

ART OF WUXIA

Adventure for 3-6 Rank 1 Characters,
by Jim Alcala Sales.

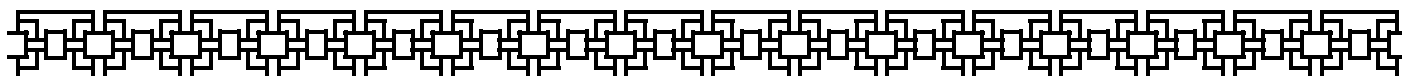
Legends of Willow Bridge: Chapter 1

WHITE BREATH CAVE



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Dedication

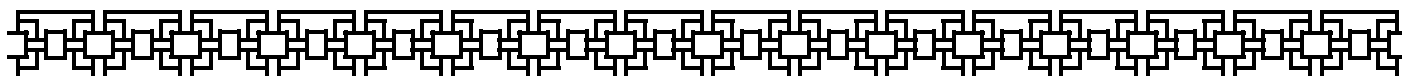
To my dear friends Brian and Pat, for seeing me through the creative desert till I got to the other side.

About this Adventure

This adventure is designed to get both novice GMs and those new to the wuxia genre up to speed with helpful tips sprinkled throughout. The story is tightly focused and serves as the introduction to a series of adventures that will expand upon the village of Willow Bridge and the problems the characters can help solve there.

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Organization of this Adventure

This is the first in a series called *Legends of Willow Bridge*, a collection of heroic adventures centering in and around this village. GMs should read the entire adventure prior to play to familiarize themselves with the story, characters, maps, and setting.

Throughout the adventure you will find text in gray boxes. This is meant to be read aloud or paraphrased to the players.

This introductory adventure is divided into three parts, and is designed to be run in a few sessions.

Part 1: Green Lily Tea House

The characters arrive in the village and stop at the Green Lily. They get involved in a scuffle with some local bandits, and meet some important NPCs. They learn of White Breath Cave and take up a quest to defeat the rising evil there.

Part 2: The Journey

The characters follow the trail left behind by the bandits encountered in Part 1, trekking across the hilly forested wilderness of Longzhi. They encounter several dangers before arriving at their destination.

Part 3: White Breath Cave

The characters find the intimidating entrance to White Breath Cave and brave its depths, wherein they face dangerous Ming cultists and more bandits, along with various other creatures and dangers. If successful, surviving characters will recover treasures and leads to further adventures.

When they return to the village after dealing with the evils of White Breath Cave, they will have taken the first steps to become Legends of Willow Bridge.

Adventure Background

Our story begins five years ago when a xia named Mang Zhao followed up on rumors that Ming cultists had reclaimed an ancient site of evil, once used by the Ming Sorcerers of old. While Mang Zhao's kung fu was strong and he succeeded in defeating a great evil, he was gravely injured in the process. Stumbling from the cave, he made his way to the small village of Willow Bridge where he was nursed back to health by the kind proprietress of the Green Lily Teahouse. There were no more sightings of Ming cultists in the area until recently.

GM

Several sample characters are in *Art of Wuxia* starting on page 48. An additional sample character is presented along with ready-made character backgrounds, at the end of this adventure. All would make perfect starting characters. Feel free to use them as is or change them as you like. They are designed to get a group of characters playing together right away with some interrelated story hooks you can pursue as you like.

Why a dungeon?

This introductory adventure serves to get a group of players and GM playing the *Art of Wuxia* role-playing game. It also serves to introduce various game mechanics and tropes of the wuxia genre. A large portion of the adventure features a dungeon. The dungeon helps the GM and players find their footing in what is likely a different genre than they are used to. It also helps simplify both GM and player decisions by providing clear adventure boundaries. Dungeons are also a part of wuxia. This shows experienced gamers they can use some of the tropes they know so well.

Where to Place Willow Bridge

We've made it easy for you to place this small village and adventure anywhere you like, whether in Longzhi or your own setting. Just place the village near a large lake. The large lake will be used in future chapters of this adventure series. Remember that with the scale of the Longzhi map you could place this village and lake in any rural hex.

Characters

This adventure is for a group of 3-6 rank 1 characters who will face a variety of challenges, so a group with mixed skills will do well. Kung fu, of course, will be needed.

Getting the Characters Involved

The characters have traveled to a teahouse located in the village of Willow Bridge. They may have been sent by a district magistrate to find out what is going on with Willow Bridge. They may have heard of the depredations of the bandits and want to stop them. They may have heard of nearby wilderness ruins containing treasure or secret knowledge. They may be part of a special commission sent to look into the rumors of Ming cultists (see Report on Ming cultists at the end of this adventure). This adventure begins with them seated at a table in The Green Lily. It is mid-morning.

Setting

The village of Willow Bridge has a teahouse (The Green Lily), a stables, a cobbler (Mang Zhao), a cloth seller, a general goods shop which has a 60% chance of having any items from the General Equipment and Costs table on page 44 of *Art of Wuxia* that costs 10tl or less.

Part 1: The Green Lily Teahouse

The proprietress, Mother Chong, introduces herself and enthusiastically greets you with a beautiful smile and knowing look. She seats you at a square table upstairs where you have a view out the open windows and down to the main floor below. Noting that the table smells of fresh lacquer, you glance around and notice signs of recent repair to many of the furnishings. Mother Chong places a cup of chopsticks, a hot kettle of tea and cups for each of you on the table. The teahouse has a kitchen, a serving counter and tables on the first floor, and some additional tables and rooms for rent on the second floor.



Mother Chong
Teahouse Proprietress 60

Mother Chong loves to banter with her guests, and is a shrewd judge of character. Assume that she can pick out any one descriptor of any character and prompt the player to role-play that descriptor. She will focus on positive descriptors rather than negative ones.

On the Menu

Dishes available at the Green Lily include fish broth noodle soup, steamed buns, fish fried with peppers, braised duck, steamed chicken with vegetables and several varieties of sweet cakes that rotate on a daily basis. Rates are 1-3tl depending on the amount of food ordered. Three varieties of rice wine are also available, ranging from sweet to dry, 1tl for a bowl, 3tl for a small jug. The tea is always complementary to guests. Rooms are available at 5tl per night.

Playing New Roles

Use this opportunity for the players to describe their characters, introduce some of their backgrounds, and any descriptors that may be appropriate. Mother Chong is there to prompt them, so use her as needed to help the players bring out their character's traits and mannerisms.

Refer to the map of The Green Lily on page 22,
or: dwdstudios.com/files/GreenLily.png

Other Patrons

There are only two other patrons at this time of day. Two men are playing a game of weiqi (go) at a table by an open window. One of them who is facing you is a skinny, old, weathered man, the other whose back is to you is bearded and has a wild, disheveled look to him. Curiously, the old man states the column and row he places his piece in. You see that the disheveled man is blind, or at least his eyes are covered by a faded cloth tied at the back of his head. The blind man touches his bowl of white stones, selects one and places it on the board. The old man jumps up from his seat and animatedly wags a finger at his companion. "Why did you do that? Are becoming peculiar? Or, wait, you're baiting me! Just waiting for me to take the next obvious move so you can pounce like a tiger on a goat! Well, I might be an old goat, but I won't fall for your trap." The blind man takes a quiet sip of his tea and says nothing. The old man stares at the board frowning and slowly sits back down in his seat concentrating on the game.

The old man is called Old Man Radish and his blind companion is Mang Zhao, both detailed below. But first...

