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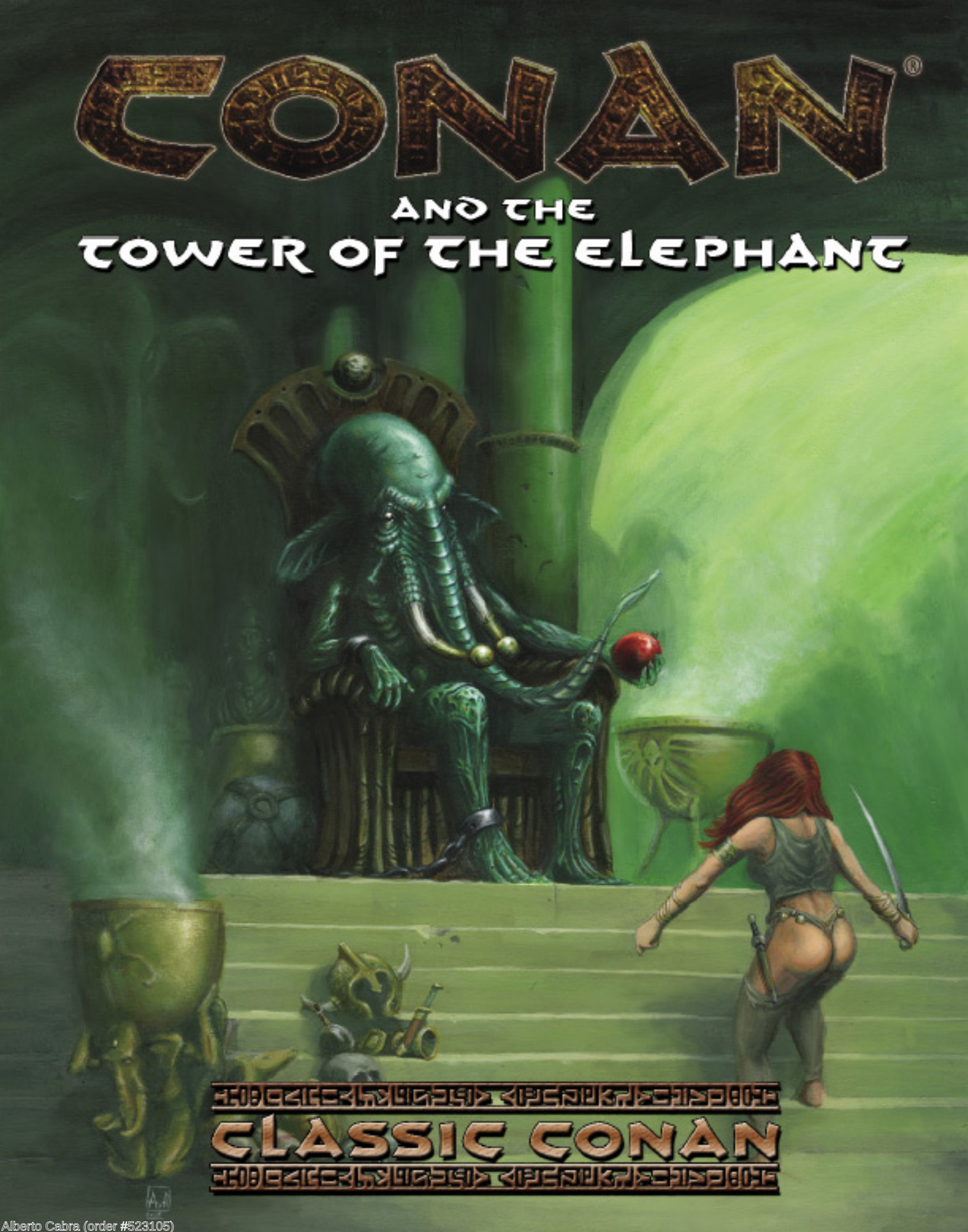
AND THE TOWER OF THE ELEPHANT



CLASSIC CONAN

Alberto Cabra (order #523105)

ARENJUN

ZAMORIAN CITY OF THIEVES

Alberto Cabra (order #523105)

CONAN®

AND THE TOWER OF THE ELEPHANT

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Introduction
Welcome to the City of Arenjun

IN THE ZAMORIAN city of Arenjun, amidst the gleaming, golden shrines of the city's temple district, stands a single tower. Surrounded by a walled, tiered garden, the tower thrusts high into the Zamorian sky, its perfect surface, unmarred by doors or windows, encrusted with gems, shining like a beacon to the heavens. The Elephant Tower stands aloof, impenetrable and alien, a glittering edifice utterly out of place in the sprawling squalor of Arenjun. It is the abode of High Priest Yara and the resting place of the Elephant's Heart, thought to be the most valuable jewel in the world, and the secret of Yara's power.

Throughout all of Zamora, rumours of the tower are as common as the flies in Arenjun's Maul. In every rotting slum or haven of lawless revelry that shelters the country's infamous thieves, murderers and mercenaries, lunatics, prostitutes and fugitives there is a tale to accompany the mysterious gleaming tower. It is said that the tower was built in the space of a single night, that it is formed of purest silver and that the towering spire, blindingly bright by day but glimmering like water beneath the moonlight, is the resting place of dark gods. Even the bravest men whisper the tower's name, wary of Yara's power and influence, and accounts of the tower's bestial and unnatural guardians, said to ceaselessly patrol the surrounding gardens. What lurks in the tower's many levels no one can say; the rumours of its contents and denizens seem more akin to nightmares given voice than anything that could walk abroad in Hyboria. No matter the verity of these rumours, one thing is known to be absolute truth – somewhere amidst the tower's labyrinthine corridors and floors the Elephant's Heart awaits. Despite this, the tower and its master are talismans of terror, even to the fearless rogues of Zamora and despite the fabulous wealth its glittering walls surely contain, no thief has yet had the courage to assay Yara's cursed tower – at least, none have returned alive.

Preparing to Play

The Tower of the Elephant is the first in a new series of Conan adventure scenarios based directly on the original stories of Robert E. Howard, allowing the Player Characters to undertake the very adventures that the mighty Cimmerian once endured. In the case of an adventure like *The Tower of the Elephant*, this will mean that Conan himself did not undertake to scale Yara's tower and steal the Elephant's Heart, but that will have little effect on the legendary barbarian's ultimate destiny to rule mighty Aquilonia.

This adventure gives Player Characters the opportunity to test their mettle against the greatest of challenges and walk the path of Hyboria's most famous adventurer – Conan of Cimmeria. Can they survive the trials that were once set before him? Have they the courage, the stoutness of heart, clearness of mind and strength of sinew to tread the road travelled by the mighty barbarian? Have they the skill to tread where Conan might have walked? *The Tower of the Elephant* will test not only their capacity for violence, stealth and greed, but for mercy, subtlety and intuition as well and those who rely solely on the strength of their sword arm to resolve problems will likely learn a hard (and potentially fatal) lesson within the bejeweled walls of the Elephant Tower.

A copy of *Conan the Roleplaying Game*, a notepad, pencils and a full set of dice (at least one of each of the following: d20, d12, d10, d8, d6 and d4) will be needed to play *The Tower of the Elephant*. Players and Games Masters may also find a a copy of *Conan: Scrolls of Skelos* and a few miniatures of use, but these are not essential.

The Tower of the Elephant combines situations and encounters that will require a mix of skills to survive and overcome. Players will find that a party of adventurers from a wide variety of character classes of particular use.

Games Masters should read, and become familiar with the entire adventure before attempting to run it to fully understand how each encounter fits with those which surround it.

Though it is possible that some or all of a Games Master's players have read Robert E. Howard's short story, the Games Master should be able to run this scenario easily enough, as much of the tower itself was never detailed in Howard's original story. Though it is not necessary, it is recommended that the Games Master read this story before running this adventure.

This adventure is designed for four to six Player Characters of between 4th and 6th character level. Should Games Masters have fewer players they should use their own discretion and scale down some of the encounters in this module. Conversely, should Games Masters have more than six players, or should the Player Characters be higher than 6th level, then he should be prepared to increase the difficulty of the challenges presented in this adventure.

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Abroad in the Maul

This adventure opens in the Maul, a lawless and sprawling slum in the city of Arenjun. It is one of Zamora's countless perilous places, a place of great poverty and great opportunity for those brazen and ruthless enough to seize it, a gathering place for furtive cutpurses, leering kidnappers, quick-fingered thieves, swaggering bravoes and their wenches. Here, the hopeless and destitute gather in Arenjun's reeking pit of filth and desperation, mingling with prostitutes and thieves, deserters and assassins, killers and con artists and a handful of wide-eyed new arrivals ready to be eaten up and spat out by the city's mean streets.

In the tradition of great Howard stories, the background of the Player Characters' involvement in *The Tower of the Elephant* is simple and straightforward. They have heard tales throughout Zamora and its neighbouring lands of the tower, the riches it contains and the perils it offers those would dare to breach its walls. Lured by such tales, the characters have come to Arenjun to see this mighty tower for themselves, to scale its glittering heights, to steal its wealth and to laugh at the terrors it contains. The Player Characters will expose the cowardice that festers in the hearts of Hyboria's most infamous rouges, the thieves of Zamora, shaming them by succeeding where no others dared.

However, if the Games Master is so inclined, it is simple enough (and, indeed, encouraged) for him to tie *The Tower of the Elephant* in with the ongoing story arc of his campaign. This can be easily accomplished in a number of ways, a few of which are suggested below.

- The Player Characters may find themselves suddenly and immediately needing a great deal of money. Despite the dangers of the Elephant Tower, the characters may be willing to brave it when it seems there is no other choice.
- A Non-Player Character whom the Player Characters know well (or perhaps even a Player Character, if the player will be absent) has been kidnapped by agents of High Priest Yara and taken to the Elephant Tower as a necessary sacrifice in some dark and malign ritual.
- The Player Characters may have been searching for some ancient artefact, only to find it is secreted away somewhere within the Elephant Tower. If they wish to retrieve it, they must enter the tower.

Whatever their reasons for going to the Elephant Tower, the Player Characters will likely wish to seek out information about it beforehand. To do that, they must go to the Maul, home of Arenjun's most skilled and ruthless thieves.

As the Player Characters arrive in Arenjun's Maul, read the following section aloud to the players;

Torches flare murkily on the revels of the Maul, as Arenjun's thieves hold a carnival by night. The Maul's crooked, unpaved streets are carpeted in heaps of refuse, sloppy puddles and drunken roisterers while its dingy byways are filled with the carousing roar of unseen revellers. Honest people have no place here and even watchmen, well paid with bloodstained coins, do not interfere in the Maul. Steel glints in the shadows as wolf preys on wolf, accompanied by the sounds of scuffling and struggling and the occasional shrill laughter of women from the darkness. Flickering torchlight licks luridly from broken windows and wide-thrown doors from which the nauseating smells of stale wine and sweaty bodies, clamour of drinking jacks and hammering fists and snatches of obscene song, hit you like a blow to the face.

Lured into the haven of cutpurses, kidnappers, thieves and bravoes that is Arejun's Maul by stories of the riches and the perils on offer to those who would dare to breach the walls of the Elephant Tower. Now you find yourself deep in the twisted streets of the city's diseased heart, amid prostitutes and thieves, deserters and assassins, killers and con artists, seeking out what information you can about the mysterious Elephant Tower.

Rumours in the Maul

The thieves and brigands of the Maul fear little – not one another, not the drunken king in Shadizar, not the law – but they do fear Yara and his tower. As the Player Characters make their way from one nameless tavern to the next, picking their way through muddy streets piled with clumps of ripe sewage and rotting garbage, the Games Master should make a special effort to communicate to the players the pall of fear that drops over the faces of even the most hard-bitten and war-tempered rogues and mercenaries of the Maul at the mention of the dreaded tower.

Still, fear has its own fascination, and as the Player Characters continue looking for information on the Elephant Tower, they will likely come across those who are willing to speak of it, to impart what they have heard from unnamed and unreliable sources about the tower and its master. Player Characters will find that a few coins spread about and a few Gather

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Maul Rumours

1d20	Rumour	Verity
1	The Tower of the Elephant was built in a single night.	True
2	High Priest Yara rarely leaves the Tower of the Elephant.	True
3	Taurus of Nemedia, once known as the 'Prince of Thieves' in Zamora, disappeared some years ago – it is thought he perished in the Tower of the Elephant.	True
4	The King Tiridates in Shadizar is largely controlled by Yara, the king's constant drinking fuelled by the sorcerer's machinations.	True
5	The guards in the tower's lowest levels, though they appear human, are actually demons bound to Yara's service.	False
6	Yara's tower is guarded by a contingent of Royal Guards dispatched by Zamora's king in Shadizar.	True
7	Yara is more than 300 years old.	True
8	On the night of the first full moon every year, a wagon rolls up to the front gates of the gardens, bringing bound and shackled prisoners from Arenjun's dungeons to Yara for use in his dark rituals.	False
9	The ghastly guardians of Yara's tower will not attack those who wear the uniform of Zamora's Royal Guard.	True
10	On Yara's last visit to the court in Shadizar, he used a glowing gem to transform a hostile prince into a spider, then crushed him beneath his heel.	True
11	Yara cannot be killed.	False
12	Horrific screams and wails that could come from no human throat are sometimes heard ringing out from the tower.	True
13	On moonless nights, winged demons have been seen circling the jeweled tower	False
14	Several years ago, a caravan from Kush arrived at Yara's tower, bearing two heavy steel cages. Tarps covered the sides, but from within came inhuman roars.	True
15	Large amounts of raw meat are often delivered to the tower, much more than the guards and Yara could consume.	True
16	The guards in Yara's tower have been turned into mindless zombies by the evil priest's sorceries.	False
17	The grasses of the gardens behind the outer walls of the tower seem normal, but are in fact venomous to the touch.	False
18	From time to time, the roar of a great beast can be heard from within the inner garden. (If the Gather Information check beat the DC of the check by five or more, the individual relating this information can confirm the great beast is a lion.)	True
19	Yara himself is long dead, his desiccated corpse now inhabited by a mighty demon he once summoned.	False
20	Anyone who dies in the Elephant Tower will become a risen dead in the service of Yara the priest.	True

Information check (DC 15) will begin to yield results. Games Masters may either roll a die on the Maul Rumours table every time one of the Player Characters makes a successful Gather Information skill check, or he may simply choose a rumour to relay to the players.

THE STYGIAN CARAVAN

As the Player Characters wander about the Maul, seeking information on the Tower of the Elephant and the feared priest inhabiting it, they will pass by Arenjun's caravan yards, where a small crowd has gathered to watch a minor drama unfold.

As the Player Characters draw closer to these proceedings, read the following section aloud to the players;

As you pass close to the city's caravan yards you notice a small crowd that has gathered about a pair of dusty caravans, each one of distinctly different origin. A Turanian caravan, its oxen still hitched to the wagons they draw, has just arrived, drawing to a halt close to a Stygian caravan that seems to have been in place for some time, judging by the arrangement of the wagons and the fire-pits smouldering nearby. One of the Stygian wagons is enormous, a small house on wheels, the wagon's tongue long enough to accommodate eight oxen. With both caravans now at rest, a large and well-armed group from the Stygian caravan approaches the new arrivals, only to be met halfway by an equally ominous Turanian group. The two groups face off against one another, suspicion and threat heavy in the air as a single man steps forward from each group. The two men speak for a few moments in tones so hushed they cannot be heard except by one another, then nod and step back, the Stygian casting venomous looks at the crowd. The two caravans are then drawn into a tight circle. Some signs of movement can be seen within the circle, but the caravan wagons effectively block any view of what is going on.

The crowd begins to disperse now that there is nothing more to see, speculating to one another about what manner of cargo is being exchanged. If the Player Characters begin to ask questions, they will find out that everyone has a guess or a theory, but that no one really knows. As the crowd gradually disperses have the Player Characters make a Spot check (DC

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10) to notice an elderly man gesturing to the characters from the shadows of a side street.

The Voice of Experience

Whiling away his days in a tavern on the edge of the Maul known as the Broken Coin is man named Buryal, a former mercenary and caravan guard who for decades hired out his services to caravans coming through Arenjun, plying trade routes from the Vilayet Sea to Stygia itself. The old man is well-informed about the goings on in the slums of the city and is aware of the Player Characters' attempts to learn more about the mysterious Elephant Tower and its occupants. Buryal offers them some help in their venture and will lead the would-be thieves to the Broken Coin to talk.

As Buryal lounges at a table in the back, alone but for a collection of empty wine bottles, read the following section aloud to the players;

Buryal eyes you up and down as you take seats around the table he has selected. Despite his eyes, bleary with wine and age, his scraggly beard, stained purple around his lips, and his ragged, threadbare clothes, his words instantly interest you.

'You have come to brave the Elephant Tower then? Don't bother lying, I have eyes and ears throughout the Maul and I know the type of questions you've been asking there. While I have no interest in your petty thievery, I am interested in acquiring your services for a short time. If you are to enter old Yara's tower you are going to need to get past the guardians of the tower's treasures, and while I have no idea what foul creatures the High Priest has patrolling his home, I do know of a way to ensure that they do not trouble you too greatly.

'The Turanian caravan that has just arrived carries with it a quantity of the most lethal poison known in all Hyboria. The consignment is destined for Stygia. I, however, would like it for myself. If you would capture this cargo for me, I will split its contents equally with you. That is it, a simple task, I'm sure you'll agree.'

