

INDIANA JONES™

AND THE
GOLDEN VAMPIRES



A  MASTERBOOK™ 
GAME PRODUCT

*INDIANA JONES*TM

and the
Golden Vampires



INDIANA JONES™ AND THE GOLDEN VAMPIRES



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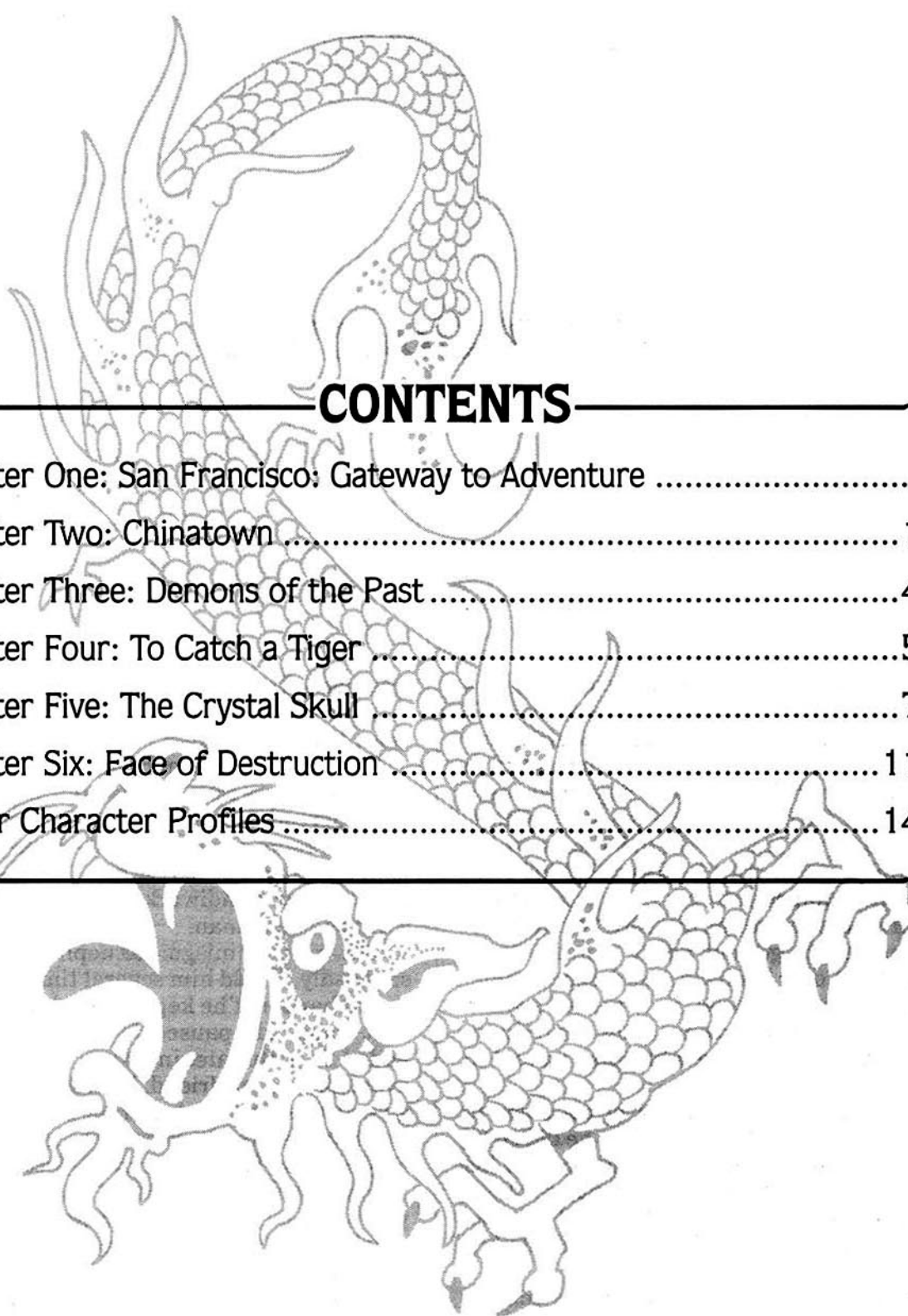
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Introduction

Indiana Jones sat back in his chair at the open air cafe and relaxed as a waiter set a bowl of soup before him. It was a beautiful day in San Francisco and he fully intended to enjoy his meal. The last few days had been, well, busy. He had earned a few days of rest.

