

TOMB OF ANNIHILATION

RUINS OF MBALA



Expanded content and DM's resources for Mbala in
Chapter 2: The Land of Chult

RUINS OF MBALA



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RUINS OF MBALA

High above the dense jungles of Chult on a large plateau lies what's left of the forgotten kingdom Mbala. These decrepit ruins holds dark secrets left uncovered. According to local legend, all that remains of Mbala is Nanny Pu'pu, a witch doctor with ancient magical powers. Old Nanny Pu'pu is secretly a hag who could prove to be an important ally to a group of heroes, or, if they are not useful or careful, a hungry, bloodthirsty foe.

This supplement to *Tomb of Annihilation* expands on the location of Mbala and the green hag Nanny Pu'pu. It is meant to make Mbala more exciting and manageable for both the DM and the players. The document includes:

A Gorgeous Map of the Ruins of Mbala, which will give life to any encounter within the forgotten kingdom.

Additional Adventure Hooks, providing the characters with a reason to travel to the ruins of Mbala.

Random Encounters & Discoveries for Mbala,
including an entirely new encounter location, the Crypt of
the Last King, complete with its own encounter map.

Expanded Pterafolk Nest, offering suggestions on how to run the pterafolk nest, as well a much-needed encounter map you can use when running the dangerous encounter!

Expanded History & Lore, which elaborates on Mbala and Nanny Pu'pu's history, and foreshadows the Sewn Sisters in the Tomb of the Nine Gods.

New Mundane & Magic Items – reward characters with mystical flora or give them mastery of the weather with the *rain stick* of Mbala!

USING THIS SUPPLEMENT

This supplement provides several new ideas on how to run Mbala and Nanny Pu'pu from the *Tomb of Annihilation*. It is useful to first read the section about Mbala in the official campaign book before reading this supplement.

As always, it is up to you, how much of the content you want to use. It's perfectly fine to use some parts of this supplement while discarding others, or simply let the ideas presented here inspire new ideas of your own.

This supplement assumes a party of 4–6 characters of 3–4th level. More powerful parties will have an easy time with the challenges within, while characters of 2nd level will probably be okay, although they should be extra careful. Throughout the document, you will find suggestions for scaling encounter difficulty.

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Monster References

The following monsters are used in this supplement:

- **almiraj** (TOA, 211) – A small rabbit-like creature with a horn similar to a unicorn.
- **ankheg** (MM, 21) – A large burrowing insect.
- **flying monkey** (TOA, 220) – Slightly more intelligent monkeys with feathered wings.
- **ghost** (MM, 147) – A spirit of a fallen Mbalan, eaten by Nanny Pu'pu, who continues to haunt the land.
- **green hag** (MM, 177) – A fey creature with the ability to disguise her form to look like other humanoids or perfectly mimic the sounds of other human voices. Green hags love to manipulate mortals into tragedy.
- **kamadan** (TOA, 225) – A feline predator that looks like a leopard with six snakes sprouting from its shoulders. Kamadans have magical breath that can cause their foes to fall asleep.
- **mummy** (MM, 228) – Embalmed body of a king (Kwalu Mbalawa) buried long ago, reanimated through a curse.
- **night hag** (MM, 178) – Night hags are shapeshifting creatures who were once fey but degenerated into fiends. They craft magical items called soul bags, which they use to trap corrupted souls and bring them to Hades.
- **night hag (coven variant)** (MM, 178) – Hags often form covens of three to become more powerful than the sum of their parts. Being part of a coven allows hags access to additional spells and magic.
- **pterafolk** (TOA, 229) – A 10-foot-tall, winged, reptilian biped native to Chult. Both a nuisance and potential food source for Nanny Pu'pu.
- **pterafolk juvenile** – A young, flightless pterafolk. Its stats appear later in this supplement on page 11.
- **pterafolk sky tyrant** – The matriarch of the pterafolk roost. Its stats appear later in this supplement on page 11.
- **pteranodon** (MM, 79) – A winged dinosaur.
- **zombie** (MM, 315) – A mindless undead humanoid.

Dramatis Personae

The following characters from *Tomb of Annihilation* are referenced in this supplement:

- **Acererak** (*TOA*, 209) – Evil archlich who used the Sewn Sisters to build a soulmonger that would feed souls to an atropal.
- **Commander Niles Breakbone** (*TOA*, 47) – Order of the Gauntlet noble in charge of Camp Vengeance.
- **Eku** (*TOA*, 34) – Disguised couatl guide in Port Nyanzaru with a hatred for Nanny Pu'pu. Eku used to heal the people of Mbala until she was forced to leave due to Nanny Pu'pu's deception.
- **Myrkul** – The Lord of Bones and Death who struck a deal with Nanny Pu'pu. His followers are often necromancers.
- **Nanny Pu'pu** (*TOA*, 72) – Ex-Sewn Sister who is now living in Mbala posing as a harmless old witch doctor. Nanny Pu'pu is a green hag.
- **Widow Groat, Peggy Deadbells, and Baggy Nanna** (*TOA*, 180) – Night Hags called the Sewn Sisters working for Acererak. When all three are together they are each a night hag (coven variant).
- **Ubtao** (*TOA*, 92) – A god who abandoned Chult.
- **Undril Silvertusk** (*TOA*, 17) – Half-orc Order of the Gauntlet priest hoping to find a way to Camp Vengeance.

Official Material References

The supplement references the *Monster Manual* (MM) and *Tomb of Annihilation* (TOA) followed by a page number as a recommendation for further reading.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

Other than randomly stumbling upon Mbala, here are two adventure hooks that players may follow to arrive there.

EKU THE COUATL GUIDE

Tomb of Annihilation states that the guide Eku, in Port Nyanzaru, is a polymorphed couatl who loved the people of Mbala and will encourage characters to destroy Nanny Pu'pu if they near the location. The following expands on the history that characters may learn if traveling with Eku.

Eku secretly healed and took care of the people of Mbala for many years after Ubtao abandoned Chult. However, when Nanny Pu'pu arrived in Mbala, she convinced the inhabitants she was a witch doctor who could perform magical remedies for the sick and injured. Unlike Eku, who remained hidden while watching over the people, Nanny Pu'pu's magic was a visible display of power.

To share the truth about the evil hag's nature, Eku revealed herself as a couatl – a flying celestial serpent. However, the people of Mbala were frightened by Eku in her true form. Nanny Pu'pu spewed lies about the danger Eku posed as an evil spirit, and the Mbalans chased Eku off of the plateau. After Eku left Mbala, the kingdom began to decline, and continued to be further damaged by Nanny Pu'pu. Distraught and depressed, Eku eventually found her way to Port Nyanzaru, never forgiving the hag who brought the downfall of the people for whom she cared deeply.

Upon learning about the death curse, Eku may hold off her quest for revenge if she believes Nanny Pu'pu will be useful to defeat the greater evil at play. Even if the players do not choose Eku as their guide, she may still present them with a quest to travel to Mbala and defeat the evil witch that lives there.