Buryal

Medium Humanoid Brythunian soldier 3/thief 1; HD: 3d10+1d8+8 (29 hp); **Init:** +7; **Spd:** 30 ft.; **Dodge DV:** 11; **Parry DV:** 14; **DR:** 6; **BAB/Grp:** +3/+5; **Atk:** Broadsword +5 melee *or* bill +5 melee; **Full Atk:** Broadsword +5 melee *or* bill +5 melee; **Dmg:** Broadsword 1d10+2, 19-20/x2, AP 5 *or* bill 2d8+3, x3, AP 8; **Space/Reach:** 5 ft. (1)/5 ft. (1); **SA:** Formation Combat (*Heavy Infantry*), sneak attack +1d8/+1d6; **SQ:** Hyborian qualities, Adaptability (Knowledge (local), Gather Information), Sneak Attack Style (bill), Trap Disarming; **SV:** Fort +4, Ref +3, Will +5 (+8 vs. Corruption); Str 15, Dex 10, Con 14, Int 14, Wis 12, Cha 8

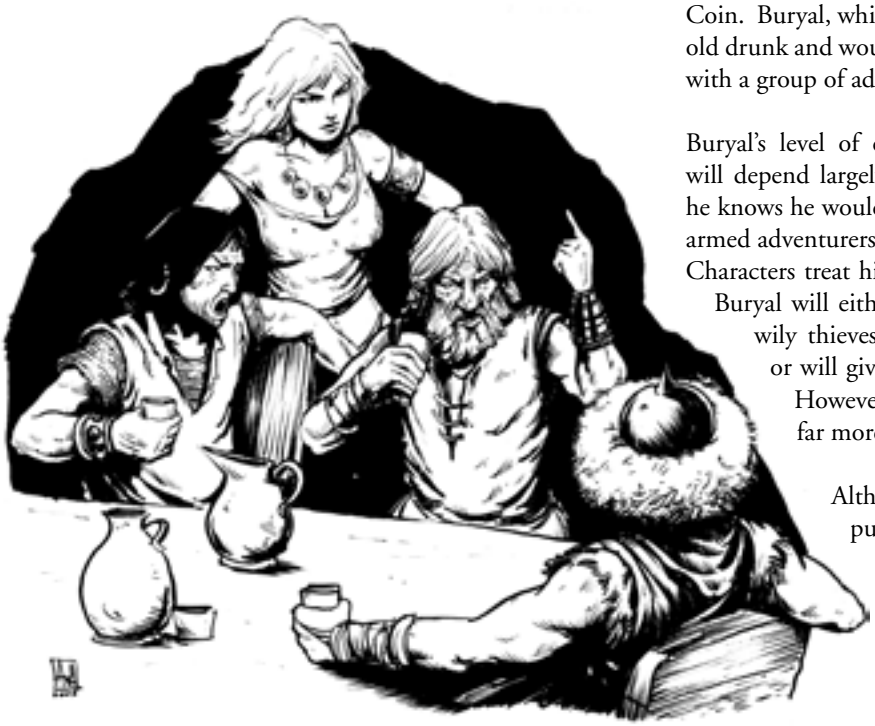
Skills & Feats: Appraise +3, Climb +6, Gather Information +4, Intimidate +6, Knowledge (local (Arenjun)) +16, Listen +3, Profession (farmer) +3, Search +9, Sense Motive +4, Spot +4, Tumble +3; Combat Expertise, Improved Disarm, Improved Initiative, Improved Trip, Knowledgeable, Skill Focus (Knowledge (local (Arenjun))

Possessions: Broadsword, bill, cloak, mail shirt.

Notes: Buryal is more or less exactly what he appears to be – a man who made a small amount of wealth for himself during his long career, but without family or home, he has drunk almost all of it away in the fetid back corners of the Broken Coin. Buryal, while well connected, knows very well he is an old drunk and would go to almost any length to avoid a fight with a group of adventurers like the Player Characters.

Buryal's level of co-operation with the Player Characters will depend largely on how they treat with him. Though he knows he would be no match for a group of young, well-armed adventurers, he is not without his pride. If the Player Characters treat him poorly, brusquely demanding answers, Buryal will either tell them that maybe they are not the wily thieves he took them for and attempt to leave or will give the Player Characters false information. However, if they sit and talk with him, he will be far more amiable.

Although one or two free drinks will put Buryal in a more conversational mood, the topic of what the old man could possible need with a quantity of deadly poison



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makes still his tongue. However, a successful Diplomacy skill check roll (DC 30), combined with a few coins will be enough to loosen his tongue enough to confess that he will use it to poison a Kothian slaver who has kidnapped his daughter.

If the Player characters agree to take on Buryal's task, read the following section aloud to the players:

'Listen carefully then, and I shall tell you what I know.' Buryal says. Dropping his voice to a whisper and glancing about the dim common room of the Broken Coin, he takes a deep breath and a long drink before continuing.

'Sure enough I've seen that great Stygian wagon before. Even rode with a few of them back in my time. Not many things will bring the snake-lovers this far north, but every now and then they'll roll up with one of those huge wagons to meet some Turanians. See, the Turanians are just the last leg in a long journey. Sure, they're bringing other goods the Stygians want, but there's only one thing on that caravan that's *truly* important. It's a small package, sure enough, come over desert and mountain from distant Khitai, carried here in bag of golden cloth or maybe a small chest worth more than a king's ransom.

'One night, as I stood guard in the shadows, I heard three Stygians, too deep in their cups, talking. It's a poison, all right, some kind of green lotus that grows only in Khitai. If they spoke truly, it is a terrible thing, a poison that rides in the air and strikes dead instantly any living thing that breathes it in. Why the Stygians want it, I could not say, but it is best not to ask such things. Perhaps it is merely for its value, for the rumours I have heard have placed its worth so high it can scarce be believed.

'There is more to the tale. Of all the cargo the Stygians receive, I know beyond all doubt that only one small package will be loaded into that great wagon of theirs. Only the caravan leader, doubtless a priest of some kind, will approach that wagon and open its door. What else lies within I cannot guess, except to say it must be alive. Listen carefully now. On top of the wagon is a small hatch, perhaps only large enough for the slightest of you to pass through. From time to time as the caravan rolled towards its destination, I would watch as a Stygian soldier, trembling with apprehension, was ordered to climb to the top of the wagon, open the hatch, and drop a chunk of meat or even a live animal inside. Never was there any sound from within.

'However you obtain the caravan's cargo, you must act quickly as the Stygians will likely be leaving in the morning.'

Though the Player Characters may wish to question Buryal further, he can tell them nothing else of benefit or applicable to the task he has set them.

HAZARDOUS CARGO

If the Player Characters are at all resourceful, they are almost certain to see immediately the benefits of taking this lotus poison with them when they attempt to infiltrate the Elephant Tower. However, wanting the poison is much easier than actually taking the poison from the paranoid and merciless Stygians.

Once the Player Characters return to the caravan yard after speaking with Buryal, read the following section aloud to the players;

The Stygian caravan is now nestled in the thick shadows that cover the quiet caravan yard like a blanket in the moonless night. The Turanian caravan has left, almost as quickly as it arrived, leaving the dark yard all but deserted. The Stygian wagons have been drawn together into a tight formation, the largest of them, where Buryal insists the poison is being kept, lies at the centre of the formation. As you watch the Stygian wagons from the shadows you notice movement through the flickering fires that provide low illumination for the caravan guards.

At any given time after nightfall and the evening meal, half of the Zamorian mercenaries and one-third of the Stygian soldiers will be sleeping but will be capable of joining any combat after two minutes (20 rounds). The Games Master may choose when Nash Kal Tet is asleep and when he is awake. The remainder will be guarding the wagons, except for the two mercenaries charged with watching the oxen in their corral, about 150 feet away from the caravan itself. Including the large wagon where Buryal insists the green lotus is kept, nine wagons make up the Stygian caravan, which now create a rough square. Narrow paths some three feet wide have been left between the wagons. On each side of the square a fire is kept burning, providing just enough light for the guards to see by.

If the Player Characters wish to steal the poison, they will almost certainly have to do so with stealth, as there are far too many guards around the caravan for the Player Characters to dispatch in a straightforward battle. The total numbers of guards defending the caravan are listed below:

Mercenaries (15)

Medium Humanoid Zamorian soldier 2; HD: 2d10+4 (16 hp); **Init:** +1; **Spd:** 30 ft.; **Dodge DV:** 12; **Parry DV:** 15; **DR:** 5; **BAB/Grp:** +2/+4; **Atk:** Broadsword +4 melee; **Full Atk:** Broadsword +4 melee; **Dmg:** Broadsword 1d10+2, 19–20/x2 AP 3; **Space/Reach:** 5 ft. (1)/5 ft. (1); **SA:** –; **SQ:** Zamorian qualities; **SV:** Fort +5, Ref +1, Will +0; Str 14, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 12

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Skills & Feats: Climb +3, Disable Device +5, Intimidate +5, Listen +2, Open Lock +5, Sleight of Hand +5, Spot +3; Cleave, Endurance, Power Attack
Possessions: Mail shirt, buckler, broadsword
Notes: These mercenaries are simple Zamorians hired as guards for this leg of the caravan's journey. If there is a large battle the Stygians appear to be losing, or if they are somehow frightened, these Zamorians are likely to break and run, losing themselves in the Maul.

Soldiers (9)

Medium Humanoid Stygian soldier 3; HD: 3d10+6 (24 hp); **Init:** +3; **Spd:** 30 ft.; **Dodge DV:** 13; **Parry DV:** 18; **DR:** 5; **BAB/Grp:** +2/+4; **Atk:** Broadsword +6 melee *or* Stygian bow +5 ranged; **Full Atk:** Broadsword +6 melee *or* Stygian bow +5 ranged; **Dmg:** Broadsword 1d10+2, 19–20/x2 AP 3 *or* Stygian bow 1d12, 19–20/x2, AP 3, Range 100 ft.; **Space/Reach:** 5 ft. (1)/5 ft. (1); **SA:** –; **SQ:** Stygian qualities, Formation Combat (Skirmisher); **SV:** Fort +5, Ref +3, Will +2; Str 16, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 11, Wis 12, Cha 12
Skills & Feats: Climb +4, Handle Animal +2, Intimidate +7, Jump +4, Knowledge (arcane) +4, Perform (ritual) +4, Ride +4, Search +3; Cleave, Endurance, Point Blank Shot, Power Attack
Possessions: Broadsword, mail shirt, targe *or* mail shirt, Stygian bow and 20 arrows
Notes: Unlike the mercenaries, the Stygian soldiers attached to this caravan will not break and run under any circumstances, considering death from an enemy's sword blow vastly preferable to what awaits them if the priests of Set learn they have failed.

Nash Kal Tet

Medium Humanoid Stygian scholar 5; HD: 5d6 (22 hp); **Init:** +1 (+1 Ref.); **Spd:** 30 ft.; **Dodge DV:** 11 (+1 base); **Parry DV:** 11 (+1 base); **DR:** –; **BAB/Grp:** +3/+3; **Atk:** Dagger +3 melee *or* Stygian bow +4 ranged (1d12); **Full Atk:** Dagger +3 melee *or* Stygian bow +4 ranged (1d12); **Dmg:** Dagger 1d4 19–20/x2 AP 1 *or* Stygian bow 1d12, 19–20/x2, AP 3, Range 100 ft.; **Space/Reach:** 5 ft. (1)/5 ft. (1); **SA:** Spells; **SQ:** Stygian qualities, Background (lay priest), Iron Will, Knowledge is Power, Scholar; **MAB:** +5 (+2 base, +3 Cha); **PP:** 8 (4 base, +3 Wis, +1 bonus) (16 maximum); **SV:** Fort +1, Ref +1, Will +9 (+7 vs. Corruption); Str 10, Dex 11, Con 10, Int 15, Wis 16, Cha 16
Skills & Feats: Bluff +9, Concentration +4, Craft (alchemy) +12, Craft (herbalism) +10, Decipher Script +10, Handle Animal +5, Intimidate +13, Knowledge (arcane) +12, Knowledge (nobility) +10, Knowledge (geography) +10, Perform (ritual) +13, Search +6, Sense Motive +7, Sleight-of-Hand +4; Persuasive, Priest, Ritual Sacrifice, Tortured Sacrifice
Sorcery Styles: Curses, Hypnotism, Prestidigitation
Spells: *Conjuring, entrance, hypnotic suggestion, lesser ill-fortune, ill-fortune, greater ill-fortune*
Possessions: Dagger, robes, Stygian bow and 20 arrows, 3 doses of flame-powder, 2 doses of Stygian tomb-dust
Notes: Nash Kal Tet is a priest of Set, sent north with the caravan by the cult's hierarchy to safeguard the green lotus and the Son of Set (see below). Though certainly not a brave man, he will stay with the caravan until it is clear his soldiers are going to be overwhelmed, should the caravan come under attack by the Player Characters.

If the Player Characters are intent on robbing the caravan and stealing the green lotus, they have three primary ways to attempt it. The first is a straight frontal assault, a very dangerous endeavour, but for groups of Player Characters with a number of barbarians and/or soldiers, this option may prove the most effective way of liberating the Stygians of their precious cargo.

The second option the characters may choose is to create some kind of diversion to draw away some of the guards while one of the characters snatches their lethal prize. Distracting some of the mercenaries

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will be fairly easy, but to pull away all of the Stygian soldiers will require a ruse of exceptional genius.

The third option is to rely entirely on stealth and thievery, slipping amongst the shadows to reach the wagons and their deadly cargo. Sneaking into the caravan yard to make off with the prize may be the most reliable path for groups that include a skilful thief amongst their number. However, the pilfering Player Characters will still have to cross 50 feet of open space, hiding and moving silently every step of the way, before they even reach the wagons. Once they have made it to the wagons, they will have some concealment from the guards, but will still have to make successful Move Silently checks as they creep towards the large wagon that rests at the caravan's heart.

Player Characters are an exceptionally inventive lot, and it is left to the Games Master to determine exactly how effective any alternative plans will be.

Once the Player Characters have reached the large wagon at the centre of the caravan's formation, read the following section aloud to the players;

A ladder ascends the side of the wagon, allowing you to easily access its roof, where, just as Buryal said, lies a small hatchway, its simple sliding bolt drawn back and its door open. Peering through the open hatch the inside of the wagon is almost pitch black and only the pale light of the flickering camp fires that passes through the cracks in the wagon's sides serves to illuminate its interior. Deep within, you see a wiry human figure crouched over a small, wooden chest, its heavily engraved sides bound with straps of silver. Even as the spindly thief picks up his prize, a second shape moves silently in the darkness, rising through a shaft of weak, stuttering light, the looming shadow bares its fangs and reveals itself to be the largest snake you have ever seen.

Lesser Son of Set

Huge Animal; HD: 11d8+21 (70 hp); **Init:** +10; **Spd:** 20 ft.; **DV:** 19; **DR:** 5; **BAB/Grp:** +8/+23; **Atk:** Bite +13 melee; **Full Atk:** Bite +13 melee; **Dmg:** Bite 1d10+10; **SA:** Constrict 1d8+10 (AP 8), Improved Grab; **SQ:** Scent; **SV:** Fort +8, Ref +10, Will +4; Str 25, Dex 17, Con 13, Int 1, Wis 12, Cha 2

Skills & Feats: Balance +11, Climb +17, Hide +10, Listen +9, Spot +9, Swim +16; Alertness, Endurance, Skill Focus (Hide), Toughness

The son of Set is currently focused on the thief, Vanku of Arenjun, already inside the wagon granting the Player Characters an excellent opportunity to perform a sneak attack on the giant snake. Unless the Player Characters have made it to the wagon having killed or driven off every single caravan guard, these men will almost certainly be alerted to the Player Characters' presence by the sounds of combat from within the central wagon.

Vanku of Arenjun

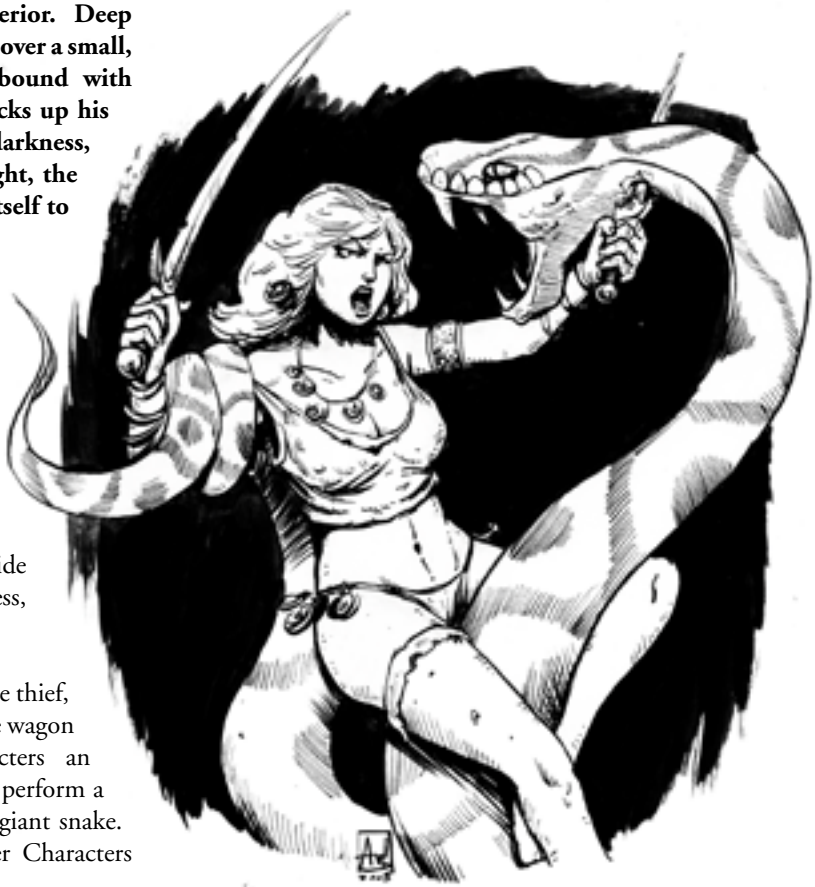
Medium Humanoid Zamorian thief 5; HD: 5d8 + 10 (32 hp); **Init:** +12; **Spd:** 30 ft.; **Dodge DV:** 17; **Parry DV:** 13; **DR:** 4; **BAB/Grp:** +3/+4; **Atk:** Short sword +7 finesse melee, poniard +7 finesse melee; **Full Atk:** Short sword +7 finesse melee, poniard +7 finesse melee; **Dmg:** Short sword 1d8+1, poniard 1d6+1; **Space/Reach:** 5 ft. (1)/5 ft. (1)

SA: Sneak Attack 3d6/3d8; **SQ:** Zamorian qualities, Eyes of the Cat, Light-Footed, Sneak Attack Style (short sword), Sneak Attack Style (poniard), Trap Disarming, Trap Sense +1; **SV:** Fort +3, Ref +8, Will +1; Str 13, Dex 18, Con 14, Int 15, Wis 10, Cha 12

Skills & Feats: Balance +9, Bluff +6, Climb +11, Disable Device +10, Gather Information +9, Hide +10, Intimidate +6, Knowledge (Local) +7, Listen +7, Move Silently +11, Open Lock +12, Search +7, Sense Motive +5, Sleight of Hand +13, Spot +4, Tumble +12, Use Rope +10; Deft Hands, Dodge

Possessions: Leather jerkin, short sword, poniard, *green lotus blossom*, *rope of dead women's hair*

Notes: Vanku of Arenjun is the son of Taurus of Nemedia, fathered upon a prostitute in the Maul as Taurus was drinking away the profits of one of his numerous thefts. He has learned much of his father's trade growing up in the



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Maul, and has become one of the most skilled young thieves in Arenjun. For years, he has intended to make his own way into the Elephant Tower, to succeed where his father failed. Though he has spoken of it to no one, Vanku has found some of Taurus' notes and it is with these that the young thief has planned his own raid against the Elephant Tower.

