weretigers (AC 3(9); HD 5\*; hp 30, 28; #AT 3; D 1-6/1-6/2-12; MV 150'; Save F5; ML 11; AL C). They are currently in human form, but will change to tiger form at the first sign of trouble.

If any character is openly wearing the **amulet of finding** (see **Settled Lands Encounter 2**), the group will not be able to surprise the patrol, no matter what they do. If, while wearing the amulet, the party hides the raft in the reeds, the weretigers will lead the orcs and bugbears to the spot. The orcs will remain on the edge of the reeds with orders to slay any who try to escape: this they will try to do by arrow fire. The bugbears and weretigers will move up to the raft and melee, surprising on a 1-3. If the party decides (while wearing the amulet) to sail past the camps, the human archers and



orcs will line both banks. Both the bowmen and the orcs will be able to follow the raft upstream with no difficulty. They will follow on the banks of the river until their morale breaks or they are all slain. If the characters try to slip by (again, while wearing the amulet) at night, the orcs will behave as listed above. The human bowmen will not fight.

If no character is wearing the amulet, the party will be able to hide in the reeds without being discovered. If they try to slip past at night, they will succeed if they are quiet and do not show any lights. If they are discovered, the orcs will attack as explained above. If the characters try to sail past in daylight, there is a 50% chance they will be far enough upstream before the orcs notice them. In this case, only the mounted bowmen will pursue. Otherwise, if the raft is noticed, the bowmen and orcs will attack as explained above.

There is very little treasure in either camp. If one camp is searched, the characters will find 500 gp in coins of different types. If both camps are searched, 1000 gp will be found.

### 3. The Malakaz

This encounter should occur while the characters are crossing the swamp. The exact location in the swamp is left to the DM.

On the night before the encounter, the sleeping character with the highest wisdom will have disturbing dreams. These dreams will not awaken him, nor will he have a clear memory of their details, but in the morning he will know that he had very clear and very evil dreams. The DM should describe scenes from the character's life that were very terrible or dangerous. The character will remember these scenes and that they somehow felt "wrong," as if things happened differently in the dreams than they did in the actual adventure where the event took place. The character will remember that there also seemed to be a force or power watching, feeding, guiding, or laughing at the character. The DM should stress the "wrongness" and "alienness" of these dreams to create a mood for the coming encounter.

As you move slowly through a reedy section of the swamp, only the sounds of normal wildlife reach you above the snapping and cracking of the reeds. The air is hazy with heat and the work of poling the raft is tiring and sweaty. Slowly the surroundings begin to change. The reeds become thicker. Large tumors grow on some of the stalks. Large patches of green-brown algae spread before you. Fish, doughy white and gray, swim just below the surface. Slowly the sun sets under a gray sky.

As the characters travel, the landscape will become more and more blighted. The reeds will become twisted with strange growths, algae will cling to the raft, and fish will have stranger and stranger deformities. However, the change is so slow that the characters will not notice it unless they specifically ask or pay attention. If they do not, the only thing they will notice is that the swamp grows quieter. At the end of the day, the characters will notice a small hut, raised on stilts just above the level of the swamp. It is an old building. It has only one room and is empty. There is no one or nothing in sight.

In the ooze under the house lives an evil influence. It is not a monster, but an evil force. The hut was once the home of a particularly evil female wizard. When she died, the hut and the area around it became filled with the essence of all her evil. In a way, the hut and area are "alive" with this power. If a **detect magic** spell is used, the entire area will show magic. Likewise, a **detect evil** will reveal powerful evil in the area. The hut and the surrounding area have several special magical effects.

1. The area has a personality. It calls itself the Malakaz. Player characters will be able to talk to it when they use **ESP**, or the first time they try a **commune** or **contact higher plane**. If contacted,

it will gloat over the characters' fate, telling them they are doomed and cannot escape. It will not reveal what will happen to the player characters or how they can escape.

2. If the characters try to leave the area, they will always return to the hut. The entire area has a special distortion that makes it impossible for the characters to leave in a normal manner. When the characters have travelled 100 yards beyond the hut, the DM should say that they push through a thick stand of reeds and see the hut in front of them again. The same thing will happen if they try to fly, swim, etc. out of the 100 yard radius. They will be able to escape if they use **dimension door** or **teleport**. They may also leave the area if the Malakaz is defeated.

3. During the night, the Malakaz will "attack." At midnight, any character who is awake must save vs. Spells at -2. Those who fail to save will fall asleep and will not awaken until morning. If at least one character is awake at all times during the night, nothing will happen. If all the characters fall asleep during the night, the Malakaz will drain the mind of one of them. In the morning, when the group awakes, the drained player will be completely mindless, a vegetable. The remaining characters will remember having bad dreams. Note: If draining the mind of a character is possible, on the first night the Malakaz will drain an NPC, if there is one with the group.

4. If the characters damage the hut, nothing unusual will happen. However, if they try to leave the area and are returned to the location of the hut, it will not be damaged. Each time the characters leave and return, the hut will be in its original condition. If the characters dismantle the hut and carry it away on their raft, the wood will slowly fade away as they cross through the reeds.

5. The Malakaz is in contact with the Master. If the player characters become trapped here, the Master will know. He will also know if the characters escape.

The Malakaz will continue to attack as explained above until the player characters escape or are all drained of their minds. If a **dispel evil** is cast on the hut, the Malakaz will automatically release the characters. The caster will hear a voice in his mind telling the characters to go. The Malakaz will not be dispelled; it will only release the characters. Other spells will have no effect on the Malakaz.

If the DM finds the players are having difficulty escaping from the clutches of the Malakaz, he may use the following to help them: a cleric may **commune** to gain information on how to escape (although the god will demand a valuable magic item be thrown into the swamp in return), or a magic-user may use a **contact higher plane** to gain the same information. All questions will be answered truthfully and magic-users will not have any chance of insanity (however, the DM should not tell the magic user this!). If the group does not have either of these spells, they will see a flitting shape on the edge of the area. This is their "Unknown Benefactor." If they go to the spot where the Benefactor appeared, they will find a small tube. Inside will be a scroll with one of the two spells above on it. The DM should decide which spell, not giving a **commune** if the party no longer has a cleric, for example. Whoever opens the tube will have a **quest** to complete when their current **quest** is finished. There is no saving throw for this **quest**. The DM should decide a suitable task based on his campaign. If the players are still trapped after this, the Unknown Benefactor will appear in a dream. It will tell them to try a spell they have not yet used. If the characters still do not figure out the situation, they will have to escape without the aid of the Unknown Benefactor.

Characters whose minds were drained by the Malakaz may be restored only after the party has escaped. A **remove curse** will automatically restore a drained character.

## PART 4: KEY TO THE CARAVAN TRACK

**THE SIND DESERT:** On leaving the swamp, the characters will enter the Sind Desert. This desert is more barren and stony than sandy: rocky areas, craggy bluffs, and patches of dry thorn bushes dot the landscape. During the daytime, temperatures often reach 110 degrees or higher. At night, the temperatures will drop as low as 30 to 40 degrees. Experienced travellers do not travel during the noon and afternoon on the Sind Desert. Most travelling is done during the morning, late afternoon, and early night. If players insist on travelling during the hottest part of the day, the DM should have them save vs. Death. Those that fail to save will take 1-4 points of damage from the intense heat. A successful save means the character is not affected by the heat.

**THE CARAVAN:** When the player characters reach the caravan track, they will immediately sight a caravan heading in their direction, and going the direction they must travel. The caravan composition is as follows:

Caravan Master: Surna Lamshar, merchant (AC 9; HD 1/2; hp 4; #AT 1: D 1-4 (dagger); MV 120'/150' on camel; Save NM; ML 9; AL N), is the leader of the caravan. He makes all the major decisions, based on the advice of others.

Captain of the Guard: Ahmed Khel, fighter (AC 0; F6; hp 52; #AT 1; D 3-10 [1d8+2]; MV 120'/150' on camel; Save F6; ML 8; AL C). He uses a **sword +2, extra damage (x4 for 1-10 rounds), AL N, Will 17, wears +2 chain mail armor, and carries a shield +2**. Khel is secretly an agent for the Master, working the caravan routes for information on the Master's enemies and caravans worth plundering. He wears an **amulet of finding** that works the same as that explained in **The Evil Patrol, Settled Lands Encounter #2**. He will not be forewarned about the player characters and will have no reason to suspect them if they do nothing unusual.

Sergeants of the Guard: Two fighters (AC 2; F3; hp 24, 20; #AT 1: D 2-9 [1d8+1 for strength]; MV 120'/150' on camel; Save F3; ML 8; AL C) named Zeid and Dakhial. Zeid has a **potion of heroism**.

Guards: The guards are 40 1st level fighters. All have the following statistics in common: AC 6; F1; hp 6; #AT 1; D by weapon; MV 120'/150' on camel; Save F1; ML 7. Their alignment is either Neutral (25%) or Chaotic (75%). They ride camels and are equipped with leather armor and shield, swords, and spears.

Merchants: There are 12 merchants (AC 9; HD 1/2; hp 3; #AT 1; D 1-4 (dagger); MV 120'; Save NM; ML 6; AL N). The merchants tend the pack camels. All of them travel on foot.

Besides the camels used by the guards and the leaders, there are 40 camels loaded with goods and 6 extra camels brought for replacements. The camels are loaded with dried fruits, grains, and cloth.

If the characters remain in the open as the caravan approaches, Lamshar, Khel, and 10 guards will ride ahead of the rest and approach the player characters. They will stop within shouting distance and greet the characters, asking who they are and where they are bound. If the players do nothing hostile or suspicious, Lamshar will ride forward to parley. He will be cautious but friendly. If asked, he will be quite willing to let the party join the caravan. If any character is wearing anything openly that would show his alignment or religion, Lamshar will warn the character to keep the object out of sight. This caravan, he explains, does not ask who a man is or what his beliefs are, only whether the man will do his work.

If the party should be rash enough to attack the outriders, they will scatter and hide. The remaining guards will ride to join them and use spears to keep the characters pinned down while the merchants lead the animals past. Obviously, if the characters attack the caravan, they will not be allowed to travel with it!

When the characters join the caravan (as the DM should encourage them to do), they will quickly discover that the caravan seems to be a tough and ill-tempered group. If the players have not already figured it out, the DM should warn them not to speak about their mission, alignment or beliefs. He may stress this fact by pointing out that any of these people may be a spy. Again, the players should be aware of the need for secrecy.

### Encounters on the Caravan Track

The first two encounters may occur in any order the DM wants. The third encounter should occur last. As described above, the caravan will travel during the morning and evening. During the remainder of the day, the caravan will rest.

#### 1. Bandits on the Way

Not finding the company of the caravan the most pleasant or sociable around, your party has accepted orders from Lamshar to act as an advance guard. Riding out to a point about 300 yards ahead of the main group, your group notices signs of the passing of a large group of men. Occasionally you find graves, torn open by wild animals. From the remains, you can tell that the Republic army passed this way, apparently just recently. Then, as you ride past the base of a steep bluff, you see a cloud of dust in the distance. It appears to be moving your way.

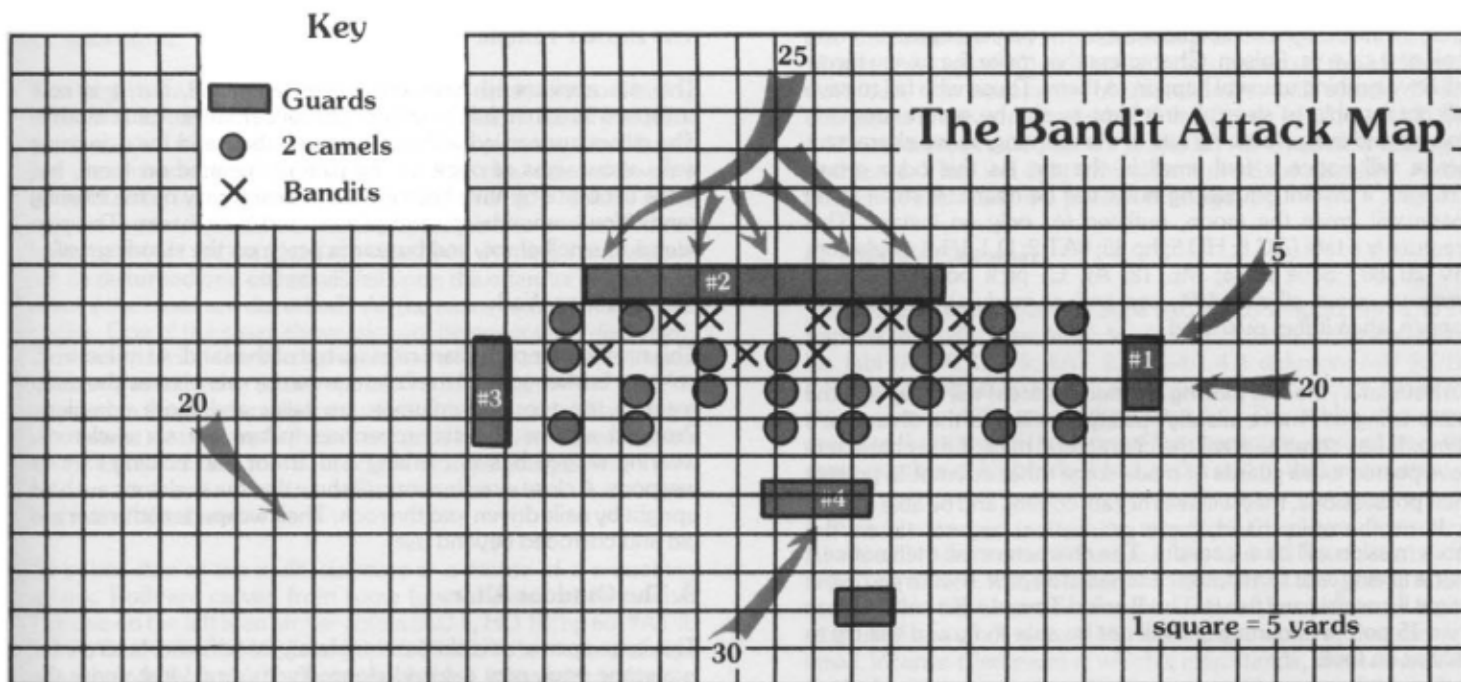
The cloud of dust is a band of 100 desert bandits (AC 7; HD 1; hp 5; #AT 1; D by weapon; MV 120'/240' on horses; Save F1; ML 7; AL N) galloping toward the caravan. They are all armed with swords and shortbows. The bandits are lead by a fighter (AC 2; F8; hp 50; #AT 1; D 1-8; MV 120'/240' on horse; Save F8; ML 9; AL N) wearing plate mail armor and armed with a sword. He also carries a **horn of blasting**.

If the characters act quickly, they will be able to warn the caravan in time to prepare for the attack. There will not be enough time to get the caravan into a defensive position, but the guards will be able to take positions. Khel will tell the player characters to take command of one of the positions for the duration of the attack; he feels their experience will be needed to drive off the bandits.