Encounter 1: Fight in a Teahouse

A group of ruffians burst in through the door. They begin turning over tables, threatening Mother Chong and demanding money, food and sacks to carry it in. As soon as they notice the heroes, they rush to attack. Roll for Initiative!

Desperate Bandits (4 per PC)

Bandit 45 (staff 1D+3, 0-1tl)

These bandits won't fight to the death. If more than half of them are defeated, the rest surrender and beg for mercy. During the fight, Mother Chong and her staff hide in the kitchen. Old Man Radish hides under a table, while Mang Zhao simply sits and listens to the fight. The bandits don't seem interested in them.

If the desperate bandits are interrogated they reveal the following bits of information:

- 1) They were working for four scary men.
- 2) The four scary men wore black silk robes with yellow sashes.
- 3) The leader was named Ghost Eye.
- 4) They thought they were hired as general laborers to dig in some cave.
- 5) They snuck away three nights ago as the cave terrified them and some had been killed right after entering.
- 6) Some of the meaner or more desperate laborers stayed with Ghost Eye.
- 7) After fleeing their employers they became quite lost in the wilderness until they chanced upon Willow Bridge.
- 8) The cave was shaped like a demon's face and had white breath!
- 9) They heard that the yellow sashed men are going to find some terrible demon relic and unleash it on the region, starting with the sacrifice of all the people of Willow Bridge!

Our First Teahouse Brawl

Use this encounter as a chance to get used to initiative, and to have the heroes try things like Chaff Before the Wind, offensive strike or using multiple actions to take out foes that are not very dangerous. Characters with an internal kung fu style can use lightness to easily move between the balcony and the main floor. If anyone has the Leader skill make sure you ask them if they want to use any of their pre-initiative abilities. Also remember that these fights don't have to be to the death. The victor of the fight decides if the defeated is killed or knocked out when they reach OBP. See page 58 of *Art of Wuxia* under Damage.

Aftermath

The bandits just wanted food and some money to travel far away from here. They plead with the heroes to let them go. Due to recent kidnappings there is a shortage of general laborers in village, so that is an option that many of them would be thankful for. The players should decide their fate. They are the xia after all.

Information Delivery

When you want to get information to your players consider following this 3-step method to get them involved: 1) let them discover it for themselves, 2) give them an obvious clue, 3) tell them about it. This method ensures that your players learn what you want them to learn. Inquisitive players will catch clues early, but if they are side tracked by something else this method ensures they learn about the story hook you provide. See an example of this at the beginning of Encounter 2 below.



Encounter 2: Old Man Radish and Mang Zhao

Several things can guide the players to Old Man Radish and Mang Zhao. The characters may want to check on them and see if they are all right. Mother Chong can tell the characters that Mang Zhao used to travel these lands and might know where this cave is located. Finally, Mang Zhao may announce that he knows this cave and has been there once. And failing that, Mang Zhao will make his way to the characters and state that he has long waited for some heroes to arrive in Willow Bridge for he has a task worthy of their attention.

Old Man Radish

Farmer 66 (unarmed ½D, 4tl).

Old Man Radish is a simple farmer who grows a peculiar form of radish leaf that when burned drives bugs away. His friend, Mang Zhao, never leaves Willow Bridge, so Old Man Radish makes the 2-hour trip once a week to see his friend and play weiqi. Old Man Radish is quite the talker. He has some homemade hooch in his pack and gladly shares it. He also shares any information he has on Willow Bridge and makes a point to mention the wonderful food and beautiful proprietress of the Green Lily Teahouse, Mother Chong. His friend Mang Zhao is a cobbler and can fix the characters' shoes if needed, and at a really great price since you are all now fast friends.

Vows Mean Something

Here is an opportunity for the players to make a vow to help Mang Zhao. Remember that fulfilling a vow is worth 1 Cultivation Point. Point this out to the players if it looks like they might miss this opportunity.

The Quest and What Mang Zhao Knows

The cave is called White Breath Cave and was a meeting place for the evil Ming Sorcerers of old. They left many dangers behind and five years ago Mang Zhao defeated a great evil there. He refuses to name it. During the battle he was badly injured and left some important items behind; items the characters may take if they promise to dispose of the four with the yellow sashes. They are Ming cultists, thoroughly wicked and no doubt up to something very evil. In addition, he had been following rumors that this cave contained a chapter of the legendary Battle Scroll (see page 70 of *Art of Wuxia* for more information). More than anything, Mang Zhao does not want to see that relic fall into evil hands.

Of his personal gear, Mang Zhao left the following in the cave: a brass wu lou (page 70 of *Art of Wuxia*), a threadbare head scarf which can keep you alive even in a blizzard (Hat of the Comfortable Beggar, page 71 of *Art of Wuxia*) and his scabbard (Scabbard of the Fray, page 74 of *Art of Wuxia*). Forget the sword, it is no doubt ruined by now.

Any character with a level in Scholar would know the history of the Ming Sorcerers, how bad the new Ming cultists are and how they endeavor to learn the evil powers of the past.

But before they leave!

Mother Chong is very thankful for the help the heroes provided and will supply them with some odds and ends she has acquired from travelers over the years, for a small fee of course.

Mother Chong has a 40% chance of having any weapon with a list value of 10tl or less, and has 1 Pill of the Ox (+10 STR for one encounter) and 1 Heavenly Pill (1D healing) that she will give to the group for free. She will also pack some food for them to take, and a couple bottles of wine (equal to 1 meal and 5 days of rations each).



Mang Zhao

Rank 5, 100, Mystic, Scholar, Warrior of the Willow Blade Song Style, 2D+4 Damage (unarmed), 90 BP, Resist 65, no techniques available at this time as he has made a vow not to use his kung fu.

Mang Zhao is blind, but his hearing is acute. He speaks in a direct manner and questions the characters' motivations.

Mang Zhao is a master of the Willow Blade Song style, but has foresworn the use of his kung fu. He is both loved by some and despised by others in the village. Some supply him with free food, clothes and basic needs; others castigate him and treat him with disdain.

Part 2: The Journey



The bandits left an easy trail to follow. A scout roll is not needed to follow it. However, characters may make a challenging (-10) Scout roll to intuit the path of the bandits and allow a shortcut. If successful, skip encounter 3. It is two (or two-and-a-half) days travel through the hilly forest wilderness with 3-4 encounters along the way.

Encounter 1: Tiger on the prowl

A tiger has been following the bandits' trail looking for an easy meal. It is hungry and has been following the scent of humans for several hours now. It will gladly attack the party.



Tiger (Animal)

A great cat, both feared and revered.

STR	80	BP	65	Rank	3
DEX	65	INIT	2	Nature	Neutral
LOG	20	DR	0	Travel	15 leagues
WIL	40	MOV	15		

- **Claw or Bite** – 65%, damage 3D
- **Stealthy** – 85%, stealth. Attempting to spot a sneaking tiger LOG-20. +10 attack and damage if sneak attack is successful.

Encounter 2: Deserters

One of the four “scary men” has decided this venture isn’t worth it. He has abandoned his fellow cultists, bringing most of the hired ruffians along. They are resting and eating lunch when encountered.

Two Shadow Fung (yellow sash)
Rank 2, 70, Sorcerer, 1D+4 Damage (jian 2D+1), 60 BP, Resist 60, Blessing/Curse, Offensive Strike (black strangling shadows), One Demon Bag (page 70 of *Art of Wuxia*), 4Dtl.