ESCORT A PRIEST TO CAMP VENGEANCE

Tomb of Annihilation (page 17) offers a random quest in Port Nyanzaru where a priest named Undril Silvertusk enlists the characters to escort her to Camp Vengeance.

In addition to interceding on the party's behalf with Commander Breakbone, she will offer to purchase a canoe as a reward for any party willing to escort her. The following describes how this quest can lead the characters to investigate Mbala.

Once the party arrives at Camp Vengeance, it will be obvious that the Order of the Gauntlet troops are in a lot of trouble. Commander Breakbone will share that he sent three scouts to the plateau of Mbala to seek the help of a witch doctor rumored to live there. Commander Breakbone hoped that they could enlist the witch doctor to provide magical medical assistance to the camp, but the scouts never returned. Commander Breakbone will offer the characters rare magical potions, a *potion of hill giant strength* or a *potion of heroism*, in exchange for news of what happened to the scouts.

Unfortunately, two of the scouts were killed by pterafolk en-route to Mbala and brought back to the pterafolk's lair to be eaten. The third scout, who survived the pterafolk attack, contracted Shivering Sickness in Aldani Basin and was found and eaten by Nanny Pu'pu. When the characters arrive at Mbala, Nanny Pu'pu is preparing a stew with some of his bones, which she claims belong to an ape she caught in a trap.

EXPLORING MBALA

When the players enter through the Mbala gate (Area M1), you can read the following text instead of what is presented on page 73 of *Tomb of Annihilation*.

The only structures still intact are a large statue of a Chultan man a hundred yards southwest of the gate and a lone hut beyond that at the edge of a ruined settlement. The hut is made from thatch and animal hides stretched over the rib cage of an immense reptile. Animal skulls, wind chimes, and totems of feathers and shells rattle in the breeze, and smoke drifts from hut. A large brick cistern sits just north of the hut.

LOCATIONS OF INTEREST

A few structures that can be distinguished from the rubble. The following locations are identified on the Map of Mbala on page 5 of this document.

M1. Mbala's Gate (TOA, 73)

M2. A statue marking the location of the Crypt of the Last King of Mbala (see page 6)

M3. A ruined armory (see page 6)

M4. A cistern with Nanny Pupu's treasure (TOA, 73–74)

M5. Nanny Pu'pu's Hut (TOA, 73)

While the characters explore Mbala, you can add random (or choose your favorite) encounters and discoveries from 'Random Encounters in Mbala' on page 8.

The History of Mbala

The campaign book describes most of the structures as being made of thatch or wood and notes that there is a large boulder field. The following history and description is presented to clarify this location:

Mbala was once the seat of a small kingdom. Because they lived above the tree line and high above the wet Aldani Basin, the Mbalans relied mostly on rock for infrastructure rather than wood or clay. Some Mbalan structures were made out of thatch and wood, which Mbalans, living above the tree line, would have to go to greater lengths to get. Over its hundreds of years of existence, Mbala had a number of mines, but most mining ended about 200 years ago following the slave uprisings in Omu. The Mbalans collapsed their abandoned mines to prevent large burrowing creatures from inhabiting them.

For hundreds of years, the kings of Mbala pledged allegiance to the queens of Omu. Mbalan trade delegations would trade minerals, metals, and herbs in exchange for food, military aid, and slaves. The military aid was primarily meant to keep the pterafolk at bay, but also helped fend off hostile tribes in the jungles. There were several important herbs that thrived on the exposed ledges and slopes of Mbala, such as Eyebright (good for eye-related conditions), Citronella (a component of insect repellent), and Kaeth (coffee). These plants were traded to Omu and Mezro, until Mezro plane shifted and Omu fell.

Once trade ended, Mbala was unable to quickly adapt. The pterafolk became much more of a problem for the Mbalans when military aid and slave trade ceased. After people began falling victim to the pterafolk, the Mbalans were forced to consolidate their declining kingdom into a smaller area. This was exacerbated by the noble refugees fleeing the slave uprisings in Omu. In addition, Mbala's dependence on food imports from other cities meant that it struggled to sustain itself as it switched from growing cash crops to food staples. Eku, the couatl, secretly aided this transition until the arrival of Nanny Pu'pu, at which point the kingdom quickly fell to ruin.

MAP OF MBALA



25 ft

M1

M2

M3

M4

M5

RUINED ARMORY

When the characters explore this area read the following:

A ring of large rocks surrounds a rusted metal anvil. Remains of tools and scraps of metal lie scattered in the dust.

Upon closer inspection, the rocks that surround the anvil have holes for spears, as they were used for weapon racks.

This used to be the only place on Chult that produced metal weapons and armor, but is now just a pile of rubble. Searching through the rubble with a successful DC 14 Intelligence (Investigation) check yields a *silvered shortsword*. Simply searching the rubble yields several discarded rusted pieces of metal armor and simple weapons, most of which are beyond repair. A set of damaged splint armor can be found, but will require a use of the *mending* cantrip or repairs from a character proficient with blacksmith's tools.

CRYPT OF THE LAST KING

Myrkul was displeased that the Mbalans would have unnaturally long lives due to the healing powers of Eku, the couatl, watching over them. As part of her deal with Myrkul, Nanny Pu'pu cursed the last king of Mbala (Kwalu Mbalawa). He has become a mummy buried in a crypt beneath the ruins. He is buried with a magical staff called the *rain stick of Mbala*, passed down for generations by the kings of Mbala to help with agriculture upon the plateau and avoid conflict with the Aldani tribe.

C1. CRYPT ENTRANCE

When the characters approach the Crypt Entrance, read the following:

A large crumbling statue stands before you. It appears to be a man holding a staff towards the sky, though much of the detail has been weathered away. An empty bowl sits beneath the statue. Words are inscribed at the base of the statue.

The statue is of Kwalu Mbalawa, who is holding the *rain stick of Mbala*. The words are written in Old Omuan and can be understood by anyone proficient in history who succeeds a DC 12 Intelligence (History) check, or anyone who uses a comprehend languages spell.

The inscription reads:

*Whose mother is a cloud,
Whose father is the sky,
Whose child is a band of colors,
Whose enemy is dry?*

Characters with a passive perception of 12 or greater notice a crack next to the statue indicating a passageway beneath the statue. Characters will have to solve the riddle to have the enchanted statue move via transmutation magic. The answer is either saying "rain" in Old Omuan or pouring a gallon of water into the bowl at the base of the statue. The word for "rain" in Swahili is "mvua", which you may use as an analog for Old Omuan.