If the player characters do not warn the caravan, the bandits will attack it with surprise. By the time the characters rejoin the caravan, all the guards and merchants will be dead. The bandits will be looting the bodies and leading the camels away. The player characters will have to continue the adventure on their own.

The inset map shows the caravan, the position of the guard units (and how many men are in each), and the attacks of the bandits (and how many men are in each attack). Each guard position is numbered. The players should select the position they wish to command. Khel and the sergeants will take the other positions. The bandits will then attack. The DM should conduct the combat as follows: roll for the guards and bandits fighting each other at the same position as the player characters. One "to hit" roll should be made for every five guards and bandits. If a hit is scored, five men on the opposing side will be killed. Those bandits fighting the player characters should be handled normally. After the players have fought three rounds of combat (or killed all the attackers at the





position), the DM should describe the situations at the other positions. The player characters should be allowed to react as they wish.

The bandit attack at each position will be as follows:

1. Twenty bandits will charge the line of 10 guards at this position. The guards will meet them with leveled spears, killing most of the mounts and throwing the riders. Instead of staying in formation, the guards will rush out and attack the fallen bandits with swords. At this point, five more bandits will ride down on the disorganized men, taking a terrible toll. At the end of three rounds, the guards will be in serious trouble. Three guards will remain, fighting 8 bandits.

2. Twenty-five bandits will attack the flank of the caravan. The 10 guards will be too widely spread to stop them, and many of the riders will break through into the caravan proper. At the end of three rounds, five guards will remain, fighting six mounted bandits, while 10 more bandits ride through the caravan attacking the merchants and trying to lead off animals (X's on the map).

3. At this position, 20 bandits will dismount and take cover behind the rocks. From here, they will use bow fire to pin down the 10 guards at this position. The guards will also take cover behind rocks and fallen animals. They will return fire with thrown spears. At the end of three rounds, this position will be in a stalemate. There will be eight guards remaining and 16 bandits. Neither side will rush the other.

4. Charging in tight formation, 30 bandits and the leader will crash into the line of spears of the 10 guards here. Fierce hand-to-hand fighting will occur. At the end of the third round, 15 bandits and the leader will have just reached the caravan animals. All the guards will be dead. The leader will be preparing to blow his horn.

If the player characters manage to defeat all of the attackers at two of the positions or to slay the leader, the bandits will flee. Otherwise, they will fight to the death. If the caravan is victorious at the end of the fight, the characters will learn that 20 guards, 5 merchants, 8 camels, and Zeid will have been killed. (If the players see more guards or merchants fall in the fight, they will discover that some were only unconscious, lightly wounded, or playing dead.) Searching the bodies of the bandits will turn up a total of 200

gp. If they want, the characters may also capture 2-20 of the bandits' horses. It will be obvious that none of the bandits have any connection with the Master of the evil army of the desert. After the fight, the caravan will leave the area as quickly as possible.

## 2. The Lost Oasis

If the players have separated from the caravan, the DM should not read the following section to the players. Likewise, all information relating to the caravan should be ignored.

Just before noon, the caravan arrives at a small oasis. It is nothing more than a pool of muddy water in a hollow of rocks, surrounded by a few feeble date palms. The merchants leisurely tie the camels and begin to make camp; Ahmed Khel posts guards in well-hidden places. It looks like it will be safe here. Lamshar comes up to your group and explains, "Here we stop for several days. The men and animals are tired and to travel on without resting would mean our deaths. We were lucky to find the Lost Oasis. Sometimes the sand hides it, and sometimes the water is gone. In celebration of our good luck, tonight there will be a feast. You will be my guests." Indeed, you have already noticed the merchants gathering dates and butchering two of the camels. In a short time the smell of stewing meat and rice hangs over the oasis.

If the characters refuse to remain in camp, Lamshar will warn them that this is a serious insult to hospitality. If the characters insist on leaving, they will not be able to hire a guide, and no one will give them any directions. Furthermore, Ahmed Khel will become suspicious of the group. He will contact the Master and inform him of the party's position. Otherwise, nothing more will happen.

If the party remains, they will be the guests of honor at the night's feast. After a thick, syrupy coffee, the merchants will carry in a large platter of camel meat (still on the bone) laid on a bed of rice. Over this will be ladled burning hot grease and melted camel butter until it flows over the sides of the tray. Lamshar will then invite the characters to eat. They will be expected to dip their fingers into the tray and pull out balls of meat and rice, dripping with grease. Lamshar and Khel will dine with them, offering the player characters choice bits of camel meat that they have pulled out. After the characters have had their fill (and to only eat a little would be insulting), the other merchants will take their place at the tray. The meal will finish with somewhat green dates.

After the feast, the DM should have all the player characters who took part save vs. Poison. Characters that make the saving throw will have nothing unusual happen to them. Those who fail to save will not be able to sleep, being kept awake by severe stomach cramps and indigestion. At two in the morning, those characters awake will notice a foul smell in the air. As this odor grows stronger, a distant squeaking noise will be heard. A small flying shape will cross the moon, outlined for only an instant. This creature is a tabi (AC 6; HD 5; hp 35; #AT 2; D 1-4/1-4 + delusion; MV 20'/80'; Save MU5; ML 12; AL C; pick pocket, hide in shadows, move silently 40%; see end of module). Nothing will happen when it flies overhead.

An hour later, the tabi (having scouted the area) will creep into the camp using its "move silently" ability. It will find the character's camp. It has come to steal the characters' map. If the characters have posted extra guards or made some other attempt to protect their possessions, they will see the tabi coming and be able to fight it. If, on the other hand, these precautions are not taken, the tabi's mission will be successful. The characters will then notice it as it is fleeing with something clutched in its paw. It will try to avoid a fight if possible and flee to **The Buried Temple**. If it suffers more than 15 points of damage, it will not be able to fly and will try to escape on foot.

If the tabi has the map, or is forced to flee, it will travel one mile across the desert (away from the caravan track). At the end of the mile, hidden behind a low bluff, is a small ruin (see **Buried Temple Map**). The tabi will fly or run into these ruins and disappear from sight. If the characters do not follow the tabi, Lamshar will send them on a scouting expedition the next day. He wants to know more about the strange creature that flew over in the night and if it is a threat to the caravan. On the scouting trip, the characters will find **The Buried Temple**.

## The Buried Temple

The site appears to have once been a temple, but it is now collapsed into ruin. It is built from red sandstone and pink marble. The pillars are carved with unknown symbols and the remaining walls show signs of once having pictures painted on them, but these decorations have been erased almost totally by the blowing sand. Now, mounds of sand pile around their bases. The ruin seems to smell of rot, and buzzards perch on the standing walls.

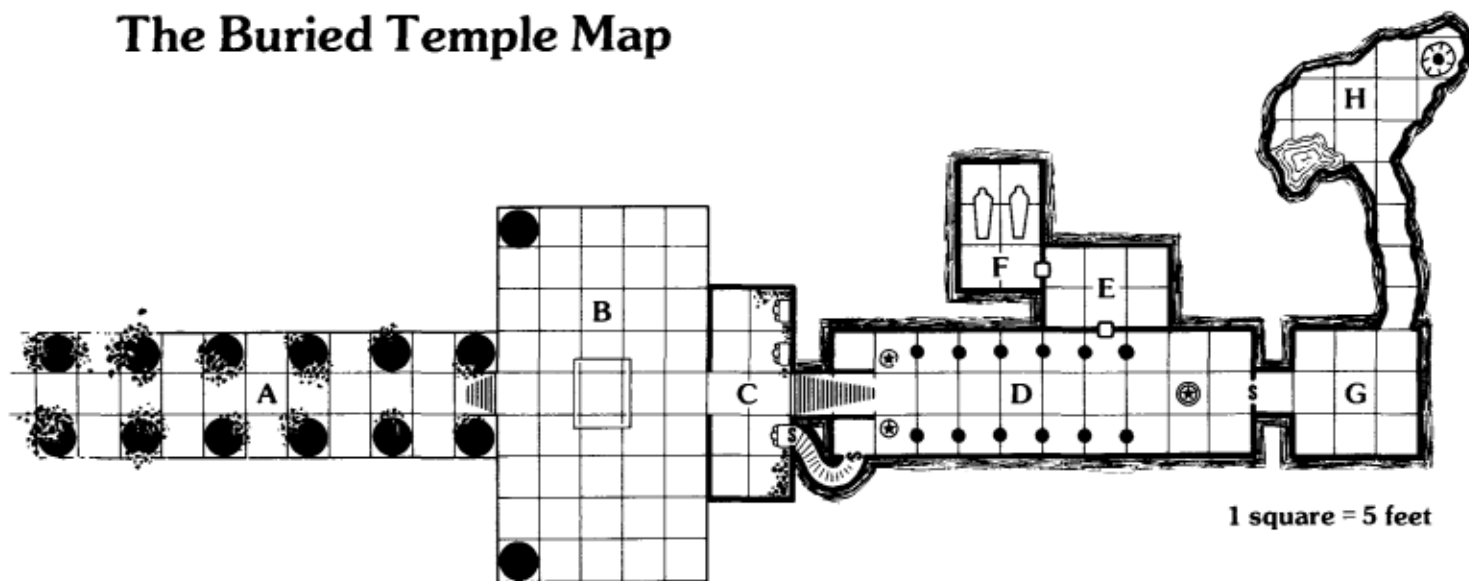
### A. The Pillar Walk

This narrow ramp of pillars rises up out of the sand. At its low end, only the broken tops of the columns can be seen, but as the ramp reaches the top, the columns are taller and more complete. Propped against the six uppermost pillars are six skeletons, wearing ragged bits of clothing and armor and holding various weapons. A close examination will show that the skeletons are held upright by nails driven into the rock. Their weapons and armor are old and corroded beyond use.

### B. The Outdoor Altar

This large open area is almost completely free of sand. In its center is a stone pool, now dry and clogged with sand. Just under the surface of the sand is a pit viper (AC 6; HD 2; hp 12; #AT 1; D 1-4 + poison; MV 90'; Save F1; ML 7; AL N) that will attack anyone who disturbs the pool. If its morale breaks, it will slither away through a drain below. If the sand is cleared away from the bottom of the pool, a series of pictures and writings will be exposed. Some pictures show people making offerings of flowers and fruit to a scorpion-man deity sitting in front of a flaming pit; others show the scorpion-man battling fearsome monsters. The writing is in an unknown tongue. If read by some means, it says, "This we give to the One Who Keeps Us that He may guard the Gate forever."

## The Buried Temple Map



- |          |             |                      |               |
|----------|-------------|----------------------|---------------|
| Wall     | Rubble      | Standing sarcophagus | Broken Column |
| Sinkhole | Sarcophagus | Statue               | Column        |
| Pool     | Stairs      | Secret door          | Door          |

### C. Anteroom

This large room has small piles of rubble and decayed wood. Lining its far wall are three sarcophagi (mummy cases). All of the cases are decorated with writing and pictures. The pictures are defaced, but the characters will be able to tell that they once showed a scorpion-man surrounded by flames. The writing, if read by some magical means, tells that these cases contain the bodies of three lesser priests of the temple. Each case has a warning that it should not be disturbed or a **curse** will fall upon the offender (there is no effect if the cases are disturbed). All the cases contain mummified bodies. One of the cases shows signs of being recently disturbed. The back panel of this sarcophagus has a secret catch that, when released, swings the panel open. The mummy in the case is fastened to the panel and swings with it. Beyond is a narrow flight of stone steps that curves to the left and ends in a door. There is also a visible exit out of the room — a flight of steps going down.

### D. Hall of the Dead

To either side of the main staircase is a statue of a crouching sphinx. Both are carved from some type of clear, golden stone. The one on the left is an amber golem (AC 6; HD 10; hp 60; #AT 3; D 2-12/2-12/2-20; MV 60'; Save F5; ML 12; AL N; immune to **sleep**, **charm**, and **hold**; able to **detect invisible**). It has instructions to attack any creature coming down the main staircase into the hall. The sound of fighting will attract Abatu (his face hidden by robes) and the tabi from **G., Abatu's Chamber**. The tabi will attack the group and Abatu will use his spell powers. If the fight is going badly for the golem, Abatu and the tabi will flee to **H., The Gate**. The golem will not attack anyone who uses the secret passage from **C.**

Covering the walls of this room are frescos showing scenes of preparing a body for burial and the afterlife. Many of the paintings appear to have been purposefully defaced — sections of them are chipped away, so that what they might have been is impossible to tell. At the far end of the hall is a small raised platform, upon which stands the statue of a vulture-headed man covered with gold-leaf. The statue weighs 200 pounds and could be sold for 5,000 gp in a large city. Around its base are broken bits of stone. Examination will show these to be parts of a statue or statues — some kind of man or insect, or both. Behind the statue is a secret door.

### E. Storeroom

This room contains many old chests, crumbling furniture, broken statues, and stoppered urns. A thick layer of dust covers everything in the room. If any of the urns are opened, all the characters in the room must save vs. Dragon Breath from the sickening smell that comes from the unknown contents of the urn. Failure to save means the character will be -2 on all "to hit," saves, and turning attempts for the next 2 turns. Hidden in one corner of the room are several ancient scrolls. Written on these, in a forgotten non-magical tongue, is the history of the temple. It will take the player characters several hours to read through the difficult text.

The scrolls tell of the scorpion-man god who lived at this temple. A lawful being, he was charged with keeping certain evil horrors under the earth, away from the world of men. To aid him in this task, the gods gave him invulnerability to all things but a magically inscribed ivory spike. In time, a religion grew around the scorpion-man, and his worshippers built the temple around him. At this point, the account ends.

### F. Burial Chamber

This room contains two ornate sarcophagi, resting on platforms on the floor. Carved around the base of each is a warning not to disturb the peace of the high priest and priestess of He Who Keeps

Us. The cases are very large and heavy. Each is gilded and set with 10 gems (worth 500 gp each). If the gems or the cases are disturbed, the occupants of the chamber will attack. These occupants are two mummies\* (AC 3; HD 5+1; hp 33, 29; #AT 1; D 1-12 + disease; MV 20'; Save F5; ML 12; AL C). One is resting in each case. They will fight until slain, turned, or dispelled. At the bottom of each case is a **potion of longevity**.

### G. Abatu's Chamber

This is the room of Abatu, a nagpa (AC 3; HD 9; hp 50; #AT 1; D 1-8 + spells; MV 120'; Save MU9; ML 9; AL C; see end of module), and his tabi (AC 6; HD 5; #AT 2; D 1-4/1-4 + delusion; MV 20'/80' (indoors); Save MU5; ML 12; AL C; pick pocket, hide in shadows, move silently 40%; see end of module). The tabi is the same creature that entered the camp of the characters, and will have the same number of hit points it had at the end of that encounter.