This bald Ming cultist wears black silk robes with a yellow sash. He has a strange magic sigil tattooed on his forehead indicating he has taken innocent life for the cause of the Ming cultists (the Scholar skill’s Historian ability could reveal this). He is willing to avoid a battle with the heroes if they give him 100tl or something of equal value.

Bandits (2 per PC)
Bandit 60 (dao 2D+2, ½Dtl)

These bandits are much more hardened than the previous ones. As long as the sorcerer is alive, they will fight to the death for him since he saved them from White Breath Cave.

“Encounter”

The term *encounter* is used often in this and other adventures and refers to the characters encountering *something*. Not all encounters need end in bloodshed, and wise players will learn when it is and is not heroic to draw blades and cast spells.

Encounter 3: Those aren't vines!

There are three hard-to-see (-20 LOG) green snakes sunning themselves along this part of the trail. They will bite if threatened. The bodies of two desperate bandits lie nearby, their skin discolored with dark blotches.

Anyone with the Alchemist skill can determine these bandits were poisoned by the snakes. The bandits have 0-1tl each. They have nothing else of value.

Snake, Green (Animal)

A small poisonous snake.

STR	5	BP	5	Rank	1
DEX	30	INIT	1	Nature	Neutral
LOG	5	DR	0	Travel	5 leagues
WIL	15	MOV	12		

- **Bite** – 55%, damage ½D and poison (Mild, Resist STR-20, Damage 1D for 2 turns and weakened for 1 day).

Encounter 4: Ghostly Reflection

This lowland is mist-covered, with a large pond in the middle. The trail skirts the edge of the pond.

This hollow has collected the mists from White Breath Cave for many, many years. The pond is the lair of two Water Ghosts who will likely attack with surprise.

Surprising Heroes

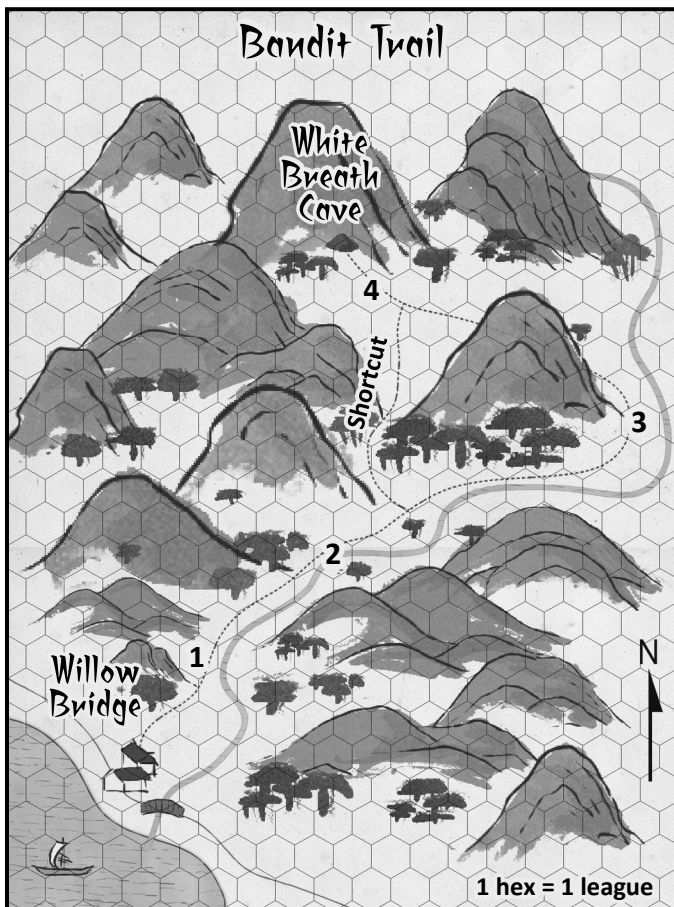
Surprise! It is likely that the Water Ghosts surprise the PCs unless they are taking adequate precautions or have the Danger Sense technique. If not, give them the Surprised condition for the first turn of combat.

Water Ghost (Demon)

These are pale bloated human-looking demons that drag the living underwater to drown them.

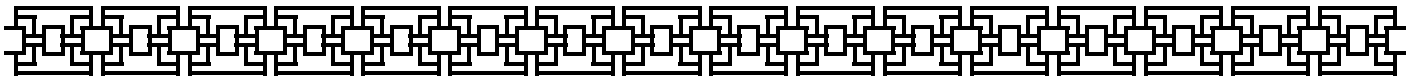
STR	80	BP	30	Rank	2
DEX	30	INIT	1	Nature	Evil
LOG	20	DR	2	Travel	5 leagues
WIL	40	MOV	8 (swim 10)		

- **Snatch** – 80%, as the hold technique (opposed STR check to break free).
- **Drown** – each round the water ghost maintains its hold it inflicts 1D damage. See Holding Breath page 65 of *Art of Wuxia*.
- **Demon** – affected normally by magic weapons and spells (half damage from all other attacks).



Color version: dwdstudios.com/files/trailmap.png

Part 3: White Breath Cave



You've followed the bandits' trail up and away from the mist-covered pond and its lurking death. The land slopes up to the foot of a rugged cliff. The white mist that pools around your feet seems to be flowing down to the pond and small valley below. As you continue to follow the bandits' tracks you notice that the trees have become sickly, with bulbous knots on their trunks and curled and misshapen leaves. The forest and all vegetation ends about 20 feet from the cliff-face. Your concern turns from the mist around your feet to the terrifying cave entrance looming ahead. The source of the mist is the gaping maw of a horrific demon, its eyes and horns carved into the cliff above the cave's entrance. Where it emerges from the cave "mouth," the mist is thickest and is about 2 feet deep, completely concealing the ground beneath. There is evidence that the Ming cultists and bandits made camp here. The remains of a camp fire still gives off some smoke and several empty crates imply they brought enough supplies to last a few weeks.

The Mist

The mist is poisonous, but only slightly. The heroes would have to be exposed to it for many days before it began to affect them. An alchemist can determine this easily, no roll necessary. Determining the actual effects is a challenging (-10) Alchemist roll. This poison will do 1BP of damage to any living thing for each week of exposure. A sorcerer can use Raw Talent to determine that the mist is indeed magical. The mist emanates an aura of evil detectable to anyone using the mystic's Harmony Sense ability.

Encounter 1: Mist Filled Halls

The mist is thick to about 2 feet off the floor. These halls are dark, so the characters will need their own light.

Play upon the characters' fears of mysterious unknown threats; they can't see where they're stepping. There could be debris underfoot. They'll certainly become concerned once they encounter the first of three pits hidden in these mists!

Pit Trap



Avoid DEX-20 (because of mist); Notice Thief+0; Disarm N/A; Range N/A; Usage unlimited; Duration instant; Resist DEX-10; Effect 1D damage (bypass DR).

The Cave

The walls of this "cave" are smooth stone, shaped by the mighty magics of the Ming Sorcerers long ago. The cave is not lit, unless specifically mentioned. Doors do not have locks unless specifically noted. Ceilings are 10' high.

Once discovered these pit traps can be avoided by carefully walking (half movement) on the narrow walkway along either side of the pit.

Refer to the map of White Breath Cave on page 23, or: dwdstudios.com/files/WhiteBreathCave.png

Encounter 2: The Font

This room has a demon face on the north wall. The mist pours forth from its nostrils. Shackles are set into the walls all around the room. Two intact skeletons remain shackled to the wall. They lunge at you in their restraints but cannot hurt you if you stay away from them. You can feel more bones are scattered under the mist.