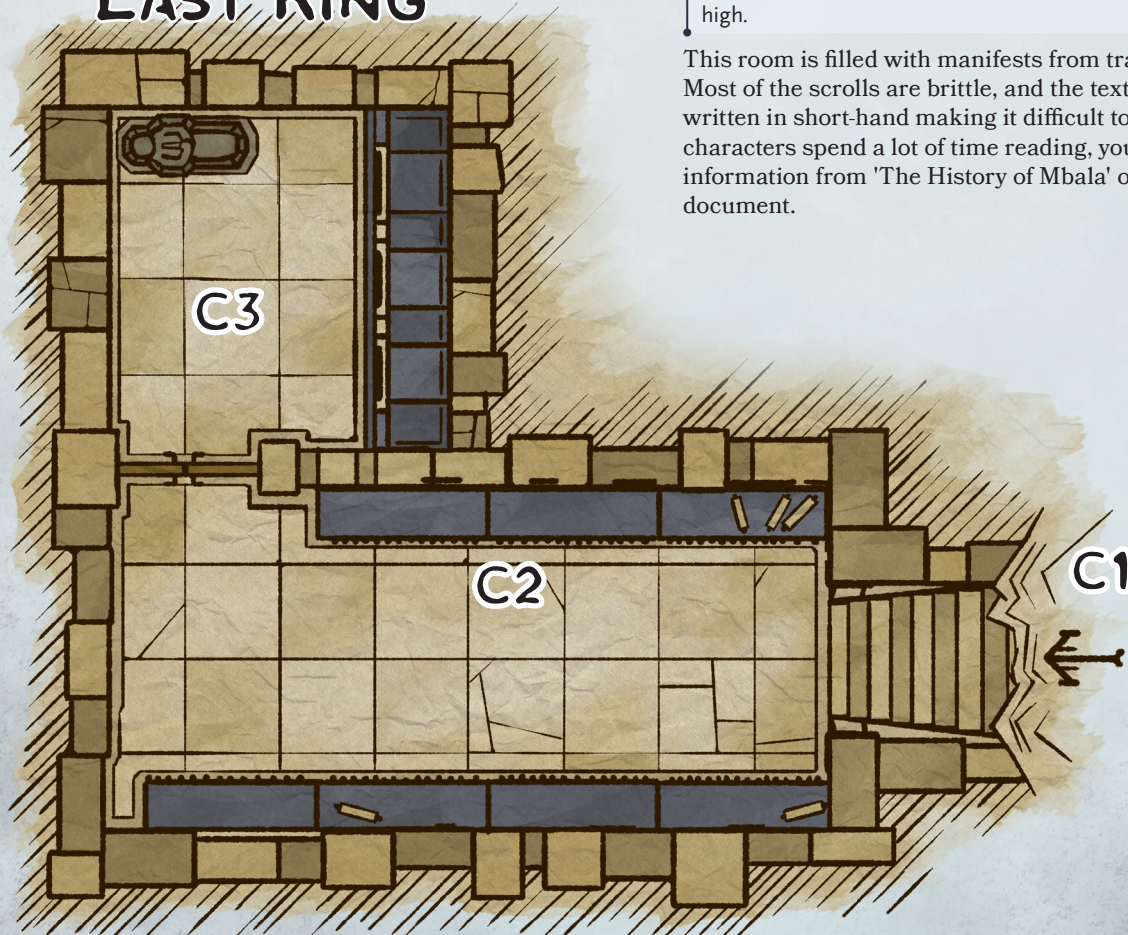
C2. HALL OF RECORDS

When the characters enter this room, read the following:

Stone stairs descend to a dark 40-foot long room. Along the walls of the hall, there are stone shelves filled with dusty scrolls. A closed double door made of stone stands at the far end of the right side of the room. The ceilings are 10 feet high.

This room is filled with manifests from trade delegations. Most of the scrolls are brittle, and the text is generally written in short-hand making it difficult to read. If characters spend a lot of time reading, you can share information from 'The History of Mbala' on page 4 of this document.

CRYPT OF THE LAST KING



C3. THE KING'S SARCOPHAGUS

When the characters open the double doors, read the following:

The room is dominated by a stone sarcophagus with an inscription carved into it. Three coffins reside in wall recesses to the right.

If any of the characters can read Old Omuan read:

Here lies King Kwalu Mbalawa, the last King of the great kingdom of Mbala. He is interred here with his family, who were taken before him through tragic misfortune. No riches lie buried here, for the King decreed all his riches would go to ensuring Mbala's survival. Like an artisan, he is buried with naught but his tools, which were not enough to save our people.

King Mbalawa attacks when his sarcophagus is opened, but will not pursue enemies above ground. He has a lair action that animates a corpse in one of the three coffins as a **zombie**, which acts on initiative count 20. To increase the difficulty of this encounter, add more hit points to King Mbalawa by increasing his constitution score to 19 or 20.

Once King Mbalawa is defeated, all zombies in the crypt fall dead. Should any characters contract *mummy rot* (MM, 228), Nanny Pu'pu may be able to remove the curse.

Treasure. King Mbalawa is buried with a set of mason's tools and the *rain stick of Mbala*.



KING MBALAWA

Medium undead, lawful evil

Armor Class 11 (natural armor)

Hit Points 78 (12d8 + 24)

Speed 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	8 (-1)	18 (+2)	6 (-2)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)

Saving Throws Wis +2

Damage Vulnerabilities fire

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Damage Immunities necrotic, poison

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Common, Old Omuan

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The mummy can use its Dreadful Glare and makes one attack with its rotting fist.

Rotting Fist. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 3) bludgeoning damage plus 10 (3d6) necrotic damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or be cursed with mummy rot. The cursed target can't regain hit points, and its hit point maximum decreases by 10 (3d6) for every 24 hours that elapse. If the curse reduces the target's hit point maximum to 0, the target dies, and its body turns to dust. The curse lasts until removed by the *remove curse* spell or other magic.

Dreadful Glare. The mummy targets one creature it can see within 60 feet of it. If the target can see the mummy, it must succeed on a DC 11 Wisdom saving throw against this magic or become frightened until the end of the mummy's next turn. If the target fails the saving throw by 5 or more, it is also paralyzed for the same duration. A target that succeeds on the saving throw is immune to the Dreadful Glare of all mummies (but not mummy lords) for the next 24 hours.

ZOMBIE

Medium undead, neutral evil

Armor Class 8

Hit Points 22 (3d8 + 9)

Speed 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	6 (-2)	16 (+3)	3 (-4)	6 (-2)	5 (-3)

Saving Throws Wis +0

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 8

Languages understands the languages it knew in life but can't speak

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

Undead Fortitude. If damage reduces the zombie to 0 hit points, it must make a Constitution saving throw with a DC of 5 + the damage taken, unless the damage is radiant or from a critical hit. On a success, the zombie drops to 1 hit point instead.

ACTIONS

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft. *Hit:* 4 (1d6 + 1) bludgeoning damage.

RANDOM ENCOUNTERS IN MBALA

A party who spends at least an hour searching the ruins of Mbala may discover something or face an encounter. You can determine what the characters discover by rolling a d10 and consulting the 'Mbala Discoveries'-table below, or you can choose any discovery or encounter you prefer. It is suggested that after the party makes five such discoveries, no more can be found.

Mbala Discoveries

d10	Discovery
1	Kamadan
2	Pteranodons and Almiraj
3	Pterafolk Attack
4	Abandoned Mine
5	Ghosts
6	Flying Monkeys
7-9	Flora and Fauna
10	Gem cache

KAMADAN

A **kamadan** eyes the party from a distance. Characters with a passive perception of 17 or higher notice it stalking them from behind some rubble. If the party does not split up for an hour, it moves along in search of easier prey. If it is attacked or isolates a character, it will use its Sleep Breath-action immediately and fight or run depending on how many foes remain conscious. If it manages to knock a solo character unconscious, it will stalk the area for 5 more minutes before attempting to kill the sleeping character and feed the pieces to its cubs. While rare in Mbala, kamadans know to stay clear of Nanny Pu'pu.