Indy had just touched the laden spoon to his lips when a commotion broke out behind him. Someone bumped into his chair, spilling the soup from the spoon onto his shirt. "What the..." he managed to get out before a man's hand reached out over his head and dropped something into his soup bowl. Indy turned around just in time to see the owner of the hand slump to the ground clutching a bloodied wound in his chest.

Indy immediately slid out of his chair to check the man on the ground. As he did so he absentmindedly stuck the soup spoon in his pocket. While he bent over the man to check his pulse, the young oriental opened his eyes briefly and whispered, "The key ... Uncle Li." Then he died.

There was some more commotion coming from inside the cafe. Indy quickly touched the man's eyes closed and stood up. As nonchalantly as was possible for such an action, he stuck his hand into his soup. It took a second, but Indy was able to find the key that the dead man had dropped. He held it up long enough to notice that the key was carved

from jade. Then he slipped it into his pocket.

"I see that you have found my key," came a voice from behind him.

Indy spun around and found himself faced by five Chinese men dressed in suits. Four of them spread out around him, cutting off all but one route of escape. Indy looked at the man who had addressed him. "I take it that this is your handiwork," Indy gestured toward the dead man.

"Ah, my poor misguided nephew," the man said sadly. "I told him several times that this would happen if he kept up his dealings with that tong." He paused for a moment, then added in a threatening tone, "If you would avoid his fate, my friend, I would advise you to give up the key. The tong that performed this horrible act would not hesitate to repeat it ... on you." The four men moved closer.

Indy shrugged and said, "If that's the way you want it ..." He reached into his pocket, grabbed the forgotten soup spoon, threw it over the uncle's head and dived beneath a table. While the five men were scrambling to find what they thought was the key, Indy dashed away from the cafe and into a side street. Behind him he heard the uncle yelling, "That's not the key! Get him!!!"

Indy smiled grimly. *So much for a day off*, he thought.

INDIANA JONES™ and the Golden Vampires

In This Book

Welcome once again to the adventure and excitement that fills the *World of Indiana Jones*. Within this book, you will find a lot of useful information for planning adventures in a new location — San Francisco. This city has a lot of places for characters to explore and gamemasters to exploit. There is even an

adventure that will introduce both the gamemaster and the players to the potential of this city. Then, for a change of pace, there are also three more action-packed adventures included in this book that can be used by the gamemaster to introduce even more elements of excitement. So, if you're looking for a good place to base a campaign, look no further. San Francisco has it all!

Chapter One

San Francisco: Gateway to Adventure

Swirling fogs, the Barbary Coast, waking up shanghaied to China, the *Maltese Falcon* ... San Francisco has been featured in the American mythic imagination from the days of the Gold Rush straight through to film noir. Let us examine the legend and reality as they interweave to make a unique adventure setting for the *World of Indiana Jones*.