Once the battle with the son of Set is over and assuming Vanku of Arenjun has survived, Games Masters should read the following section aloud to the players;

As you hoist yourself out of the giant snake's mobile lair and into the foul and tarnished air of the Maul, the brassy light of the caravan's campfires reveal your competitors rakish features. 'My thanks for your assistance, I thought that scaly terror would be the end of me.' He smiles, casting a wary glance in the direction of the wagon's hatchway. 'It seems that I am not the only one intent on robbing the Elephant Tower this evening, for by Bel, I can see no other reason why anyone would be in search of such a deadly poison at this hour. Allow me to introduce myself, I am Vanku of Arenjun and my father was none other than Taurus of Nemedia, once known as the Prince of Thieves in Zamora and I would have us join forces in our endeavour if you are willing.'

Vanku will ask that they split the green lotus powder retrieved from the caravan equally, but will settle for a single dose. If the Player Characters threaten him or refuse to split the lotus powder, Vanku will shrug and simply say that he will hope to see the characters inside the Elephant Tower before attempting to disappear into the nearby streets leading away from the caravan yard. Vanku will henceforth become an antagonist for the Player Characters attempting to, whenever possible, thwart their attempt on the Tower of the Elephant.

Assuming the Player Characters split their prize with Vanku, they will be the proud owners of a ornate wooden chest bound in silver worth 125 silver pieces, as well as up to nine doses of green lotus powder worth 1,500 silver pieces per dose.

If the Player Characters agree to join forces with Vanku to plunder Yara's tower, read the following section aloud to the players;

'Good,' he says, as soon as you give your answer. 'I know from my own investigations and what little information left behind by my father, something of what we will face within. In the Outer Garden there is but a single patrol of two guards, easily avoided or slain. In the Inner Garden, however, there are no guards – none human, anyway. Rumours tell of great demons or worse, but I believe these guardians to be merely lions, even so, it will take this extract of the deadly lotus to get us past them in silence. Doubtless more guards will occupy the lower levels of the tower, but it is the tower's upper floors where we set our sights, the abode of Yara himself and the treasure we seek.

'It will be a fine night for thieving – the moon will be hiding until just before dawn and by the time she shows her face again we shall all be rich men.'

Vanku will happily accompany the Player Characters if they hold to Buryal's bargain and deliver the green lotus powder to the old man, but will not relinquish any share of the poison he has already been given. With this task completed, and with an air of confidence and bravery, Vanku leads the Player Characters through the darkened streets of Arenjun, bound for the temple district of the city, and the Tower of the Elephant.

Using Vanku of Arenjun

Use of Vanku of Arenjun is purely optional. If the Games Master feels the Player Characters could use a little help braving the dangers of the Elephant Tower, or if he simply wishes to tie the adventure in even more closely with the events described by Howard, he may wish to include Vanku. However, the wily, young thief is not integral to any portion of the adventure, though he is mentioned from time to time as it is assumed that the Player Characters will accept his offer. If the Player Characters are insulting to Vanku (or simply if the Games Master wishes to place another obstacle in the Player Characters' path), Vanku might become an adversary in the scenario, a lone and skilled thief attempting to breach the Elephant Tower and steal its riches at the same time as the Player Characters, possibly even following them at a discrete distance, allowing them the opportunity to face and defeat all of the tower's guardians themselves, clearing the way for Vanku himself.

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In Howard's original short story *The Tower of the Elephant*, Conan did not enter the tower alone. Rather, he encountered another man in the gardens, Taurus of Nemedia, in his day the greatest thief in Zamora. He and Conan joined forces, intending to split the spoils of the tower. After climbing a rope to the top of the tower, Taurus met an untimely end at the fangs of a giant spider. As this scenario assumes Conan never became involved with the Elephant Tower, it follows then that Taurus attempted to rob the tower alone but was similarly slain on the roof of the tower.

Not Using Vanku of Arenjun

If the Games Master chooses not to include Vanku in this adventure, then the son of Set will be asleep when the Player Characters reach the wagon. The only way to remove the chest containing the lotus poison without waking the son of Set is to carefully lift the chest out of the snake's coils without waking it, or to kill the beast with a single coup de grace blow. The Games Master may decide that the snake's dying body thrashes about wildly, creating a huge commotion, attracting the attention of the guards.

To remove the chest from the snake's coils without waking it, the Player Character must descend into the wagon, succeeding with a Move Silently skill check opposed by the snake's Listen skill. He must then pick up the chest, succeeding in a Sleight of Hand skill check (DC 20), and make his way back out of the wagon. Lastly, the Player Characters must make their way back out of the caravan yards without attracting attention.

Assuming the Player Characters succeed, they will be the proud new owners of a wooden chest bound in silver (125 sp), as well as ten doses of green lotus powder (1,500 sp per dose).

Clothes Maketh the Man

Should the Player Characters fail in their attempt to steal the green lotus powder from the Stygian caravan, ensure their survival once inside the grounds of the Elephant Tower or if the Games Master wishes, he may include this part of the adventure, though its inclusion is entirely optional.

In the course of seeking information about the Elephant Tower, it will be very easy for the Player Characters to discover that the tower itself is guarded by a contingent of royal guards, assigned to Yara's service by drunken King Tiridates in Shadizar. This is likely to give Player Characters the idea of infiltrating the Elephant Tower by wearing the uniforms of Shadizar's royal guards. However, the royal guards assigned to Yara's service all know one another, and while it might be possible for a single individual to slip inside, genuine guards will certainly notice a group of strangers attempting to bypass them and reach the upper levels of the tower. Any plan to use royal guard uniforms is not without merit, however, for while the other guards may spot that the Player Characters are impostors, the lions in the tower's inner garden will not. These lions, one of Yara's many lines of defence of his tower and one of the most difficult to bypass without raising an alarm, are trained not to attack anyone wearing the uniform of a royal guard.

The royal guards assigned to Yara's service are not the only ones with duties in Arenjun, obviously. Royal guards stand watch at some of her temples, and safeguard one of the king's disused palaces located in this city. There is a single laundry that is contracted to clean and repair the uniforms of all royal guards in Arenjun.

If the Player Characters do decide to steal some uniforms to pass themselves off as royal guards, a single Gather Information check (DC 15) will be enough for them to find out about the 'Gleaming Garments' laundry. Situated near the temple district of Arenjun, this laundry is a long, low-roofed stone building that bustles with activity day and night as it handles all manner of laundry from across Arenjun.

Every five days, a wagon full of soiled uniforms is collected and driven to the laundry, escorted by a pair of royal guards. The two guards spend the day at the laundry, watching over the labourers as they clean and repair the uniforms, guarding the precious uniforms. Once the cleaning is complete, a process usually lasting into the night, the uniforms are loaded back onto the wagon and taken to the various royal guard stations throughout Arenjun.

If the Player Characters are interested in stealing a set of uniforms to use as disguises in their attempt to breach the Elephant Tower, they will likely come to the laundry itself to reconnoitre. However, taking uniforms from the laundry without being caught, or at least noticed, is a very difficult task. In addition to the two royal guards, there are generally two dozen labourers working day and night at the laundry. Though the labourers will certainly not attempt to in join any fighting as the Player Characters try to overwhelm the two royal guards, there is little the Player Characters could do to prevent the labourers from fleeing the scene and raising an alarm. Games Masters should take care to point out to any Player Characters scouting the laundry the sheer number of people working within it.

Special Delivery

The best option the Player Characters have available to them for acquiring royal guard uniforms is the delivery wagon that ferries the uniforms to and from the laundry. As mentioned before, it is usually quite late at night before all the uniforms

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are clean and dry and ready to be returned. A lone wagon rattling through the near empty night time streets of Arenjun is a much easier and more private target for a band of larcenous Player Characters than the laundry itself.

Games Master may safely assume that the wagon will pass through a number of narrow, dark streets as it makes its way to various destinations around the city. The wagon, pulled by a pair of oxen, is watched over by a pair of royal guards, one driving, the other seated at the back of the wagon, ensuring that no one sneaks up from behind to pilfer any of the wagon's load.

Royal Guards (2)

Medium Humanoid Zamorian soldier 6; HD: 6d10+12 (45 hp); **Init:** +3; **Spd:** 25 ft.; **Dodge DV:** 14; **Parry DV:** 17; **DR:** 11; **BAB/Grp:** +6/+8; **Atk:** Crossbow +7 ranged *or* short sword +8 melee; **Full Atk:** Crossbow +7 /+2 ranged *or* short sword +8/+3 melee; **Dmg:** Crossbow 2d6, x2, AP 4, Range 60 ft. *or* short sword 1d8+2/19–20 x2/AP 3; **Space/Reach:** 5 ft. (1)/5 ft. (1); **SA:** Formation Combat (heavy infantry); **SQ:** Zamorian qualities; **SV:** Fort +7, Ref +3, Will +2; Str 15, Dex 13, Con 15, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 13

Skills & Feats: Bluff +3, Diplomacy +5, Disable Device +5, Gather Information +7 (+9 if the check relates to theft, assassination and the locations or powers of legendary or magical objects), Intimidate +12, Open Lock +5, Search +13, Sense Motive +6, Sleight of Hand +5; Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes, Improved Disarm, Investigator, Negotiator, Persuasive, Steely Gaze

Possessions: Crested helmet, crossbow and 20 bolts, mail hauberk, short sword, silvered breastplate

Notes: The Zamorian Royal Guard are commanded by King Tiridates, thus they are often called the King's Own. They tend to hold themselves separate from the regular army. Although most of the royal guard have a reputation for villainy, some are reputed for bravery. These are often chosen to personally accompany the king. The king also stations royal guards with people of importance or influence as a sign of his favour. The royal guard wear silvered breastplate armour and horse-hair crested helmets. Most of the royal guard are Zamorians who have proven singularly adept at finding rebels and criminals, as well as managing to establish the proper contacts and proffered the expected bribes at the right time to the right people. Royal Guardsmen are typically more intelligent than the standard soldier. Combat prowess is not particularly expected, as promotions tend to be greased by the application of coin and pushed forward by personal contacts speaking on behalf of the soldier seeking the promotion.

Both of the royal guards are carrying a loaded crossbow in his lap. Behind the driver is another loaded crossbow. If the delivery wagon is attacked, the guards seated on the back of the wagon will attempt to fire their crossbows before engaging in melee. Meanwhile, the driver will vigorously whip the oxen, attempting to make it to a nearby watch station. Neither of the guards will be shy about shouting for help. For each round of combat after the first, the Games Master should roll 1d20, on a roll of one or two, a pair of Arenjun's watchmen will hear the guards' cries and run to assist them.

Arenjun Watchmen (2)

Medium Humanoid Zamorian soldier 2; HD: 2d10+2 (13 hp); **Init:** +3; **Spd:** 25 ft.; **Dodge DV:** 14; **Parry DV:** 12; **DR:** 7; **BAB/Grp:** +2/+3; **Atk:** Bill +4 melee *or* short sword +5 finesse melee; **Full Atk:** Bill +4 melee *or* short sword +5 finesse melee; **Dmg:** Bill 2d8+1, x3, AP 7 *or* short sword 1d8+1, 19–20/x2, AP 2; **Space/Reach:** 5 ft. (1)/5 ft. (1); **SA:** –; **SQ:** Zamorian qualities; **SV:** Fort +4, Ref +3, Will –1; Str 13, Dex 16, Con 13, Int 12, Wis 9, Cha 10

Skills & Feats: Bluff +2, Disable Device +6, Gather Information +2 (+4 if the check relates to theft, assassination and the locations or powers of legendary or magical objects), Intimidate +6, Open Lock +6, Search +5, Sense Motive +1, Sleight of Hand +6; Improved Disarm, Persuasive, Weapon Focus (bill)

Possessions: Bill, brigandine, buckler, short sword, steel helmet

Notes: The watch militia is the police force of Arenjun, working for the city's magistrates. They are typically armed with bills. Just as the king of Zamora is a despot, the Watchmen have an almost despotic control over those in charge of Arenjun's vices and pleasures. There is a strong sense of unanimity among the ranks of the Watch and a slight to one of them will bring down the wrath of all of them. Further, the soldiers also seem to have considerable means of gathering evidence to warrant the capture and imprisonment of offending parties.

The chances of someone showing up to investigate the commotion will continue to accrue even after the Player Characters have dispatched or silenced the wagon's defenders, making it imperative for them to seize the uniforms and make their escape as quickly as possible.

Games Masters should bear in mind that the ambush of the wagon will not go unnoticed for very long. No matter what precautions the Player Characters take, it will take only an hour or so for the city watch to discover the looted wagon or the royal guards to notice that their uniforms have not returned. 1d4 hours after the wagon has been ambushed the royal guard, in conjunction with the city watch, will begin scouring the city of Arenjun for any clues as to the identity of the people who waylaid two of their number and made off with their highly prized uniforms. If the Player Characters are to use the uniforms to break into the Elephant Tower, they would be well advised to do so as soon as possible after stealing them.

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Peril in Paradise

PRESUMABLY, THE PLAYER Characters will choose to make their approach to the Elephant Tower during the night, as by day the streets and alleyways of the temple district are alive with priests and worshippers, monks and theologians. By night, however, the streets are deserted. The priests and monks are closeted in their chambers, the worshippers have returned to their homes, while the theologians are dreaming new means to complicate the faith. Not even the city watch treads the pavements of the temple district at night, for the thieves of Zamora rightly fear the retribution meted out on those with the audacity to violate the temples and seek safer quarry elsewhere in the city.

The Player Characters will have little trouble finding the Elephant Tower – it looms over all temples in the district, indeed, over all buildings in the city, and unlike all these, it was clearly not shaped by human hands.

As the Player Characters enter the temple district, read the following section aloud to the players;

You have entered the part of the city reserved for the temples. On all sides, each snowy marble pillar, golden dome and silver archway glitters white in the starlight – every one a shrine to one of Zamora's myriad strange gods. But these temples and shrines do not concern you tonight. Now, squatting low amid the shadows in the courtyards of the philosophers, now bereft of the arguments of theologians, you carefully observe the shimmering shaft of the Elephant Tower rising frostily into the stars. In the sunlight it shone so dazzlingly that few could endure its glare, now in the moonless night its silver walls shimmer like fish scales. The tower's slim perfect cylinder, a hundred and fifty feet in height, twinkles in the light of fires far below, as if its entire surface is encrusted with great and rare jewels.

The base of the tower is concealed among the waving exotic trees of its gardens and the high wall that encloses them. No lights shine forth from the Tower of the Elephant; indeed it seems that no window punctures the tower's shimmering walls – at least not above the level of the inner wall.

The wall of the Outer Garden is pierced in one place by a set of grandiose metal gates decorated with a leering golden skull, its eye sockets filled with huge, glittering emeralds. Wide enough for a pair of wagons to pass through when opened, the tower's gates are opened only once every five days when the royal guards' uniforms are collected to be taken to the laundry and fresh supplies are brought in. The contingent of guards at Yara's tower is so small that all the guards know one another, while any wagon passing through the gates is always thoroughly checked, making any possibility of slipping inside the Elephant Tower in this manner a very dangerous prospect.

The Outer Garden

The wall of the Outer Garden is ten feet tall and three feet thick. Unlike the Elephant Tower itself, the walls of the gardens seem to be constructed from neatly cut and whitewashed limestone blocks and are in and of themselves quite unremarkable. Thick shrubbery grows all over the outside of the wall that fences the Outer Gardens off from the street, the rustling leaves of the shrubbery's thick foliage imposes a –5 penalty to any Move Silently checks made while attempting to sneak around within five feet on either side of the wall itself.

Merely entering the Outer Garden in a stealthy manner is not without difficulty. The wall is simple enough to scale; a Jump check (DC 10) will allow a Player Character of average

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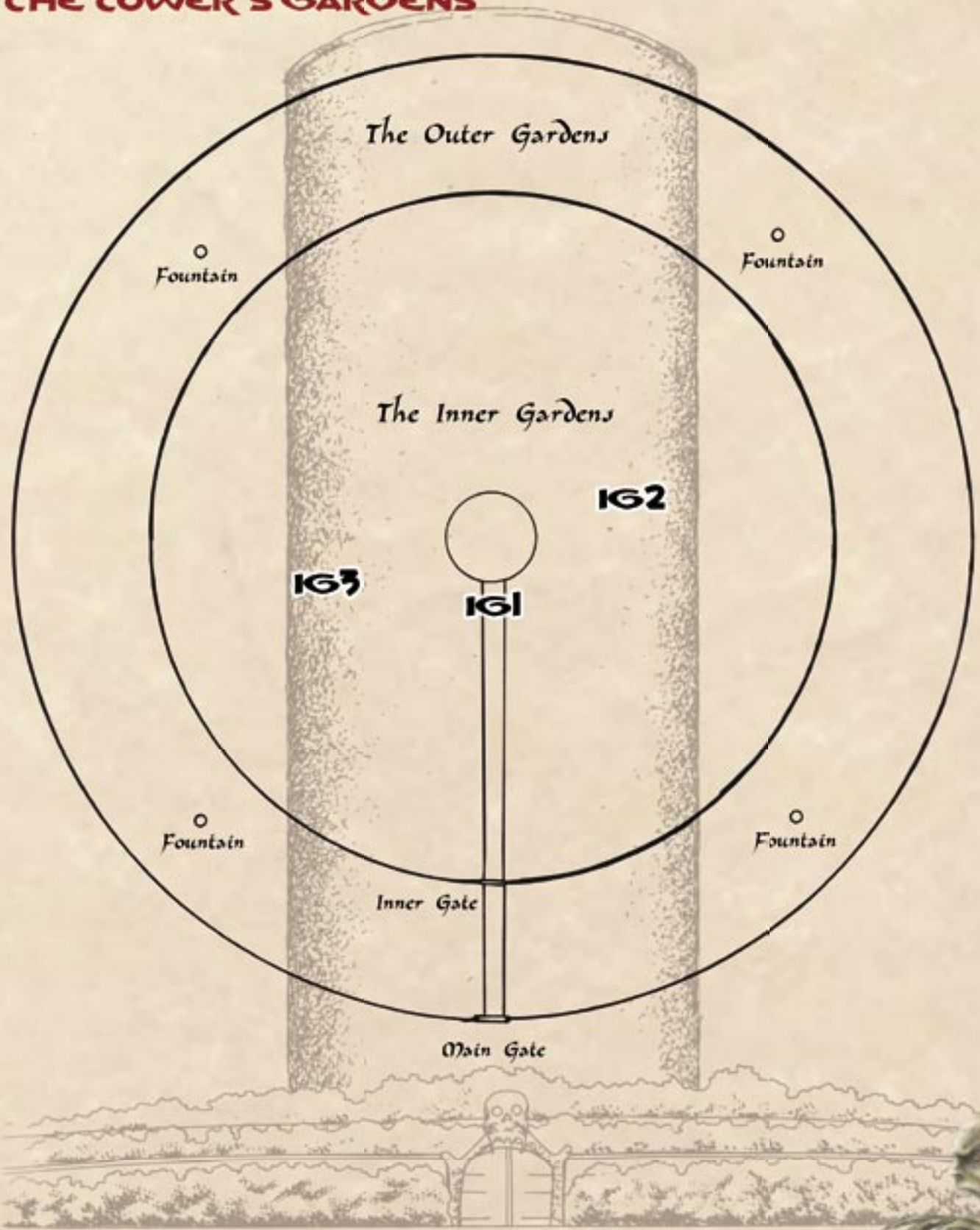
THE TOWER'S GARDENS



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height to grab the top of the wall and a Climb check (DC 10) will allow the Player Character to clamber to the top. Though the wall is a simple barrier to bypass, what is on the other side of the wall is less so.