If the tabi managed to steal the map from the player characters, Abatu will have it now. Otherwise, the tabi will have returned to report its failure. If the characters do not fight the golem, Abatu and the tabi will be in this chamber. When the characters enter, Abatu will be standing at a table, looking into a mirror that shows a small, incense-filled room in which a man stands, dressed entirely in black, grotesque armor. His face cannot be seen. If Abatu has the map, he will be about to hand it through the mirror when the players enter. The tabi will attack the party, while Abatu will use his spell powers to hurt or hinder them. He will save his **corruption** to destroy the weapons and magic items that are used against him. If Abatu is reduced to 20 or fewer hit points, he and the tabi will flee to **H., The Gate**.

The mirror is a **mirror of sending** that will show any scene known to the user. Objects, but not living creatures, may be passed through it; spells, however, cannot pass through it. Each turn in which the mirror operates exhausts one of its charges: at this time, it has only four charges left. During the fight, the mirror will still be in operation. The man in black (the Master) will be able to see the outcome of the combat. If the players look into the mirror, the Master will observe them, write two messages on parchment, and hand these to them. The first will read, "Come and enjoy my hospitality, mortals. I will await you beyond the great pass." The second reads, "The bearers are to be given escort to the Great Temple. By the hand of the Master." He will then bow to them, and the scene will fade away. If the room is searched, the characters will find a bag containing 5 gems, each worth 500 gp. The only other item of value to the players in the room is a scroll. It is non-magical and bears the following message in code: "They have slipped past the Malakaz. Learn what they know and report it to me." Tucked inside this scroll is a second, shorter note. It reads, "Get the map and send it to the Black One across the desert!" Both messages are from the Master and refer to the player characters. "The Black One" refers to the Abbot of The Evil Abbey.

### H. The Gate

This is a small stone cavern. At one end is a pool of water, at the other a shaft that disappears into the bowels of the earth. Scattered about the room are bones of some unknown creature. If Abatu and the tabi have fled to this room, they will both fight as before. If Abatu is in danger of death, he will run across the room and leap into the shaft, quickly falling out of sight. Rising from the well will come a burst of sickly-sweet smelling steam and a chorus of insanely evil screams and laughter.

If any character wants to jump after Abatu into the pit, the DM should give him warnings such as "The pit looks bottomless," or "You hear monstrous roars and screams from below." If the player insists, he will die. If the party tries to climb down into the pit, they will find the rocks too hot and the smell of rot too great to continue.



If the characters examine the bones in the chamber, they will notice that they belong to what was probably a combination of man and insect. The bones also appear to have been deliberately broken apart. Further searching will turn up the skull of the creature, transfixed by a large ivory pin with faint carving on it. If this pin is removed, there will be a sudden crash like a thunderclap. The ground will shake and tremble and the bones will begin to slide back together. The skull will speak in a hollow, booming voice, "Ha, mortals! You have freed me! Flee for your lives!" Even as the characters watch the skeleton, flesh will begin to regrow on its body. The entire chamber will begin to crack and shift. Debris will crash from the ceiling and a burst of howling screams will come from the pit. Fire, steam, smoke, and the stench of rot will also rise from the shaft. If the characters have not yet left the room, the scorpion-man skeleton will cry, "Flee now! While you can!" To give his words added meaning, a large section of the roof will fall, almost blocking the exit.

The scorpion-man skeleton was once the powerful guardian of this gate, but he was defeated and has been long since forgotten by the world. His defeat made it easy for Abatu to watch over this site and learn its secrets. Abatu has been getting help from the Master in return for service and information. By removing the spike, the characters have restored the guardian creature, who is now using its powers to seal the pit. The creature (AC 0) may only be killed by the ivory spike the characters pulled free.

If the characters try to return to this area after the scorpion-man appears, they will not be able to get beyond the Hall of the Dead. The remaining sections of the temple will have collapsed.

### 3. Friend or Foe?

This encounter should be the last one the players have while travelling with the caravan. It should occur at some point when the characters are separated from the rest of the caravan, either when riding back from The Buried Temple or while acting as advance scouts.

You are riding through a narrow draw, along the only trail suitable for your animals. The desert is starting to become uncomfortably hot. As you come around a bend in the ravine, you see a man on foot, standing in the shade of the rock.

The man is an advance scout for a band of dervishes who have been watching the movements of the characters through the ravine. Hidden in the rocks are 40 dervishes (AC 7; HD 1; hp 5; #AT 1; D by weapon; MV 120'; Save F1; ML 10; AL L) armed with swords and shortbows. About one mile away is a larger party of 100 dervishes. They are equipped the same and are all mounted on camels. The camels of the 40 hidden in the rocks are with this larger party.

The dervishes will not attack or reveal themselves until they see the reaction of the player characters to the advance scout at the bottom of the ravine. If the players attack him, the dervishes will fire arrows at them. If the player characters do nothing hostile, the dervishes will remain hidden until the scout signals that everything is safe. If the 40 dervishes are in great danger, one man will run back to the larger group for help. The remaining 100 men will arrive in one turn.

When the party approaches the scout, he will signal his peaceful intentions by laying his weapons aside. If asked who he is, he will answer, "A traveller." He will then ask the characters, "Are you of the true faith?" If their answer is no or that they do not understand, he will ask, "Are you willing to convert?" At the same time, the characters will become aware of a movement in the rocks above them. The 40 dervishes will rise up and cover the characters with their bows. If the players claim to be of the true faith, the scout will ask, "By what sign?" If the player characters produce the holy

symbol of a Lawful cleric, he will signal that all is safe and the men will climb down to join him. If they use any other holy symbol, he will have the dervishes cover them as above, and give them the chance to convert.

If the characters have proven themselves, they will be escorted back to the main group of dervishes. If they are offered the opportunity to convert and accept, they will be asked to give up their weapons and obvious magical items (wands, scrolls, etc) as a sign of their willingness. If they refuse, their weapons will be seized, and they will be escorted under guard to the main group. The slightest action that might be spell-casting will cause the guards to attack.

When the dervishes reach the main group, they will be greeted by their leader, Talel el Hareidhin, a cleric (AC 6; C10; hp 42; #AT 1; D 1-8 + 2 [mace]; MV 120'/240' on horse; Save C10; ML 10; AL L). He has the following spells memorized:

**First level:** cure light wounds, detect evil, purify food and water, remove fear

**Second level:** bless, know alignment, hold person, silence 15' radius

**Third level:** cure disease, remove curse, striking

**Fourth level:** create water, cure serious wounds, neutralize poison

**Fifth level:** commune, dispel evil

He has a **mace +2**, a **ring of animal control**, and a **scarab of protection**. If the party comes in peace, Talel will chant a prayer of thankfulness for the safe return of the patrol. Any cleric who pays attention to this will notice that Talel also casts a **detect evil** during the course of the chant. If no characters harbor evil intentions towards the dervishes, Talel will be satisfied and will greet the party warmly. If he does **detect evil**, Talel will immediately cast a **hold person** on the character or characters so detected. The rest of the party will then have to swear with their lives to the good conduct of the held person(s). Talel will let the spell expire, but will keep the suspect character(s) under close watch. If the party refuses to vouch for a held character, that character will be killed and the rest of the party will be suspect.

If the party comes as converts, Talel will cast the same spells as above, but will not bother to hide his actions. Should any character be detected as evil, Talel will order the death of all the party. The characters may be able to prevent this by quickly explaining the quest they are to complete.

After Talel has satisfied himself about the party's intentions, he will ask them to ride with him. If the characters have given him no cause for suspicion, he will order their weapons and magic items returned. He will also insist that the party be guests at his camp that night. The camp, he explains, is but a day's journey away. If any of the characters is in immediate need of clerical help, Talel will offer the use of his spells unless the party has a cleric who can deal with the problem.

When the characters reach the dervish camp (the DM should decide how long this takes), they will see that it is a collection of tents set in a well-protected area. The camp appears to be about 250 men strong. The characters will be shown to tents and left guarded or unguarded, depending on the situation. If the characters are to convert, instructors in the faith will give them lessons for the rest of the day. That night, the characters will attend a feast as guests of Talel. This feast will be similar to that held at the oasis by the merchants, except that the meal will be pleasant: lamb, not camel, will be served.

After the feast, Talel will ask what news the characters bring from distant lands. After hearing what the characters have to say, he will tell the news of the desert. If asked about the Republic Army and where it can be found, he will tell of the crushing defeat it suffered: according to his story, it was lured into a trap and destroyed almost to a man by the evil forces that have armed for war. He will then ask what purpose the characters have in entering the desert at such a dangerous time. If they explain their mission, he will become very serious and grave. He will dismiss all others and hear what the characters have to say in detail. After listening, he will tell them what he knows.

Of the Master or the mind behind the gathering evil armies, Talel knows nothing. His own tribe has led its life much as before, surviving and raiding on the non-believers of the area. He does know that the Republic army is no more and will not be able to help the players. He also knows that travelling towards the mountains is dangerous: the farther the party gets, the more enemy patrols and camps they must avoid. His knowledge of the land is limited to the desert and the hill country to the west. He does not know anything about the lands beyond the mountains, but he does know a little about the Great Pass. "Pass" is not the proper term for it, he says. It is actually a maze of narrow valleys, river canyons, and dark caverns that few enter and from which fewer return. He does remember that there was once a monastery built near the entrance to guide and protect travellers on their way; however, he is not sure

it is still there. The DM should let the players ask what questions they want of Talel. However, he will not always know the answers or may have the wrong information. At the end of the night, Talel will inform the characters that he will have more guidance for them shortly.

After several days (during which the characters may rest and recover hit points and spells), Talel will summon the characters. He will say, "I have learned only a little, and that I do not understand. On your way, seek these things: first, a land where terror sleeps beneath the earth; second, four strong men who cannot move; and last, a man who is not a man. There is no more I can tell you. One of my men will guide you for a short way. May the gods be with you." If the party has the amulet, he will continue: "That which is behind this evil can see you through an amulet you possess. Always keep it covered."

The three things mentioned above are **The Hibernating Monster**, **The Guardians of the Pass**, and **The Abbey of Evil**. As the party finishes these encounters, they will have learned enough to lead them to the next location. However, getting the information requires that the players ask the right questions or decipher what they have learned.

The guide will lead the characters 10 miles from the camp and point in the direction of the hills. He will then turn to go back to the dervish camp. The characters will be on their own.

## PART 5: KEY TO THE SIND DESERT

**The Plain of Fire:** When the characters leave the dervish camp, they will enter an area of the Sind Desert called "The Plain of Fire." Here the temperatures are normally 100 degrees or higher during the day and only a little cooler during the night. The area is a large lava plain with many sharp rocks and blowing sand. There are no oases or wells anywhere, and only a few dried-out plants. If characters travel during the hottest part of the day while on the Plain of Fire, they must save vs. Dragon Breath or suffer 1-10 hit points of damage from the heat. Those that make the saving throw will still suffer 1-4 points of damage.

**The Desert Hills:** Beyond the Plain of Fire is a low range of hills. From a distance, they look quite barren and lifeless; however, there are many different kinds of small game, bushes, grasses, and small trees in this area. In the hills near the mountains, the trees become taller and more dense.

### Random Encounters in the Sind Desert

While characters travel across the desert, the DM should check for random encounters. There is a 1 in 6 chance of encounter every day the party is on the Plain of Fire. There is a 1-2 in 6 chance of encounter every day the party is in the Desert Hills. If the characters still carry the **amulet of finding** openly, the encounter will automatically be with one of the Master's minions. Otherwise, to determine what is encountered, roll 1d20 and check the table below.

Die Roll	Plain of Fire	Desert Hills
1-3	Basilisks (1-4)	Cockatrices (1-4)
4	Dragon, Blue (1)	Cyclops (1)
5	Efreets (1)	Enemy Patrol #3
6-10	Enemy Patrol #1	Enemy Patrol #2
11-14	Enemy Patrol #2	Enemy Patrol #1
15-17	Enemy Patrol #3	Giant, Hill (2-5)
18	Salamander, Flame (1-2)	Gorgon (1-3)
19-20	Scorpion, Giant (1-4)	Wyvern (1-3)

**Enemy Patrol #1:** This patrol of the Master's army consists of 20 gnolls (AC 5; HD 2; hp 10; #AT 1; D 2-8; MV 90'; Save F2; ML 8; AL C), 5 harpies (AC 7; HD 3; hp 18; #AT 3 + special; D 1-4/1-4/1-6 + special; MV 60'/150'; Save F3; ML 7; AL C) and a magic-user leader (AC 8; MU 6; hp 18; #AT 1; D 1-4 or spells; MV 120'; Save MU6; ML 8; AL C) who has a **ring of protection +1** and the following spells memorized:

**First level: protection from evil, sleep**

**Second level: invisibility, web**

**Third level: fireball, protection from normal missiles**

**Enemy Patrol #2:** 30 goblins (AC 6; HD 1-1; hp 3; #AT 1; D 1-6; MV 60'; Save NM; ML 7; AL C), 10 bugbears (AC 5; HD 3+1; hp 15; #AT 1; D 2-8; MV 90'; Save F3; ML 9; AL C), 2 trolls (AC 4; HD 6+3; hp 38, 32; #AT 3; D 1-6/1-6/1-10; MV 120'; Save F6; ML 10(8); AL C; regenerate 3 hp per round), and a fighter leader (AC 2; F7; hp 45; #AT 1; D 2-9 [1d8+1]; MV 120'; Save F7; ML 9; AL C) who carries a **sword +1 (NSA)**.

**Enemy Patrol #3:** This special patrol of the Master's army is led by a fire giant (AC 4; HD 11+2; hp 58; #AT 1; D 5-30; MV 120'; Save F11; ML 9; AL C). In the group are 5 harpies (AC 7; HD 3; hp 12; #AT 3 + special; D 1-4/1-4/1-6 + special; MV 60'/150'; Save F3; ML 7; AL C) and a fighter (AC 4; F4; hp 20; #AT 1; D 1-8; MV 120'; Save F4; ML 8; AL C) leading a trained chimera (AC 4; HD 9; hp 50; #AT 5 + special; D 1-3/1-3/2-8/2-8/3-12 + special; MV 120'/180'; Save F9; ML 9; AL C).

If the players show the pass obtained from the Master at the Buried Temple, none of the patrols encountered will harm them. Instead, they will be led to **The Evil Abbey**. The characters will be allowed to keep their weapons, but will be under guard at all times. If they attack a patrol escorting them, the escort will fight to the death.

## Encounters in the Sind Desert

The following encounters need not occur in any particular order, but the first one given should occur while the characters are crossing The Plain of Fire.

### 1. The Hibernating Monster

As you ride across the broiling, flat plain, you see a line of clouds rolling in your direction. By late afternoon, the sky is partly cloudy, a rare occurrence on the Plain of Fire. Within half an hour, it has started to rain. At first, the rain is light, but then it suddenly turns into a downpour. You cannot see more than 10' ahead, and the rain pounds on your heads and shoulders. Soaked to the skin in warm rain, you welcome the relief from the heat. And then, as quickly as it started, the rain stops. The sun breaks through the clouds and steam begins to rise from the many puddles and streams left behind. It is hot and humid.