The skeletons have been animated by the evil mist. They can easily be dispatched. If the skeletons in the shackles are attacked, 5 more skeletons will animate from the bones on the floor. This will only happen once.

There is no apparent way to shut off the mist but clever players may figure out a way of permanently blocking the mist from coming out.

Skeletons (Animated)

Animated bones of the dead.

STR	40	BP	10	Rank	1
DEX	50	INIT	1	Nature	Neutral
LOG	0	DR	0	Travel	5 leagues
WIL	0	MOV	6		

- **By Weapon** – 45% (currently unarmed ½D, will try to acquire weapons from players).
- **Bony** – vulnerable to lightning (damage x2)
- **Animated** – created by the animate spell, can be dispelled. Immune to charm, cold, and poison.

Encounter 3: Robe Room

This room contains pegs on the wall where the Ming sorcerers would hang ceremonial robes they used when praying at the font. The robes have long since turned to useless, tattered rags. The mist stops at the doorways to the north and west and will not cross those thresholds.

Encounter 4: Storage Room

This room is filled with broken and collapsed racks and shelves.

If the characters spend any time looking through the debris they find a threadbare, but intact, scarf hanging on one of the broken shelves. It is clearly not as ancient as other items in this place. The scarf detects as magical to anyone using the Sorcerer ability Raw Talent. This is one of Mang Zhao's possessions, left behind when he fled the cave (Hat of the Comfortable Beggar, page 71 of *Art of Wuxia*).

There is some very old wine in a small cask. It would be worth 50tl to a connoisseur.

Encounter 5: Dining Hall

This was once a communal dining hall. Many of the tables and stools have fallen apart. There is light and the sounds of cooking and the chatter of voices coming from the room to the west.

If the characters make any loud noises they'll alert the cultists in the kitchen.

Encounter 6: Kitchen

A Ming cultist and 5 bandits are in this room. They have several lanterns with them. They are currently preparing a meal by dicing food they brought with them and heating oil in the two huge woks that sit over lit brick ovens. Six crates are stacked in a corner. Two contain provisions (40 days of rations) and 4 are empty.

The woks can be used as large improvised weapons (page 42 of *Art of Wuxia*), treat anyone doused with the hot oil as if they came in contact with moderate strength acid (page 64 of *Art of Wuxia*).

WHITE BREATH CAVE

Bone Claw

(yellow sash)

Rank 2, 70, Sorcerer, 1D+4 damage (spear 2D R20), 60 BP, Resist 60, Hinder, Offensive Strike (spray of sharpened bones), two heavenly pills (2D Healing each), 3Dtl.

This bearded cultist wears black silk robes with a yellow sash. He has plaited his beard and added small animal skulls as beads. He will fight to the death.

Bandits (5)

Bandit 60 (dao 2D+2, ½Dtl). These bandits will surrender if three of them are defeated.

Encounter 7: Sleeping Quarters

This was once a simple barracks with multiple beds separated by screens. The screens and beds have since decayed to uselessness. There are twelve small metal lock boxes. All are locked requiring a challenging (-10) Thief roll to open. There are 1D-3tl in each. One contains an ivory comb worth 1Dx10tl to any antique dealer or museum.

Encounter 8: Sitting Room

This room once had several nice chairs. There are some functioning lanterns but they are not lit. On the floor are two dead bandits (½Dtl each). They died from what look like very sharp cuts.

There is a key with a faded yellow tassel sitting on a small stone table. (This key opens the locked door in room 11). The key detects as magical with the Sorcerer Raw Talent ability (no skill roll needed) and has an evil aura noticed with the Harmony Sense ability of a Mystic (skill roll needed). The table itself is nicely carved but is very heavy (requiring several characters with a combined STR of 125 or higher to carry). If hauled out of this complex it could sell for 200tl.

Encounter 9: Paper Cuts

This was once a library. Angled shelves along the walls once held hundreds of scrolls. Most of the scrolls look like they have crumbled over time but a few here and there look like they are still readable as they were made of sturdy bamboo strips. The remains of small tables with paper weights lie in piles everywhere. As you enter the room, several pieces of paper are tossed about as if by a breeze and flip off a shelf here, from under a broken table there. Then you see them for what they are. They look like small paper cutouts shaped like people wielding tiny paper swords. Then, in the blink of an eye, they enlarge to life-sized paper warriors and attack!

There are 2 paper warriors plus 1 per PC.

Paper Warrior (Animated)

Small, paper cutout of a warrior.

STR	40	BP	10	Rank	1
DEX	50	INIT	2	Nature	Neutral
LOG	0	DR	0	Travel	5 leagues
WIL	0	MOV	8		

- **By Weapon** – 55%, jian 2D+1
- **Enlarge** – able to change size from small, page-sized cutout to human-sized.
- **Stealthy** – 80% stealth
- **Animated** – created by the animate spell, can be dispelled. Immune to charm, cold, and poison.

A thorough examination of the readable scrolls in this room reveals the approximate locations of three other sites, likely now in ruins, that were valuable to the Ming Sorcerers of old.

Encounter 10: Room of Exalted Glories

Strangely, the mist from the hallway will not enter this room. This hall has 10 nooks containing skulls carved into the east and west walls. A translucent blue figure of a tall, beautiful woman in ancient Wodan monk robes seems to pour out of the eye sockets of one skull to flow and take shape before you.

This restless spirit has awoken from her slumber due to the activities of the Ming cultists. She doesn't remember her name, but remembers she killed 87 Ming Sorcerers when she was alive and wishes to fight anyone she finds, confusing them for Ming Sorcerers.

A successful Scholar roll reveals the spirit's name, Sha Wan. If addressed by name, she will focus enough to allow communication without the need for a LOG roll. If the characters communicate with the spirit, she will tell them the location of a great treasure if they promise to destroy the Ming cultists first. Sha Wan knows the location of the secret room (Encounter 15).

Under each skull is a name inscribed in the stone. A successful Scholar roll reveals that these grisly trophies came from heroes who fought against, and died at the hands of, Ming Sorcerers.

Restless Spirit (Ghost)

Ghostly figure with unfulfilled desire.

STR	30	BP	40	Rank	2
DEX	50	INIT	1	Nature	Varies
LOG	20	DR	0	Travel	5 leagues
WIL	80	MOV	8 (fly 8)		

- **Curse** – 75%, cast hinder as Sorcerer level 2.
- **Preoccupied** – restless spirit must make a LOG check in order to understand that someone is trying to help or communicate with them.
- **Bound** – can only manifest near site of death or desire.
- **Possess** – 75%, cast dominion as Sorcerer level 2, joins body of victim.
- **Ghost** – only affected by unarmed attacks & spells.

Encounter 11: Great Hall

This room contains a small dais and ornate chair located at the middle of the north wall. The north wall is embossed with designs that appear harsh and dangerous. They are designed to lead the eye to the chair on the dais and would frame the one sitting in the chair with power and authority.

A Mystic making a successful Harmony Sense roll can determine this was a place of power and evil. This is where the Ming Sorcerer who ruled this place held court and passed judgment on enemies and Ming disciples alike. Mystics can also sense a that great evil in this place has been destroyed.

This room is also where Mang Zhao faced off with a demon, specifically a Masked Demon Priest and several Masked Demon Assassins. Scorch marks on the floors and walls, and a half-dozen broken and corroded iron masks are direct evidence of the battle. Also on the floor is a broken sword and a dusty scabbard untouched by time. These were left behind by Mang Zhao after his battle here (Scabbard of the Fray, page 74 of *Art of Wuxia*).