Extending into the Outer Garden five feet from the base of the wall is an area of broken glass and shattered crockery, placed here by the guards of the tower, who realised how simple it would be to scale the wall. It is extremely difficult to notice in the darkness, and the Games Master should have Player Characters make a Spot check (DC for this check is 20 or DC 15 for characters who have the Eyes of the Cat feat). If the Player Characters notice the ring of glass and crockery, they may safely jump over it with a successful Jump check (DC 15), if the Player Characters fail to notice the hazardous area on the far side of the wall they are almost certain to drop right on to it when they descend the wall into the Outer Garden. Dropping onto the broken glass will inflict one hit point of damage to any Player Character wearing boots, or 1d3 hit points of damage to any Player Character who happens to be barefoot. The sudden and unexpected pain might be enough to make a Player Character cry out (Will saving throw DC 10 to remain silent), a cry that might also alert the guards that something is amiss. Further, dropping onto the broken glass will, obviously, create a loud crunching sound, which the tower's guards might hear if they are nearby. The Games Master should roll 1d10 if any commotion is made while climbing over the outer wall; on the roll of a one the garden's two guards will hear the noise and move to investigate.

When the Player Characters have made their way into the Outer Garden, read the following section aloud to the players;

The Outer Garden of the Elephant Tower is carefully manicured and tended, a trimmed sward of grass that is all but completely open. The sound of four tinkling fountains can be heard softly throughout the neat garden, the beauty of their music a stark contrast to the perversity of their gruesome design. The ground slopes uphill slightly towards a second wall, some 50 feet away, separating this garden from the Inner Garden. Along that wall are a few clumps of sculpted bushes, the only means of concealment available anywhere in the Outer Garden, aside from the four fountains.

Walking a patrol through the garden is a pair of guards. They are making no effort to move silently, and if the Player Characters wait and listen before climbing over the outer wall, they will have a chance to hear them as they pass (Listen check (DC 15)). It takes the guards about five minutes to complete one full circuit of the Outer Garden. If the guards see the Player Characters, their first reaction will be to cry out an alarm, which has a 50 percent chance of being heard by the remainder of the guards within the Elephant Tower itself. If they see three or fewer intruders, they will engage them in battle. Otherwise, they will run in the opposite direction. Either way, they will continue to shout the alarm once every round until they are slain or more guards arrive on the scene.

Guards (2)

Medium Humanoid Zamorian soldier 2; HD: 2d10+4 (19 hp); **Init:** +1; **Spd:** 25 ft.; **Dodge DV:** 14; **Parry DV:** 12; **DR:** 7; **BAB/Grp:** +2/+3; **Atk:** Bill +4 melee *or* short sword +2 melee; **Full Atk:** Bill +4 melee *or* short sword +4 melee; **Dmg:** Bill 2d8+2, x3, AP 7 *or* short sword 1d8+2, 19–20/x2, AP 2; **Space/Reach:** 5 ft. (1)/5 ft. (1); **SA:** –; **SQ:** Zamorian qualities; **SV:** Fort +5, Ref +1, Will +0; Str 14, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 12

Skills & Feats: Bluff +3, Disable Device +4, Gather Information +3 (+5 if the check relates to theft, assassination and the locations or powers of legendary or magical objects), Intimidate +7, Open Lock +4, Search +6, Sense Motive +2, Sleight of Hand +4; Cleave, Eyes of the Cat, Power Attack

Possessions: Bill, brigandine, buckler, short sword, steel cap

If these guards succeed in raising the alarm, they will be joined in 2d4 rounds by another group of four guards from the tower itself. After another 2d4 rounds, another group of four guards will appear. By this time, the royal guards within the Elephant Tower will have succeeded in rousing Yara from his lotus dreams and have him well defended in his lotus den (4:1, see pg. 25). Only if his royal guards have not yet dealt with the problem will Yara himself come to deal with the impertinent invaders.

THE INNER GARDEN

It is in the Inner Garden that the Elephant Tower truly reveals its dangerous nature. The Inner Garden is not the open sward the Outer Garden is; instead it is as a jungle, as thick as those of fabled Khitai, taken root in the city.

The wall separating the Outer Garden from the Inner is not much different from the wall separating the Outer Garden from the city. It too is made of neatly cut and whitewashed limestone, ten feet tall and three feet wide, though it appears taller when viewed from the street outside the Outer Garden, as it sits at a higher elevation. Unlike the outer wall, however, this one is festooned with thickly interwoven vines.

If the Player Characters have Vanku with them, he will have informed them by now that, according to his father's notes, the Inner Garden is patrolled during the day by a number of guards, but during the night it is guarded by a pride of lions. He knows nothing of the danger posed by the vines on the wall, a fairly recent addition to Yara's defences of the Elephant Tower.

The vines seem innocuous enough, though they completely cover the wall between the Outer and Inner Gardens, a thick

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mesh of foliage climbing from the foot of the wall to the top. At first glance, the vines even seem as if they might be beneficial, providing ready handholds for climbing the wall. However, these vines are no simple plants – they are a devilish form of vegetation brought to Yara from the deepest jungles of Khitai, where they are known as shuo-ji, which translates to 'manacle leaf.'

The shuo-ji are planted along the entire circumference of the wall, each individual plant occupying a 15-foot section of the wall. Passing over the wall without dealing with at least one of the plants is impossible – how many plants the Player Characters must dispatch before crossing into the Inner Garden depends upon how far out they spread themselves when scaling the wall. Although the guards assigned to the Elephant Tower frequently clean away any remains of the shuo-jis' victims, such as birds and small animals, using a long-handled rake, Games Masters may wish to allow the Player Characters a Spot check (DC 20) to notice the light scattering of small bones on the ground close to the wall's base.

Shuo-ji

Large Plant; HD: 4d8+8 (24 hp); **Init:** +11; **Spd:** –; **DV:** 14; **DR:** 1; **BAB/Grp:** +3/+12; **Atk:** Vine +6 finesse melee; **Full Atk:** Vine +6 finesse melee; **Dmg:** Vine 1d6+2; **Space/Reach:** 15 ft. (3)/5 ft. (1); **SA:** Improved Grab, Poison (Injury, DC 15, Initial Damage 1 Str, Secondary Damage 1d4 Str); **SQ:** Plant qualities; **SV:** Fort +6, Ref +4, Will +1; Str 14, Dex 16, Con 15, Int –, Wis 10, Cha 10
Skills & Feats: Improved Initiative

Once the Player Characters have scaled the wall to the Inner Garden, read the following section aloud to the players;
Having cleared a way through the deadly vines that cover the wall to the Inner Garden you climb to the top of the wall and look over into the Inner Garden beyond. The garden is a vague pool of shadows, where low bushes and feathery trees spread and wave in the cool breeze. Your wary soul feels the aura of waiting menace that broods here and the burning glare of unseen eyes, and as you drop into the Inner Garden the hairs at the nape of your neck instinctively bristle at the thick shadows and the scent of danger they conceal.

If Vanku has accompanied the Player Characters and was able to secure a dose of green lotus powder from them, then he loads the deadly poison into a long steel tube before venturing further into the Inner Garden. Vanku will tell any character who asks that this was the means by which his father intended to get past the lions he believed guarded the tower.

If the Player Characters do not have Vanku with them or did not manage to steal any of the green lotus powder they may have to find some other means of getting past the lions. If the Player Characters were able to steal a royal guard uniform for each of their number then the Lions will pay them no heed. Though the lions are dangerous, the Player Characters would likely be able to defeat them in battle. However, the sounds of the conflict will surely be heard inside the Elephant Tower, which will summon the guards just as surely as if one of the men walking patrol in the Outer Garden had managed to cry out an alarm.

Lions (6)

Large Animal; HD: 8d8+24 (60 hp), **Init:** +10; **Spd:** 40 ft.; **DV:** 15; **DR:** 2; **BAB/Grp:** +3/+12; **Atk:** Claw +7 melee; **Full Atk:** Two claws +7 melee and bite +2 melee; **Dmg:** Claws 1d5+5, bite 1d10+2; **Space/Reach:** 10 ft. (2)/5 ft. (1); **SA:** Pounce, Improved Grab, Rake (1d6+3); **SQ:** Low-light vision, Scent; **SV:** Fort +6, Ref +7, Will +2; Str 21, Dex 17, Con 15, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 6
Skills & Feats: Balance +7, Hide +3, Listen +5, Move Silently +11, Spot +5; Alertness, Run

The lions usually wander the Inner Garden singly or in pairs. However, if they become aware of the Player Characters, they will begin to gather together in the bushes, waiting to pounce when the Player Characters come within range.

Clever Player Characters may, at the Games Master's discretion, notice there is no wall or partition of any kind in place to protect those walking between the tower and the gates of the Inner Garden from the lions. This is because the lions have been trained not to attack anyone in the uniform of a guard and, obviously, Yara as well. If the Player Characters were able to acquire guard uniforms, they would be able to move through the Inner Garden unmolested by the lions.

Entering the Tower

There are three separate ways the Player Characters may enter the

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Elephant Tower, each with its own perils and possibilities. Which way they choose to go will bear directly on how long the scenario takes to run, and how difficult a time the Player Characters will have completing it.

The Secret Door (G1)

This is the small but immensely strong doorway into the Elephant Tower. Yara has never bothered posting a watch outside the gates, trusting his guards and guardian beasts to deal with any interlopers before they come this far. The doorway is all but impossible to see, so seamlessly does it blend with the tower's walls, and requires a Search check (DC 20) to locate.

The main entrance of the Elephant Tower is nearly seamless, all but impossible to discern from the walls surrounding it, and absolutely impossible for the Player Characters to open from the outside. When the main gate is closed, only Yara may open it from the outside. However, it is easily pushed open from the inside. If the Player Characters choose to enter this way, they have only to make enough noise for the guards inside to hear it and decide to investigate. Once the door is opened, the Player Characters may freely enter the Elephant Tower, so long as they are able to dispatch the guards in the Main Hall (see pg. 19, G1). Games Masters should remember that at least one of the guards in the Main Hall will run directly to Yara should the Player Characters attempt to storm the Elephant Tower through the main entrance.

Lions' Den Entrance (G2)

This is the entrance to the lions' den (see pg. 19, B9), where the lions rest and shelter during the day. Concealed by the Inner Garden's thick underbrush, it is difficult to find, requiring a Spot check (DC 20) to locate. If the Player Characters do locate the entrance to the lions' den it will provide them an alternate means of entering the Elephant Tower. The gates that bar access from the lions' den into the basement are not locked, merely secured with a heavy iron pin. Though the lions cannot remove the pin, it is simple enough for any creature with hands to do so.

If the Player Characters manage to discover the entrance to the lions' den, they may try to enter the Elephant Tower through this route, which will bring them directly to the lions' den (see pg. 19, B9), via a 50 foot earthen tunnel. With enough skill and stealth, they may be able to slip past the guards in the basement without raising an alarm.

Chimney (G3)

A three feet tall column of bricks juts up from the ground here, covered with an ornate, though rusted iron canopy. It is the chimney of the Elephant Tower's mess hall (see pg. 17, B1). The shaft of the chimney is far too small for anyone to fit down, and stopping it up will surely alert any guards in the mess below. If they wish, the Player Characters may spend some time listening at the chimney to the conversations of the guards below, requiring a Listen check (DC 20), which should give them a clear idea as to whether or not the guards inside the tower are alerted to their presence. On a roll of one on 1d10, the chimney is releasing a trail of thick, dark smoke, indicating that someone is cooking below.

The Roof

Perhaps the best way to enter the Elephant Tower is through the roof, just as Taurus of Nemedia sought to do when he made his own attempt on the tower. If the Player Characters have Vanku with them, they will have an easier time of it, as this is the entry he had planned on making. Carefully following the notes left by his father, Vanku has secured a length of *rope of dead women's hair* (see below) long enough to reach the top of the tower.

Rope of Dead Women's Hair

This supernaturally strong rope is made from dead women's hair steeped in the juice of the upas-tree. It weighs but two pounds per 100 foot length, and can bear some 750 pounds without snapping. In appearance it seems only a thin and flimsy cord, so that a full 100 foot coil of it could be carried in a large belt pouch.

Cost: 1,250 sp. per 100 feet of rope. Requirements: Craft (alchemy) 6 ranks, one dose of upas-tree juice (included in cost), the hair of 20 dead women.

Though the rope is light and supple, it is still a terribly difficult task to throw a grapple to a roof 150 feet above. Any Player Character (or Vanku) attempting it must make a ranged attack with the grapple. If the attack roll is 25 or greater, the grapple will reach the roof and take hold, allowing the Player Characters to ascend. If the Player Characters do not have Vanku with them (or at least do not have a *rope of dead women's hair*), they may still attempt to grapple the roof of the Elephant Tower, but the task is much more difficult when using heavy hemp rope. Only a Player Character with a Strength ability score of 18 or greater has even a chance of casting the grapple high enough to catch, and even then can only succeed with a ranged attack roll of 30 or greater.

No matter which kind of rope the Player Characters are using, every failed cast of the grapple means a ten percent chance that the grapple will clatter loudly on the outside of the tower as it falls back, alerting the guards inside that something is happening in the Inner Garden.

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The Elephant Tower

Now that the Player Characters have endured the perils of the Gardens, the Elephant Tower itself still lies ahead, glimmering in the moonlight, showing no sign of door or window, a flawless silver shaft as inaccessible as the stars.

Basement

Tower Mess (B1)

The walls of this mess hall are rough stone, while the floor has been worn smooth by the passing of the tower's guards. Several crude tables stand dotted throughout the room, and a mighty clay oven dominates much of the western wall. A large wooden table, littered with the debris of food preparation is scored with thousands of nicks and scrapes, and indelibly stained with blood and juices. An array of well-used pots, pans, cleavers and racks hang from the walls. Close to the southern wall is a well from which the guards draw water for use throughout the Elephant Tower.

Guards' Privy (B2)

This small room is occupied by little more than a hole in the floor and the overpowering stench of stale effluent.

Barracks (B3)

There is a standing force of 20 guards at the Elephant Tower, coupled with a contingent of four royal guard, dispatched from Shadizar by King Tiridates at Yara's request. At any given time, up to ten guards and two royal guards will be off duty and can either be found here or in the Guard Hall (B4). When the Player Characters arrive, assuming the alarm has not already been sounded, six of the off-duty guards will be sleeping in their bunks here. They will be roused by the clamour of battle if the Player Characters engage the four guards in the Guard Hall (B4), and will join the battle in 1d4 rounds. None of the off duty guards will be wearing armour, nor will they have time to don any.

Guards (6)

Medium Humanoid Zamorian soldier 2; HD: 2d10+4 (19 hp); **Init:** +1; **Spd:** 30 ft.; **Dodge DV:** 12; **Parry DV:** 17; **DR:** 0; **BAB/Grp:** +2/+3; **Atk:** Bill +4 melee *or* short sword +2 melee; **Full Atk:** Bill +4 melee *or* short sword +4 melee; **Dmg:** Bill 2d8+2, x3, AP 7 *or* short sword 1d8+2, 19–20/x2, AP 2; **Space/Reach:** 5 ft. (1)/5 ft. (1); **SA:** –; **SQ:** Zamorian qualities; **SV:** Fort +5, Ref +1, Will +0; Str 14, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 12

Skills & Feats: Bluff +3, Disable Device +4, Gather Information +3 (+5 if the check relates to theft, assassination and the locations or powers of legendary or magical objects), Intimidate +7, Open Lock +4, Search +6, Sense Motive +2, Sleight of Hand +4; Cleave, Eyes of the Cat, Power Attack

Possessions: Bill, buckler, short sword

If the Player Characters conduct a thorough search of this room, they will find a number of small bags, boxes and chests containing the assorted personal possessions of the guards. Most of these are fairly worthless – sets of dice and dog-eared playing cards, whetstones, cheap good luck talismans and other small mementos. Amongst all this, the Player Characters will find 62 silver pieces in various coins, as well as a small copper idol of Zath, worth 20 silver pieces.

Guard Hall (B4)

The sanded stone floors in other sections of the Elephant Tower's basement give way here to a deep red tile, shot through with streaks of a sickly green. Three old wooden tables in varying states of disrepair and a collection of mismatched chairs and stools are the only furnishings in this room. Here, the guards take their meals and while away their spare time with the help of dice and wine. The tables are littered with cups and plates, pushed to one side to make room for the next game, and the tiled floor is sticky with spilt wine.