Geography and Climate

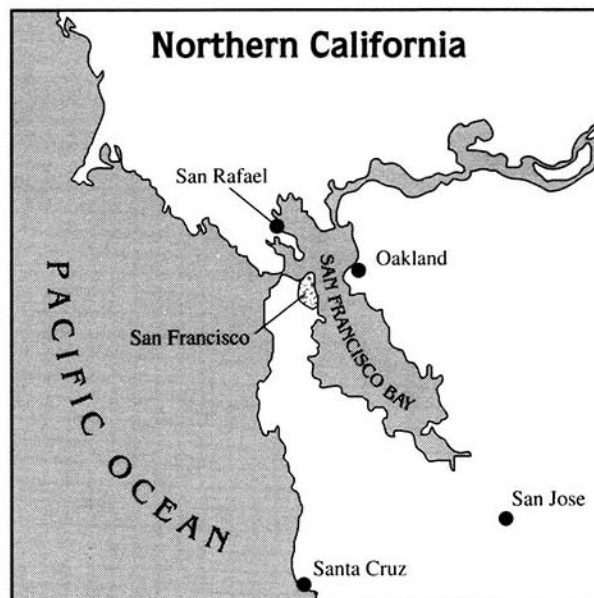
San Francisco and its surrounding sister cities lie around a collection of bays and inlets that feed into the Pacific Ocean roughly 1/3 of the way south on the California coast. It is quite hilly, rising almost straight out of the bay to heights of 300 meters. Among these heights are Telegraph Hill, Nob Hill, and Russian Hill from which one can see virtually the entire city and the surrounding waters.

The hilly city itself takes up just over 160 square kilometers with even higher mountains bordering it on its non-waterfronts. The Coast Ridge sits to the east and the Santa Cruz Mountains are at the southern edge of San Francisco.

The Bay itself is one of the great natural harbors of the world. Major cities along it include Berkeley (with its major university already firmly established in the Jones era), Oakland on the East Bay, and San Jose on the

South Bay. Adjacent to the region are Stanford University (between San Jose and San Francisco) and the Napa-Sonoma wine growing region (between San Rafael and Sacramento). The Bay is open to coastal and fishing craft along its entire length with major shipping channels near San Francisco, Oakland, and Pittsburgh.

The entire bay region was once a fresh water river which carved its way through the hills and mountains to greet the ocean. As the



land mass upon which California sits slowly settled and the ocean rose, the river was inundated with sea water forming two large bays. Each bay varies in width from 8 to 20 kilometers with the San Paolo bay reaching 64 kilometers to the north and northeast and the San Francisco bay reaching 56 kilometers to the south. Each bay only averages about 5 meters in depth but their centers descend much further, dropping to depths of 45 meters. Guarding the entrance to these two bays is the Golden Gate channel. The channel is approximately 5 kilometers long by 1.5 to 3 kilometers wide and is more than 90 meters deep.

The Bay is cut in half by the Bay Bridge (completed in 1936) linking Oakland and San Francisco through the artificial island naval base of Treasure Island. The navy and marines also have major facilities near the town of Alameda near Oakland. Spanning the Golden Gate is of course the Golden Gate Bridge (also completed in 1936) linking San Francisco to the then rural Marin County. There is a major army base called the Presidio at the south end of the Golden Gate Bridge. In the Bay north of the Bay Bridge lies the Federal prison at Alcatraz Island.

San Francisco itself has a lovely climate that could be called a perpetual fall. The daytime temperature range fluctuates in the 70's, nighttime in the 50's. The rest of the Bay area is far more seasonal with summer highs over 100 degrees common in the South Bay and along the coast south of San Francisco.

In game terms, San Francisco is a major urban area for the period. However, by period reality, this means that small towns and cities are separated at frequent intervals by green areas and stray houses in between. The continuous strip cities are a post-WWII event.

The road grid is good by the standards of the time, especially for the West. However, it is not as good as Los Angeles — to say nothing of New York or Boston. Outside the cities, a highway is a two lane blacktop and dirt is often a kilometer down the sideroads. Further, the extremely hilly nature of the area produces many sideroads that loop back on themselves without connecting to much of anything.

Major freight and most people move around the area by train. The Bay was an early railroad center and connections are good with many small stations at frequent intervals. Rail will also get you out of the region fairly easily. Air connections are good relative to the period. You can rent air transport in many small local fields. There is scheduled service out of San Francisco to several major destinations.