The door leading out of this room is locked. It has a carved visage of a demon's face on it. Only a Ming cultist, or others indoctrinated into their ways, can pass this door (simply by touching it) unless they have the key from room 8. The door has an obvious keyhole. A Sorcerer can use Raw Talent to notice that the door is magical. A Mystic making a successful Harmony Sense roll can sense the great evil of the door. They also sense that the door does not like them and wishes them to die a painful and horrible death.

Examining the masks reveals they were from the masked demons, if a character's background indicates they would have such knowledge.

Threshold of Ultimate Evil

Attempting to pick the lock or bash the magically-reinforced door drains some life essence from the offender unless they make a successful WIL roll. If they fail this roll, they gain the fatigued condition until their next full night's rest. Multiple attempts to pick the lock or bash the door result in multiple fatigue conditions. Picking the lock requires a hard Thief roll (-20 for difficult lock). Bashing the door open requires a hard STR roll (-20) or 30BP damage applied with weapons such as axes. Bashing the door open will alert all of the NPCs in areas 12-14.

Once past the threshold of ultimate evil the characters can see light coming from around the corner. It is a steady light, like that from lanterns, not torches. Once they look around the corner to the north, they can see that the hallway comes to an east and west T-intersection. The light is coming from both directions.

Encounter 12: Private Meeting/Dining Room

This room is well lit and contains a table and chairs arranged as if this was once a meeting hall. A tall man in black silk robes with a yellow sash holds a lantern above his head while closely examining the wall. Several lit lanterns sit on a nearby crate. The cultist holds a lajatang in his left hand and is tapping the wall with it, his head cocked as if listening to the sound the tap makes.

The Ming cultist, Stone Heart, is checking for secret doors in this room. As soon as he notices intruders, he attacks without hesitation. If he hears the sounds of combat coming from room 14, he will rush to Ghost Eye's aid.

Stone Heart *(yellow sash)*

Rank 2, 70, Warrior of the Pouncing Panther Style, 1D+4 damage (lajatang 2D), 60 BP, Resist 60, Power Attack, Unblockable Attack, one heavenly pill (1D Healing), spell scroll of Conjure, 5Dtl.

The furniture is well-preserved, coated in an enchanted lacquer to last centuries, and might fetch 600tl from a collector or museum. They appear magical to a Sorcerer using their Raw Talent, but do not have any kind of aura that a Mystic might sense.

Encounter 13: Leader's Private Study

From the 3 lanterns on the table you can see the walls and ceiling of this room are covered in horrific carvings of demons rampaging across the land, destroying armies and towns, and doing terrible things to people. The eyes of the demons seem to stare at you no matter where you are in the room.

This room has an oppressive and evil aura and only Ming cultists can sleep peacefully or meditate to regain qi here. A Mystic can detect these effects with a successful Harmony Sense. They can also get a vision that the head Ming sorcerer of this place used this as a private study.

Several treasures have been gathered on one table that has been leveled with several broken chairs and other debris. There are three statuettes of demon lords once worshipped by the Ming (Azor, Galruk and Pyre). The statues are worth 100tl each to a collector. Anyone standing near the table, or the individual statues, hears faint whispering and experiences feelings of doubt and insecurity. Destroying the statues dazes anyone present (as the dazed condition) for one hour. However, such acts do not go unnoticed and those who destroyed the statues gain the effects of a blessing spell they may use three times after they leave this evil place. Mang Zhao's brass wu lou (page 70 of *Art of Wuxia*) and a rare spell tome containing the spell Conjure (page 58 of *Art of Wuxia*) are also here.

Encounter 14: Leader's Private Room

There is light coming from this room. It once held a nice bed and chair, but both have fallen to ruin. Two lanterns are on a propped up table and a third one is in the hands of a man in black robes and a yellow sash as he closely examines the wall.

Ghost Eye is searching for the treasure room rumored to be in this ruin. He will attack any intruders and will aid Stone Heart if he hears any noise indicating battle. Ghost Eye wears his hair loose. He has a well-groomed goatee and his left eye is milky white. Ghost Eye is a fanatic and will never surrender to the heroes.

Ghost Eye (yellow sash)
 Rank 2, 70, Sorcerer, 1D+4 damage (jian 2D+1), 60 BP, Resist 60, Domination, Offensive Strike (choking green mist), two Heavenly Pills (2D Healing each), 5Dtl.

Encounter 15: The Vault

The door to this room is made to look like a part of the wall (hard LOG roll to detect). Characters may also climatically find the vault entrance by tapping on the wall at the location of the secret door or being shown by Sha Wan from Encounter 10.

An ornate suit of armor on a black cloth mannequin stands in the center of the room, a shining, drawn jian held in its fist. A dusty, stitched bamboo scroll rests at the mannequin's feet. This room has display pedestals and stone shelves carved into the walls. Three of the shelves hold the rotted remains of once expensive silk.

This vault once held treasures collected by the Ming Sorcerers, but it was cleaned out when they abandoned this place toward the end of their reign of terror. Left behind in this vault were bolts of expensive silk (now ruined) that were too bulky to haul away and a stitched bamboo scroll that

appeared worthless (Battle Scroll chapter, page 70 of *Art of Wuxia*, the GM should choose a chapter which best fits their game).

The mannequin is revealed as an animated creature to a Sorcerer's Raw Talent ability. A successful Scholar roll reveals that many ancient treasure rooms had magical guardians. The mannequin is a Spirit Armor Guardian that will attack if the scroll or ruined bolts of silk are touched by anyone not allied with the Ming Sorcerers of old. It will pursue anyone disturbing the "treasures" it guards. It cannot leave White Breath Cave.

Failed Spirit Armor Guardian (Animated)

Was left behind because of a flaw in its animation, making it a poor bodyguard.

STR	120	BP	190	Rank	5
DEX	100	INIT	2	Nature	Neutral
LOG	10	DR	10	Travel	10 leagues
WIL	80	MOV	8		

- **By Weapon** – 120%, jian 2D+14.
- **Unarmed** – 120%, damage 1D+13.
- **Animated** – created by the animate spell, can be dispelled. Immune to charm, cold, and poison.
- **Bound** – becomes unanimated if it leaves the entrance to White Breath Cave.

A Rank 5 Opponent?

Throwing a rank 5 creature against the players might seem unfair. It is. But still, the players can completely control the nature of this encounter. The guardian will not attack until the treasures are touched. The characters have time to heal from their previous battles and approach this encounter at full strength. Also, it is likely they can outrun the guardian. Resourceful players will also realize that the guardian can easily be led into and trapped in one of the pit traps. Let the players puzzle this one out for themselves. If they are clever and execute a good plan, they get a nice magic item that can add further adventures to the campaign.

Wrapping Things Up

Assuming the players survive, they have gained some treasure, some magic items, the approximate locations of other sites to explore, and perhaps even a magical artifact that can lead to more adventures as they search for more lost chapters of the Battle Scroll. If the characters performed heroically, Mang Zhao will begin grooming them in the fight against evil doers, and is willing to teach the Willow Blade Song Style to any characters who are interested. He has waited a long time for heroes that might help him in his quest for revenge and justice and he may have finally found them. He also knows of a place where the PCs can find knowledge to help defeat the villain who took his eyes and has imprisoned the people of Willow Bridge with invisible chains. But that is a story for next time.