There are four guards in here when the Player Characters arrive, assuming the alarm has not been raised. They are dressed in their armour, but have set aside their helms and shields. They have all been drinking, imposing a –2 penalty on all attack rolls and skill checks.

Guards (4)

Medium Humanoid Zamorian soldier 2; HD: 2d10+4 (19 hp); **Init:** +1; **Spd:** 25 ft.; **Dodge DV:** 12; **Parry DV:** 13; **DR:** 7; **BAB/Grp:** +2/+3; **Atk:** Bill +4 melee *or* short sword +2 melee; **Full Atk:** Bill +4 melee *or* short sword +4 melee; **Dmg:** Bill 2d8+2, x3, AP 7 *or* short sword 1d8+2, 19–20/x2, AP 2; **Space/Reach:** 5 ft. (1)/5 ft. (1); **SA:** –; **SQ:** Zamorian qualities; **SV:** Fort +5, Ref +1, Will +0; Str 14, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 12

Skills & Feats: Bluff +3, Disable Device +4, Gather Information +3 (+5 if the check relates to theft, assassination and the locations or powers of legendary or magical objects), Intimidate +7, Open Lock +4, Search +6, Sense Motive +2, Sleight of Hand +4; Cleave, Eyes of the Cat, Power Attack

Possessions: Bill, brigandine, buckler, short sword, steel cap

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ARMOURY (B5)

This is the armoury for the guards manning the Elephant Tower. It contains one mail hauberk (800 silver pieces), one silvered breastplate (2,500 silver pieces), one crested helmet (400 silver pieces), four brigandine coats (12,000 silver pieces), four steel caps (160 silver pieces), two crossbows (24 silver pieces) and 20 bolts (40 silver pieces), 20 hunting bows (60 silver pieces) and 300 arrows (15 silver pieces), ten short swords (500 silver pieces), eight bills (56 silver pieces) and five large shields (35 silver pieces). The armoury is by far the most orderly room in the tower's basement, with each weapon oiled and stowed neatly on its appropriate rack.

LARDER (B6)

A set of stairs leads down into the tower's larder, which takes advantage of the constant cool temperature to better preserve food. Most of the larder is given over to bulk foodstuffs, such as wheels of coarse cheese, shanks of mutton and sacks of grain, intended to provide meals for the guards. The small room in the southeast section of the larder contains the food used to make Yara's meals – strange cheeses and odd meats imported from foreign lands. The entire stock of Yara's section of the larder is worth as much as 950 silver pieces if the Player Characters can find an interested buyer.

TORTURE CHAMBER (B7)

This large room contains a wide range of torturous accoutrements, all of which appear dull and rusted with lack of use. This is not because of any objection Yara has to torture; in fact, as Yag-Kosha (see pg. 27, 5:1) can attest, Yara has a great enthusiasm for the pursuit. Rather, it is because Yara so rarely has the need or opportunity to torture anyone here, preferring to do so in the privacy of his laboratory above. As such, this room has come to be used for storage more than anything else, a place to put all the odds and ends needed in the tower from time to time.

Note that if the Player Characters came to the Tower of the Elephant to rescue someone, the torture devices may well show signs of very recent use. Alternatively, they may be untouched, and the Player Characters will find the person they are seeking chained to the altar of Zath (see pg. 20, 1:2).

CELLS (B8)

Crudely gouged out of the rock at the eastern end of the Elephant Tower's basement are 16 tiny cells sealed behind heavy iron doors. If the Player Characters are interested in taking a closer look inside one of the cells, the keys hang from a peg on the north wall, near the westernmost cell. Like the torture chamber (B7), these cells show few signs of recent use, though there is ample evidence they have all been used in the past. Simple calendars are scratched into the stone of the wall, along with various names and curses of desperation. This would be an excellent spot for the Games Master to plant clues to future adventures. If the Player Characters have come to the Tower of the Elephant in search of someone, they may find them here. Alternatively, if this is the first place the Player Characters come, the Games Master may wish to move the captive upstairs to Yara's laboratory or temple, in order to lengthen the adventure and prevent the Player Characters from slipping away without confronting the true terrors of the tower.

THE IMPRISONED PLANT (B8A)

In the cell farthest to the east, Yara keeps one of the most dangerous creatures he has gathered to the Elephant Tower. It is a yothga, a semi-intelligent plant that hails from the same distant planet as Yag-Kosha. Yara had hoped, considering the vast wealth of information he has wrested from Yag-Kosha over the centuries, that another creature from the same planet might yield new and unguessed mysteries to him. Of course, the yothga had no knowledge to offer, being little more than a carnivorous plant. However, instead of simply destroying the thing, Yara chose to place it here in the cells, intending to feed it the next time one of his guards displeased him. The yothga has been languishing in this cell for a long time now without nourishment, and none of the guards will go anywhere near this particular cell door.

If the door to its cell is opened, the yothga will strike with all the strength and desperation its starvation has given it. However, lack of any sustenance has taken its toll on the monstrous thing, reducing its hit points dramatically.

Yothga

Large Plant; HD: 9d8+45 (23 hp (typically 85 hp); **Init:** +10; **Spd:** 0 ft.; **DV:** 14; **DR:** 2; **BAB/Grp:** +6/+18; **Atk:** Tendril +11 melee; **Full Atk:** 4 tendrils +11 melee; **Dmg:** 1d6+4 + poison, AP 5; **Space/Reach:** 10 ft. (2)/10 ft. (2); **SA:** Improved Grab, Loathsome Caress, Poison, Powerful Grapple; **SQ:** Plant qualities, Low-Light Vision; **SV:** Fort +11, Ref +6, Will +3; Str 19, Dex 17, Con 20, Int 2, Wis 10, Cha 24

Skills & Feats: Listen +11, Spot +4; Improved Initiative, Skill Focus (Listen), Weapon Focus (tendril)

Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, a yothga must hit with its tendril attack. It can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity. If it wins the grapple check, it establishes a hold and can use its Loathsome Caress (see below).

Loathsome Caress (Su): A yothga that has successfully grappled an opponent will completely enfold itself around him. It automatically hits with all four tendril attacks each

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round. Furthermore, once it has reduced a target to 0 Int by means of its poison, it can begin to go to work on his soul. It may do this up to once per month, forcing a Corruption save in the target (DC 21) by its foul influence. A target whose Corruption increases to 10 by this means is completely consumed, body and soul, by the yothga, and it grows in size by 1 HD. The Corruption save DC is Cha-based. A Large yothga can only hold one Medium target or two Small targets in its Loathsome Caress at any one time; a Huge yothga can hold two Medium, four Small, or one Medium and four Small targets.

Poison (Ex): Contact, DC 19, initial and secondary damage 1d4 Int. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Powerful Grapple (Ex): Yothgas gain a racial bonus of +4 to all grapple checks, thanks to the flexibility, quantity and thickness of their branches and tendrils.

Lions' Den (B9)

This large and low-ceilinged chamber is where the lions that guard the tower's Inner Garden spend the daylight hours, sleeping and eating and waiting for night to fall. If the Player Characters arrive during the day, all six lions will be here; if they arrive at night, the den will be empty. Aside from a large number of cracked and gnawed bones, there is nothing here.

The den connects to the basement of the Elephant Tower via a 30 foot tunnel of rough stone. Two steel gates divide the passageway. These gates are never locked as the lions cannot manipulate the heavy latches that hold the gates closed. For the Player Characters, however, lifting the latches and opening the gates is a simple matter.

Ground Storey

Main Hall (G1)

The main hall takes up the majority of the ground floor of the Elephant Tower. It is the main entranceway to the tower, a place where Yara would receive those whom he had summoned to speak with him, when he entertained himself with notions of more worldly power. It is rarely used as such anymore, for Yara has devoted himself more and more to the pursuit of demons and examining the mysteries he has extracted from Yag-Kosha's torture.

The once-great hall is now a shadow of its original splendour, for the guards of the tower have begun to use it for their own revelry, even when on duty. The hall's lapis-lazuli floor, once breathtaking in its beauty, is now stained and scarred, and two great banquet tables, ornately carved of heavy, inlaid oak, have been dragged into the centre of the room to be used by the guards. The surface of the tables is notched and scarred from a thousand games, sticky with stale wine and littered with food and dice.

The walls of this room arc up and inward to form the ceiling, an enormous, arcing surface, seemingly formed of mother-of-pearl and studded with bloodstones. Near the northern wall is an enormous throne of pure onyx, still perfectly maintained and pristine, for none of the guards are so foolish as to take their seat there.

If the Player Characters arrive here without raising the alarm, there will be eight guards lounging around the banquet tables, amusing themselves with games of dice and the occasional obscene song. They will attack immediately on seeing the Player Characters. Four of them have had a little too much to drink, and will suffer a –2 penalty on all attack rolls and skill checks.

Guards (8)

Medium Humanoid Zamorian soldier 2; HD: 2d10+4 (19 hp); **Init:** +1; **Spd:** 25 ft.; **Dodge DV:** 12; **Parry DV:** 17; **DR:** 7; **BAB/Grp:** +2/+3; **Atk:** Bill +4 melee *or* short sword +2 melee; **Full Atk:** Bill +4 melee *or* short sword +4 melee; **Dmg:** Bill 2d8+2, x3, AP 7 *or* short sword 1d8+2, 19–20/x2, AP 2; **Space/Reach:** 5 ft. (1)/5 ft. (1); **SA:** –; **SQ:** Zamorian qualities; **SV:** Fort +5, Ref +1, Will +0; Str 14, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 12
Skills & Feats: Bluff +3, Disable Device +4, Gather Information +3 (+5 if the check relates to theft, assassination and the locations or powers of legendary or magical objects), Intimidate +7, Open Lock +4, Search +6, Sense Motive +2, Sleight of Hand +4; Cleave, Eyes of the Cat, Power Attack
Possessions: Bill, brigandine, buckler, short sword, steel cap

Central Stair (G2)

This is the central stairway to the Elephant Tower, a spiraling column of silver steps which seems to emit a dim glow. Whether by trick of light or sorcery, these stairs give one the impression of endlessness, a disconcerting feeling of being in a shadowy well. Because of the tight spiral of the stairs, it is difficult to see very far above or below while climbing or descending the steps. The Player Characters may use these steps to ascend to the top of the tower, or to any floor in between.

Guard Room (G3)

This room was initially intended as one of two guardrooms on the ground floor of the Tower, where Yara's guards and servants would wait and stand watch while he met with those he summoned to the Main Hall (G1). However, as Yara began to use the Main Hall less and less, the guards began to use it more. This room is all but abandoned; the guards have not entered it in more than a year. The lapis-lazuli floor of the Main Hall continues into the room, covered with a film of dust and littered with several simple chairs and other pieces of functional furniture.

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THE CELLAR STAIR [G4]

This set of smooth stone stairs descends into the cellar.

GUARD ROOM [G5]

This room is much like the guardroom (G3) on the opposite side of the tower, but with a few differences. It is the path the guards customarily use when travelling back and forth from the cellar, and their traffic has left a wide swath in the dust on the floor. Now that the guards have more or less taken over the Main Hall for their own use, they use this room to store their wine. There are six casks of wine against the inner wall of this room and while the wine is hardly of good quality, the casks are worth up to 30 silver pieces each.

FIRST STOREY

It is possible that the Player Characters will miss this level of the tower entirely as they make their way along the Central Stair. Unlike the other floors of the Elephant Tower, there is no true landing here, and no obvious door, only a small step to one side of the stairs, large enough for one man to stand on, and a blank wall as featureless as the tower's exterior walls. Player Characters who decide to stop and search for a door do have a chance to find it, however. A Search check (DC 20) will reveal the hairline gap running around the hidden door, as well as the cleverly concealed catch. The door catch itself is trapped with a poison needle that is somewhat more difficult to find than the door was.

Poison Needle Trap

Type: Mechanical, touch trigger, manual reset trap; **Atk:** +6 melee; **Dmg:** 1 + poison (giant spider venom, save DC 16, initial damage 2d6 Con, secondary damage 1d4 Con); Search DC 24; Disable Device DC 20

Once the Player Characters step through the hidden door, they may well wish they had not, for this entire floor of the Elephant Tower is given over to Yara's temple to Zath, the spider god of Zamora.

As the Player Characters enter the temple level, the Games Master should read the following section aloud to the players;

The hidden door swings open silently and you gaze into a room, thick and hazy with the smoke and heavy smell of some strange incense. Wisps of the blue-grey smoke move through the air, while gaseous tendrils snake across the floor, trapped in the dim light of the room's flickering sconces. Deeper into the room something shimmers, red and yellow like candlelight, after a moment, you see that it is the pale firelight reflecting off clusters of rubies and amber studding the room's onyx walls. The smoky floor seems to be malachite, or some other green stone, its colour changed by the light from the deep green of a forest to the sickly green of corruption. Against the far wall, you spy a table of some exotic wood, laden with golden vessels with jewel-crusted rims, glittering in the guttering light.

The door the Player Characters are looking through opens in the northern side of the immense Idol of Zath (1:1). The smoke of the incense is harmless, and though thick, it is not so thick as to impede visibility. The bulk of the idol of Zath looms over the open doorway, preventing characters from seeing the dark, web-strewn ceiling above them. Likewise, emerging as they are from the side of the idol, it is impossible to tell it what it is until the Player Characters move farther into the room. Three giant spiders lurk amongst the heavy onyx buttresses of the ceiling, guardians of the temple who will fall upon any creature other than Yara that dares enter.

Giant Spiders (3)

Medium Animal (vermin): HD: 2d8+4 (13 hp); **Init:** +3; **Spd:** 30 ft., climb 20 ft.; **DV:** 14; **DR:** 1; **BAB/Grp:** +1/+1; **Atk:** Bite +4 finesse melee; **Full Atk:** Bite +4 finesse melee; **Dmg:** 1d8 plus poison; **Space/Reach:** 5 ft. (1)/5 ft. (1); **SA:** Poison (injury, save DC 16, initial damage 2d6 Con, secondary damage 1d4 Con), Web; **SQ:** Vermin qualities, Darkvision 60 ft., Tremorsense 60 ft.; **SV:** Fort +4, Ref +3, Will +0; Str 11, Dex 17, Con 12, Int –, Wis 10, Cha 2
Skills & Feats: Climb +19, Hide +7, Jump +4, Spot +8; Alertness, Run

Poison (Ex): A giant spider has a poisonous bite (save DC 16, initial damage 2d6 Con, secondary damage 1d4 Con).

The rest of the room conforms to what the Player Characters could see through the open door – malachite floor and onyx walls and ceiling. Clusters of softly glowing gems are scattered seemingly at random throughout the room.

IDOL OF ZATH [1:1]

This enormous idol occupies the centre of the room, stretching from floor to ceiling. The shaft of the Central Stair rises directly through the idol, hidden within the bulk of the massive statue. The statue itself is sculpted from a single piece of black jet, shaped into the image of a spider of nightmarish proportions. Though hideously lifelike, it is completely inert. A circular depression in the floor just in front of the idol, three feet across and a foot deep, contains powdered ash and seems to be used as place for an offering or sacrificial fire.

ALTAR OF ZATH [1:2]

The dark red marble of this altar stands in stark contrast to the sickly green colour of the floors. It is a huge block of stone, four feet high, four feet wide and seven feet long. A golden censer two feet across and nine inches tall sits at one

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end of the altar, emitting a constant stream of heavily scented smoke, which coils about the room. At the other end is a golden bowl of similar proportions, its rim studded with rubies. A flaky substance that could be dried blood is smeared over the inside of the bowl, and the golden manacles at each corner of the altar certainly substantiate that hypothesis. The censer is worth 1,800 silver pieces, while the golden bowl is worth 3,500 silver pieces. They will be extremely difficult to sell anywhere in Zamora, as they are clearly religious artefacts of the cult of Zath.

Religious Supplies Chest (1:3)

This chest is made of the same malachite stone as the floor and, on closer inspection, will reveal that it is actually part of the floor, seamlessly attached. Within the chest are all manner of religious supplies, most of very little value, such as candles, bottles of incense and vestments.

Offering Tables (1:4)

The three tables along the northern wall of the temple contain a wide array of vessels, plates, holy books and other liturgical elements for the worship of Zath. Zamorian religions are among the most complex and ritualised in the world, and the priests and theologians of those religions have had millennia to debate, ponder and complicate the faith. Thus, each of the items on these tables has its own individual role to play in the worship of Zath.

Taken together, the entirety of the religious items on the offering tables has a value of 30,000 silver pieces, though they, like the items from the altar, will be extremely difficult to sell anywhere in Zamora. In fact, attempting to do so is more likely to bring the anger of the church of Zath down upon the Player Characters than it is to result in a sale.

Despite the great wealth so carefully arranged on these tables, taking it is not without risk. Hundreds of tiny spiders lurk and crawl throughout the forest of golden vessels, and will attack any creature that disturbs them. However, if the Player Characters take some of the incense from the Religious Supplies Chest (1:3), light it, and allow the smoke to drift over the offering tables, the spiders will become quiescent, and will take no action when the Player Characters begin to pilfer holy objects from the offering tables. Touching an item on the offering tables without taking this or some other precaution will result in an attack by 1d6 tiny spiders.

Tiny Spiders

Tiny Animal (vermin): HD: ½d8 (2 hp); **Init:** +6; **Spd:** 20 ft., climb 10 ft.; **DV:** 15; **DR:** 0; **BAB/Grp:** +0/–4; **Atk:** Bite +3 finesse melee; **Full Atk:** Bite +3 finesse melee; **Dmg:** 1 plus poison; **Space/Reach:** 2 ½ ft. (½)/0 ft. (0); **SA:** Poison (injury, save DC 10, initial damage 1d2 Str, secondary damage 1 Str), Web; **SQ:** Vermin qualities, Darkvision 60 ft., Tremorsense 60 ft.; **SV:** Fort +2, Ref +3, Will +0; Str 3, Dex 17, Con 10, Int -, Wis 10, Cha 2
Skills & Feats: Climb +19, Hide +19, Jump +14, Spot +8; Run

Poison (Ex): A tiny spider has a poisonous bite (save DC 12, initial damage 1d4 Con, secondary damage 1d4 Str).