PTERANODONS

A flock of 1d4 **pteranodons** hunting for food spot a group of 1d4 **almiraj** and dive down on their prey. The pteranodons are faster than the speedy almiraj and will gobble them up in 1d4 turns unless the characters intervene. A party wizard may be able to entice an almiraj to become his or her familiar with a successful DC 14 Wisdom (Animal Handling) check.

PTERAFOLK

1d4 **pterafolk** spot the players and attack. If any pterafolk are killed, the rest flee back to their nest.

ABANDONED MINE

The character leading the way must succeed a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw or fall 2d10 feet into an abandoned mine shaft. At the bottom of the shaft, an **ankheg** attacks whoever disturbed its home. The rest of the mine is either collapsed or the DM may run a modified adventure from **The Mines of Chult**.

Flora of Mbala

These mundane plants can be found in the ruins of Mbala.

Eyebright. Small, white flowers. Can be consumed as an action to end the blindness condition.

Citronella. A type of grass. Can be burnt as a block of insect repellent-incense. When lit, it burns for 8 hours and repels normal insects within a 20-foot-radius.

Kaeth. Kaeth is analogous to real life coffee. Consuming Kaeth boiled in water gives a character +1d4 to initiative rolls for 8 hours.

GHOSTS

A ghost rises up out of the ground before the characters. Roll 1d4 and consult the table below to determine the ghost's disposition.

Ghost Disposition

d4	Disposition
1	The ghost is hostile and attacks, unless Nanny Pu'pu is present.
2	The ghost is afraid of the party. It still believes it is alive and that Mbala is thriving. It thinks the party is an invading force.
3	The ghost attempts to possess one of the players, but is not hostile. The ghost just wants to hang out for an hour then leaves. The player can role play the ghost.
4	The ghost is friendly and, if asked, relays some history of Mbala. The ghost does not realize Nanny Pu'pu is a hag or killed anyone, but is surprised she has managed to survive for this long.

FLYING MONKEYS

The sound of wings heralds the arrival of 2d6 **flying monkeys**, which swoop through the adventurers in a wave of grasping hands and feet. Each character must succeed on a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw or lose a useful piece of gear to the furry thieves. The monkeys are servants of Nanny Pu'pu and will stash any items they steal in the Cistern (Area M4 of Mbala). If the characters suspect that the monkeys are her servants and question her about it, she claims that the monkeys are free creatures.

FLORA AND FAUNA

Roll 1d4 and consult the table below to determine what plants or creatures are discovered.

Flora and Fauna Discovery

d4	Discovery
1	The characters find 2d6 Citronella plants growing wild. These plants can be used as insect repellent incense. A successful DC 10 Intelligence (Nature) or Wisdom (Survival) check allows a character to determine that the smell is similar to the insect repellent and may have similar properties.
2	The characters find 1d4 Eyebright plants. These plants can be used to cure the effects of blindness. The plant's properties can be determined with a successful DC 14 Intelligence (Nature) or Wisdom (Survival) check.
3	The characters find 2d4 Kaeth plants growing wild. These plants are commonly used as a morning drink across Faerûn and can be easily recognized.
4	The characters find a yahcha crawling along the ground.

GEM CACHE

The characters spot a vault in the rubble. The vault is locked and can be opened with a successful DC 15 Dexterity (Thieves Tools) check or a successful DC 25 Strength (Athletics) check. The vault contains 2d6 gemstones (either jasper, onyx, quartz, or zircon) worth 50 gp each.

NANNY PU'PU

As previously mentioned, Nanny Pu'pu is a green hag posing as a witch doctor in Mbala. Here, you will find additional advice on how to run her in your game, including an expansion to her backstory, an introduction scene, additional gifts she can bestow upon the party, and an outline of the information she provide inquisitive characters with.

HISTORY OF NANNY PU'PU

For hundreds of years, Nanny Pu'pu was a night hag, and together with Widow Groat and Baggy Nanna formed a night hag coven called the Sewn Sisters. The coven would haunt the dreams of mortals, filling their heads with doubts and fears, in the hope of tricking them into performing evil acts in the waking world. Eventually the hags would kill the corrupted mortals in their sleep and trap their souls in special soul bags for transport to The Grey Waste of Hades.

After the construction of the Tomb of the Nine Gods, Acererak discovered the atropal on the Negative Plane. He began devising a plan to feed the atropal souls until it transforms into an evil god. Knowing of night hags' power to trap souls, Acererak sought the help of the Sewn Sisters to create the soulmonger. Because the soulmonger would prevent souls from reaching Hades, disrupting the balance of the planes, the Nanny Pu'pu and her sisters initially resisted Acererak. When Acererak was victorious, he forced the hags to betray Nanny Pu'pu, the most vocal of the group. Nanny Pu'pu was cast out of the Sewn Sisters, who recruited the night hag Peggy Deadbells to reform the coven. The three began to work on behalf of Acererak, spending the better part of the next century building the soulmonger.

Alone in the jungles of Chult, Nanny Pu'pu underwent hag metamorphosis back to her original fey form (a green hag), which was more suited to survive the local climate. With her powers reduced and her adaptation underway, Nanny Pu'pu traveled to Mbala, a small Chultan kingdom slowly dying out in the wake of Omu's demise and Ubtao's disappearance from Chult. The kingdom welcomed Nanny Pu'pu, who posed as a witch doctor with magical powers.

Eager to regain her power, Nanny Pu'pu formed a deal with Myrkul the Lord of Bones and put a curse on the king (see Crypt of the Last King on page 6). Slowly and carefully, Nanny Pu'pu used her *illusory appearance* to kill and eat the Mbalans over many years as she recovered from her wounds, always framing murders on others or pterafolk. Between the blazing sun, winds, and the monsoons of Chult, the infrastructure crumbled, leaving behind nothing but the ruins found today.

Note: The Timeline

Acererak entered Omu and enslaved the Omuans to build the Tomb of the Nine Gods approximately 100 years ago (TOA, 92). According to Tomb of Annihilation, Acererak found the atropal "not too long ago by human standards" (TOA, 6). This supplement assumes that the discovery of the atropal and the soulmonger development began shortly after the Tomb of the Nine Gods was built, leaving enough time for Nanny Pu'pu to be cast out of the Sewn Sisters and contribute to the downfall of Mbala.

RUNNING NANNY PU'PU

As the characters may have discovered while searching the ruins of Mbala, the forgotten kingdom is haunted by ghosts of the last fallen Mbalans who were never properly buried and whose skulls are piled in heaps at the entrance gate. When you're ready for the party to meet Nanny Pu'pu – whether that is shortly after the characters cross the gateway into the ruins proper, or when they near Nanny Pu'pu's hut – you can have several ghosts appear and attempt to use their 'Possession'-action against one of the characters. After one ghost succeeds, you can have the other ghosts simply watch as the possessed character fights his or her party members for a few rounds, or – if the party is stronger than average – you can have more ghosts try to possess other characters. Players rarely get to fight one another so set this up in a way that you think will be fun for the players.