Awarding Cultivation Points

Remember to award cultivation points at the end of each session. Here are some ways the players likely earned CP in this adventure.

Ability or Skill – Players likely made numerous ability or skill checks during each game session.

Role-playing – Players can take a cue from Mother Chong and prompt each other to demonstrate their descriptors. Over time players will get good at this and their characters' descriptors will be reinforced often.

Virtuous Hero – Ask the players if they can give examples of how they as individuals or a group passionately demonstrated being Resolute, Truthful or Just.

Oath Fulfilled – Besides the advice on Vows on page 6, have players keep track of the vows they make. This will make them want to follow up on further adventure opportunities.

Victory – Any fight the players can walk away from earns them one cultivation point for the session.

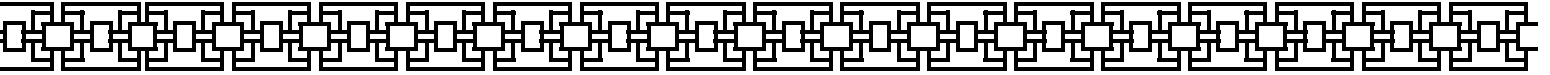
Success – This story had a main goal of stopping the four yellow sashed Ming cultists. If the players did that, then they earn one cultivation point.

Appendix A: Report on Ming Cultists

A report on the groups collectively called Ming cultists as submitted by Minister Run Lee to High Minister Pan Ching on the 4th Day of Enlightenment, the 18th of Thaw Season in the year 492 of the Long Empire. May my Emperor live and reign for ten thousand years, ten thousand years, ten thousand of ten thousand years.

To understand the current rumor of “Ming cultists” one must first understand their origins. I will not waste time here giving an entire account of the Ming Sorcerers of old as everyone knows they held all the Dragon Lands, known as Longzhi in the old language of Laolong, for centuries before being brought down by Emperor Tien and the Five Illustrious Heroes in the year that marked the start of our calendar. Much praise has already been given by the greatest scholars of our time to such historical records as *Accounts of the Demon Battles* by Shan Fo and *The Swallowing of the Isle of Pain* by Chin Jin of the Golden Brush and I leave these profound sages to enlighten the reader in a way I could never hope to achieve.

But still, rumors in border lands and other remote areas persist in claiming a rise of cultists that wish to learn the secrets of the Ming Sorcerers of old, or wish to emulate their vile practices of demon worship and human sacrifice. After making an extensive review of district reports on any cult-like activity occurring over the past three years, I have found a significant uptake in reported sightings and altercations noted by various magistrates and governors. There are considerably fewer reports from the provincial governors and yet, allowing for



normal exaggerations in such things, there is still a slight increase in these rumors.

I would have discounted these cultists as no more than bandits, but they seem to have an agenda beyond just looting and robbery. Capture and interrogation of these Ming cultists, as the magistrates have begun to call them, has revealed some consistencies. First, these cultists seek out all forms of lore from the period of the Ming Sorcerers. They purchase or steal mundane artifacts from that vile era along with books, scrolls, paintings and even poems that have any mention of that time best forgotten.

The second point of commonality is that these cultists often follow a charismatic leader who is willing to purchase the services of laborers for menial tasks such as porting supplies or digging in old ruins. This shows they have some sort of organization or benefactor and the silver they give their workers has been noted to have mint markings from several official sources. I've asked for a list of missing or stolen silver shipments from the Ministry of Revenue, Personnel, Public Works and War to see if there are any patterns to be found there.

The third point, and perhaps the most alarming, is that all such cult-like activity has coincided with the unearthing of sites once important to the Ming Sorcerers of old. I've attached an extensive list of such places disturbed in the past three years. I hope that I'll be allowed to compare the list with historical records and maps of known Ming Sorcerer tombs and other places of historical

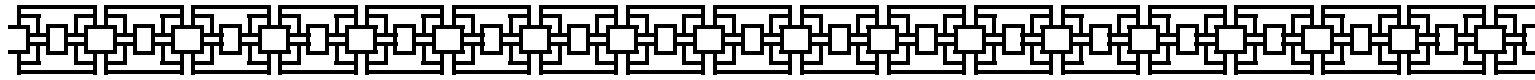
note as they relate to the Ming. Perhaps, with the help of the Ministry of Rites and Ministry of War some common historical map of such sites could be compiled and compared with the attached list, future blasphemies of these cultists can be thwarted and their members brought to justice.

The final concern I must note is that some of the most remote districts have reported whole villages to be abandoned. I believe these were first noted by the former Minister of Public Works before his treasonous liaisons with the ambassador from Jin were exposed and he was brought to justice. Normally I would never consider the words of a traitor, but as shown in the attached scrolls he wrote the report on missing villagers a year before the Jin ambassador came to our shores. Comparing his report with those I've noted as containing credible Ming cultist activity there is a profound correlation. I believe we need to verify what might be a credible concern to the Ministry of Justice.

If you have found this report summary and the attached documents to your satisfaction, I humbly request that my follow-up queries to the various ministries I have already mentioned be granted. I further ask for guidance as to whether a special commission should be undertaken to verify the veracity of these Ming cultists in our remote border areas and to bring these cultists to justice, or put any such rumors to final rest.

*Humble Servant of the Imperial Court
and the Ministry of Justice
Minister Dee Tiandu*

Appendix B: Characters



Starting on page 48 of Art of Wuxia you can find six pre-generated characters that are well-suited to this adventure. On page 20 you'll find one more! If you choose to use them, the expanded backgrounds below can be read out loud by the players and will help form a readymade group of heroes.



Mighty Bahu

I've worked on the docks as a laborer and earned coin as a brawler. I'm not afraid of anything and I'm happy to crack the heads of evil doers.

I owe the scholar 100 taels, but won't repay him unless he is brave enough to demand it. The scholar is a good guy, but needs to be toughened up. If he doesn't learn to stick up for himself, the world will eat him up. It's my job to teach him this. In no way is he ready for real life combat. I'll have to protect him.



Brother Shan

My parents were too poor to feed three children. At an early age, I was given to the monks of the Bowing Dragons who raised me. Now that I am an adult, I have left the temple to explore the world and bring rightness where I can. I do not eat meat or drink alcohol, and I have taken a vow of poverty. Such a vow precludes starting a family, so I focus on righting wrongs in the world.

The first person I met in the wider world was a drunken brawler with a good spirit. Despite his gruff manner, I found his honest way of looking at the world surprisingly enlightened for one so base. He has taught me much about the world. In return, I try to smooth his rough edges.



Meili

I never knew my parents. An orphan, I was taken in as a ward of the Chow family. And have done everything in my power to repay their kindness. I studied hard in both the classics and the sword. I got a position with the local constable as a peace officer, but the level of corruption within the prefecture was disgusting. Unexpectedly, while I was in the middle of investigating the attempted assassination of an innocent young woman, my title was stripped from me by my superiors and I was exiled from the capital.

Since then I've wandered from town to town selling my sword to escort agencies. I met Brother Shan on the road when he and his friend Mighty Bahu helped me defeat some bandits. We have been fast friends ever since. I secretly want to marry Brother Shan, but I'm having trouble getting his attention. Maybe if I was more attractive, maybe if he will train with me....

I have come to really like Lee Jeelie and consider her a very good friend. She seems a free spirit, yet there is something about her. She seems vaguely familiar, but I just can't put my finger on it.