Assuming the Player Characters are able to find this temple, it will be one of the few great sources of treasure for them in *The Tower of the Elephant*, as, unlike so many other things in this tower, the golden bowls, vessels and other liturgical paraphernalia were not created by Yag-Kosha, but rather were brought here by Yara. Thus, when the Rule of Impermanence takes effect on the tower itself, these items will remain intact.

Second Storey

The landing leading to this storey of the Elephant Tower is the first obvious means of egress from the Central Stair (G2) as the Player Characters travel through the tower. It is also the lowest of the three levels of the tower reserved for Yara's personal use. Every room on this level of the Elephant Tower has a floor of amber tiles, while its walls and ceilings are constructed of purest white marble.

On the landing is a small silver table, atop which rest several golden lamps, worth 200 silver pieces each.

Map Room (2:1)

Lining the walls of this room are maps of Arenjun, Shadizar and Yezud, as well as larger maps depicting various regions of the rest of the world. The most impressive aspect of this room, however, is not on any of the walls, but standing in the middle of the floor. Atop a richly carved and stained table of teak is a huge map of Zamora, depicting the country in exacting detail.

Player Characters who opt to take a closer look at some of the maps on the walls will notice small markings and notations made on some of the maps, potential locations for various artefacts Yara is interested in acquiring, sealed away within forgotten tombs and fallen keeps. The Games Master could easily plant clues for future adventures amongst the obtuse and obscure notes left on these maps by Yara.

Moving the map of Zamora out of the Elephant Tower would be all but impossible as it is subject to the Rule of Impermanence. The maps on the walls, on the other hand, are of exceptional quality and may easily be taken down and removed from the tower. There are 18 maps in all, each worth 225 silver pieces each to an interested buyer.

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CORPSE ROOM (2: 2)

This is the room where Yara keeps the corpses of four deceased guards. He has cast *raise corpse* on each of them, intending to put them to use defending the tower and its grounds, however, he has not yet decided where to station them, much to the relief of the living guards.

Risen Dead (4)

Medium Undead: HD: 3d12+3 (22 hp); **Init:** +0; **Spd:** 20 ft.; **DV:** 10; **BAB/Grp:** +1/+4; **Atk:** Unarmed +4; **Full Atk:** Unarmed +4; **Dmg:** Unarmed 1d6+3; **Space/Reach:** 5 ft. (1)/5 ft. (1); **SA:** –; **SQ:** Undead qualities, Limp Stumble; **SV:** Fort +1, Ref +0, Will +3; Str 17, Dex 8, Con –, Int –, Wis 10, Cha 1

Skills & Feats: Brawl, Toughness

LIBRARY (2: 3)

This room contains a dozen bookshelves and scroll racks, carved of ebony and inlaid with gold and pearls. Rich though they may be, the shelves pale in comparison to what they contain – the library of Yara. There are literally hundreds of volumes here, on subjects ranging from herbalism and alchemy to history and religion. Additionally, there are many works on sorcery here, focusing primarily on Curses, Hypnotism, Necromancy, Oriental Magic and Summonings. The Games Master, at his discretion, might allow a scholar Player Character to learn any spell from those five sorcery styles by finding and studying the appropriate book from this library.

Most precious of all the books in the library are the two great gems of Yara's collection, complete sets of both the *Books of Tsotha-Lanti* and the *Books of Vathelos* (see *Conan: Scrolls of Skelos* for complete information on those two collections).

The books of Yara's library are of tremendous value, but Player Characters are likely to find it difficult to remove many of them from the Elephant Tower. Games Masters should bear in mind that the books generally weigh between ten and 20 pounds, making them an unwieldy load for an adventurer. If the Player Characters do decide to take some of Yara's books with them, the Games Master should determine the value of the volume based on the value of the information it contains.

YARA'S LOWER STUDY (2: 4)

This room has the same amber-tiled floor and marble walls and ceiling found throughout the rest of this level, but in this room ornate rugs from Iranistan and dark tapestries from Vendhya have covered them, lending the room a more sombre appearance. A large chair, upholstered in some unknown hide, sits in front of a unlit brazier, a marble table on one side and a hookah on the other. Against the northernmost wall is a wine rack holding nine bottles of wine, each imported from some distant land and each frightfully expensive. Beneath a long table on the western wall, heaped with books, is a wooden chest with bands of gold, boasting a large, black lock.

There are several objects of value in this room, should the Player Characters decide to inspect the contents further. Yara is quite fond of his wines, and is a man of expensive tastes – so long as the wax seals are undamaged, the bottles of wine are worth 525 silver pieces each. The four Iranistani rugs and seven Vendhyan tapestries are quite valuable as well; each will fetch 500 silver pieces from an interested buyer.

The chest beneath the table is worth 250 silver pieces. However, the Player Characters are likely to be curious about what is inside. The lock on the chest is a variation of the *globe of Yezud* (see *Conan: Scrolls of Skelos*), designed to affect anyone who attempts to open the chest without the proper key, which is in the custody of Yara. When someone attempts to pick the lock of this chest that is actually concealed within the altered *globe of Yezud*, they will automatically be targeted by the *globe*, which transforms into a small, black, venomous spider and bites the would-be lock picker, automatically hitting. The bite itself deals one point of damage, as well as subjecting the victim to the spider's venom (primary damage 1d6 Con, secondary damage 2d8 Con, Fort save DC 20 for half). It is possible to shatter the *globe* before the Player Characters even approach the chest, thus negating its effect. It has a hardness of 5 and 2 hit points.

Once the *globe of Yezud* is dealt with, the Player Characters must still bypass the lock. Opening the lock of the banded wooden chest requires an Open Lock check (DC 25). Within the box are five glass vials, each containing one dose of black lotus blossom, worth 1,250 silver pieces for each dose, as well as two crystal bottles of Zingaran brandy worth 900 silver pieces each.

THIRD STOREY

At this floor of the Elephant Tower, a circular landing that seems to be made of pure gold surrounds the twisting stair. Two doors stand precisely opposite one another, both made of solid obsidian and outlined with softly glowing bloodstones.

No matter which door the Player Characters open first, they are certain to be in for a surprise. The exterior walls of the two main chambers on this level (see room descriptions below) are utterly transparent, though they seem opaque from the outside. If the Player Characters come in during the night, they may think, at first, that the walls are simply black stone studded with tiny, shining diamonds (something which would not be out of place in this tower), but after a moment, they will certainly realise they are looking out at

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the night sky. If they are here during the day, they will likely not have even that moment of confusion, as the bright rays of the sun come streaming through the impenetrable walls of the tower, which seem from this vantage to be nothing more than glass.

Both doors leading from the stairway into the rooms of this storey are locked and will require an Open Lock check (DC 25) to open. These doors are also trapped. The Games Master should have Player Characters to make Spot check (DC 20) before any attempt is made to open the doors in this level of the tower. Success allows the Player Characters to notice a small hole in the ceiling just above the door. So long as the lock on the door is successfully picked on the first try, this hole poses no danger. However, an Open Lock check failed by four or less has a 50 percent chance of triggering this trap, while failing this check by five or more guarantees that the trap will be triggered. The trap itself causes a globe of *Kothic demon fire* to drop from the hole above the door and shatter in front of it; the *Kothic demon fire* inflicts 2d8 points of fire damage on anyone within its ten foot-by-ten foot range of effect. A Reflex save (DC 20) may be attempted to avoid this damage.

The doors can easily be battered down and have a hardness of 10 and 10 hit points, but doing so will automatically trigger the doors' trap. Opening the door with the key, which is in Yara's custody negates any danger from the *Kothic demon fire* traps.

Laboratory (3:1)

The western half of this level of the Elephant Tower is taken up by Yara's alchemical laboratory. It is a masterwork laboratory, constructed of the finest materials available, worth 10,000 silver pieces. Among the laboratory equipment can be found three draughts of *golden wine of Xuthal*, worth 1,750 silver pieces each.

As the Player Characters enter the laboratory, read the following section aloud to the players;

The white marble floor here is scarred and pitted, bearing the wounds of acid burns and sudden fires, while the obsidian ceiling above is mottled with stains and the strange fumes that foul the air. A hundred unclean smells assail your nostrils as you enter the room – sickly sweet, rancid, chemical and others beyond the words of any language you know to describe. The air is hazy with smoke, but through it you can see several long tables, their scarred surfaces covered with small firepots and glass vessels of every size and description. The smoke clouding the air bubbles and wafts from the rims of the room's glassware, each an ongoing experiments of some unwholesome nature.

Beyond the fuming pots and smoking vessels is the most surprising sight of all – the open sky. Though you know from your observations of the tower that there were no windows piercing its sides, by some art of sorcery the walls here seem as clear as glass.

As soon as the Player Characters advance into the room, the door to the Shambling Boar-Thing Cell (3:2) on the south wall will swing open, releasing another of Yara's defences into the laboratory.

Shambling Boar-Thing

Medium Monstrous Humanoid: HD: 4d8+8 (35 hp); **Init:** +11; **Spd:** 40 ft., climb 20 ft.; **DV:** 16; **DR:** 4; **BAB/Grp:** +4/+9; **Atk:** Gore +9 melee; **Full Atk:** Gore +9 melee and two slams +4 melee; **Dmg:** Gore 2d6+7, AP 8, slams 1d4+2; **Space/Reach:** 5 ft. (1)/5 ft. (1); **SA:** –; **SQ:** Darkvision; **SV:** Fort +5, Ref +7, Will +2; Str 20, Dex 16, Con 13, Int 5, Wis 12, Cha 6

Skills & Feats: Climb +10, Hide +7, Listen +2, Move Silently +7, Spot +2; Improved Initiative, Toughness

Once the shambling boar-thing is defeated, the Player Characters are free to explore the alchemical laboratory, though Games Masters may rule that the value of the laboratory has been decreased by up to half as a result of the chaos of the battle against the creature. Yara expected as much, and counts a few thousand silver pieces a small price to pay for the destruction of any invaders of his tower.

Aside from what remains of the laboratory, there are two small chests under one of the tables, both of which are locked and will require an Open Lock check (DC 20) to open. One of the chests contains 700 silver pieces worth of various alchemical components, while the other contains four globes of *Kothic demon fire*, worth 500 silver pieces each and three paper-wrapped packages of *Stygian tomb-dust*, worth 400 silver pieces each.

Shambling Boar-Thing Cell (3:2 & 3:4)

This is one of two cells on this level of the tower for the shambling boar-things Yara had brought to him from Kush. Considering the wealth of power he was able to glean from his torments of Yag-Kosha, Yara thought it worthwhile to plumb the minds of other creatures, which seemed to him of similar design. He was disappointed but not surprised to find that the boar-things were little more than animals.

Though the beasts had no sorcerous knowledge to be dredged from their minds, the boar-things are possessed of great strength, and rather than disposing of them, Yara opted to put the creatures to work as guardians for his Laboratory (3:1) and Observatory (3:3). The High Priest keeps the unfortunate creatures penned in these tiny, stinking

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closets, feeding them only occasionally between his lotus dreams. The unfortunate creatures are trained to serve Yara and will attack without mercy any creature other than the sorcerer that enters these rooms.

There is nothing in the cell other than bones gnawed to splinters and the reeking stench of the boar-things' waste.

OBSERVATORY (3:3)

This room serves two purposes for Yara, functioning both as the observatory for his immense telescope, and as a chamber for the occasional summoning ritual he performs.

As the Player Characters enter the observatory, read the following section aloud to the players;

At first glance, this chamber seems nearly empty, though it is difficult to consider the trappings about you when you see the wall of the room before you. You were certain, from your observations of the Elephant Tower from the outside, that no window or casement pierced its perfect sides, yet now you find yourself staring into the open sky. It seems somehow, that the outer wall of the tower is as clear as the finest glass when viewed from the inside.

As you take in the unexpected view, you note the chamber is indeed not as empty as it may at first have seemed. A golden telescope, five feet long and a foot wide, rests on a stand of polished and inlaid wood, one end of the tube pointing at the exposed sky. A short table sits beside it, covered in sheaves of paper. Most arresting of all is the design in the centre of the room, a wide circle that has either been painted or inlaid upon the white marble floor. The characters and figures inscribed in the circle seem to wriggle and dance before your eyes, invoking a feeling of nausea and ill ease. An unhealthy greenish glow arises from the circle.

As soon as the Player Characters advance into the room, the door to the Shambling Boar-Thing Cell (3:2) on the south wall will swing open, releasing another of Yara's defences into the observatory.

Shambling Boar-Thing

Medium Monstrous Humanoid: HD: 4d8+8 (35 hp); **Init:** +11; **Spd:** 40 ft., climb 20 ft.; **DV:** 16; **DR:** 4; **BAB/Grp:** +4/+9; **Atk:** Gore +9 melee; **Full Atk:** Gore +9 melee and two slams +4 melee; **Dmg:** Gore 2d6+7, AP 8, slams 1d4+2; **Space/Reach:** 5 ft. (1)/5 ft. (1); **SA:** –; **SQ:** Darkvision; **SV:** Fort +5, Ref +7, Will +2; Str 20, Dex 16, Con 13, Int 5, Wis 12, Cha 6

Skills & Feats: Climb +10, Hide +7, Listen +2, Move Silently +7, Spot +2; Improved Initiative, Toughness

The glowing circle in the centre of the floor is, as the Player Characters are almost certain to surmise, a summoning circle. Despite the unhealthy glow it emits, however, it is completely harmless, but Games Masters may wish to play up the Player Characters' fear during this battle by having it flare or dim in brightness as the battle surges closer to it, then farther away.

The long golden telescope near the eastern wall of this room was created as part of this tower. Yara has been using it to try to find Yag-Kosha's home planet of Yag. According to the mysterious being, this is a green planet, which circles, forever in the outer fringes of this universe. Yara hopes to find the planet, that he might have the opportunity to learn more secrets from Yag-Kosha's mighty race, but has thus met with only failure. The short table beside the telescope is filled with paper, each covered in the lotus-fevered, scribblings Yara has made during his quest to find Yag.

FOURTH STOREY

When the Player Characters arrive at the landing for this storey of the Elephant Tower, they have reached the abode of the High Priest himself. Depending upon the route by which the Player Characters have arrived, and the actions taken along that path, they may find swift victory or utter defeat within these chambers.

The entirety of this circular landing is constructed of ebony, and a single ebony door, in the centre of which is set a grinning silver skull, pierces the wall. If the Player Characters have already met Yag-Kosha (see pg. 27, 5:1) and treated him with mercy and respect, they will likely come here bearing the blood-soaked *heart of the elephant* to exact Yag-Kosha's final revenge on his captor. The door is locked and will require an Open Lock check (DC 25) to open. The keyhole is set in the middle of the grinning skull's mouth, and a failed attempt at picking the lock will result in the skull shooting a pair of poisoned darts from its gaping eye sockets.

Poison Dart Trap

Type: Mechanical, touch trigger, manual reset trap; **Atk:** +8 ranged; **Dmg:** 1 + poison (giant spider venom, save DC 16, initial damage 2d6 Con, secondary damage 1d4 Con); Search DC 24; Disable Device DC 20

Note that the trap will not be triggered if the Player Characters pound on the door or attempt to break it down – Yara was forced to make concessions, considering that the guards sometimes need to rouse him from his lotus sleep, and pounding on the door is the best way for them to do so.

There is a chance that Yara will be able to hear the Player Characters as they attempt to pick the lock or otherwise interact with the door, determined by the exact actions the Player Characters are taking and Yara's Listen skill (see pg. 25). If the High Priest does hear them and succeeds in a Will

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saving throw (DC 25), he will rouse himself from his slumber and prepare for their arrival.

Yara's Lotus Den (4:1)

This room is as black as night, built entirely of ebony and jet. Moonstones twinkle dimly in the ceiling and a faint haze of intoxicating smoke drifts in the air, the heady scent of the black lotus blossom. It is here that Yara spends most of his days, and it is here that the Player Characters will find him. If they have managed to make it this far into the tower without alerting him or his guards, Yara will be reclining on a black silken couch, his eyes wide and dilated with the fumes of the lotus as he stares blankly into unknowable abysses. Aside from the silken couch upon which Yara rests, there is little in the way of furnishings in this benighted room, only an ebony table between the couch and the door to the stair, and a hookah on the floor beside the couch.

If Yara has been alerted to the presence of the Player Characters by his guards, then the wily sorcerer will be prepared for the arrival of the characters and have all of his surviving royal guard form a screen about him, in an attempt to defend himself against the intruders. Yara will only join the fray himself if all of the members of his royal guard are killed or incapacitated.

Royal Guards (4)

Medium Humanoid Zamorian soldier 6; HD: 6d10+12 (45 hp); **Init:** +3; **Spd:** 25 ft.; **Dodge DV:** 14; **Parry DV:** 17; **DR:** 11; **BAB/Grp:** +6/+8; **Atk:** Crossbow +7 ranged *or* short sword +8 melee; **Full Atk:** Crossbow +7 /+2 ranged *or* short sword +8/+3 melee; **Dmg:** Crossbow 2d6, x2, AP 4, Range 60 ft. *or* short sword 1d8+2/19–20 x2/AP 3; **Space/Reach:** 5 ft. (1)/5 ft. (1); **SA:** Formation Combat (heavy infantry); **SQ:** Zamorian qualities; **SV:** Fort +7, Ref +3, Will +2; Str 15, Dex 13, Con 15, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 13

Skills & Feats: Bluff +3, Diplomacy +5, Disable Device +5, Gather Information +7 (+9 if the check relates to theft, assassination and the locations or powers of legendary or magical objects), Intimidate +12, Open Lock +5, Search +13, Sense Motive +6, Sleight of Hand +5; Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes, Improved Disarm, Investigator, Negotiator, Persuasive, Steely Gaze

Possessions: Mail hauberk, silvered breastplate, crested helmet, crossbow and 20 bolts, short sword

It is also possible the Player Characters will arrive in this room without the *heart of the elephant*, not yet having ascended to the level of the Elephant Tower where Yag-Kosha languishes in his opulent prison. If the Player Characters enter this room without alerting Yara in any way, they will have the opportunity to slay him as he struggles to come out of his lotus-sleep. Once the Player Characters enter the room, Yara will sense he is in danger, but still must succeed with a Will saving throw (DC 25) to wake up before one of the Player Characters opens his throat with a knife.