After a few rounds (or earlier, if the players aren't enjoying fighting each other, or the fight is going poorly for them), Nanny Pu'pu emerges from her hut and chants out booming words in an ancient language as if under the effect of the *thaumaturgy* spell. The ancient words are part of a spell akin to the *break enchantment* function of the *dispel evil and good* spell, ending the possession effect. Once ejected from its host, the hostile ghost and the onlooking ghosts flee into the bone piles.

Nanny Pu'pu then greets the characters as an ancient old witch doctor and invites them in for some stew. The players may be suspicious of Nanny Pu'pu, but the gesture should dispel the chance that she and the party will fight on sight.



NANNY'S LAIR FEATURE

Nanny Pu'pu is wary of adventurers in groups and will not put herself in harm's way directly if there is a possibility she could be discovered or attacked. To make Nanny Pu'pu more powerful, consider giving her the following lair action from *Volo's Guide To Monsters*, page 59:

The hag creates an illusory duplicate of herself, which appears in its own space. As long as she can see her duplicate, the hag can move it a distance equal to her walking speed as well as make the illusion speak on her turn (no action required). The illusion has the same statistics as the hag but can't take actions or reactions. It can interact with its environment and even pick up and hold real objects. The illusion seems real in every way but disappears if it takes any amount of damage. Otherwise, it lasts until the hag dismisses it (no action required) or can no longer see it. If the hag uses this lair action to create a new duplicate, the previous one vanishes, dropping any real objects in its possession.

Nanny Pu'pu will combine this ability with her *invisible passage* action to control the duplicate while invisible nearby, both in and out of combat.

NANNY'S GIFTS

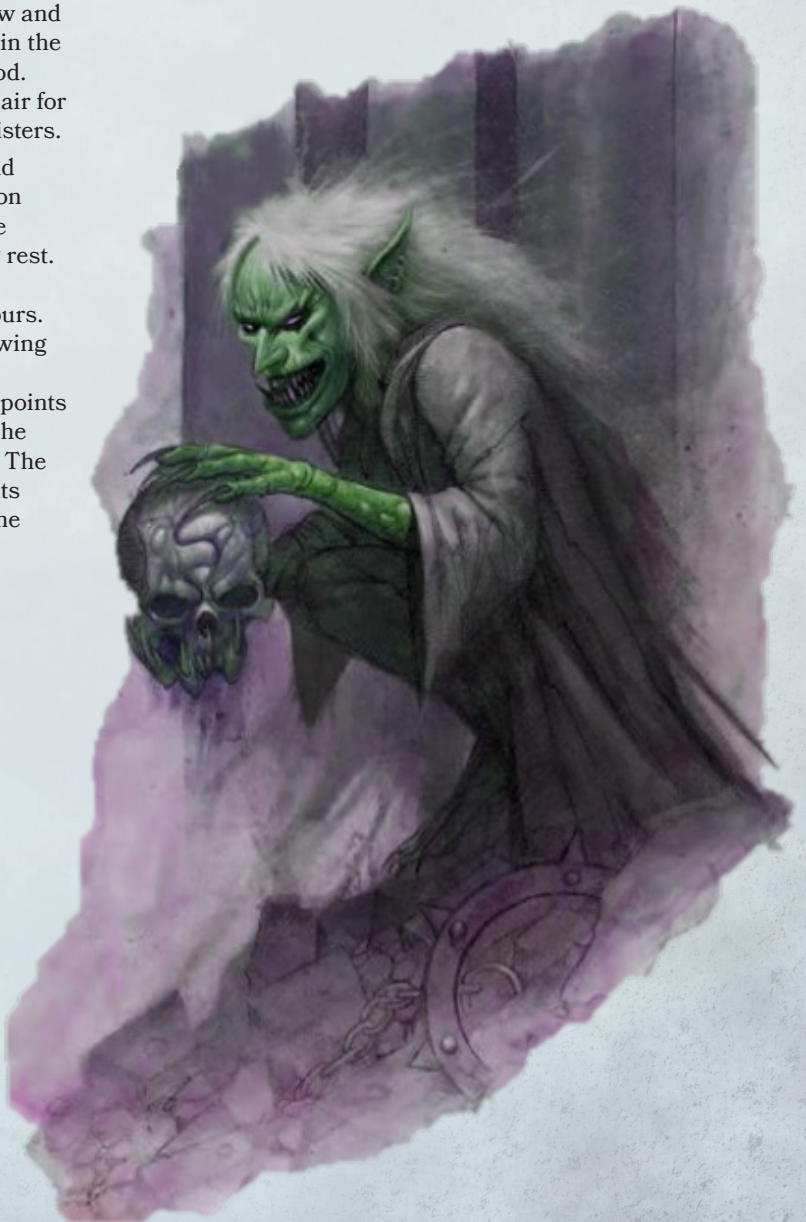
In addition to the Rite of Stolen Life detailed in *Tomb of Annihilation*, DMs can have Nanny Pu'pu offer some other weird magical "gifts" to characters willing to help her with her pterafolk problem. She can grant these blessings by mixing some of the characters' hair or blood in a stew and providing them with potions. Characters can only gain the effects of a potion brewed with their own hair or blood. Nanny Pu'pu keeps extra samples of the blood and hair for later use, which are eventually stolen by the Sewn Sisters.

- **Gift of Eyes.** The user gains blindsight (60 feet) and advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight for 8 hours. However, the user is affected by the blinded condition for 8 hours following the next long rest.
- **Gift of Adrenaline.** The user gains advantage on Strength, Dexterity and Constitution checks for 8 hours. However, the user suffers a point of exhaustion following the next long rest.
- **Gift of Heroism.** The user gains 10 temporary hit points for 8 hours, for the same duration the user is under the effects of the *bless* spell (no concentration required). The user suffers horrible nightmares and gains no benefits from the next long rest. However, the is affected by the *bane* spell for 8 hours following the next long rest.

WHAT NANNY KNOWS

If the characters share that they are seeking a cure for the death curse, Nanny Pu'pu can provide the following information at the DM's discretion. Nanny Pu'pu would be motivated to share information about the Sewn Sisters and Acererak out of vengeance.

- The evil archlich Acererak is likely behind the death curse. Acererak enlisted the help of a group of hags called the Sewn Sisters who specialize in trapping souls. She does not know what they are doing with the souls, but expects it is the reason for the death curse.
- The Sewn Sisters are Widow Groat, Baggy Nanna, and likely one other hag that Nanny Pu'pu does not know (Peggy Deadbells). Nanny Pu'pu also incorrectly believes that the Sewn Sisters are working against their will for Acererak. In reality, the hags have grown greedy in anticipation of all of the souls that will become available to them once the atropal ascends into godhood and intend to follow through on Acererak's plan.
- Nanny Pu'pu knows the general location of Omu, but has no reason to assume that the city is related to the death curse. She knows nothing of the Tomb of the Nine Gods.
- Nanny Pu'pu can sense the evil presence atop the Heart of Ubtao, which can be seen from Mbala on a clear day. She does not know what resides there.