Lee Jeelie

I always liked to sneak around and one night I overheard one of the royal concubines conspiring to kill the emperor and instate her son. A roof tile slipped off near my nighttime perch and revealed my presence. To protect my family, I have been on the run for the past three years, hounded by assassins. My brother recently found me and he wants me to return to the family, but I know what danger that would bring. I also know that no one will believe my story. It is best to let them think I am just a free spirit.

I find the scholar very attractive. He is kind and intelligent, and not a brute like Mighty Bahu. But still, he hasn't even noticed my advances. I'm sure my overly serious brother wouldn't approve of him anyway. Maybe if I could show my brother how worthy the scholar is that might help my case.



Lee Fang

I am a knight of the Wodan sect. I have been trained in both kung fu and sorcery with the sole purpose of protecting people and defeating evil. My sect is allied with the monks of the Bowing Dragon.

I recently caught up with my sister who has led a less than honorable life. I hope to influence her so that she comes to no harm and doesn't soil the family name further.

I am cautious to find the truth of things, but I don't hold back when fighting evil. I wonder if Meili would make a good Wodan sect member? She has a solid sense of justice.



Yi Minzhe

I was born ten years after my two siblings, and my parents were very protective of me. What little money they had was spent on books and tutors for me.

Later, I had taken the master's exams and was waiting on the results when the love of my life literally fell into my arms, stumbling into my clinic late one night. She was wounded, and had a nasty poison in her system. Fearing assassins, I paid for an escort to help Jeelie, the recovering woman, and I slip out of the capitol.

I have never been good around women, but my feelings for Jeelie turn me into an idiot. Bahu, the brute, owes me 100 taels, but frankly I'm afraid of him. He is very gruff and ruthless to his enemies. He is also very loud.

WHITE BREATH CAVE

Former Assassin

Shui Yan is a former assassin. She is torn because she both protects and endangers her friends. She did not leave on the best of terms with her former associates.

1
RANK

Moral Code: Somewhat kind, totally focused, somewhat selfless, somewhat honorable, totally brave.

Descriptors: Never forgets a face, Always on the job.

	STR	DEX	LOG	WIL	INIT	MOV	DR	BP	QI
	65	66	51	53	2	10	33	33	3

Skills	LEVEL	P/S	SCORE
Detective			26 %
Scout			26 %
Thief	1	S	53 %
Warrior of the	Flying Daggers Style		
(melee)	1	P	63 %
(ranged)			63 %

Weapons	
Unarmed	63%, 1D+2
Jian	63%, 2D+3
Daggers	M: 63%, R: 63%, 1D+2

Abilities	
Qi Abilities: Back for More, Dig Deep, Draw Upon Qi, Final Parry, Heroic Pose, Tempt Fate, Qi Healing, Lightness, Transfer Qi	
Kung Fu Techniques: Hidden Weapons	



Background

Since birth I was raised and trained by assassins. While I enjoyed and even excelled in learning my skills, the thought of murder always revolted me.

For my first “job,” I was part of a reinforcement team backing up some senior members of my order sent in to kill the Emperor. The whole thing went south due to an unexpected witness. We chased the witness over the rooftops of the capital until she crashed through the roof of an apothecary’s shop. Through the hole in the roof I saw her being cradled by a young alchemist. Something in me snapped and I killed the rest of my team, allowing the witness to escape.

I have since turned my skills to helping others, but must always remain vigilant. The White Lotus Assassins never give up their own. I have found some new friends, and soon I must warn them of the danger I have put them in. I just don’t know how. Maybe the right moment will present itself.

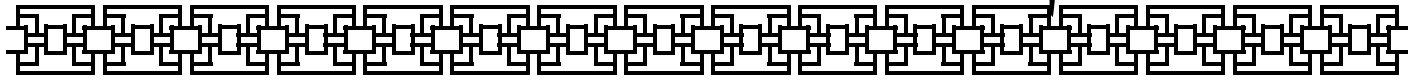
“Knowing right from wrong is easy. Choosing is difficult.”

— Shui Yan

Equipment

- Riding horse: saddlebag, tack, and harness
- Survival pack: satchel, bedroll, candles, flint & steel, 10 days rations, rope, torches, water gourd
- Jian
- Leather Armor
- Daggers (4)
- Mild poison antidotes (2)
- 4tl

Appendix C: Visualizations & Maps



Mother Chong



Old Man Radish

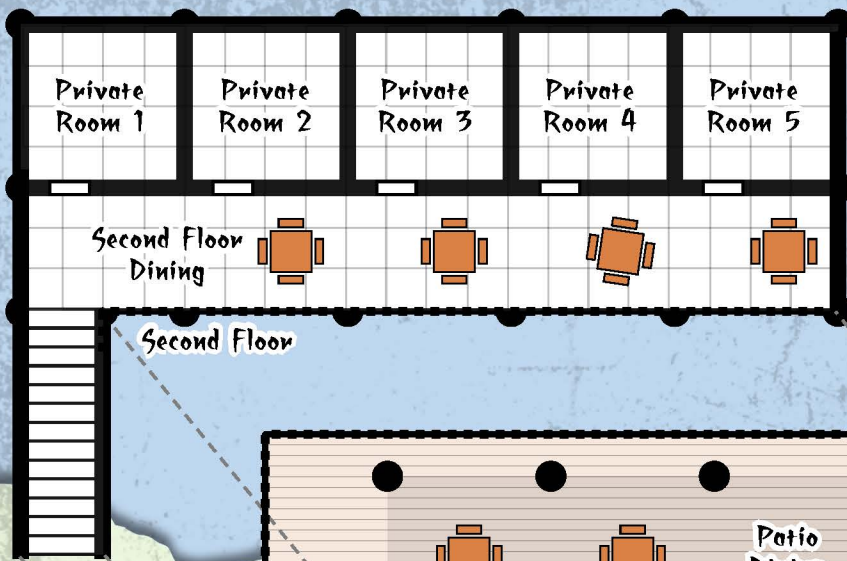


Mang Zhao

Maps

On the following two pages you'll find maps of The Green Lily and White Breath Cave.. If you'd like color versions, you can grab them from here:

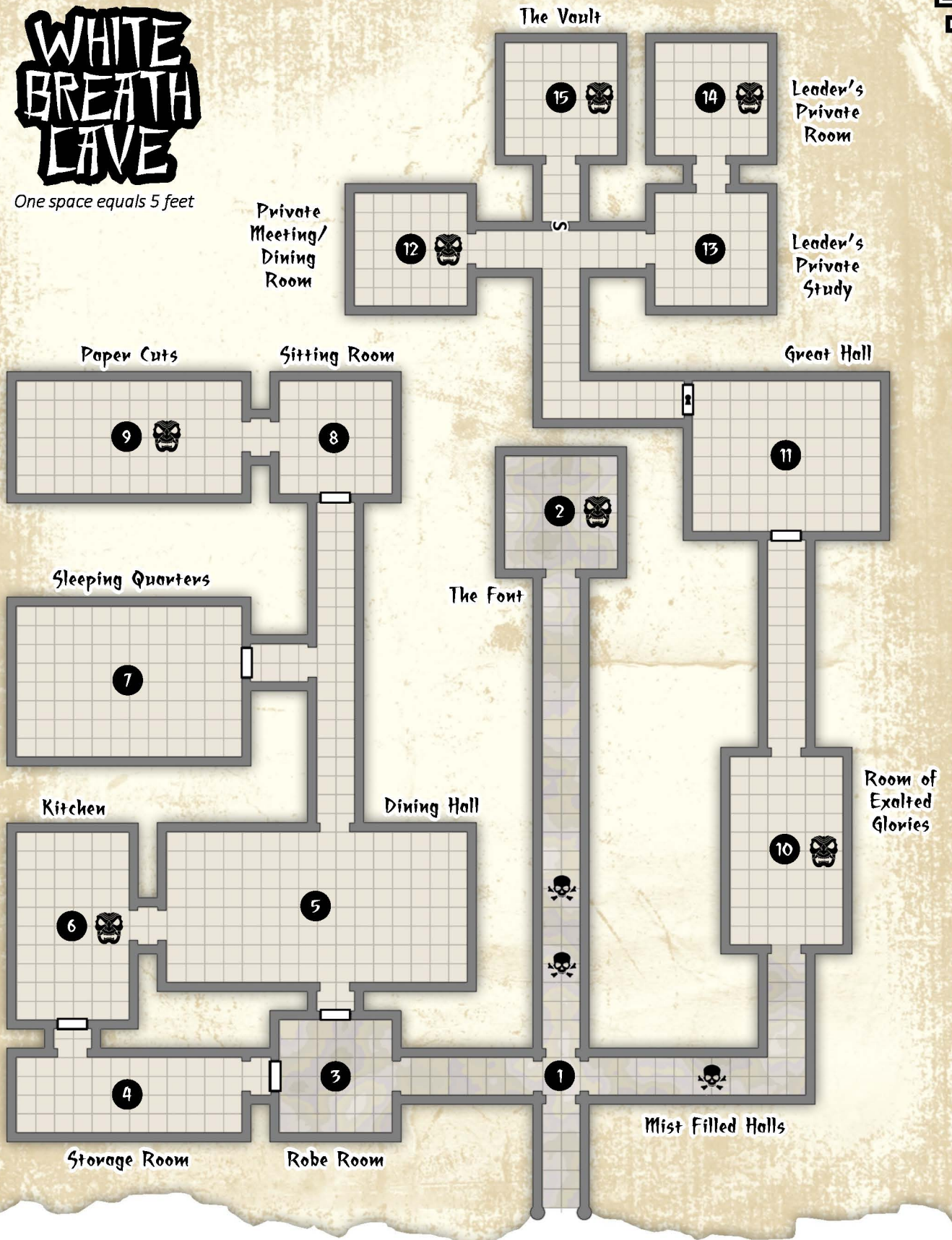
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- dwdstudios.com/files/trailmap.png
- dwdstudios.com/files/WhiteBreathCave.png



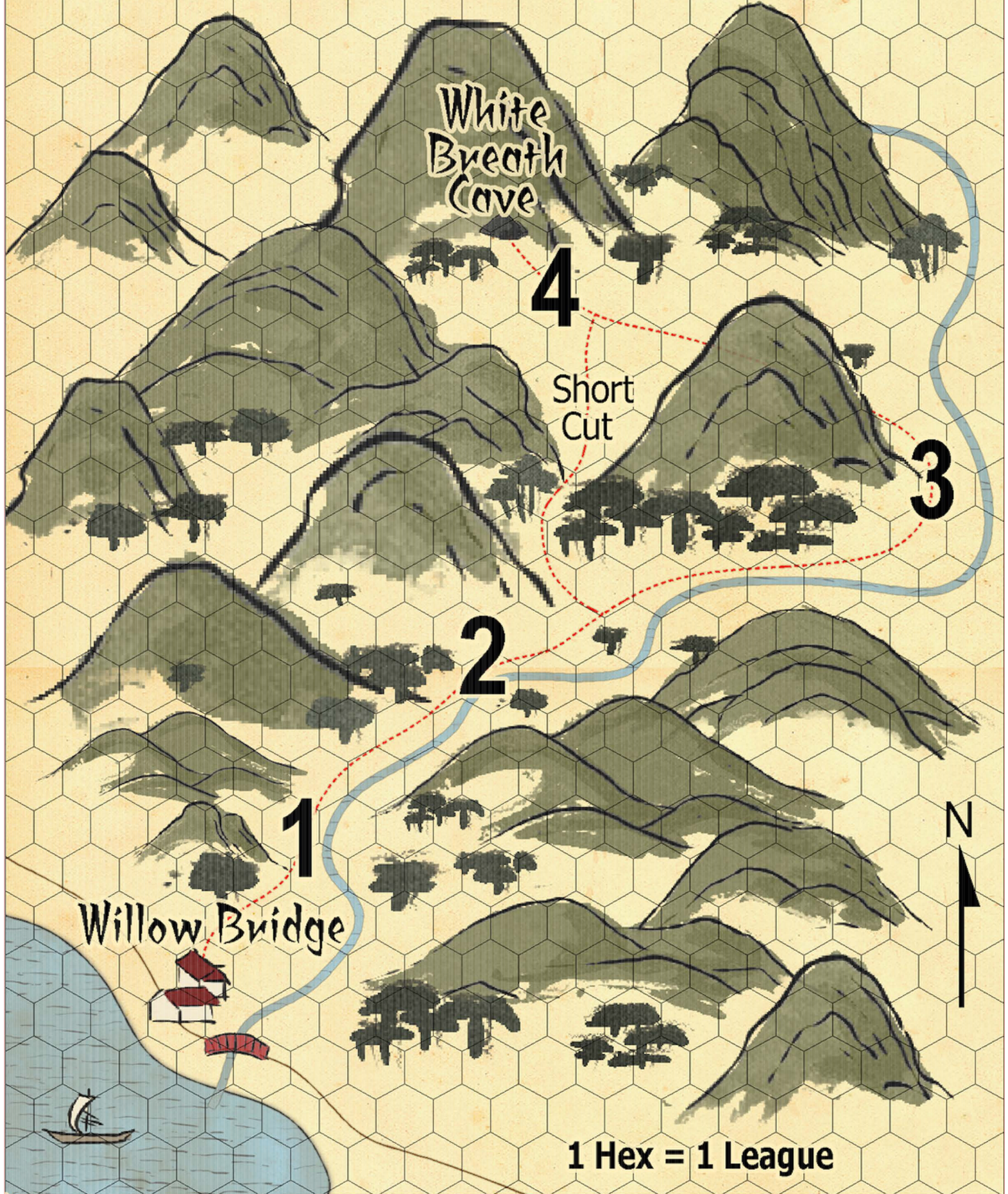
One space equals 5 feet

WHITE BREATH LAKE

One space equals 5 feet



Bandit Trail



ART OF WUXIA

Legends of Willow Bridge: Chapter 1

WHITE BREATH CAVE

What do you get when you combine bandits, a teahouse, evil cultists, a blind kung fu master and some newly rolled up wuxia heroes? An introductory adventure for *Art of Wuxia*, of course!

This adventure is designed to guide players and GMs new to the genre or even new to role-playing games to the high flying action of *Art of Wuxia*. The adventure has many tips for the GM, useful for running the adventure, and tips for playing up various wuxia tropes.

We've also included backgrounds for the sample characters found in the *Art of Wuxia* rulebook. These backgrounds serve to create connections between the characters and give them some common ground. Also included is a bonus character to use if you wish. The background of the bonus character also connects to the other sample characters.

As indicated by the title this adventure serves as the launching point, not only for your own *Art of Wuxia* campaigns, but also for a series of adventures that will expand upon the village of Willow Bridge and the lands around.