In game terms, this is an area where you can easily meet politicals from virtually anywhere. University or museum connections are best at the two universities mentioned above although the city does have some respectable local institutions. Military and maritime connections will mean more here than in most of the U.S. Asian and South American connections will mean more than usual; European (except colonial) and Caribbean will mean less.

Taking a Tour

A detailed look at modern San Francisco can be done by taking a tour through the city. The first stop on the tour trail is at the wharfs along the Bay. This is an appropriate starting point because it is where so many visitors and immigrants enter San Francisco for the first time.

The Wharf

The wharf area of San Francisco does not refer to the whole of the waterfront property in the city but only to the area of northeast and east San Francisco that lies directly next to the bay. Activity on the wharf begins early in the morning when the first fisherman heads out for the day and lasts until the last ships return with their new catches. Between these two times, the area is filled with a vocal smattering of fishermen, roadside vendors, shop merchants, sailors and ship captains. The people of the Wharf are of various descent — principally Italian, Scandinavian and Chinese. All are either selling their catches, purchasing other people's catches or trying to find work aboard a ship.

The Wharf is a good area to hide, should the characters wish to do so. There is usually a high volume of people going through this area, so it should be fairly easy for the characters to "get lost in the crowd" here.

Adventure Hook

The players could be engaged by the Himalayan Institute to escort a young monk in grave danger from San Francisco to a remote hidden monastery in the High Sierras. The characters should know nothing of his true origin. He is actually a young man who is believed by one faction in Tibet to be the reincarnation of the next Dahli Lama. In pursuit of the monk are martial arts experts from one of the tongs, seeking to use him as a front for their own schemes in Tibet. Further back but chasing are a party of monks from a different faction with mystical powers, two British Secret Service agents, and a group of officers trained in kung fu from a major warlord in west China.

Market Street and the Downtown

The next step on the tour of San Francisco is San Francisco's heart — Market Street. It is the heart of the retail district and is a main thoroughfare into the rest of the city. Like many of the other districts near the waterfront, Market Street is densely-packed with low-rent apartments and hotels as well as numerous saloons. As you travel further along its path into the city, you can find San Francisco's chief financial district, an area of moderate and higher priced hotels, a shopping district and, perhaps most important to many sailors, a vice district.

Market Street could be useful to both the gamemaster and the player. For the gamemaster, there are several shady places for characters to meet even shadier contacts. The characters could also meet with danger in the red light area. As for the players, it is possible for them to purchase just about anything along Market Street.

South of Market

The area south of Market Street and bordered by the waterfront, Market Street, Townsend Street and Eleventh Street is simply known as South of Market and resembles closely the waterfront area of Market Street. It is an extremely high-density area filled

with two main types of buildings — cheap boardinghouses and bars. Those residing in South of Market are primarily of Scandinavian, Finnish, and German descent. The remainder of the population consists of migratory workers, miners and agricultural workers. Also, South of Market is known for having more than its fair share of the homeless.

An example of how South of Market could be used by the gamemaster is that it could be a suitable place to set up contacts for the characters to meet or maybe provide a chance encounter with a group of rowdy bar patrons.

The Mission District

Directly to the west of South of Market lies a slightly more respectable section of town. The crowding of the boardinghouses very quickly gives way to more typical single and two-family houses. Where South of Market is filled with single, transient-labor Northern European males, the Mission District is primarily filled with working class Irish Catholic and German Protestant families. Social activities occur in the district's numerous churches and religious social clubs. Where South of Market has an overabundance of bars, the Mission District has a cache of fraternal orders and social clubs.

Because of the high density of religious activities held here, this area could be a good place to send characters if they are looking for clues pertaining to an artifact or treasure that is important to the Christian religion.