PTERAFOLK NEST

As described in Tomb of Annihilation, Nanny Pu'pu blames the pterafolk for the downfall of Mbala (though, in reality, she had a lot to do with it as well). She requests that the characters deal with them as they remain a nuisance for her, preventing explorers (meals) from making their way up the plateau to see her. Additionally, after the characters leave Mbala, she will feast for days on pterafolk corpses.

GENERAL FEATURES

The pterafolk nest has the following general features:

- **Lighting.** During the day the cave is well lit for the first 20 feet and dimly lit beyond that.
- **Ceilings.** Ceilings in the nest are 20 feet high.
- **Stalagmites.** Stalagmites in the cave provide half cover against ranged attacks, such as pterafolk javelins.

The matriarch of the nest is a cruel **pterafolk sky tyrant**. Because she must be feared by the other **pterafolk**, she cannot show any signs of weakness, and cannot be negotiated with. She is out hunting when the characters first arrive.

Because this is a nest, there are several **pterafolk juveniles**. These creatures may become collateral damage during the fight if any area of effect spells are used, but they will not attack unless in direct self defense. These hatchlings have poor eyesight and are unlikely to detect intruders. Pterafolk give birth to live young, so there are no eggs in the nest.

Tomb of Annihilation states that there are 2d6 pterafolk present at the nest at any one time, while the rest are out hunting (there are 20 pterafolk residents in total). This supplement assumes there are 6 pterafolk and 3 pterafolk juveniles present in the cave when the characters arrive. Feel free to add more combatants to increase the difficulty. This can be easily decided in the moment by adding more pterafolk combatants when reinforcements arrive.

In addition to the map provided on the following page, a few suggestions to make the encounter more exciting are presented as well.

PTERAFOLK JUVENILE

Small monstrosity, unaligned

Armor Class 10
Hit Points 3 (1d6)
Speed 10 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
6 (-2)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	7 (-2)	8 (-1)	10 (+0)

Senses passive Perception 9
Languages –
Challenge 0 (0 XP)

ACTIONS

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, reach 5 ft. *Hit:* 2 (1d4) piercing damage.

PTERAFOLK

Large monstrosity, neutral evil

Armor Class 12 (natural armor)
Hit Points 26 (4d10 + 4)
Speed 30 ft., fly 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	13 (+1)	12 (+1)	9 (-1)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)

Skills Perception +2, Survival +2
Senses passive Perception 12
Languages Common
Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Terror Dive. If the pterafolk is flying and dives at least 30 feet forward toward a target, and then hits that target with a melee weapon attack, the target is frightened until the end of its next turn.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The pterafolk makes three attacks: one with its bite and two with its claws. Alternatively, it makes two melee attacks with its javelin.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft. *Hit:* 7 (2d4 + 2) piercing damage.

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) slashing damage.

Javelin. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 30/120 ft. *Hit:* 9 (2d6 + 2).

PTERAFOLK SKY TYRANT

Large monstrosity, neutral evil

Armor Class 13 (Natural Armor)
Hit Points 45 (6d10 + 12)
Speed 30 ft., fly 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	13 (+1)	14 (+2)	9 (-1)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)

Skills Perception +3, Survival +3
Senses passive Perception 13
Languages Common
Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Flyby. The pterafolk sky tyrant does not provoke opportunity attacks when it flies out of an enemy's reach.

Dive Bomb. If the pterafolk sky tyrant moves at least 10 feet straight toward a target and then hits it with a bite attack on the same turn, the target takes an extra 7 (2d6) piercing damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 14 Strength saving throw or be pushed up to 10 feet away and knocked prone.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The pterafolk sky tyrant makes three attacks: one with its bite and two with its claws.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (2d4 + 3) piercing damage.

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) slashing damage.

REACTIONS

Fear of Retribution (2/day). Whenever a friendly creature within 30 feet of the pterafolk sky tyrant that can hear it misses with an attack, the sky tyrant can screech perilous threats to allow that creature to reroll the attack roll.

RUNNING THE PTERAFOLK NEST

Below are some advice on how you can run the characters' assault on the Pterafolk Nest, depending on how they handle the approach to the nest.

ATTACK FROM THE FRONT

Two **pterafolk** guard the ledge, watching for enemies. Characters can get a surprise attack against the guards if they succeed on a Dexterity (Stealth) check against the pterafolks' passive perception of 12 as they approach.

- If the whole party fails, the guards spot the characters 30 feet away, and alert the nest inhabitants to attack.
- If only half of the party succeeds, the pterafolk go on alert and draw an additional two guards from within the lair out to watch. While the four guards are on alert, the DC increases to 14 to get within 30 feet with hopes of surprising the guards.
- If the whole party succeeds, or one fails and the rest succeed with relatively high rolls, the characters can get within 30 feet and attack with surprise.

ATTACK FROM THE BACK

Two **pterafolk** are sleeping by the chimney in the back of the nest. Two more are milling about or eating closer to the entrance of the nest with the three pterafolk juveniles, and two pterafolk are on guard at the entrance. Characters can approach the sleeping (incapacitated and prone) pterafolk without waking them by succeeding on a DC 10 Dexterity (Stealth) check to get close enough for a melee critical attack.