As the party travels on, they will find that the cloudburst has soaked the entire countryside. There is little mud, but the sand has become damp and sticky, making travel tiring for the animals. One hour after the cloudburst, the characters will feel the ground tremble under their feet. If they stop and listen, they will hear a faint scratching noise from below. Suddenly, a dragonlike head will burst out of the ground directly in front of the characters! Using the morale levels given in the rulebook, the DM or players should roll a morale check for every animal and NPC with the group (made at -2 for all the animals). If a being fails its morale check, it will flee for 1-3 miles before stopping. Riders will be thrown from their animals when this happens. Even as this is happening, eight more heads will burst out of the ground near the first.

The ground breaks open and a desert hydra (AC 3; HD 9; hp 72; #AT 9; D 1-10 per head; MV 120'; Save F9; ML 11; AL N) rises to attack the characters. The desert hydra is like a normal hydra except for its armor class and that it hibernates underground during long dry spells. When it appears, it must hunt quickly and will attack any food source near it. This hydra will try to kill as many creatures as possible and then come back to feed on them later. It will randomly attack characters or their mounts.

If the characters slay the hydra, they will be able to search its nest, which is nothing more than a hollowed-out area under the earth. Scattered throughout it are the bones of several more unfortunate adventurers, 1000 ep, 2000 gp, and one 50 gp gem. Also in the nest is a scrap of leather. On one side of it is a map that shows the route to **The Guardians of the Pass**. The players will have completed the first deed of the puzzle given them by the dervish leader: to find "a land where terror sleeps beneath the earth."

### 2. The Enemy on the March

This encounter may occur either in the Plain of Fire or the Desert Hills.

As you are travelling, you notice that a low haze hovers above the ground ahead. An hour later, you can tell the haze is actually a large cloud. As you approach, the cloud resolves itself into a huge boiling mass of dust. Now you can begin to make out a faint sound, a sort of low rumble, that slowly rises and falls. As it grows nearer, the cloud now appears to be several miles across. It is too late to ride out of its way, but suddenly, a small cave mouth appears ahead in a small gully.

The large dust cloud is raised by a major part of the Master's army as it marches toward the east. The army will march in the direction of the players and will camp when it reaches the area of the cave. This camp will cover about a two square mile area. The cave will be somewhere near the center of it.

The cave the characters have found is a small one, only about 30' deep. There is nothing in the cave of note; it is large enough, however, to hold the entire player group and their animals. If the characters hide in the cave and take precautions such as brushing away tracks, screening the entrance with bushes, or casting a **hallucinatory terrain**, they will not be immediately discovered. If the characters remain in the open instead of hiding, a group of 20 goblins (AC 6; HD 1-1; hp 3; #AT 1; D 1-6; MV 60'/150' on wolves; Save NM; ML 8; AL C) riding dire wolves (AC 6; HD 4+1; hp 22; #AT 1; D 2-8; MV 150'; Save F2; ML 8; AL N) will first discover them. If the characters have and show the pass received from the Master at the Buried Temple (see **The Buried Temple, Area G.**), the goblins will escort them to the main army. After a night in the camp, under guard, the party will be given an escort (**Evil Patrol #3**) to The Evil Abbey. If the characters fight, the goblins will defend themselves while at least one goes back for help. The DM should try to make it clear to the players that fighting is a losing proposition — the army appears to be several thousand strong in men and monsters! If possible, the characters will be captured and held in the camp for questioning. In such a case, all their equipment will be taken away, and all will have their hands bound (making spell casting impossible). As a rule, unless something extraordinary happens, captured characters will be tortured and killed.

If players are intelligent and remain hidden, the army will move into their area and make camp. If they look, the characters will catch glimpses of creatures moving at the top of the ravine: men, bugbears, goblins on dire wolves, a giant of some type, and trolls. Many of the creatures will come to the gully and throw refuse into it, including dead bodies. In time, buzzards will flock to the area near the cave mouth. The characters will have little fear of discovery by the Master's troops. However, the cave will begin to fill with the odor of rot.

At night, the players will see the glow of fires beyond the edge of the gully. The buzzards will have left, so if the characters decide to leave the cave and investigate, they will not make any noticeable noise. Ten yards from the top of the gully is a small camp of five nomad soldiers (AC 6; F1; hp 4; #AT 1; D 1-8; MV 120'; Save F1; ML 8; AL C), dressed in robes and armed with swords. Beyond them, the plain is dotted with fires for several miles. The nearest fire beyond the soldiers is 100 yards away. If the characters watch



the five men, they will quickly notice that they are not on their guard. Occasionally, a goblin or similar small creature will wander into their camp, only to be driven off with small rocks, insults, and sword waving by the soldiers. Listening to the men will reveal that they speak their own language and the common tongue, but cannot speak Goblin or any of the other monster languages. Finally, about 10 at night, the men will bed down. One man will remain awake, apparently to look out for thieves and cut-throats in the night.

If the characters return to their cave, the rest of the night will pass without incident and in the morning, the army will break camp (with much shouting and swearing) and move on. The characters will not be discovered. If the characters decide to investigate the camp at night, they will first have to dispatch the guard near the gully. Since he is not watchful, the characters will be able to surprise him on a 1-3 if they creep up on him. If they approach him openly, they can try to pose as soldiers in the Master's army. However, if there is a dwarf, elf, or halfling in the group, the guard will be suspicious, since none accompany the army. If the characters can devise a suitable explanation for the character's presence (the DM should decide what is suitable), he will not wake his fellows. If there are no unusual characters with the party, the guard will accept the players as fellow soldiers. He will still be suspicious, thinking they may be thieves or murderers, but will not wake his fellows. Once closer to the guard, the players will be able to see that his face is surrounded by three black painted circles, apparently some kind of tribe or sect marking. The faces of the sleeping men are painted in the same manner.

After the soldiers have been dispatched, the party may disguise themselves with the dead men's clothing and move about the camp. If they do so, the DM should use the following special encounter table, checking once every 10 minutes. The chance for an encounter is 1-3 on a six-sided die. 1d6 should be rolled to determine what has been encountered.

#### Die roll and Encounter

1. 2-8 bugbears (AC 5; HD 3+1; hp 18; #AT 1; D 2-8; MV 90'; Save F3; ML 9; AL C; surprise on a 1-3) looking for lone creatures or small groups to beat up and rob. They will not kill their victims, unless forced to do so. The bugbears do not know the password and carry no treasure.

2. 2-20 guards (AC 6; F1; hp 5; #AT 1; D 1-8; MV 120'; Save F1; ML 8; AL C) who are drunk (40%) or patrolling the camp. If they are drunk, they will befriend the characters and invite them to drink. Through careful questioning, the players will be able to learn 1-6 rumors and the night's password ("hydra"). If the guards are patrolling the camp, they will break up any fights they can, using whatever force is necessary, not hesitating to kill if they must. They will try to capture any party containing a dwarf, elf, or halfling unless a good reason for the character's presence is given.

3. 1 hill giant (AC 4; HD 8; hp 44; #AT 1; D 2-16; MV 120'; Save F8; ML 9; AL C) carrying a stolen horse (its dinner) under its arm. It will try to scare the characters away. If this fails, it will attack.

4. 1-4 gargoyles\* (AC 5; HD 4; hp 20; #AT 4; D 1-3/1-3/1-6/1-4; MV 90'/150'; Save F8; ML 11; AL C; immune to **sleep** and **charm**) will flutter down on the party and harass them. The gargoyles will not seriously harm the party if they are not hurt themselves.

5. 2-5 officers, all fighters (AC 3; F4; hp 30; #AT 1; D by weapon; MV 120'; Save F4; ML 8; AL C) will challenge the party, demanding the password and the characters' business in this area. If the players do not answer to their satisfaction, the officers will summon a guard patrol to capture them.

6. A juggernaut camp guarded by 10 fighters (AC 4; F2; hp 12; #AT 1; D 1-8; MV 120'; Save F2; ML 9; AL C) and led by a fighter officer (AC 1; F7; hp 40; #AT 1; D 1-10; MV 120'; Save F7; ML 9; AL C) carrying a two-handed sword and wearing **plate mail +2**. The guards will challenge any who try to enter the camp, demanding the password and the reason for the visit. Failure to give a suitable answer will cause them to attack, while one summons help from a nearby camp. Help (3-30 more guards) will arrive in one turn. At the center of each juggernaut camp is a large vehicle. It stands 30' high and is shaped like a pyramid. Instead of wheels, it has two rollers like a steamroller. The vehicle appears to be made of wood.

This vehicle is a wood juggernaut (AC 6; HD 25; hp 100; #AT 1; D 8-80; MV 120'; Save special; ML 12; AL N; see end of module for more details). If the player characters attack the camp, it will slowly begin to rock back and forth. After 4 rounds of this, it will attack, pursuing the player characters, although not waiting for the guards to get out of its way. In fact, it will crash through anything in its path until the characters leave the camp. At this point, it will stop and move no further. Its attack will cause considerable panic in the camp and if the characters escape, there will be no further pursuit by the troops.

If the characters manage to befriend any of the people they encounter, or if they creep close to a camp and listen, they may learn some useful information. The DM should roll from the list below to determine what they might learn. It will be up to the player characters to ask the right questions (or, if they are listening in, to piece together clues) to learn this information.

#### Die Roll Rumor

- 1 **The Master is in league with powerful forces from elsewhere.**
- 2 **The Republic army was crushed and scattered by the Master's powerful infernal machine.**
- 3 **Now that the Republic army is destroyed, the Master's army prepares to march on the lands to the east. The attack will begin in about one month.**
- 4 **The Master is a powerful spell caster who guards himself with creatures not of this world.**
- 5 **There are none of the Master's forces between here and the Great Pass.**
- 6 **There is some type of secret sign that will show the true path through the Great Pass.**

If the player characters use visible magic (**fireballs**, **lightning bolts**, etc.) while in a fight in the camp, it will attract the attention of others. After one turn, 50 guards (same statistics as those given above) will arrive at the scene of the fight. On the round after that, another 50 guards will arrive. Unless the characters have escaped before the first group arrives or are able to escape in the confusion of a fight in the dark, they will be captured. Captured player characters will be treated as has already been explained above.

In the morning, regardless of the actions of the player characters, the army will break camp and move to the east. Left behind will be the debris of an army on the march — dead bodies, broken equipment, and the ashes of fires. If the characters think of it, they will find it easy to follow the trail of the army back to the Great Pass.

**Note:** This encounter could have many more possibilities for adventures. If the DM wants, he may allow the characters to try nearly anything within reason. Such events would have to be handled by the DM as they came up, but he should always bear in mind that stealth, not fighting, will be more likely to succeed. Even a group of expert players cannot hope to defeat several thousand men and monsters.



## PART 6: KEY TO THE GATES OF THE PASS

**FOOTHILLS TO THE PASS:** The mountain foothills are different from the desert hills: bent and twisted pine grows on the land, and streams flow through the area, carrying water from the Black Mountains beyond. The hills are very rugged, cut with ravines and bluffs. The ground, though covered with trees and grass, is dusty and rocky. If players take time to hunt, they may find antelope and other small game. The air is somewhat cooler than the desert below, although the temperatures still average about 80 degrees during the daytime. To the west, the tops of the Black Mountains rise above the horizon, their peaks often disappearing into banks of icy clouds. Even from this distance, the characters can tell the peaks are tall, jagged, and icy.

**THE BLACK MOUNTAINS:** This massive mountain range is among one of the highest and most dangerous mountain chains in the known lands of the campaign. (The DM is always welcome to create one that is higher.) Its peaks are permanently ice covered, and large glaciers fill many of the high valleys. From a distance the mountains appear white and dull blue, but when viewed more closely, the blue becomes dull gray, barren rock. Most of the mountain land is well above the treeline, even above the highest of the meadows that cover the lower slopes. Travel through the mountains is nearly impossible except at certain passes and trails: any traveller who tries to climb through the mountains will confront a lack of food, snow-covered crevasses, avalanches, cliffs, cunning monsters, freezing cold, and air so thin he cannot breathe. If the characters attempt to cross at some place other than a pass, they will die unless they turn back.

### Encounters for the Gates of the Pass

The two encounters for this section must occur in the order listed. The madman who controls the Guardians has information useful in the second encounter, without which characters may be at a serious disadvantage.

#### 1. The Guardians of the Pass

Your party is travelling through a light stand of trees that grow near the base of a rocky bluff. Travel is difficult: the trees and loose shale force you to detour often. As you finally reach the top of a low ridge, you discover a large, bowl-shaped clearing on the other side. At the lower, far end are four giant-sized statues. Their features are nearly worn away, and it is difficult to tell that they are carved to represent old men. Each stands with his hands folded in front of him.

Hidden behind the statues is a small cave. By standing at certain points in the cave and speaking, it is possible to make it seem as if each of the statues is speaking. Hiding in the cave is a madman (AC 9; HD 1/2; hp 3; #AT 1; D 1-4; MV 120'; Save NM; ML 7; AL N). He understands the purpose of the cave, and knows where to stand to make each statue speak. The madman has also made four drums, one at each position. Over each he has hung a large rock. A system of ropes allows him to release all the rocks at once from any of the positions. As soon as the characters enter the clearing, the madman will see them and run to one of the positions. The first statue will say in a whispering voice, "Look! Someone enters our valley. Who is it?" The madman will run to a different spot and have another statue say, "Some travellers. What do they want?" "They want to hurt us," a third will reply. Then the last will say, "Quiet. Then they will not see us."

The madman was once held prisoner by the Master. Now, after his escape, he has hidden in these woods for nearly a year. During this time he discovered the statues and learned how they work. He is now convinced that he and the statues are one. Whenever possible, he will speak through one of the statues and not directly to the other person. He will always refer to himself as "we." He will not want to be rescued or cured, but because of his experiences, he has useful information about the The Evil Abbey, The Great Pass, and the Master.

If any character comes within 10 yards of the statues, one will shout, "Stay back, man of mortal clay. This is our sacred ground!" Another statue will say, "Speak what you want. All who come to us are fulfilled." If the characters continue to advance, the madman will untie the rocks hanging over the drums, causing the statues to utter a tremendous, echoing crash. Immediately, a statue will say, "Do not provoke our wrath, mortal!" If the characters advance beyond this, the statues will begin to scream and chant in a wild chorus of voices. Finally, the madman will break down in fear and begin to beg for mercy. This will be carried to the players through one of the statues.

If the characters do not advance or if they find the madman, they may ask him questions either through the statues or directly. He knows the directions to The Evil Abbey and The Great Pass beyond it. If asked about "the man who is not a man," he will cackle and laugh quietly and then say, "Ask the holy men on the great hill, for truly they will know the answer." If the characters ask about the pass, he will say, "Seek at the Swallower of the Sun and be led by a snake that does not bend." If the characters ask about the Master, he will scream, "He Who Is Not Named! The Servant of Death! He dwells in a chariot of many rooms, in a land of neither ice nor fire. Once we met in a world beyond this land, a world above the clouds." After this, the madman will break into whimpering and babbling and then curl up into a small, silent ball on the floor. He will not react to anything. If he is asked a question to which he does not know the answer, he will make something up on the spot. Sometimes these answers will seem to make sense; sometimes they will include whatever strange instructions or riddles strike his fancy.