If the Player Characters have come here at Yag-Kosha's request, bearing the *heart of the elephant*, they may speak Yara's name and he will instantly awaken. Once Yara is awake, the heart is laid before the villainous High Priest and words given to the Player Characters by Yag-Kosha are spoken, the *heart of the elephant* will activate, unleashing the *shrinking doom* curse Yag-Kosha has set upon the jewel.

High Priest Yara

Medium Humanoid Zamorian scholar 15; HD: 10d6+5 (46 hp); **Init:** +8; **Spd:** 30 ft.; **Dodge DV:** 18; **Parry DV:** 15; **DR:** –; **BAB/Grp:** +11/+11; **Atk:** Dagger +14 finesse melee, or Kothic demon fire +14 ranged; **Full Atk:** Dagger +14/+9/+4 melee or Kothic demon fire +14/+9/+4 ranged; **Dmg:** Dagger 1d4; Space/Reach: 5 ft. (1)/5 ft. (1); **SA:** Defensive Blast, Spells; **SQ:** Zamorian qualities, Background (lay priest), Iron Will, Knowledge is Power, Scholar; **MAB:** +9; **PP:** 12 (base 4, +5 Wis, +3 Level) (48 maximum); **SV:** Fort +7, Ref +8, Will +16; Str 10, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 18, Wis 20, Cha 14

Skills & Feats: Appraise +18, Bluff +16, Concentration +16, Craft (alchemy) +20, Craft (herbalism) +20, Decipher Script +14, Gather Information +10, Heal +10, Intimidate +16, Knowledge (arcana) +20, Knowledge (local) +20, Knowledge (religion) +20, Listen +20, Perform (ritual) +15, Search +16, Sense Motive +16; Adept (Curses), Augment Summoning, Hexer, Opportunistic Sacrifice, Ritual Sacrifice, Summoner, Tortured Sacrifice

Sorcery Styles: Curses, Divination, Hypnotism, Necromancy, Summonings

Spells: *Agonising doom, astrological prediction, black plague, death touch, demonic pact, domination, draw forth the heart, draw forth the soul, entrance, greater demonic pact, greater ill-fortune, greater sorcerous news, hypnotic suggestion, ill-fortune, lesser ill-fortune, mind-reading, psychometry, raise corpse, ranged hypnotism, sorcerous news, summon demon, summon elemental, visions*

Possessions: Dagger, five silver keys (will open rooms 2:4, 3:1, 3:3, 4:1 and 4:3)

Notes: Yara, priest of Zath, is more than 500 years old. In his distant youth, he began to plumb the darker mysteries of sorcery, consorting with demons and fiends of all stripes in order to deepen his knowledge of his god, a path that led him inevitably into Corruption. Possessed of an even greater desire to control and dominate than his fellow priests of Zath, Yara hoped to gather to himself enough power to enforce the dictates of the clergy upon the populace, freeing them of all degeneracy by the force of his sorcery.

One day, while still a young man, he left his home in Yezud and struck out into the world, seeking new and better sources of knowledge, a path that led him eventually to Khitai, where he discovered Yag-Kosha. He tricked and enslaved the noble being, wringing the vilest of

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secrets from the tortured creature's mind and forcing Yag-Kosha to perform horrible deeds.

For more than 300 years, Yara has lived in the Tower of the Elephant in Arenjun, a massive shaft of silver he forced Yag-Kosha to build for him in a single night. His hopes to use sorcery to create a perfect vision of the cult of Zath's tenets are largely forgotten now, and he spends most of his time in lotus-haunted sleep.

Once the steps outlined above have been completed, read the following section aloud to the players;

Yara flinches at your words as at some grim pronouncement of doom, and begins to draw back from the glowing gem. As you watch, however, a light of madness kindles in his eyes, as he turns towards the gem, approaching it with halting steps, as though he is struggling with himself and losing.

The once-clear gem has now become murky, a depthless chasm of shifting clouds. Drawn towards it like a moth to a flame, Yara takes his last, jerking step and seizes the gem in his bony hands. For a moment, you think that the dim light and lotus-laden air are playing tricks with your mind, as Yara, tall and ghastly when he arose from his silken couch, seems now to be shrinking smaller and smaller. You watch as Yara stares into the jewel with eyes shining with fear and horror as he continues to shrink still further.

Now the size of a child, Yara sprawls upon the floor, the jewel still clenched in his hands. With a final effort of will, he tears his hands away, but it is far too late, his tiny voice now shrieks in rage and terror, calling upon countless cursed beings for aid. As the jewel towers over him like a hill, Yara tries to flee but ever the heat of the elephant draws him back, like a magnet draws a wisp of iron. Three times he circles the jewel, coming ever closer, until, with a scream almost too small to hear, he runs straight at the jewel.

Impossibly, he begins to climb the jewel's side, still shrieking in desperate defiance, until he reaches the top of the mighty gem. Barely more than the size of an ant, he screams almost soundlessly, his arms waving in his last, futile attempt to save himself, before sinking into the gem as a man sinks into the water.

Only dimly can the High Priest be seen now, deep in the smoky depths of the great jewel, and as you watch, you think you see another figure, a figure with the body of a man and the head of an elephant, great wings beating on its back and its head crowned with stars. Yara throws up his hands in one last gesture of defiance, and the gem vanishes in a burst of iridescent shards, a rainbow shimmering for a moment in the darkness of this chamber before it is gone.

With the destruction of the *heart of the elephant* and the death of Yara, the Rule of Impermanence takes effect on the Tower of the Elephant. Raised by magic in a single night, it is about to be undone in even less time than that. The tower begins to shake and tremble, reinforcing Yag-Kosha's warning to flee once Yara has been dealt with. The Player Characters will have five minutes (50 rounds) to reach the ground floor and flee the tower before it collapses. If the Player Characters have not yet ventured to the lower levels of the tower and dealt with the guards themselves, they will find that Yag-Kosha's promise holds true. When the Player Characters emerge from the Central Stair (G2) in the Main Hall (G1), they will see that all the guards lie dead at their tables, and the way is clear for them to flee the tower.

YARA'S BEDCHAMBER (4: 2)

Yara rarely uses this room, generally sleeping on the couch in his Lotus Den (4:1). The room is opulent to the point of gaudy, the ebony and jet walls, floor and ceiling bedecked with a large number of rugs and tapestries from all across Hyboria. The fabrics weigh at least 300 pounds and worth 1,000 silver pieces to an interested buyer. An ebony wardrobe stands against the western wall, just south of the bulge marking the column of the Central Stair (G2), that contains the sorcerer's clothing, most of it stained and soiled with the scent of lotus. An enormous bed stands near the eastern wall. Beside it sits a small, unlocked chest, which contains seven globes of *Kothic demon fire*, worth 500 silver pieces each and three draughts of *golden wine of Xuthal*, worth 1,750 silver pieces each. If Yara becomes aware of the Player Characters before they enter his Lotus Den (4:1) from the Central Stair (G2), he will come here first to fetch these sorcerous items to do battle. In

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the northern wall is an enormous steel door, leading to the Treasure Chamber (4:3).

Yara's Treasure Chamber (4:3)

The steel door to this chamber is locked, requiring an Open Lock check (DC 30) to open, and the key is in Yara's possession. Even if the Player Characters are able to open the door and access this room, they may be disappointed, as it contains little treasure. Once Yara forced Yag-Kosha to build him the Elephant Tower, Yara took one look at his new home and realised the structure of the tower itself, the gems crowning its top and adorning its walls was worth more than any simple treasure he could store away in its new vault. Yara does still use the room as his treasury, however, keeping the coinage needed to run the tower stowed here, to be doled out when needed. Scattered over the floor in this room are approximately 15,000 silver pieces, a pittance when compared to the value of the structure housing them. There is one great treasure hidden in here, however, a crystal decanter filled with a pale golden liquid. The decanter itself is worth 100 silver pieces, but the ten doses of *golden wine of Xuthal* the decanter contains is the real prize, worth 17,500 silver pieces.

Fifth Storey

In a very real sense, the fifth storey of the Elephant Tower is the crux of the scenario, the point on which the rest of the adventure hinges, for this place is the opulent prison of Yag-Kosha, the being held in thrall by Yara, forced against his will to teach the evil sorcerer the darkest of secrets.

If the Player Characters entered the tower from the roof, as Vanku and his father, Taurus, planned, this will be the first full storey of the tower they reach. On the other hand, if the Player Characters are making their way up the tower from its lower levels, one storey at a time, they may have already confronted Yara.

The landing on this storey is small, a mere five foot square of malachite in front of an ivory door, studded with bloodstones. Thin wisps of smoke drift out from beneath the door. The door is not locked or trapped, and swings silently inward with the gentlest push.

Chamber of Yag-Kosha (5:1)

This is the great chamber where the creature Yag-Kosha is held in tortured bondage. As the Player Characters enter the chamber, read the following section aloud to the players;

The ivory door swings open silently, revealing a room of wealth such as you have never dreamed. The ceiling is domed, and seemingly cast of a single sheet of solid gold. The walls are a milky green jade and the floor is of ivory, partly covered by thick rugs. Blue, scented smoke of exotic incense floats up from a pair of golden braziers, while beyond them, on a blue marble dais, sits an enormous jade idol. The idol depicts the naked body of a man; but the head is one of nightmare and madness. Too large for the human body, it has no attributes of humanity in it at all. Wide flapping ears jut from the sides of the head, a curling proboscis drapes from the front of the face, on either side of which stand white tusks tipped with round golden balls. The idol's eyes are closed, as if in sleep. Before the dais, atop a gold and ivory altar, sits a gem the size of a man's fist, glittering in the light and as clear as crystal.

Once the Player Characters step inside the room, Yag-Kosha will hear their footsteps and open his great, sightless, topaz eyes and speak, in a voice that never changes key or timbre.

'Who is here? Have you come to torture me again, Yara? Will you never be done? Oh, Yag-Kosha, is there no end to your agony?' tears begin to roll from the creature's sightless eyes, and the trunk quests tentatively in the air about it.

At this point, the Games Master should have the Player Characters make a Spot check (DC 15). Success indicates that despite the terror of the situation, they notice the marks of terrible torments on the creature's flesh, the twisted and deformed shape of its useless limbs and the scars that mar its entire body.

If the Player Characters choose to attack Yag-Kosha, he will not defend himself, though he will regret not exacting his revenge on Yara, he thinks it a small price to pay for finally being released from his pain. On the other hand, if the Player Characters take no action against him, Yag-Kosha will ask them to come closer. He senses an opportunity to achieve release from his torments and avenge himself upon Yara, and wishes to make certain the Player Characters are worthy of his trust. Assuming the Player Characters do approach, he will touch them gently with his trunk, feeling their features as a blind man does and using the direct contact to examine them with his *mind reading* spell. If at least the majority of the Player Characters have no Corruption points, he will make up his mind to trust them and offer to tell them his tale of woe.

Yag-Kosha

Medium Outsider: HD: 10d8 (45 hp); **Init:** +8; **Spd:** 30 ft.; **DV:** 18; **DR:** 1; **BAB/Grp:** +10/+10; **Atk:** Gore +11 finesse melee; **Full Atk:** Gore +11 finesse melee; **Dmg:** Gore 1d8; **Space/Reach:** 5 ft. (1)/5 ft. (1); **SA:** Spells; **SQ:** Darkvision 60 ft., Blood of Power; **MAB:** 11; PP: 36 (base 30, +6

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Wis); **SV:** Fort +7, Ref +8, Will +15; Str 11, Dex 12, Con 11, Int 20, Wis 26, Cha 22
Skills & Feats: Craft (alchemy) +18, Craft (herbalism) +18, Diplomacy +19, Intimidate +16, Knowledge (arcana +31, Knowledge (history) +28, Knowledge (geography) +28, Knowledge (religion) +28, Knowledge (nature) +28, Listen +23, Perform (ritual) +19, Search +18, Sense Motive +11, Spot +23; Improved Sorcerous Sight, Knowledgeable, Alertness, Skill Focus (Knowledge (arcane))
Sorcery Styles: Counterspells, Curses, Divination, Necromancy, Oriental Magic, Prestidigitation, Summonings
Spells: Yag-Kosha may cast the following spells as though he were a 10th level scholar: *agonising doom, astrological prediction, awful rite of the were-beast, burst barrier, calm of the adept, conjuring, curse of Yizil, darting serpent, death touch, demonic pact, dream of wisdom, gelid bones, greater ill-fortune, greater sorcerous news, greater telekinesis, greater warding, ill-fortune, incantation of Amalric's witchman, lesser ill-fortune, mind-reading, psychometry, raise corpse, rune of Jhebbal Sag, sorcerous news, telekinesis, visions, visions of torment and enlightenment, warrior trance, warding*
Notes: Yag-Kosha is not a demon, despite his monstrous appearance, nor is he a native to this world. He and his fellows came to Earth from their home world of Yag, banished after a failed attempt to overthrow the kings of Yag. As the aeons passed and his people began to die off, Yag-Kosha made his way to Khitai, where he was worshipped as a god. He believes himself to be the last of his kind on earth.

A gentle and honourable soul, Yag-Kosha has suffered for centuries under the horrible tortures inflicted on him by Yara. He is desperate for revenge, but more desperate still for release, a chance to free himself of Yara's yoke and bring an end to the foul deeds the priest has forced him to commit. He sees the arrival of the Player Characters in his gilded cage in the Elephant Tower as an opportunity to accomplish both goals.

If the Player Characters attack Yag-Kosha, he will not defend himself, preferring to let death come. In any case, the tortures inflicted on him by Yara have stripped him of all ability to fight, aside from the use of spells.

Assuming Yag-Kosha trusts the majority of the Player Characters, read the following section aloud to the players;

'I am very old; long and long ago I came to this planet with others of my world, from the green planet Yag, which circles forever in the outer fringe of this universe. We swept through space on mighty wings that drove us through the cosmos quicker than light. Defeated in our war with the kings of Yag, we were outcasts. But we could never return to Yag, for once we had settled here, our great wings withered from our shoulders. Here we lived, in quiet retreat from earthly life. We fought the strange and terrible forms of life, which then walked the earth, so that we became feared, and were not molested in the dim jungles of the east, where we had our abode.

'We saw men grow from the apes and build the shining cities of Valusia, Kamelia, Commoria and their sisters. We saw them reel before the thrusts of the heathen Atlanteans, Picts and Lemurians. We saw the oceans rise and engulf the world and the shining cities of civilisation. We saw the survivors of Pictdom and Atlantis build their primitive empires, before, once again, they fell into ruin as their peoples became locked in bloody wars. We saw the Picts sink into abysmal savagery and the Atlanteans devolve into apedom again. We saw new savages drift southward in conquering waves from the frigid north to build a new civilisation, with new kingdoms called Nemedia, Koth and Aquilonia. We saw the descendants of the Lemurians who had survived the cataclysm, rise again through savagery and ride westward, as Hyrkanians. And we saw this race of devils, survivors of the ancient civilisation that existed before Atlantis sank, come once more into culture and power – this accursed kingdom of Zamora.

'All this we saw, neither aiding nor hindering the immutable cosmic law, and one by one we died; for we of Yag are not immortal, though our lives are as the lives of planets and constellations. At last I alone was left, dreaming of old times among the ruined temples of jungle-shrouded Khitai, where I was worshipped as a god by an ancient yellow-skinned race. Then came Yara, versed in dark knowledge handed down through the days of barbarism, since before Atlantis sank.

'First he sat at my feet and learned wisdom. But he was not satisfied with what I taught him, for it was white magic, and he wished evil lore, to enslave kings and glut a fiendish ambition. I would teach him none of the black secrets I had learned, through no wish of my own, over the aeons.

'But Yara's wisdom was deeper than I had guessed; with guile learned among the dusky tombs of dark Stygia, he trapped me into divulging a secret I had not intended to bare; and turning my own power upon me, he enslaved me. Ah, gods of Yag, my cup has been bitter since that hour!

'He brought me up from the lost jungles of Khitai where the grey apes danced to the pipes of the yellow priests, and offerings of fruit and wine heaped my broken altars. No more was I a god to kindly jungle-folk – I was a slave to a devil in human form.

'He pent me in this tower, which at his command I built for him in a single night. By fire, rack and strange

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unearthly tortures you would not understand, he mastered me. In agony, I would long ago have taken my own life, if I could. But he kept me alive – mangled, blinded and broken – to do his foul bidding. And for three hundred years I have done so, from this marble couch, blackening my soul with cosmic sins, and staining my wisdom with crimes, because I had no other choice. Yet not all my ancient secrets has he wrested from me, and my last gift shall be the sorcery of the Blood and the Jewel.

'For I feel the end of time draw near. You are the hand of Fate. I beg of you, take the gem you will find on yonder altar.' With his trunk, Yag-Kosha indicates the great gem you noticed when you entered the room.

Once the Player characters have taken the *heart of the elephant* from its resting place, read the following section aloud to the players;

Yag-Kosha taps the centre of his chest with the end of his trunk and continues. 'Take your sword, and cut out my heart; then squeeze it so that the blood will flow over the stone. Then go you down these stairs and enter the ebony chamber where Yara sits wrapped in lotus-dreams of evil. Speak his name and he will awaken. Then lay this gem before him and say, 'Yag-Kosha gives you a last gift and a last enchantment.' Be swift, for it shall not take him long to learn of my death. Then get you from the tower quickly; fear not, your way shall be made clear. The life of man is not the life of Yag, nor is human death the death of Yag. Let me be free of this cage of broken flesh, and I will once more be Yogah of Yag, morning-crowned and shining, with wings to fly, and feet to dance, and eyes to see, and hands to break.'

Whether or not the Player Characters follow Yag-Kosha's instructions is, of course, entirely up to them. Vanku has no desire to do this, not wanting to become embroiled in a feud between a demon (as he sees Yag-Kosha) and a sorcerer. He would prefer to simply take the *heart of the elephant* and slip back out of the tower the way he came in. Yag-Kosha will beg the Player Characters not to do this, using every tactic he has learned from probing their minds, asking them to give him his chance for release and revenge. He is, despite his desperation, still an honourable creature, however, and will not attempt to use any manner of sorcerous compulsion on the Player Characters.