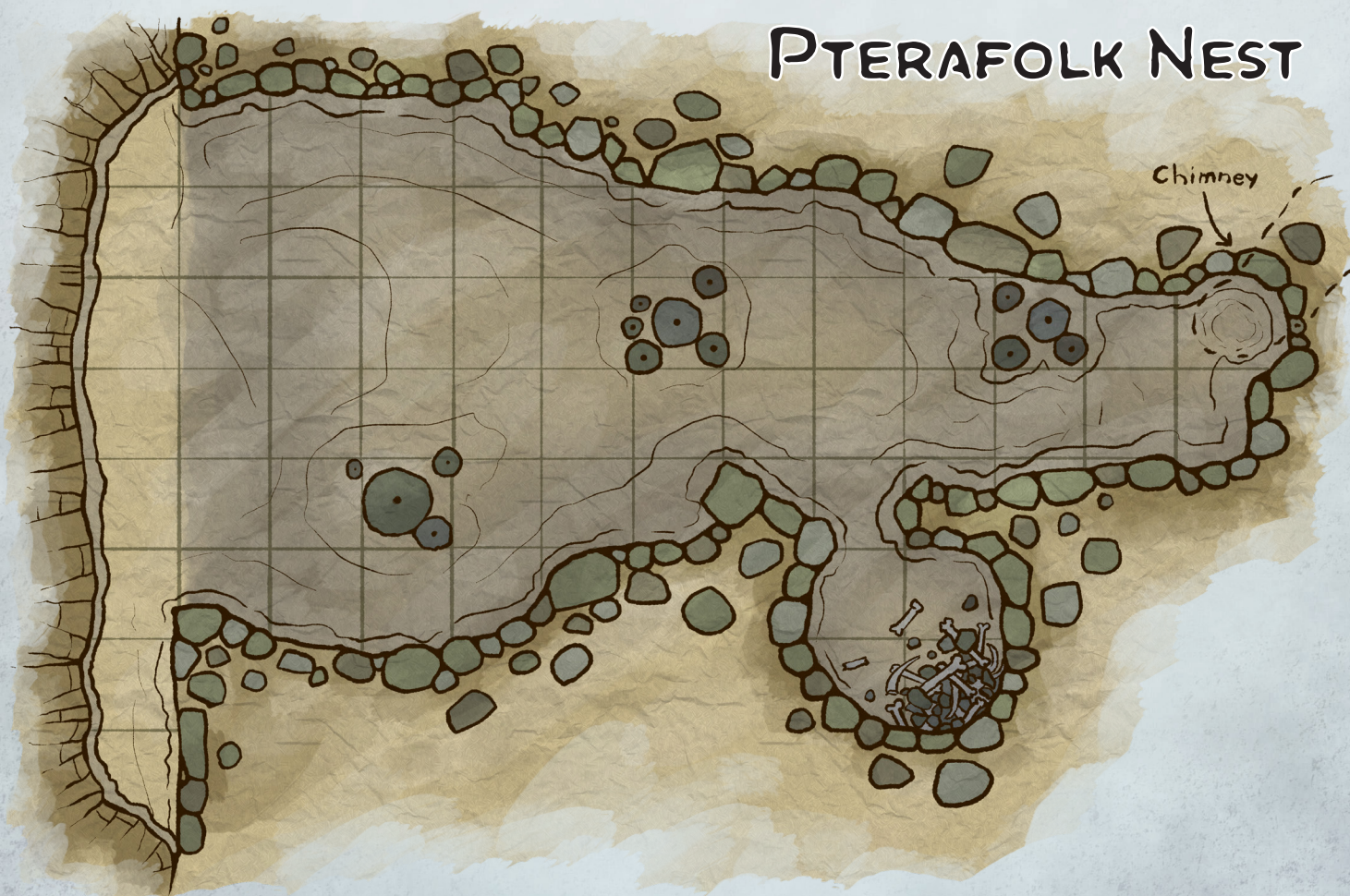
- If the whole party fails, the sleeping pterafolk awaken, and the whole nest attacks.
- If only half of the party succeeds, one of the two sleeping pterafolk awakens and begins to mill about the nest.
- If the whole party succeeds, or one fails and the rest succeeded with relatively high rolls, the characters can get within melee range and attack with surprise on the sleeping pterafolk.

If the characters defeat the sleeping pterafolk during the surprise round, the rest of the nest is not alerted to their presence unless a particularly loud spell or action was used.

REINFORCEMENTS

Once any of the **pterafolk** in the nest are defeated, one pterafolk per turn will use the dash action, flying out of the nest, screeching for reinforcements. If a pterafolk manages to escape 60 feet from the outside the lair entrance, reinforcements arrive in 2 turns. The reinforcements consist of the pterafolk who called for help, two additional pterafolk, and a **pterafolk sky tyrant**, named Tarnak. The pterafolk sky tyrant is the alpha female of the nest and the strongest of the pterafolk. If the pterafolk sky tyrant is defeated, the rest of the pterafolk attempt to flee for their lives.

Treasure. In the main chamber, characters can find six javelins. In the side chamber of the cave are the bodies of two partially eaten Order of the Gauntlet scouts. A discarded backpack near them contains a pouch with 6 sp, a dagger, a potion of greater healing, and a rough map of Aldani Basin.



DEVELOPMENTS

Once the characters have dispatched the pterafolk and left Mbala, Nanny Pu'pu decides to contact Widow Groat in an attempt to get her old covenmates to revolt against Acererak. She tells Widow Groat that a group of fools are attempting to destroy the soulmonger and the Sewn Sisters should let them. Nanny Pu'pu believes that if Acererak has to start over, the effort will leave him weakened and potentially vulnerable.

Unfortunately for Nanny Pu'pu, the Sewn Sisters pay her a visit after receiving the message and kill Nanny Pu'pu. This visit should coincide with the characters' arrival at Omu, at which point there is little chance that they will return to Mbala for the Rite of Stolen Life. When the Sewn Sisters destroy Nanny Pu'pu, they collect the samples of hair and blood that she kept from the characters and use it to create the clone(s) kept in the cage of the Lair of the Sewn Sisters (area 71 of the Tomb of the Nine Gods) (*TOA*, 178).

Alternatively, if the characters fought and killed Nanny Pu'pu, her old covenmates sense her passing and come to investigate. After this, they take an interest in the characters and may visit one during the night to steal hair or blood for cloning.



MAGIC ITEMS

POTION OF GREATER HEALING

Potion, uncommon

This potion's red liquid glimmers when agitated. You regain 4d4 + 4 hit points when you drink this potion.

POTION OF HEROISM

Potion, rare

This blue potion bubbles and steams as if boiling. For 1 hour after drinking it, you gain 10 temporary hit points that last for 1 hour. For the same duration, you are under the effect of the *bless* spell (no concentration required).

POTION OF HILL GIANT STRENGTH

Potion, uncommon

This potion's transparent liquid has floating in it a sliver of hill giant's fingernail. When you drink it, your Strength score changes to 21 for 1 hour. The potion has no effect on you if your Strength is equal to or greater than that score.

RAIN STICK OF MBALA

Weapon (quarterstaff), rare (requires attunement)