The Western Addition

To the north of the Mission District across Market Street lies one of the few areas of San Francisco left relatively unscathed by the Great Earthquake of 1906. The Western Addition extends from Market Street northward to the base of Pacific Heights and Nob Hill and is bordered on the east by Chinatown. Like the Mission District, it is primarily a single or two-family home area, but unlike Mission, it is distinctly middle and upper middle class.

The predominant nationality in the Western Addition is German with Jews making up the majority of the religiously convicted. In this area, the primary occupations of the workers are upper class financial clerks or bank managers or other white collar desk posi-

tions. Also considered part of the Western District is Japantown, which is home to the more successful Asians found in San Francisco. This area also has a small number of African-Americans.

This is another good area to set up contacts for the characters. Perhaps a museum curator lives here. Or maybe the parents of a fellow student who has mysteriously vanished reside in one of the houses here.

Nob Hill and Pacific Heights

Continuing the upward trend in wealth levels, the Western District gives way to the Pacific Heights area. This section, which is not only socially higher than the rest of the city, but physically higher, lays claim to the economic elite. It was in this area that one of the Big Four of the Southern Pacific Railroad (Charles Crocker) and more than a few of the earlier Silver Kings (most notably James Flood and James Fair) chose to reside in the 1800's. Accompanying them were many of the town's financial giants whose wise investments earned them an immortal position in the community's history. As one would expect from an area with these influential types of personalities, the homes are expensive and ostentatious. One socialite even had a \$30,000 bronze fence which required the full-time employment of a servant just to polish it. Today, little has changed. If a family is Irish Catholic (the predominant nationality of the district) and wealthy, there is a good chance that they live here.

For gamemasters, this could be the perfect place to locate a wealthy collector of art and antiquities who seems to have possession of something the characters are looking for.

North Beach

Sliding down the backside of Nob Hill and heading north back to the water, one encounters North Beach. The district was originally the Latin Quarter in the late 1800s and early 1900s and is named for a beach that no longer actually exists (it has been supplanted by a landfill). It and the area at the base of Telegraph Hill was home to the French, Mexican, Spanish and Portuguese immigrants. However, the Italians that used to live a little further south on Telegraph Hill have taken

over this district. As the number of Italians in the city and on the wharf grew, the "Little Italy" section of Telegraph Hill slowly outgrew itself and spread throughout North Beach. Today, all of the area north of Chinatown is filled with Italians and Sicilians and other Northern Mediterranean immigrants.

The Italians of San Francisco are one of the more successful of the ethnic groups. Having begun on the wharf, they soon took over large portions of the food processing, pasta, wine, and canned food markets in addition to founding the extremely successful Bank of Italy.

If the gamemaster wishes, it is possible to set up a few interesting encounters here, especially if the characters are looking for something that the Italians have close connections to.

Visiting the Neighbors

There are a few other areas that may be of interest while checking out San Francisco. These are San Francisco's sister city of Oakland and the various islands that sit in the bay waters.

Oakland

Across the bay from San Francisco is the seat of Alameda county, Oakland. Oakland was founded in 1820 by the Spanish, who named it for its abundance of live oak trees. While very similar to San Francisco, Oakland is noticeably more blue collar. While San Francisco appears as more of the "international" harbor, it is Oakland which supplies it with much of its trade goods. Its government and politics are very similar to San Francisco's, and Oakland is home to an army base, a naval supply center and an air station.

The Islands

Besides being home to numerous fish, the San Francisco Bay and Golden Gate channel hold a few islands of note. The most well-known of these is Alcatraz Island. Alcatraz Federal Penitentiary was opened in 1933 and is basically a twelve acre rock surrounded by the freezing cold waters of the channel. Considering the temperature and presence of sharks in the waters, most criminals choose to stay on the island rather than escape.

On a more pleasant note, there is Treasure Island, an artificial island built for the 1939 Golden Gate exposition. This exposition was held to show off the completed Golden Gate and San Francisco–Oakland Bay Bridges. Adjacent to Treasure Island is the island site of the original Spanish settlement at Yerba Buena. In the late 1930s, this island becomes a central anchoring point for the San Francisco–Oakland Bay Bridge.