Only a **wish** can cure this madman. If the characters use one to cure him, he will find that he cannot remember what has happened to him for the last two years, for the only way he can be cured is to forget everything that has happened to him.

Since the four statues are the second part of the puzzle given by the dervish leader, the DM should do what he can to see that the characters get the directions to the next encounter. However, if the players are simply not figuring things out, the DM should not give them free help.

## 2. The Evil Abbey

This encounter should be the last one used in this module. If the DM uses the last half of the series, **Wilderness Module X5, The Temple of Death**, the adventure will continue in that module when this encounter is completed.

The Evil Abbey is located very close to the shadow of the Black Mountains. By the time the characters reach the abbey, they will have passed the treeline and will be crossing alpine meadows. A large point of rock juts above the level of the surrounding area. The top of this rock has been cleared, and the abbey built upon it. It is surrounded on all sides by steep cliffs (the heights are marked on the map). A broad staircase climbs from the base of the rock to its entrance.

The abbey itself is composed of a number of buildings. Some of these form the outer walls, while others stand separate inside the compound. All are made of plastered stone and have steeply pointed, red tile roofs. All the windows on the buildings and outer wall are shuttered and have bracings for awnings. These bracings are very strong and can support the weight of a man and equipment. Inside, the abbey is heavily decorated with frescos and wood carvings of religious significance.

The abbey was once the home of a number of Lawful monks, at the heart of a large village now long since destroyed. Long ago, the village was destroyed, burned and plundered by a band of evil raiders. Surrounded, the monks of the abbey were trapped. For

nearly a year, they held out, carefully rationing their supplies, but finally, the inevitable came, and they were overrun and killed almost to a man. However, since the abbey is so far from civilization and deep in the heart of the enemy territory, no word has ever escaped concerning their fate.

Now, new occupants have taken over the abbey. The monks met in this encounter are actually bhuts (see end of module for details). During the day, they will behave like perfectly normal holy men, doing nothing that will give the player characters any reason to suspect they are not what they claim. At night, they become evil and murderous. For several years they have lived in the abbey, maintaining this deception to slay unwary travellers who stay the night. They have been so successful that the Master has taken them into his service, giving the bhuts the extra duty of guarding the entrance to the Great Pass. This they have done extremely well.

To add strength to their deception, the bhuts pretend that the monastery is under a powerful curse. As they explain it to visitors, this curse only affects the monks and those visitors who do not heed their warnings while they stay. The bhuts will warn the visitors not to leave their rooms at night under any circumstances, even if they hear screams or other sounds. The bhuts explain that, to battle the curse, the monks must be more active at night, praying in the temple, drawing mystic signs, and burning incense in the different buildings. To help calm suspicions, the monks will tell the visitors that they are not required to stay in the guest house during the day and may move around the monastery freely. They will ask visitors to respect their religion and not enter the temple compound, since only those initiated into their faith may enter this sacred ground.

If the characters offer to help the monks, the offer will be accepted. The monks will warn that other brave and stout adventurers have tried before, and all have failed. The monks have learned that the source of the curse seems to be the blacksmith's shed, from where an icy creature supposedly appears during the night. The monks do not know the reason for the curse; they will claim, however, that it was placed by some powerful deity.

The creature is actually a frost salamander that lives in the hearth of the blacksmith's shed. During the day, it spends its time in certain freezing passages under the abbey. At night it searches for food. It hates the bhuts but will not normally attack them. The bhuts would be very happy if it were dead.

If the characters ask about the "man who is not a man" (which refers to the bhuts), the bhuts will claim not to know the answer. They will promise to look into their library for the answer. Of course, they will not bother doing this.

The room key given below describes each room as it would appear during the daytime. If there are any differences in the description at night, these will be noted. Any creatures in a room will only be there during the night, unless noted otherwise. During the daytime, most of the rooms and chambers will have people coming and going from them.

Below is listed a **Sequence of Events**. This will explain what will happen when the characters arrive at the abbey and how they will be treated. By using both the **Sequence of Events** and the **Room Key** that follows, the DM will be able to run the encounter.

### Sequence of Events for the Evil Abbey

The following section outlines the events that will occur at the Abbey when the player characters arrive. This outline is not absolute; it does not try to account for all the possible actions of the player characters. The DM should adjust the events as he sees fit, remembering the goals and objectives of the bhuts at the abbey.



When the characters first arrive at the abbey, the DM should read them the following:

Your party has been riding across the treeless plain for several days now. A light snow has fallen and the air is quite cold. Then one of your group points to something in the distance. There, outlined by the black mass of the mountains and the white snow, you see a small line of red. Another hour passes as you ride toward it, and now you can tell it is a line of roofs. Some time later, you see a group of buildings clustered on a craggy rock. Finally, close, you can see what must be the monastery. A broad staircase climbs the cliffs to a gate above. Sweeping the base of the steps are two men, barefoot and dressed in orange-yellow robes. They see you, bow, and smile. "Brother, do you wish shelter and rest for the night?" one of them asks.

The two "monks" will lead the player characters up the staircase, mumbling something as they take each step and bowing to the little statues that line the stairs. Once at the top, they will have the gate opened, will send for the bhut posing as the abbot, and will offer to stable the characters' animals. When the abbot arrives, he will ask if the players wish to stay the night in the guest house. If they do, he will explain the supposed curse, but tell them they will be safe inside. He will encourage them to stay in the abbey, saying that the outside lands are also unsafe at night.

If the characters offer to defeat the curse (the frost salamander), the bhuts will accept. They will help the party set up their positions and will supposedly pray and bless them. That night, the bhuts will do nothing. They will stay inside and will not bother the players.

If the characters manage to defeat the frost salamander, the monks will appear the next morning, rejoicing to their gods at being freed from this awful curse. They will insist the characters stay that night for a feast. The monks will explain that their religion will not allow them to dine with the player characters, but they will be glad to prepare a fine meal for them: nuts, grains, roots and dried fruits, along with wine. There will be no meat. Everything served to the characters will be drugged. If they fail to make a saving throw vs. Poison, they will fall asleep. When the characters wake, three will be shackled to the walls in **Catacomb Area #3**, three more will be locked in the cell at **Area N4**, and any remaining characters will be locked in **Area I2**. Each night the bhuts will come and take another character to "join them for dinner," starting with the NPC's. The DM should allow the characters a reasonable chance to escape their predicament, either through spells or cunning.

If any of the characters manage to stay awake after the feast or if the feast is not held for some reason, the bhuts will use the tunnel to visit the guest house. They will try to capture one of the players each night, or, failing that, as many as possible in one night. If the bhuts draw suspicion, they will try to kill the characters, always trying to use stealth as much as possible.

If for any reason the bhuts are attacked during the daytime, they will defend themselves with polearms and swords. They will fight at the level of their hit dice and may be hit only by magical weapons, even in daytime.

## ROOM KEY TO THE EVIL ABBEY

### A. The Grand Stairway

This staircase of 999 steps is carved from the rock of the peak. Rising from the plain, it climbs to the main gate of the monastery. On each step is carved a symbol representing one of the 999 prayers that the former inhabitants said while ascending to the world of Truth. At each ninth step, there is a small statue to the side of the staircase. These once represented the 111 Precepts of Understanding, to which offerings were made while climbing the stairs. At the top of the staircase is the gate, both doors of which are carved and painted. One shows the essence of Truth rising above a mob of deformed beings. The other shows a guardian creature driving evil spirits away.

### B. The Guest House

This building is where visitors to the abbey stay. From the outside, it is unremarkable — only plastered and whitewashed stone. In front of the main door is a 6" circle of red clay. Visitors are required to touch their head to this circle before entering the building. In this way, they show respect to the protective spirits of the house. Doing this will not affect a cleric's standing with his deity. On each door of the double door entrance is painted an eye so that the protective spirits may see evil before it enters.

#### B1. Entrance

The entrance to the guest house is divided into 2 small chambers, both bare of any furnishings or decorations. Under the staircase that leads to the second floor of the building is a secret, one-way trapdoor that may only be opened from below (**The Dolorous Way, Area 4**). The bhuts use this trapdoor to enter the guest house secretly at night.



## B2. Sleeping Chambers

These small rooms are used as bedrooms for visiting travellers. One person will be assigned to each room. All of the rooms may be closed off by heavy drapes. There is only a little furniture in each: a hard wood pallet and stone pillow, a small traveller's chest, a stool, and a chamber pot. None of the rooms will be occupied when the players arrive.

## B3. Courtyard

This small, tiled court allows fresh air and some light to reach the lower rooms. All the rooms and balconies around the courtyard have windows. In the center of the courtyard is a statue, a stone rod that rises 6' into the air and is topped by a oval ball somewhat larger than the rod. If the characters ask, the monks will explain it is a representation of one of their gods. There is nothing else in the courtyard.

## B4. Kitchen

This room shows signs of being long unused. Dust covers the one table and the hearth. A few cooking pots are piled neatly in one corner. If the monks are asked about the kitchen's apparent lack of use, they will explain that since the evil armies are abroad they have had few visitors. Those that do come will generally dine with the monks. The characters may use this kitchen to prepare meals if they wish.

## B5. Meditation Chapel

This small chamber contains a shrine to the protective spirit of the guest house. This consists of a small altar, surrounded by candles and incense and set in front of the three-panel painted screen. Behind the screen are the secret doors to the rest of the house.

Every night this room contains a bhut\* (AC 4; HD 7+2; hp 44; #AT 3; D 1-4/1-4/1-6 + special; MV 40'; Save F10; ML 10; AL C) supposedly praying for the safety of the players. When the bhuts decide to act (see **Sequence of Events**), the one staying in this chamber will enter the house by the secret doors. There is nothing of value in this room.

## B6. Instructional Chamber

This small chamber is lavishly decorated with paintings representing the various deities once worshipped by the monks in the abbey. Each picture shows the deity surrounded by its symbols of power. Along the bottom of the pictures runs a series of smaller paintings that tell the stories associated with these deities. None of the bhuts know these stories well enough to explain them. If asked about this room, they will say that its purpose is to provide restful contemplation for visitors. If asked to explain the pictures, they will refuse, saying, "The mysteries of our faith may only be discovered by contemplation and insight. When you have done this, you will be one of the initiated."

## B7. Chamber of Contemplation

This narrow room is bare of furnishings and decoration. It was intended to be used for rest and meditation when the guest house was built. It may now be used for any reason the characters wish.

## B8. Terrace

This terrace overhangs the outer edge of the abbey. From here the characters will be able to have a clear view of the Black Mountains. It is a 400' drop to the ground below.



## C. Stable

This open shed is used as a stable for any animals belonging to visitors. It will be empty when the characters arrive, apparently unused for a long time. The mangers are nearly empty, containing only a little rotting grass and grain. Some grooming equipment hangs on the walls, all of it rusted and in poor condition. If the bhuts are asked about this, they will explain that they own no animals and never use the stables themselves. It has been a long time since they have had visitors.

## D. Granary

When the abbey was still in operation, this long building held the grain stores for the monks. The large doors are double doors, while the smaller ones are dutch doors (the top and bottom may be opened separately). All the doors are very stout. On each is painted an image of a guardian spirit, supposedly to keep the grain from spoiling.

Inside, there is a clear space in front of each door where grain has been taken out. Beyond the clear area, the grain is piled nearly to the ceiling. It is dusty and gray. If the grain is disturbed, clouds of gray dust will billow up and beetles and other insects will scurry about. It is obvious that the supply is old and dry-rotted beyond use.

Hidden in the granary are 10 giant rats (AC 7; HD 1/2; hp 2; #AT 1; D 1-3 + disease; MV 40'; Save F1; ML 8; AL N). They are reasonably well-fed on the insects found in the grain, and on the leavings of the bhuts. They will only attack if the grain is disturbed.

If the players ask the bhuts why all their grain is spoiled, the bhuts will explain that it is part of the curse. No grain they gather can be kept for very long before it spoils. The bhuts will apologize for this and explain that the characters will have to provide feed for their animals. Actually, the bhuts never bother to gather or use grain, since they do not eat it.

## E. The Well

This well is the source of water for the abbey. A wooden roof is built over the well; on the ground beside it is a bucket and a 70' rope. The water is 60' below the mouth of the well, forced up the interior of the rock through an underground spring. The water is 20' deep.

## F. The Monks' House

This building is made of plastered and whitewashed stone. A band of red and green 3' from the ground circles the entire building. In front of the doors is a 6' circle of black earth. Before entering the house, a person must spit on this circle to invoke the protective spirits of the house. As in the guest house (B), the doors have eyes painted on them to see evil before it enters. If any characters enter the house at night, the two bhuts (**Area F2**) will follow them around, waiting to attack at the best time.



### F1. Entryway

Lining the walls on either side of this small room are two racks of polearms. There are 10 weapons in all, in good condition and apparently cared for by the monks. If asked why these weapons are here, the bhuts will point out the need to defend the abbey against the evil forces in the land.

### F2. Sleeping Chambers

These small chambers were once used for sleeping by the human monks who lived at the monastery. Now, the rooms are little used by the bhuts. The rooms are sparsely furnished, containing only a straw mat, a bowl, and a lamp; they are dusty and have cobwebs in the corners. If players examine any of the bowls, they will notice that each is stained with a rusty red powder (dried blood).

One room contains a secret trapdoor to the catacombs below. (**Area 6, The Dripping Passage**). It may be opened from either side. During the night, there will be two bhuts\* (AC 6; HD 7+2; hp 43, 40; #AT 3; D 1-4/1-4/1-6 + special; MV 40'; Save F10; ML 10; AL C) in this room at all times. They will attack any creature that enters the building.

### F3. Dining Room

This narrow room has a low table and several short stools. Lined neatly in a row along one wall are several bowls and eating utensils. The bhuts do not use this room normally, but will give the appearance that it is used when there are visitors at the abbey. The first time the characters see the room, there will be a coating of

dust on everything — more dust than could have accumulated in a day or even a week. If the characters return to the room later, it will be clean and give the appearance of recent use.

### F4. Kitchen

The kitchen is not normally used by the bhuts, but they will have cleaned and prepared it to look normal before the characters enter it. The room, though small, is clean. It is furnished with a single table and a large hearth fireplace. On the table are several bowls, a heavy knife, and some bundles of roots and herbs. If the characters examine the table, they will notice some large reddish stains which could have been caused by nearly anything. If players examine closely, they will find the fireplace full of water-soaked ashes and the chimney clogged with spiderwebs.

### F5. Pantry

This was once used to store food for the monks who stayed at this house. It is now very dusty. Piles of rags and other broken cooking items are pushed into the corners. Hidden among them is a human skull.

### F6. Courtyard

This an open courtyard identical to that in the guest house (**B3**).

### F7. Terrace

This terrace overlooks the well and the blacksmith's shed. The ground is 15' below. There is nothing of importance here.