Though the plan Yag-Kosha proposes is likely the best chance the Player Characters have to defeat Yara, they are under no obligation to follow it. Indeed, if they have already defeated Yara, they have no reason to follow it, other than to show Yag-Kosha the mercy he deserves. Player Characters scholars may even be tempted to follow in Yara's footsteps, keeping Yag-Kosha alive to wring secrets from him while plumbing the mysteries of the *heart of the elephant*, using the Elephant Tower as a new headquarters. Alternatively, the Player Characters may be willing to put Yag-Kosha out of his misery, but unwilling to sacrifice an item of such power as the *heart of the elephant*. Games Masters may wish to remind Player Characters suddenly giddy at the thought of such power that the *heart of the elephant* is an incredibly powerful item, and once the fact of Yara's death is exposed, many, many eyes will be turning towards the new owners of the *heart of the elephant*.

However, this scenario assumes the Player Characters are more heroic than that, and choose to follow Yag-Kosha's wishes. As the Player Characters cut the heart from Yag-Kosha's chest and drain the blood from the still-beating organ over the gem, they will notice it absorbs the blood, as a sponge does water.

Although there seems to be vast wealth lying scattered about this room, in the form of rugs, golden furnishings and gems, all of it was created by Yag-Kosha the night he created the tower, and none of it will survive his death.

The Heart of the Elephant

The heart of the elephant is a large transparent gem, closely linked to Yag-Kosha. It stores the knowledge of a number of spells, allowing a sorcerer who is holding it to cast them without knowing them himself, once he has 'attuned' himself to the heart.

The attunement process requires a one-day ritual, during which the sorcerer expends some 3,000 silver pieces' worth of incenses and other consumables. At the end of this time he makes a Perform (ritual) check (DC 20), and if successful is regarded as attuned to the heart.

The following spells are available to a sorcerer who is attuned to the heart of the elephant, so long as he holds it in his hand: *lesser ill-fortune, ill-fortune, greater ill-fortune, shrinking doom, astrological prediction, dream of wisdom, visions, entrance, hypnotic suggestion, conjuring, telekinesis, greater telekinesis, magic builder.*

The heart of the elephant can also be used by a Yaggite to pass on a curse after his own death. The Yaggite must arrange for his own blood to be used to bathe the gem in. He names the target of the curse. That target is affected by a *hypnotic suggestion* to pick up the gem, the instant he sees it. He may make a Will save as usual to avoid the *hypnotic suggestion*, but the DC is set by the magic attack roll of the now-deceased Yaggite when alive. The named character can be affected by the *hypnotic suggestion* even if he would usually be immune by virtue of his hit dice. If he does pick up the gem, he is immediately struck down by the chosen curse, with no saving throw. If the curse was *shrinking doom*, the named character will be sucked into the heart of the elephant itself at the conclusion of the spell, there to remain trapped forever.

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Manufacturing Costs: 297,000 sp.; 29,700 xp; caster level 20th; spells required: *lesser ill-fortune, ill-fortune, greater ill-fortune, shrinking doom, astrological prediction, dream of wisdom, visions, entrance, hypnotic suggestion.*

EMPTY ROOM (5:2)

This room is empty except for some old crates, and a giant spider nesting near the ceiling.

Giant Spider

Medium Animal (vermin): HD: 2d8+4 (13 hp); **Init:** +3; **Spd:** 30 ft., climb 20 ft.; **DV:** 14; **DR:** 1; **BAB/Grp:** +1/+1; **Atk:** Bite +4 finesse melee; **Full Atk:** Bite +4 finesse melee; **Dmg:** 1d8 plus poison; **Space/Reach:** 5 ft. (1)/5 ft. (1); **SA:** Poison (injury, save DC 16, initial damage 2d6 Con, secondary damage 1d4 Con), Web; **SQ:** Vermin qualities, Darkvision 60 ft., Tremorsense 60 ft.; **SV:** Fort +4, Ref +3, Will +0; Str 11, Dex 17, Con 12, Int –, Wis 10, Cha 2
Skills & Feats: Climb +19, Hide +7, Jump +4, Spot +8; Alertness, Run

Poison (Ex): A giant spider has a poisonous bite (save DC 16, initial damage 2d6 Con, secondary damage 1d4 Con).

STORAGE ROOM (5:3)

This room is half filled with crates, rolled-up carpets and dozens of other possessions Yara has stored here. Like the Empty Room (5:2), there is a giant spider spinning its web near the ceiling.

Giant Spider

Medium Animal (vermin): HD: 2d8+4 (13 hp); **Init:** +3; **Spd:** 30 ft., climb 20 ft.; **DV:** 14; **DR:** 1; **BAB/Grp:** +1/+1; **Atk:** Bite +4 finesse melee; **Full Atk:** Bite +4 finesse melee; **Dmg:** 1d8 plus poison; **Space/Reach:** 5 ft. (1)/5 ft. (1); **SA:** Poison (injury, save DC 16, initial damage 2d6 Con, secondary damage 1d4 Con), Web; **SQ:** Vermin qualities, Darkvision 60 ft., Tremorsense 60 ft.; **SV:** Fort +4, Ref +3, Will +0; Str 11, Dex 17, Con 12, Int –, Wis 10, Cha 2
Skills & Feats: Climb +19, Hide +7, Jump +4, Spot +8; Alertness, Run

Poison (Ex): A giant spider has a poisonous bite (save DC 16, initial damage 2d6 Con, secondary damage 1d4 Con).

SCRYING ROOM (5:4)

In the middle of this room, atop a stand of pure black jet, sits a perfect globe of crystal some 18 inches in diameter. It is a *crystal ball of speech and vision* (as described in *Conan the Roleplaying Game*), created for Yara by Yag-Kosha. Yara rarely comes here any longer, and the floor and crystal ball itself are coated with a thin film of dust. So long as Yag-Kosha is still alive, the Player Characters are free to make use of the crystal ball, should they desire to do so, but the Rule of Impermanence will destroy the item soon after Yag-Kosha dies.

SIXTH STOREY AND ROOF

Depending upon how the Player Characters choose to enter the Tower of the Elephant, this may well be the first place they go. As mentioned earlier, Vanku wishes to attempt to scale the sides of the tower, and has brought his *rope of dead women's hair* for that very purpose. If the Player Characters choose to enter through the Secret Door (IG1) or through the Lions' Den (IG2), however, it is entirely possible, even likely, that they will never see the roof of the tower.

CENTRAL STAIR (G2)

This is the top of the Central Stair, the end of the shaft piercing the middle of the Elephant Tower, from the Main Hall (G1) to this point. It terminates here in a small room of softly glowing white stone, with a single door of pure gold in the western wall.

DEN OF THE GUARDIAN (6:1)

The walls, ceiling and floor of this glittering room are of white marble, the walls set with great white gems that glow brightly. Doors made of pure gold pierce its eastern and western walls – the door to the east leading to the top of the Central Stair (G2) of the Elephant Tower, while the door to the west opens upon the Rooftop (6:2). At first glance, there seems to be nothing but three silken couches, embroidered in gold and worked with strange serpentine designs, as well as several mahogany chests bound with silver. Most are closed with heavy golden locks, but two are open, and a riot of jewels spills from them onto the floor. These jewels were created along with the Elephant Tower itself, and will disappear along with it when the Rule of Impermanence takes effect. Meanwhile, however, the jewels are here for one simple reason – a precaution placed by Yara, a means of distracting any would-be thieves long enough for the room's guardian to dispose of them. It is here that Yara keeps the largest and strongest of his giant spiders, a monster of a beast and a canny fighter that will fall mercilessly on any intruders to its domain.

Guardian Spider

Large Animal (vermin): HD: 4d8+8 (28 hp); **Init:** +2; **Spd:** 40 ft., climb 30 ft.; **DV:** 16; **DR:** 3; **BAB/Grp:** +2/+5; **Atk:** Bite +5 finesse melee; **Full Atk:** Bite +5 finesse melee; **Dmg:** 1d10 plus poison; **Space/Reach:** 5 ft. (1)/5 ft. (1); **SA:** Poison (injury, save DC 16, initial damage 2d6 Con, secondary

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damage 1d4 Con), Web; **SQ:** Vermin qualities, Darkvision 60 ft., Tremorsense 60 ft.; **SV:** Fort +5, Ref +3, Will +0; Str 12, Dex 17, Con 14, Int –, Wis 10, Cha 2
Skills & Feats: Climb +19, Hide +9, Jump +6, Spot +8; Alertness, Run

Poison (Ex): A guardian spider has a poisonous bite (save DC 20, initial damage 2d8 Con, secondary damage 2d6 Str).

The Rooftop (6:2)

The deep blue stone set with flecks of gold of the Elephant Tower's rooftop is contained within a four foot tall, gemmed retaining ledge. Near the western edge of the tower stands a chamber built atop the roof, constructed of the same silvery material as the walls of the tower, though unlike the main shaft of the tower, the exterior walls of this chamber are adorned with various swirling designs picked out in small gems. The only apparent way into the tower is through the door in the western wall of the chamber, a golden portal whose surface is moulded to seem like scales, crusted with jewels that gleam like ice.

Lying on the roof in front of the door is a skeleton, wrapped in tattered rags of clothing. This is the corpse of Taurus of Nemedia, slain by the guardian spider in the Den of the Guardian (6:1) when he made his attempt on the Elephant Tower many years ago. If the Player Characters examine the corpse, they will find an old copper tube, turned green with exposure to the weather, as well as a rotting coil of what seems to be thin cord (Taurus' *rope of dead women's hair*) and a rusting poniard amongst the rags and bones. These few clues will be enough for Vanku, if he is with the Player Characters, to surmise this is the corpse of Taurus the Nemedian, Vanku's father. The copper tube was used by Taurus to carry and deliver the green lotus blossom poison he used to dispatch the lions in the Inner Garden, though none of the deadly poison remains here now.

Yara is aware of the corpse's presence on the roof, but has never seen any need to remove it. Vanku, however, will be determined to take his father's body out of this place, and will insist on coming back to retrieve it before confronting Yara.

Conclusion

The conclusion of *The Tower of the Elephant* depends completely upon the actions taken by the Player Characters in the scenario. Have they shown mercy to Yag-Kosha, using the *heart of the elephant* against Yara as in Howard's original short story? Have they defeated Yara through their own fortitude and skill, and now seek to take his place, occupying the Elephant Tower and wringing secrets from Yag-Kosha's tortured mind? Or have they taken a path somewhere in between those two?

Assuming the Player Characters make it out of the Elephant Tower alive, having dealt with Yara and his captive, Yag-Kosha, read the following section aloud to the players;

Into the waving green gardens of the tower's grounds you burst, and as the dawn wind blows the cool fragrance of its luxuriant growths over you, you start as if waking from a dream. Turning back uncertainly, you stare at the cryptic tower you have just left. Bewitched and enchanted? Have you dreamed all that seems to have passed? As you look over the gleaming tower, now swaying against the crimson dawn, its jewel-crusted rim sparkles in the growing light, before crashing into shining shards.

As Howard Wrote It

If the Player Characters followed Yag-Kosha's wishes and used the *heart of the elephant* to destroy Yara, they will have only a few minutes to flee the Elephant Tower, past the now-dead guards, before the Rule of Impermanence takes effect. The tower will creak and groan mightily, swaying in the sky like a tree thrashed by a gale, before tumbling in upon itself with a great roar. The sound of the tower's fall will certainly attract attention, and the Player Characters may or may not wish to be around for that. Regardless, word will eventually get out that they are responsible for Yara's defeat, earning them a substantial bonus in Reputation.

At first, the people of Arenjun will avoid the ruins of the tower, but within a day or two the lure of potential wealth will grow too great, and the boldest of Arenjun's inhabitants will begin to pick at the remains. Whether the site of the tower is eventually excavated in search of treasures within, or whether some terrible curse strikes down the looters, is left up to the Games Master.

Taking Yara's Place

If the Player Characters do not follow Yag-Kosha's wishes, instead keeping him alive in his tortured body in the Elephant Tower and using the *heart of the elephant* for their own ends, they will gain a good deal of Reputation, though perhaps not the kind of Reputation they would like. Even if they do slay Yag-Kosha, but do not wash the *heart of the elephant* with his blood, and leave the Tower of the Elephant behind as an abandoned grave for Yag-Kosha and Yara, taking the still-functional gemstone with them, they will still become the object of a great deal of unwanted attention. The *heart of the elephant* is an artefact of unspeakable power, an item many a sorcerer would like to get his hands on, and while it is in their possession, perhaps the Player Characters can expect an unwelcome visit from the most infamous sorcerer of all, Thoth-Amon…

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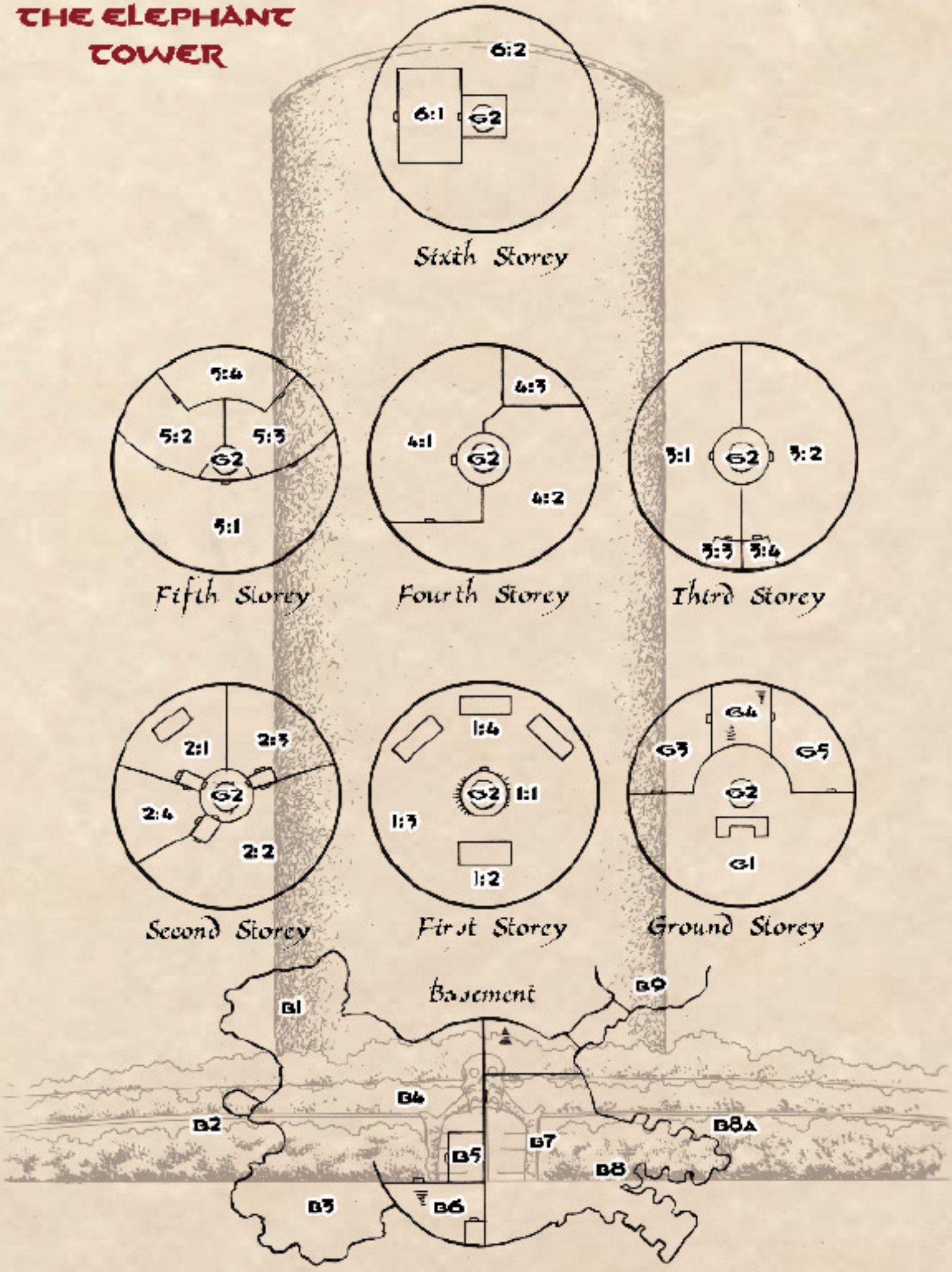
THE ELEPHANT TOWER



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CONAN®

AND THE TOWER OF THE ELEPHANT

In the Zamorian city of Arenjun, amidst the gleaming, golden shrines of the city's temple district, stands a single tower. Surrounded by a walled, tiered garden, the tower thrusts high into the Zamorian sky, its perfect surface, unmarred by doors or windows, encrusted with gems, shining like a beacon to the heavens. The Elephant Tower stands aloof, impenetrable and alien, a glittering edifice utterly out of place in the sprawling squalor of Arenjun. It is the abode of High Priest Yara and the resting place of the Elephant's Heart, thought to be the most valuable jewel in the world, and the secret of Yara's power.

Throughout all of Zamora, rumours of the tower are as common as the flies in Arenjun's Maul. In every rotting slum or haven of lawless revelry that shelters the country's infamous thieves, murderers and mercenaries, lunatics, prostitutes and fugitives there is a tale to accompany the mysterious gleaming tower. It is said that the tower was built in the space of a single night, that it is formed of purest silver and that the towering spire, blindingly bright by day but glimmering like water beneath the moonlight, is the resting place of dark gods. Even the bravest men whisper the tower's name, wary of Yara's power and influence, and accounts of the tower's bestial and unnatural guardians, said to ceaselessly patrol the surrounding gardens. What lurks in the tower's many levels no one can say; the rumours of its contents and denizens seem more akin to nightmares given voice than anything that could walk abroad in Hyboria. No matter the verity of these rumours, one thing is known to be absolute truth – somewhere amidst the tower's labyrinthine corridors and floors the Elephant's Heart awaits. Despite this, the tower and its master are talismans of terror, even to the fearless rogues of Zamora and despite the fabulous wealth its glittering walls surely contain, no thief has yet had the courage to assay Yara's cursed tower – at least, none have returned alive.

Conan and the Tower of the Elephant is the first in a new series of Classic Conan adventure scenarios based directly on the original stories of Robert E. Howard, allowing the Player Characters to undertake the very adventures that the mighty Cimmerian once endured.

Conan and the Tower of the Elephant is designed for four to six Player Characters of between 4th and 6th character level and combines situations and encounters that will require a mix of skills to survive and overcome. This adventure gives Player Characters the opportunity to test their mettle against the greatest of challenges and walk the path of Hyboria's most famous adventurer.

CLASSIC CONAN

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