As an adventure hook, the gamemaster might consider having a lost Spanish artifact be traced to the settlement at Yerba Buena.

History of the Hub City

Discovery and Pre-America

Much of the western coast of the United States was discovered relatively early by the Pacific explorers. However, these sailors, which included the famous Sir Francis Drake and several Spanish navigators, never ventured into the San Francisco Bay area. Drake himself came close, but landed in a smaller cove (now known as Drake's Cove) north of the Golden Gate channel. It wasn't until 1769 that the area which is modern San Francisco was officially discovered by a northbound Spanish land expedition led by Gaspar de Portola. Even then, the discovery was an accident since the Spanish had been looking for Monterey Bay, which they had mistakenly passed to the south.

Founded in 1776 (year of the Declaration of Independence) as a classic Spanish mission fort under the name Yerba Buena (which is Spanish for "good herb"), the City from its early days had a multinational flavor as Russian, American, and British fur trappers and whalers, as well as China traders, drifted through it. Then, Spain's claim and garrison passed to Mexico with Mexican independence. During this period, Mexico continued to claim more and more of northern California and eventually designated the San Francisco area as an official port of entry.

Slowly the Russian and British influence ebbed while American influence and settlement continued to slowly expand. Then the second Texas War (Mexican-American, 1846–48) gave California to the U.S. after a short and transparently fictitious period known as

the "Golden Bear Republic." In California terms, it was a nonevent. If America had not taken California in the war, it certainly would have after the Gold Rush (1848–50).

Gold Rush: The 1840s

Throughout the 1840s, while the United States and Mexico fought for control of the western territories, immigrants and other people from the east began to make their way cross-country to California. On January 24th of 1848, one traveller named James Marshall discovered gold on the shores of the American River at Coloma. By mid-year, word of the discovery had reached back to the east and the rush was on.

The Rush populated California while the base U.S. line of settlement was still astride the Mississippi River. It also made San Francisco a multinational town. By the height of the Rush, 200 languages could be heard on the city's streets. Chronic ethnic gang warfare between the various groups and the "true Americans" were to be a feature of the City down through the century.

Early Developments: 1850–1890

Although the news of gold brought thousands of people to the west, it would take a few years for the long term effects to hit San Francisco. In the early going, the gold rush actually served to hinder San Francisco's growth since everyone abandoned the city to trek northward and make their fortune. Throughout 1849 and 1850, San Francisco was little more than a transient town with a bay filled with dozens of abandoned ships.

As gold rush fever began to die down in the 1850s, San Francisco began to grow again. Those that had made their fortunes came back southward to settle, and those that were bankrupt followed the trail of wealth hoping that maybe there were job opportunities in their wake.

San Francisco grew up as a typical port city. Most of its occupations were devoted to maritime activities from ship building to shrimp fishing. To some degree, there was even sardine and salmon fishing on the rivers that fed the bay. Whaling would hit its peak in the late 1800s and hundreds of oyster bays were planted in the 1870s.

— Contacts, Part One

The Jones era is politically incorrect by our current views—especially in terms of bigotry. San Francisco is tolerant of more types of people than most of the U.S.. Because of that, it also has more levels of ethnic and racial hostility than most areas due its more heterogeneous nature.

From a population standpoint, it was a major city rising from 416,000 people in 1910 to 634,000 in 1930. It was a working man's city in the main, with a disproportionate amount of single transient northern European males. In addition, it had a more varied transient male population linked to the merchant marine and fishing industries. The two cultures did not interact in a major way although they often lived in adjacent areas. Therefore, from a gaming standpoint, contacts, associations, enemies, and leads from one do not carry over into another and neither carry into polite society.