## G. Blacksmith's Shed

This small shed shows signs of having been long deserted. Inside is a large hearth with a set of bellows in good repair. There is no fire in the hearth, and the air seems icy and chill around it. If asked about this, the monks will explain that it is apparently connected with their curse. Living under the coals is a frost salamander\* (AC 3; HD 12; hp 53; #AT 5; D 1-6 (x4)/2-12 + 1-8 from cold; MV 40'; Save F12; ML 9; AL C). It does not appear during the day, as it is under the earth at this time. Hence, during the day, no character will be affected by the 20' cold radius. At night, it comes out and stalks for prey in the monastery and surrounding countryside. It will not attack the bhuts unless forced. Hidden deep under the frozen coals are an **axe +2** and a **ring of invisibility**. Both are resistant to the effects of the great cold in the lair.

## H. Bath House

This corner building was once the bath house for the monastery, but is now long unused. If asked why, the bhuts will explain they no longer have the people required to heat and fill the bath.

### H1. Main Bath

A 4' deep pool dominates this room. It is filled with a scummy brown, algae-choked water. The algae floating on the surface hides an ochre jelly\* (AC 8; HD 5; hp 26; #AT 1; D 2-12; MV 10'; Save F3; ML 12; AL N; immune to lightning and weapons) living in the pool. If characters approach the edge of the pool, it will attack. Underneath it are 2000 sp and the bones of several previous victims. The floor, walls, and pool are covered with painted tiles. Examination will show that these explain the proper bathing ritual of the monks who once lived here. At one end of the room is a stove for heating water.

### H2. Yellow Mold Peril

This large changing room is encrusted with a large yellow mold\* (AC always hit; HD 4; hp 20; #AT special; D 1-6 + special; MV 0; Save F2; ML na; AL N). Rising out of the mold at the far end of the room is a skeleton with a bright, shiny sword clenched in its hand. Neither the skeleton nor the sword is magical. There is nothing of value in this chamber.

### H3. Dressing Chambers

These small chambers were used as changing rooms when the baths were in operation. There is nothing in any of these rooms.

### H4. Storeroom

This room contains firewood, tubs for heating water, and several large urns that contain the spoiled remains of scented oils. There is nothing of value in this room.

### H5. Balcony

This narrow balcony overlooks the cliff. The ground is 350' below, a series of large stone terraces cut into the sides of the rock on which the abbey sits. The railing of the balcony is very sturdy and will easily support characters climbing on ropes.

## I1. Abbey Kitchen

This large kitchen, once used to feed more inhabitants than are now living here, is still used by the bhuts for preparing their meals. The kitchen itself appears to be perfectly normal; however, there are no foodstuffs (flour, meat, fruit, nuts, etc.) in sight. Along the outer wall are two large ovens and a large fireplace. There is nothing of value in the kitchen. The door to the **Kitchen Storeroom (I2)** is locked.



## I2. Kitchen Storeroom

This room is kept locked, to keep the characters from discovering the nature of the foods the bhuts do eat. There is nothing in the room but the remains of past prey. If asked about this room, the bhuts will say it is their House of the Dead.

## J. The Training Hall

This building was once used as classrooms for instructing initiates in the abbey's beliefs. It is now used by the bhuts as a meeting place and a command center when servants of the Master arrive at the abbey. On the ground in front of the doors is a blue circle of clay. Before entering the building, characters will be required to rub their palms upon this to appease the protective spirits of the house. On the front doors are the eyes like those found on the other houses in the compound; however, these eyes have small peepholes allowing those inside to see out. Painted on the outer wall, 3' from the ground, is a rainbow band of blue, green, orange, and red.

### J1. Entryway

This entryway is lavishly carved and painted with pictures of the gods of learning once worshipped by the monks. These show benevolent old men with long beards and robes holding various objects in their hands — a mirror, a bowl of water, a small animal, and a plant of some type. At night, the entryway is trapped: any person crossing the threshold into the rest of the building will release an axe fixed in the ceiling, which will swing toward the person who released it. The axe will hit like a 4th level fighter and do 1-10 points of damage. A secret catch on the wall beside the arch disarms the trap.

### J2. Courtyard

Unlike the courtyards in the other buildings, this courtyard has a small tree at its center instead of a statue. The tree is withered and dead. There is nothing else in the courtyard.

### J3. Classrooms

Each of these rooms contains a low table, an oil lamp, writing and painting equipment, parchment, and a litter of ancient-looking scrolls and books. During the daytime, if the players visit this building, there will be one bhut in each room, apparently studying and meditating on religious topics. The bhuts are actually searching for ancient lore that might be of use to them. At night, there will be four bhuts\* (AC 4; HD 7+2; hp 40; #AT 3; D 1-4/1-4/1-6 + special; MV 40'; Save F10; ML 10; AL C) scattered throughout these rooms. They will stalk any characters who enter the building, attacking at the best possible moment.

#### J4. Meeting Hall

This room contains a long table and several chairs. On the table are loose papers and several oil lamps. There will be no one in here day or night. The papers are drawings, paintings, and notes on information obtained from old scrolls. There is a secret drawer in the table, containing several papers from the Master: one gives the bhuts the authority to protect the pass; another lists a shipment of prisoners that was given to the bhuts; the third gives instructions that at least one of the player characters be brought alive to the Master should they appear at the abbey. Complete descriptions of the player characters are also given on this paper.

#### J5. Storeroom

This small room is lined with shelves of materials: scrolls (non-magical), parchments, inks, paints, and bundles of dried plants. If the DM rules that any player character is able to identify these plants, he will be able to tell that they are herbs used for healing, poison antidotes, and salves. However, the character will not be able to tell that all the plants have been infected by a poisonous fungus. If any of the plants are eaten or applied to a wound, the character must save vs. Poison (at +4) or die. There is nothing else of value in this chamber.

#### K. The Temple Compound

This area of the abbey is walled off from the rest of the buildings. The wall is 12' high and made of plastered and white-washed stone, like the rest of the abbey. The only apparent openings in this wall are the gate and the windows overlooking the cliffs. The cliff along this area is 350' high. There are two secret doors in this wall: one enters the private collection of the library, and the other enters the **Abbey Kitchen, I1**.



The temple gate is carved and painted. One door shows a large circular wheel. Around the edges of this wheel are seven different scenes. At the top are a group of god-like beings, apparently the gods of the temple. The other scenes depict man (at the bottom), a group of demonic creatures struggling with each other, a group of animals, and the elements of earth, fire, and air. In the center of the wheel is apparently the holy symbol of the order — a bull's horns with the sun in between them. The other half of the gate has a picture of a fierce and ugly god-like creature slaying smaller hideous creatures against a background of clouds. The gate is barred from the inside.

The bhuts will not allow the characters to enter the temple openly. When posing as monks, they will explain that the temple ground is holy and non-believers cannot enter. If the characters are found inside the temple, the bhuts will try to slay them.

#### K1. Outer Courtyard

This courtyard is decorated with paintings similar to those found on the temple gate. The ground is striped with red, black, and blue clay. In the center of the courtyard stands a large frame that supports a bell. A wooden post, hung horizontal in a sling alongside the bell, is used to sound it. The courtyard opens onto the **Temple Porch** and a covered corridor that surrounds the entire temple proper.

#### K2. Temple Porch

This open-sided porch has a yellow clay floor and a roof decorated with many carvings of flowers and leering faces. In the center of the porch is a 5' wheel, hung vertically on a pole. The wheel is carved with writing (prayers) and hung with small bells. The wheel is fastened by its axle and may be spun easily. Sitting on top of the wheel is a small monkey, tied to the pole by a long chain, who has been trained to turn the wheel whenever any creature other than a monk (or bhut) enters the porch area. The sound of the bells will attract two bhuts\* (AC 4; HD 7+2; hp 41, 38; #AT 3; D 1-4/1-4/1-6 + special; MV 40'; Save F10; ML 10; AL C) and their trained giant weasel (AC 7; HD 4+4; hp 20; #AT 1 + special; D 2-8; MV 50'; Save F3; ML 8; AL N) in 2-8 rounds. These guards normally patrol the corridor surrounding the temple. They will not receive any help from other creatures in the temple. If one of the bhuts is killed, the other will attempt to flee and warn those inside. If he is successful, the party will not be able to surprise any creatures in the temple.

#### K3. The Abandoned Shrine

The door to the room is long unused and may only be opened after an "open doors" die roll. Inside is a dark, narrow, and dusty chamber. It shows no signs of having been used recently. At the back of the chamber is a small altar, also covered with dust. It is a small stone table, on which rests a statue of a dragon-like creature perched on a large rock. Pinned under one claw is a writhing snake with a woman's face. Clenched in the other claw is a large pearl (1000 gp value). The altar is a shrine to the deities of Law. Any lawful character who pays reverence to this shrine (speaks respectfully, offers prayers, cleans the statue, etc.) will be **blessed**. This will give the character a +1 "to hit," damage, and morale. This **bless**, unlike the normal spell, will last 24 hours. The DM should not inform the player character what has happened; the player character will merely notice a feeling pass over him. If the DM feels that the motive for the character's actions was self-interest (the player saw another character receive this unknown feeling and does the same thing so he can get the benefit), he will not be **blessed**. It is important that the player characters be sincere in their actions. Once the characters leave this chamber, they will not receive the **bless** if they return. If any character steals the pearl or damages the altar in any way, he will be -1 on all "to hit" and saving throw rolls for 24 hours. There is nothing else in the room.



#### K4. Temple Foyer

This chamber is heavily decorated. A rainbow band runs around the walls, 3' from the floor. Above this are the remains of many bright, gilded paintings, all of which have been scratched away or smeared with filth. The floor is made of small wooden tiles that form patterns of different colors. These tiles have been cunningly fitted so that any creature walking on them will give rise to a series of moans and near-human cries that will echo up through the floor. This noise will alert any creatures in **Area K5, The Main Temple**. It will not attract the attention of creatures elsewhere in the abbey.

The archway to **The Main Temple** has a magical trap. Any character who crosses through without saying, "I come to thee, my Master," will release a **curse** on himself. If the character saves vs. **Spells**, the **curse** will have no effect. If he fails his save, however, this **curse** will cause the character to forget everything of his past life. He will not remember who his friends are, what his name is, where he is, or why he is there. All spells memorized will be forgotten, although new spells may be memorized normally (if there is enough time). The character will not remember the powers of any magic items, but he will not forget how to speak or what class he is. He will retain all the abilities of his class except for memorized spells.

#### K5. The Main Temple

This room is ornately decorated with paintings and gilt carvings. All the walls are covered with carved wood panelling showing various deities surrounded by flowered borders. The pillars are painted with black, red, yellow, and blue stripes and are inlaid with bits of mother-of-pearl and mirrors. Lights shine and dazzle off these to create sparkling points throughout the room. In the center of the room is a dais. On the dais is a large cauldron.

Standing around the cauldron are two bhuts\* (AC 4; HD 7+2; hp 39, 32; #AT 3; D 1-4/1-4/1-6 + special; MV 40'; Save F10; ML 10; AL C) and 3 ghouls (AC 6; HD 2; hp 10; #AT 3; D 1-3 each + special; MV 30'; Save F2; ML 9; AL C). They will attack any characters who enter the room unless they are accompanied by a monk (or someone wearing a monk's robes). If possible, however, they will try to convince any lone character who has lost his memory from the curse at **Area K4** that he is actually on their side and that the

other players are the enemy. If the character fails to save vs. **Spells**, he will believe the bhuts unless there are other player characters present in the area. If one of the bhuts is slain, the other will flee. He will not warn any other creatures in the temple, but will attempt to escape the monastery altogether.

Hidden in a secret compartment in the dais are 3000 gp, 3 gems (each worth 500 gp), and a map showing the location of the Great Pass.

#### K6. Robing Chamber

This chamber was once used by the Lawful abbot to prepare for ceremonies in the temple. It is bare of all decoration. Against the walls are 4 chests. The first two chests are open and the contents (robes, slippers, and undergarments) are scattered on the floor in front of them. The other two chests are closed. One contains only more clothing like the open chests. The fourth chest is apparently the same; however, there is a secret compartment in the bottom. When this compartment is opened, the characters will see an illusion (no saving throw) that the chest is a gate to a deep shaft. At the bottom of the shaft are flames and the shadows of leaping, demonic creatures. The illusion will not be dispelled if touched, but will not cause any harm to those who see it. Hidden by the illusion is a miniature (6" long) spear. This is a **Spear of Panic**. When a character attempts to hit with the spear, it will magically grow out to 10', allowing any target within 10' to be attacked. The spear has no bonuses to hit and only does 1-6 points of damage. However, if the spear strikes an enchanted or undead creature, the creature will automatically flee from the combat.

#### K7. Abbot's Antechamber

This small chamber has two low stools, a small table, and an oil lamp. Otherwise, the room is not decorated. Curled out of sight under the table is a giant rattlesnake (AC 5; HD 4; hp 23; #AT 2; D 1-4 each + poison; MV 40'; Save F2; ML 8; AL N). The rattle of the snake has been cut off. If the alarm at **Area K2, The Temple Porch** has been sounded, the abbot-bhut will have released the snake and it will be able to move around the room freely. If no alarm has been raised, the snake will be fastened by a chain to the wall. In this case, the snake will not be able to attack characters who enter the room and immediately follow the wall that leads away from the table. There is nothing of value in this room.





### K8. Abbot's Shrine

This room is hung with painted silks and carpeted with furs. In one corner stands a small shrine. There are several lit candles around it. The shrine is obviously one to some Chaotic deity. Kneeling at the shrine is the abbot, a bhut\* (AC 4; HD 7+2; hp 50; #AT 3; D 1-4/1-4/1-6 + special; MV 40'; Save F10; ML 10; AL C). Lying beside him is his pet grizzly bear (AC 6; HD 5; hp 34; #AT 3; D 1-4/1-4/1-8; MV 40'; Save F2; ML 8; AL N). If the abbot is attacked, he will call for help and attempt to fight his way to the stairs that lead to the catacombs. If possible, he will escape down these steps while the grizzly holds the party at bay.

If the characters destroy the statue of the Chaotic deity, they themselves will not be affected. However, within 1-4 rounds, a huge lightning bolt will crash out of the sky, striking the cliff directly below this corner of the temple, blasting rocks and leaving a huge hole. At the end of 2-12 rounds, the room will suddenly shift. Cracks will appear in the walls. Each player should be given only a few moments to tell the DM what he is going to do. If he runs to the staircase or the door (not the secret door!), he will be safe. If he does anything else, he will fall with the chamber when it slips off the edge of the cliff. Characters who fall will take 6-60 points of damage from the fall and will be unconscious for 24 hours.

If players search the room before it is destroyed, they will find 3000 gp, 5000 sp, and a scroll with three spells: **light**, **read languages**, and **detect invisible**. The painted cloths are worth 4000 gp if sold in a major city.

### L. The Library

This low building is different from all the others in appearance. Instead of whitewashed, plastered stone, the abbey library is covered with dried, red clay. Pressed into the clay at many different points are mystical seals. They are not magical but were intended to invoke the spirit of learning into those who entered the library.