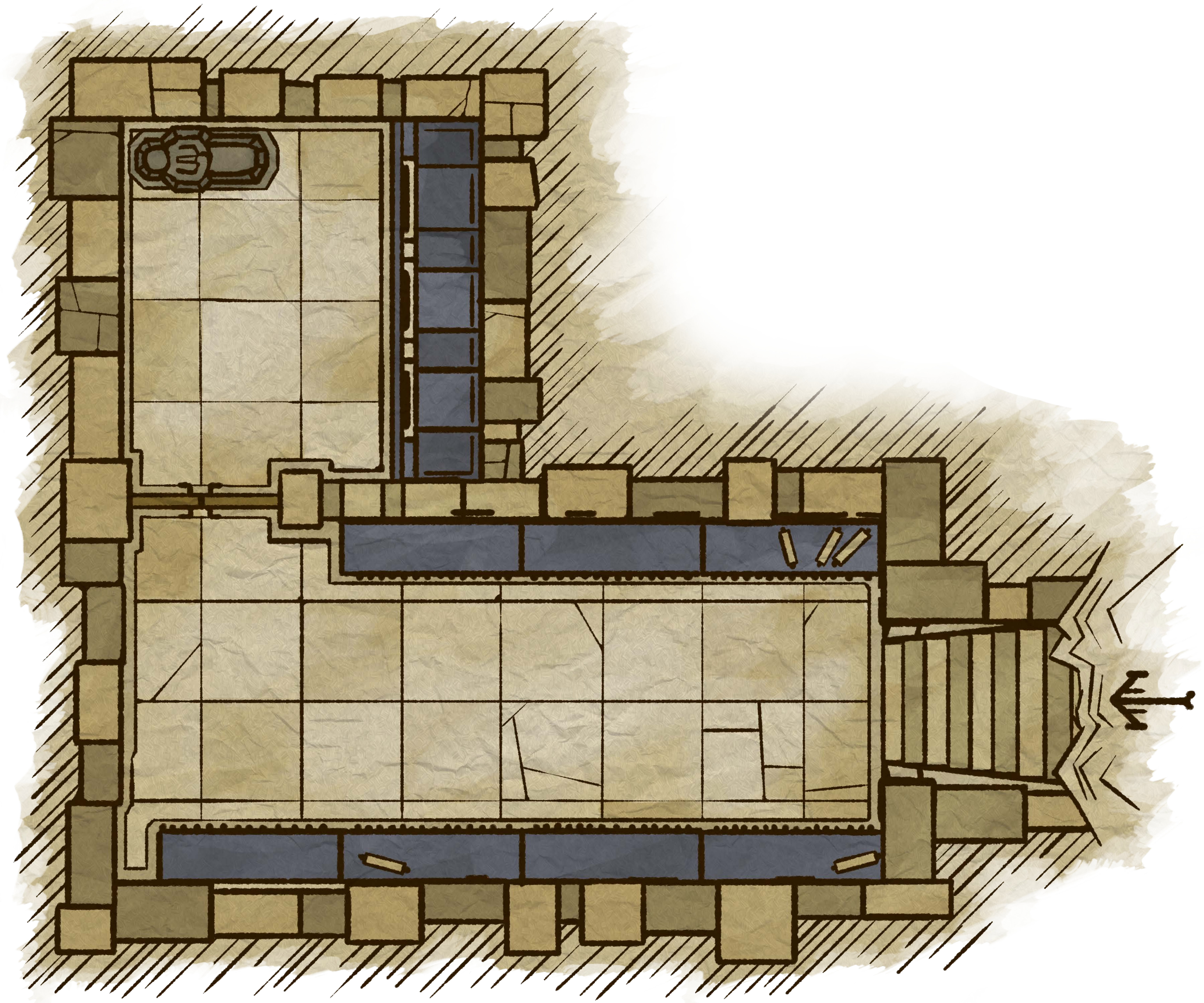
The *rain stick of Mbala* is a +1 quarterstaff, engraved with markings of wind, water, plants, and earth on an outer cylindrical portion of the staff, which rotates around the main shaft. The outer cylinder may be rotated, granting the wielder the ability to cast one of the following corresponding cantrips. Once rotated, the outer cylinder is locked in place until the next dawn. A notch on the main shaft visually indicates which symbol is selected.

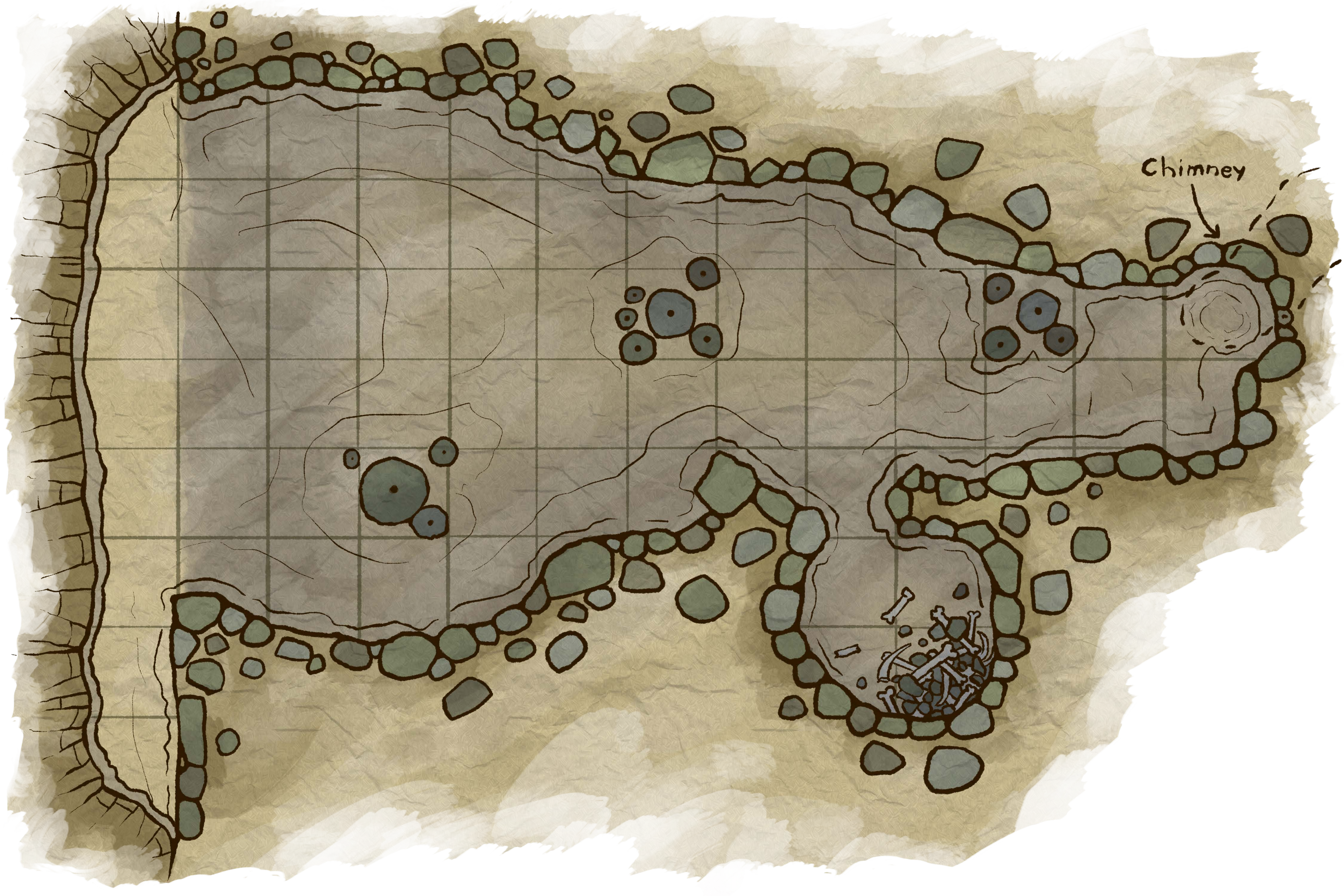
- Wind: *gust*
- Water: *shape water*
- Plants: *druidcraft*
- Earth: *mold earth*

Additionally, the *rain stick of Mbala* has 1 charge, which can be used as an action to change the weather within 10 miles of the caster to become 90° F (32° C) and light rain for 8 hours (0.5 inches of rain accumulate during this time). The weather changes over the course of 10 minutes. At dawn, you may roll a 1d6. On a 6, the *rain stick of Mbala* regains a charge if it currently has none.



25 ft





Chimney

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COLLABORATION

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