### L1. The Entryway

This broad entrance has a statue standing on either side of the door. One is a sword-wielding, banner-waving, ogre-faced man running through the clouds. The other statue is of a demure older woman holding a piece of cloth. At the base of each statue is writing in an unknown tongue. Each identifies its statue: the man is "Guardian Against False Reading and Impious Thought." The woman is "The Veil of Truth." These statues, if sold in a major city, would be worth 5000 gp. Each statue weighs 3000 coins.

### L2. Library Shrine

Built into the wall in between the two entrances to the Main Library, **Area L2** is a small shrine to the deity who protects those seeking knowledge. The shrine consists of a statue of an three-armed, bull-headed man. One hand holds a lamp, the second holds a dagger, and the third holds a writing brush. There are several candle stubs around the base of the statue. None of them look recently used. However, the statue appears to be clean and free of dust.

### L3. Cubicles

These small chambers each have a stool, a lamp, a desk, and several scrolls. During the day, none of the cubicles will be occupied. At night, there will be one bhut\* (AC 4; HD 7+2; hp 33; #AT 3; D 1-4/1-4/1-6 + special; MV 40'; Save F10; ML 10; AL C) in one of the cubicles. The DM should decide which cubicle the bhut is in. The bhut will be searching the manuscripts for lost lore. It will attempt to hide from the players, only attacking if it can catch a character alone or if forced to fight.

### L4. Main Library

This long room is lined with shelves that reach to the ceiling 15' above. The shelves are stacked with scrolls, some of which are relatively new, while others are quite old and brittle. The room shows signs of recent use. If the characters examine any of the scrolls, the DM should roll on the following table to determine what they find. A **read languages** spell will be necessary to read any of the scrolls.

Die Roll	Scroll Found
1-75	Treatise on the interpretation of the proper rituals of the religion of the abbey.
75-90	A section of the chronicles of the abbey. It will only cover one year. The abbey has been here for 500 years.
91-95	A geographical text, that, if studied, will reveal the location of the Great Pass and give some basic directions on how to find one's way through it.
96-99	A text on heretical religions that will describe a huge temple, "the chariot beyond the clouds." The temple will be somewhere beyond the Great Pass. All the other information will deal with theological differences of opinion and will not be useful to the player characters.
100	A magical scroll that will give any reader other than a cleric one point of wisdom. Any cleric not of the same religion as the Lawful monks who once lived here will lose one point of wisdom. The DM should decide if the cleric's religion and the monks' religion are the same. Once the scroll has been read, it will crumble into dust.

There are over 5000 scrolls in this library.

## L5. The Secret Archives

As in the Main Library, this chamber is lined with shelves that are stacked with scrolls. However, these scrolls are those that have been found or written by the bhuts. If the characters read two or more of these scrolls, they will learn the history of the bhuts at this abbey — how they came to occupy it and what they have done since they came here. The characters will also learn of the arrangement between the bhuts and the Master beyond the Great Pass. Finally, they will learn the general directions to the Great Pass and how to find the entrance to it. They will not gain any information on how to find their way through the Great Pass. There are also four scrolls of ancient lore. There is a 1 in 20 chance that any scroll read will be one of these scrolls. If the character reads one of these scrolls, he must save vs. Spells. If he saves, he may ask three yes or no questions of the DM, just as if a **commune** spell had been cast. If the character fails the saving throw, he will be permanently confused and will not be able to fight or cast spells until a **remove curse** is cast on him. These scrolls will only work once.

## M. Storage Shed

This open-fronted building contains an assortment of tools and junk that has collected at the abbey for many years. In this shed may be found carpenter and stonemason tools, rope, wheelbarrows and handcarts, lamp oil, firewood, wooden buckets, and other common items. Most of the items are covered with dust and cobwebs. A few, like the lamp oil, appear to be used from time to time. There is nothing of great value in this shed.

## N. The Abbot's House

This small building was once the Abbot's private chambers. The outside is like that of most of the other buildings — plastered and whitewashed stone. It has no other decoration. The door and windows are a shimmering black wood that does not appear at all natural. This material resists fire, weapons, and spells.

The door and windows are actually gateways to the Master's temple. The rooms inside the Abbot's house are part of this temple. A person entering from the Abbey will be transported (with no ill effects) to the Master's temple. When the person leaves these rooms, he will return to the abbey. Although the character will be at the Master's stronghold, he will not be able to explore more than the small group of rooms that forms the Abbot's house on this map. The Master does have a magical device that allows him to use these rooms as a normal **teleport**. He uses this gate to communicate with his servants, the bhuts, and his army in the field.

The insides of these rooms are different from those elsewhere in the abbey. The floors are large, dressed blocks of stone. The walls are black stone carved with some ornately evil designs.

If the characters are still wearing the **amulet of finding (Settled Lands Encounter #2)**, they will not be able to surprise any of the creatures found in this area. If the DM wishes, he may have some of the intelligent creatures in these rooms prepare traps for the player characters.

## N1. Guard Chamber

This gloomy, smoke-filled room contains no furniture except for one smoldering brazier. Huddled away from the brazier are three wights\* (AC 5; HD 3; hp 22, 20, 18; #AT 1; D energy drain; MV 30'; Save F3; ML 12; AL C) who are bound by the Master to guard these chambers. They will attack any creature who enters, unless the Master is present or has given orders not to attack. There is nothing of value in this room.

## N2. Meeting Room

This room is strewn with cushions and the walls are hung with rich fabrics. There are no creatures in this room. There is, however, a table covered with papers, an inkwell, and a writing brush. If the characters search through the papers, they will find a listing of the forces for the Master's army that is currently marching to the East. Also among the papers is a partial list of the spies working for the Master. These papers would be of great use to the human armies of the East, if the players can find some way to return with them.

## N3. Small Armory

The walls of this room are lined with racks of spears, pole arms, swords, and other weapons. Shields also hang on the walls. All of the weapons are in excellent condition, but none are magical. The characters will be able to find any weapon (except lance) that is listed on the equipment lists in the rulebook. The Master maintains this armory in case attackers manage to enter these rooms or in case the bhuts of the abbey need assistance. The window in this room looks out over a scene of lightly forested plains. There are no mountains in sight.

## N4. Holding Cell

This room is a cell. The door is locked and the bars are very stout (to keep the wights out). Inside the room is strewn with dirty, foul-smelling straw. Hiding in the far back corner is a woman, Dressla the Thief (AC 9; T5; hp 13; #AT 1; D by weapon; MV 40'; Save T5; ML 6; AL N). She has no equipment and is dressed in a ragged pair of pants and a shirt. If the characters rescue Dressla, she will tell them her story. According to what she says, she had heard stories of a fabulously large gem that was hidden in an ancient temple far beyond the mountains. She and several others went to find or steal this gem. They found the temple, learned that it was occupied by a large number of creatures, and managed to enter unnoticed. Unfortunately, the group was discovered before theft could be made. All her companions are dead. Once back to the abbey, she refuses to return to the temple of the Master. If the characters do go on, she will leave, hoping to reach the lands to the east. She will be able to tell the characters the following information:

1. They should watch for the sign of the fish when travelling through the Great Pass.
2. The temple is many miles away on the other side of the mountain range.
3. The temple is decorated to look like a huge wagon or cart.
4. On certain holy days, they will be able to enter the temple disguised as members of the Master's army.
5. The inner parts of the temple are very dangerous, filled with unknown guard creatures and traps of all kinds.

She will have no other useful information. After she was captured, she explains, she was kept blindfolded or in the dark. She has no idea why she was in the cell the characters rescued her from, except that it was for some special purpose.

## N5. Upper Hall

This hallway is bare of furniture. There are no creatures present. Hung on the walls are scrolls with characters written on them. These are prayers to a great Chaotic deity. The windows look out over a tree-spotted plain. There are low mountains far in the distance.

## N6. Storeroom

This room contains a number of common supplies: candles, lamps, fancy woods for repairs, tools, and barrels of grease and fat. Searching in one corner is Mond, a fighter (AC -1; F11; hp 72; #AT 1; D 4-11 [1d8+3]; MV 40'; Save F11; ML 9; AL C). He has a **sword +2(NSA)**, **plate mail armor +2**, **shield +1**, and a **ring of djinni summoning**. Mond is one of the Master's main commanders. If attacked in this room, he will fight to the best of his ability, summoning the djinni only if he has suffered 30 or more hit points of damage. If Mond's morale breaks, he will not surrender, but will attempt to flee. The windows in this room look out on a tree-spotted plain. There are no mountains in sight.

## N7. Terrace

This small area is an open terrace. When the characters step onto this terrace, they will find themselves back in the abbey. If they go into the Abbot's House through this door, they will find themselves in the Master's Temple.

## THE CATACOMBS

These passages burrow into the rock. The walls and ceilings are solid and have no bracing. The floors are worn smooth, but the walls are rough and jagged. Most of the passages are quite dry, and the air is very stale. There is no light anywhere in the catacombs.

### 1. Crypts

This is a passage with niches filled with coffins — some very old, some fairly new. Most are intact, but a few are cracked or broken, revealing the bones inside. All are covered with dust and cobwebs.

**A.** This coffin contains the corpse of a vampire\* (AC 2; HD 7; hp 42; #AT 1; D 1-10 + special; MV 40'/60'; Save F7; ML 11; AL C). It is currently "dead," a stake driven through its heart. If the stake is removed, it will come to life in 10 rounds. It is hungry and will stalk the player characters through the catacombs.

**B.** There is one large coffin in this niche. An inscription tells that it is the coffin of a previous abbot of great faith. If the lid is pried open, the characters will find a skeleton and, beside it, a long bone tube. This tube contains a map of the Great Pass, showing the proper route to take to get through it.

**C.** Carved on the back wall of this niche is some writing, but it is covered by dust and cobwebs. The writing says nothing important. The niche contains one large coffin. If any character enters the niche, there is a 1-3 chance on 1d6 of triggering a rockfall. The character will suffer 4-40 points of damage unless he saves vs. Paralysis. The rockfall will completely block the entrance to the niche. If the character fails his save, others may pull him from the rocks in one round. If he saves, he will suffer no damage, but will be trapped on the other side of the rockfall. It will take 6 turns to dig him out. Hidden in the coffin (which will break open when the roof collapses) is a **wand of fear** and a gem-encrusted crown worth 8,000 gp.

### 2. Secret Altar

In the center of this circular chamber is a large statue of a man dressed in exotic black armor. If the characters saw the Master in the mirror at The Lost Oasis, they will recognize that the statue is of him. Draped around its neck is a large snake, apparently part of the casting. The statue has a permanent **magic mouth** cast on it: when a group enters the chamber, it will say, "Ah, small beings, you have come to do homage to me and my gods! Kneel and pray for our mercy!" The voice will alert all the other creatures in the catacombs, making surprise impossible unless the characters remain here for at least 3 turns.

The snake is actually a rock python (AC 6; HD 5; hp 30; #AT 2; D 1-4/2-8; MV 30'; Save F3; ML 8; AL N) that will attack anyone who comes within 10' of the statue. If the morale of the snake breaks, it will slither back up the statue and hiss menacingly at the characters. There is no treasure in this room.

### 3. Cells

The passageway ends in four small cells — no more than niches in the rock with shackles at the back of each. The floor of each cell is covered with filth and puddles of water.

**A.** Shackled to the wall of this niche is the former abbot, a cleric (AC 9; C7; hp 10; #AT 1; D by weapon; MV 40'; Save C7; ML 5; AL L). He cannot speak and so cannot pray for or cast spells. Over the years he has been imprisoned here, he has become nearly blind. He can still see well enough to write, however, and the bhuts have kept him alive for information and in case they need him for an emergency. If rescued, he will not trust the players until after sunset, when he can learn if they are bhuts or not. He knows the layout of the abbey and its underground passages, and can guide characters through them.

**B.** These cells are empty.

### 4. The Dolorous Way

This passage leads to the secret trapdoor that enters into the guest house (**Area B1**). At its end is a ladder that leads to the trapdoor. There is no latch on the other side of the trapdoor, so it can be opened only from this side. Strewn along the sides of the passage are bones. If players examine these, they can tell that they are human bones that have been gnawed and broken.

### 5. The Water-Filled Chamber

Here the passage opens into a large chamber. Near the opposite wall is a large pool of water, part of the same spring that feeds the well. The water is very cold, but is murky with constantly bubbling sand. Living in this pool is a giant leech (AC 7; HD 6; hp 32; #AT 1 special; D 1-6; MV 30'; Save F3; ML 10; AL N). At the bottom of the pool are 3 gems (1000 gp each) and a **potion of heroism**.

### 6. The Dripping Passage

This passage is very damp; water drips constantly from the ceiling to form puddles on the floor. In turn, these puddles form small streams that flow towards **Area 8, The Secret Exit**. There are no creatures living in this passage. There are, however, several branches, one of which leads to the secret trapdoor that opens into the Monks' House. This trapdoor may be opened from either side.

### 7. Trapdoor

At this point is a ladder leading to a trapdoor in the ceiling. This trapdoor may be opened from either side. It opens into the Training Hall.

### 8. The Secret Exit

This passage winds for some length (not shown on the map) and finally ends in a secret door. Standing guard here are a bhut\* (AC 4; HD 7+2; hp 36; #AT 3; D 1-4/1-4/1-6+ special; MV 40'; Save F10; ML 10; AL C) and two bugbears (AC 5; HD 3+1; hp 20, 18; #AT 1; D 2-8; MV 30'; Save F#; ML 9; AL C) who have just arrived from outside. They will fight any intruders from inside or out (i.e. any character not wearing a monk's robe). If their morale breaks, all the creatures will flee through the secret door. This door opens to the alpine meadows at the base of the rock on which the abbey is built.





## PART 7: NEW MONSTERS

This section presents the new monsters used in the module. All of the creatures given are extremely rare and should seldom be encountered in a normal campaign.

### Bhut\*

Armor Class: 4	No. Appearing: 2-8 (2-8)
Hit Dice: 7+2**	Save As: Fighter: 10
Move: 120' (40')	Morale: 10
Attacks: 2 claws/1 bite	Treasure Type: A
Damage: 1-4/1-4/1-6 + special	Alignment: Chaotic

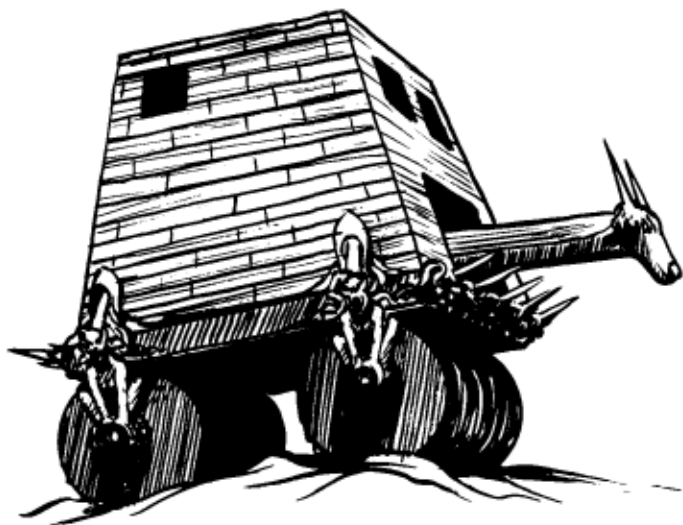
Bhuts are intelligent, evil beings similar in many ways to lycanthropes and undead. During the daytime, bhuts appear to be normal humans. At night their hair becomes wild and their skin scaly. Their hands turn into claws, and their teeth become fangs. While in this form, they hunt humans and demi-humans for food. They are extremely clever and often use deception and trickery to obtain their meals.

In combat, bhuts attack with their claws and bite. Their bite is freezing to the touch. Besides normal damage, any creature bit by a bhut must save vs. Paralysis or be numbed. Numbed creatures always lose initiative and are -2 on all to hit rolls. The numbness will last for 1-4 rounds.

Bhuts have all the immunities of an undead creature (**sleep**, **charm**, **hold**, poison, and gases). They also, like undead, make no noise when moving. They cannot be turned. They save at a level higher than their hit dice. Bhuts cannot be struck by non-magical weapons, but a single hit from a **blessed** weapon will kill one instantly. In addition, bhuts radiate a powerful aura, preventing **detect evil** and **know alignment** spells from working on them. **Know alignment** will mistakenly detect the bhuts as Lawful.

Bhuts prefer to live near human settlements, preying on those living there. Often, they will work together. Normally, they will assume some innocent cover (monks, travelling gypsies, a family on the edge of town, etc.) to prevent suspicion.





## Juggernaut

	WOOD	STONE
Armor Class:	6	0
Hit Dice:	25**	30**
Move:	120' (40')	90' (30')
Attacks:	1 crush	1 crush
Damage:	8-80	10-100
No. Appearing:	0 (1)	0 (1)
Save As:	Special	Special
Morale:	12	12
Treasure Type:	G	M and N
Alignment:	Neutral	Neutral

Juggernauts are huge magical machines. They look like houses, pyramids or statues mounted on great rollers. They are magically animated and have some awareness of their surroundings, allowing them to hunt and kill. They are made of wood or stones.

Juggernauts are very maneuverable. They can stop, back up or turn in one round, allowing them to attack creatures in front, behind, or alongside in the same round. They attack by rolling over the victim with their huge wheels. These rollers are 30' wide, making it possible for juggernauts to attack more than one target in their path. If there is only one target in a given direction, the attack is made normally. If there are two or more targets in the path, each target is first allowed to save vs. Dragon Breath. Targets that make their saving throw have managed to get out of the path of the juggernaut. Those that fail to save will be hit by the Juggernaut if it rolls its "to hit" number against that target. A separate roll is made for each target.

All juggernauts have the following immunities in common: all non-magical missile fire; **sleep**, **charm**, and **hold** spells; and poison.

**WOOD JUGGERNAUT:** This type of juggernaut normally appears as a large wooden building on rollers. It is 20' to 30' high. It saves vs. everything, except magical fire, at 5 or better. A wooden juggernaut will fail its saving throw vs. any type of magical fire attack.

**STONE JUGGERNAUT:** These appear as small pyramids or huge statues on rollers. They stand 40' to 50' high. They may only be damaged by magic weapons or spells. All saving throws are made at 4 or better. Stone juggernauts can crush small buildings, even those made of stone.

A juggernaut carries its treasure inside it. This treasure may only be found after the juggernaut is dead.



## Nagpa

Armor Class: 3	No. Appearing: 1 (1)
Hit Dice: 9	Save As: Magic user: 9
Move: 120' (40')	Morale: 9
Attacks: 1 bite or spells	Treasure Type: I
Damage: 1-8 or special	Alignment: Chaotic

Nagpa look like dried, withered humans with the heads of vultures. They are very intelligent and are highly magical in nature. They may use the following powers up to three times each a day: **create flames** (This will cause a burnable object within 60' to burst into flame for 1-3 rounds. It will cause 2-12 points of damage each round. A saving throw vs. Spells will reduce the damage to half), **paralysis** (All lawful characters within 10' must save vs. Spells or be paralyzed for 1-4 rounds), **corruption** (This will cause a non-living object within 60' to decay or rot into uselessness. Magic items are allowed a saving throw vs. Spells at the level of the character using the item), **darkness**, and **phantasmal force**. In combat, a nagpa will try to avoid melee if possible, and use its spells.

Nagpa are rarely met, preferring to stay in deserted ruins or wastes. They speak their own tongue, their alignment language and a common language.



## Soul Eater\*

Armor Class: 0  
Hit Dice: 10\*  
Move: 180' (60')  
Attacks: 2 claws  
Damage: 1-10 each + special

No. Appearing: 1 (1)  
Save As: Cleric 10  
Morale: 12  
Treasure Type: Nil  
Alignment: Neutral

A soul eater is a being from another dimension summoned or granted to high level clerics. It is used to slay beings as ordered by the cleric who summoned or received it. A soul eater appears as a cloud of glowing darkness and can assume any shape desired. Once given a victim to kill, it will not quit until the victim or itself is defeated. A soul eater is highly intelligent and will accomplish its mission by any means it can.

In combat, the creature will attack with two ghostly claws each round. In addition, each time it hits it will drain one point of Wisdom unless the victim saves vs. Death Ray. This saving throw must be made each time the character is hit. A soul eater may only be struck by magical weapons. Silver and normal weapons will have no effect on it. If the victim is slain by the soul eater or has his Wisdom reduced to 0, the victim is dead, and the soul eater will return to its own dimension. Characters slain by a soul eater cannot be raised or reincarnated. Otherwise, the character regains Wisdom at the rate of 1 point per day. If the soul eater's hit points are reduced to 0, it will dissolve into a formless cloud and drift away. It will not return.

If the soul eater's victim is slain by another or if the soul eater is defeated, it will return to the cleric who summoned it and attack him. Because of its rage, it will have 20 HD and will do 3-18 points of damage when it attacks. If defeated a second time, it will disappear forever.



## Tabi

Armor Class: 6  
Hit Dice: 5  
Move: 60' (20')  
Flying: 240' (80')  
Attacks: 2 claws  
Damage: 1-4/1-4 + special

No. Appearing: 1-4 (1-4)  
Save As: Magic user: 5  
Morale: 6 (12)

Treasure Type: Nil  
Alignment: Chaotic

The tabi are small, winged, ape-like creatures about the size of a large housecat. Their bodies are covered with a long golden fur while their wings are leathery membranes, like a bat's. They give off a stench of rot that can be smelled at up to 100'. They are intelligent and clever.

In combat, tabi fight with their sharp claws which drip with a crystal blue venom. Anyone hit by a tabi must save vs. Paralysis. A player who fails to save will be deluded, attacking any creature or character adjacent to him. A deluded character may only fight with weapons or bare hands, but will do so to the best of his ability. The delusion will last for 2-12 turns or until a **neutralize poison** is cast on the victim. Tabi also have a 40% chance to pick pockets, move silently, and hide in shadows. Tabi prefer to ambush characters and then hide while the deluded victim attacks others.

Tabi have very long lifetimes, during which they gather much information about ancient legends and forgotten lore. They are intelligent and speak their own tongue. It is possible for high level magic-users to research a spell that will bind a tabi to his service. If the spell is researched and worded properly, the tabi will remain in service to the magic-user until one or the other dies. While enspelled, it will be absolutely loyal to the character commanding it. In such cases, the parenthesized morale should be used. An enspelled tabi will also assist its master by telling information that it knows.



## PART 8: PRE-ROLLED CHARACTERS

It is possible that the player characters in the DM's campaign will not be of high enough level to play this module immediately. In this case, the DM may save this module until the characters in the game are ready, or he may let the players use the pre-rolled characters given below. These characters are designed to fit with the adventure; players using them will find the encounters challenging, but not beyond the abilities of their characters.

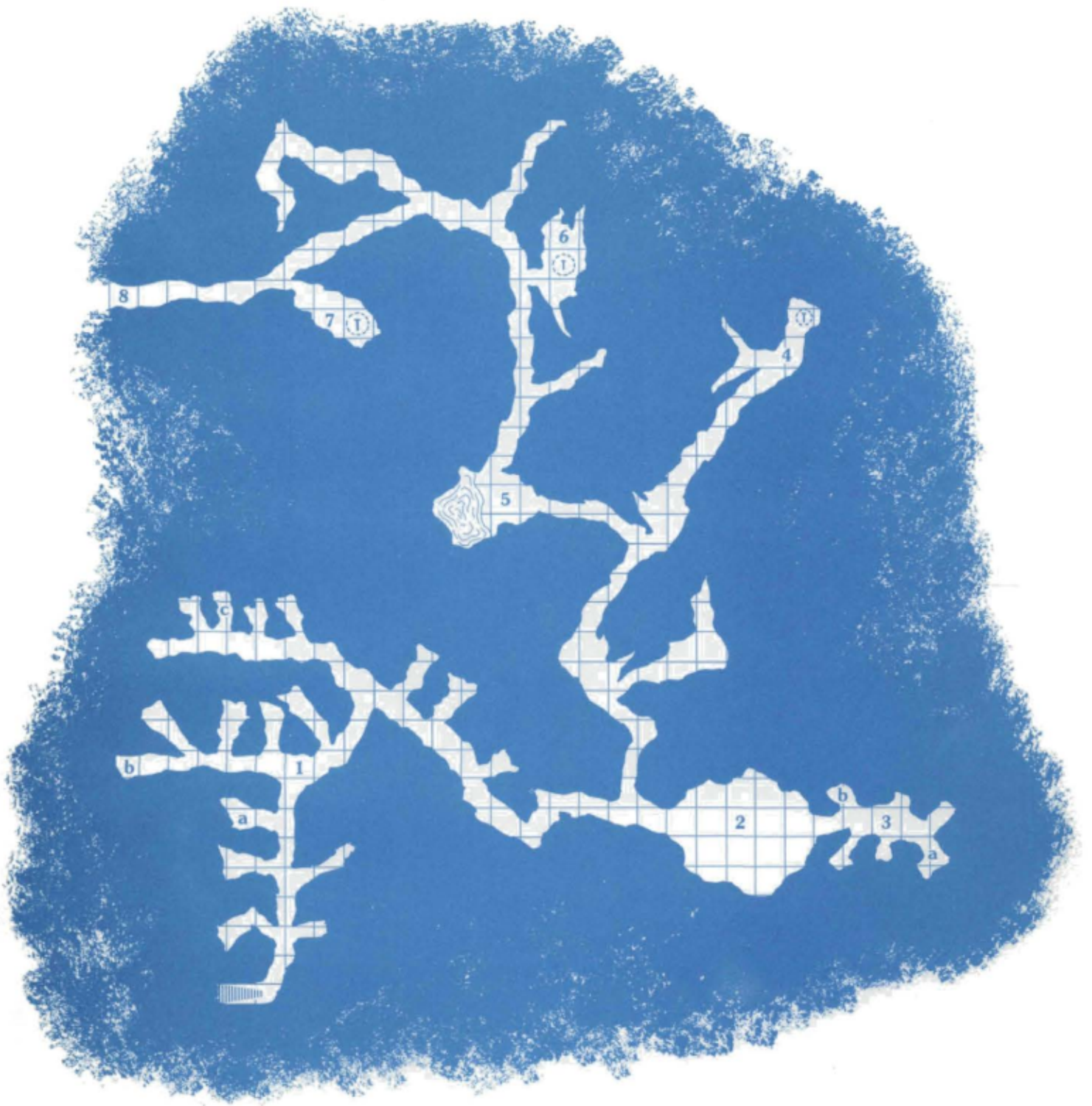
The table below lists seven different characters, a typical party for this module. All the necessary information has been given, including magic items that characters may carry. No spells are listed for the spellcasters: the choice should be made by each player for his character. The number of each character has a corresponding number on the Magical Items Table, after which there is a list of useful magical items that the character might choose to carry. For equipment, the DM should allow pre-rolled characters to have any items they wish from the equipment list in the rulebook, limiting them only by encumbrance. In addition, each player character should have 500 to 1000 gp with which to start the adventure.















**Pre-Rolled Character Table**

No.	Class	LVL	STR	INT	WIS	CON	DEX	CHA	HP
1.	Cleric	8	11	12	14	16	10	7	46
2.	Fighter	9	15	12	6	17	12	10	60
3.	Elf	6	12	17	9	11	8	10	23
4.	MU	8	7	15	8	14	9	8	31
5.	Dwarf	7	15	7	10	16	10	9	46
6.	Thief	7	13	9	9	14	14	12	25
7.	Halfling	6	12	16	12	10	14	10	26

## MAGIC ITEMS TABLE

1. plate mail armor +1; shield +1; ring of fire resistance; staff of striking; potion of undead control
2. sword +1, flames on command (NSA); potion of healing; potion of speed; plate armor +1; shield +1
3. sword +1, intelligence 9, see invincible, detect gems, levitation, alignment Lawful, ego 7; 8 +1 arrows; bag of holding
4. dagger +1; ring of telekinesis; scroll of magic missile, invisibility 10' radius, disintegrate; scarab of protection; wand of cold
5. shield +2; 6 +2 crossbow bolts, war hammer +3; scroll of protection from lycanthropes; potion of healing
6. sword +1 (NSA); leather armor +1; ring of spell turning
7. sword +1 (NSA); sling +1; plate mail armor +1; elven cloak and boots



 Door	 Trapdoor/floor	 Altar	 Grain
 Double door	 Trapdoor/ceiling	 Pillar	 Fireplace
 Gate	 Window	 Terrace railing	 Pool of water
 Secret door	 Stairs		

Scale: 1 square = 5 feet



# DUNGEONS & DRAGONS®

## Expert Set Adventure Module

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### Master of the Desert Nomads

by David Cook

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To arms! To arms! The battle lines are drawn as desert men and inhuman tribes wait poised to strike on the fertile and rich lands of the east. The call has gone out through the civilized lands. The armies have been raised to match the invading foes from the west. Nobles and peasants have joined swords to greet the foes.

But Fate or Chance has decreed another role for a small few. No glorious banners will wave on their march. No squadrons of knights will charge at their word. Instead, they will fight the war with stealth, secrecy, and cunning. The risks they will take are great, but the fates of both armies lie with them.

It begins one night for your party far from the fighting. Suddenly you are entrusted with the most dangerous mission of the war.

Can you cross the Sind Desert, occupied now by enemy armies, to find the Great Pass?

Can you find the one known only as The Master?

What will you do if you do find him?

So begins your adventure in **The Master of the Desert Nomads**, the first module of a two-part adventure that can be concluded in the exciting **Temple of Death** or played entirely on its own. Can your party do what must be done?

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This module is for use with the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® Expert Set, which continues and expands the D&D® Basic Rules. This module cannot be played without the D&D® Basic and Expert rules.

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