This growth and the still persistent rumors of northern gold drew a wide variety of merchants—many from across the Pacific. By the mid-1850s, only four other U.S. cities (New York, Boston and New Orleans) could claim a larger take from foreign commerce. The foreign merchants that came were primarily from the Orient (first commercial accord with the local government signed in 1867), Hawaii (1878) and Australia (1878). Europeans were even making the long journey by the time of the turn of the century and as the merchants came, so did the immigrants. By the 1860s, San Francisco had added the title of third largest immigrant city to its growing list of accomplishments.

Following the growth from gold (and later silver) rushes was the economic development of California's other resources. Lumber, steel, sugar, fruit and other foods all became big sellers for California and especially so for San Francisco, which served as its wholesale middleman. The final draw for foreigners was the building of the transcontinental railroad.

As eastern Irish began to tire of the arduous task, newly arrived western Chinese happily took up the hammer.

Keeping in pace with the economic developments of San Francisco were the technological developments of the period. In the late nineteenth century, the city kept up by adding telegraph lines in 1853, gas lights in 1854, large-scale electricity in 1876 and telephone lines in 1877.

The Arts and Music grew just as rapidly as the rest of the city's advances. Before the turn of the century, San Francisco already had well-established theatres, symphonies, operas and museums. Many were even more impressive than ones that were built in the east because of San Francisco's ability to incorporate the unique features of the Far East and its other varied travellers.

The Turning of the Century: 1900–1906

The first decade of the new century was marked by one major event which will be remembered by San Franciscans for generations to come. This event, of course, was the Great Earthquake of 1906. Preceded by smaller tremblers in 1898 and 1900, both paled in comparison to the devastation wrought by "the big one" which began 240 kilometers north of San Francisco and ripped the city in half in seconds. It hit the city at 5:13 on the morning of April 13th and immediately caused hundreds of thousands of dollars in damage. What made it truly horrifying, though, were the fires that began as a result. The city burned from the waterfront to the Mission District for five days and, in the end, the damage totalled in the hundreds of millions of dollars, hundreds had been killed and thousands were left homeless.

After the Apocalypse: 1906–1920

Showing their true pioneer spirit, San Franciscans recovered from this disaster with amazing speed. Working together in unheard-of cooperation, they virtually rebuilt the entire city from the ground up and by 1915, there were few signs of the great disaster. To display their ability to recover and to show their pride in the new city, the San Franciscans held the 1915 Panama-Pacific International Expo which also

Lecture Notes: The Drifter Culture

America in this period was mainly a farming country with rapidly growing cities, largely in the north and Midwest. However, the region bounded roughly by Seattle-San Francisco-Salt Lake-Denver-Minneapolis formed an exception. In large measure, it was an economic colony of the settled regions, dominated by raw materials industries of various sorts (industrial farming, mining, lumber, fishing, animal herding and the processing of the products thereof) and the shipping of the same. There was a distinct shortage of settled folk of both the farming and town-dwelling variety. There was also a distinct shortage of women and an even greater shortage of "respectable" ones. There was a huge surplus of white Protestant male drifters.

The drifter is a type largely lost to today's world. They worked brutally hard jobs for incredibly long hours. However, they did not live by the rules of settled society. Even in a period of alcoholism beyond our current

imagination, they were a whiskey-loving, two-fisted bunch. They would endure savage discipline in company towns with bought law for a period and then drift. They did not tend to be major lawbreakers — their crimes were of the trespassing, streetfighting, public intoxication, vice sort — petty crimes with small occasional terms in the local lockup. Their fight with the "law" was far more likely to be with the railway dicks as they rode the rails in open defiance of the railroad companies. However, they sheltered within their midst a subclass of grifters and full-time criminals who helped to give the whole group a bad name to respectable folk. This was a class divide that went beyond mere money. Drifters and the church-going types formed two different societies with very different antagonistic lifestyles. The world of the mining camp, the lumber camp, the pickers camp, the hobo or vagrant jungle by the freight yards — the world of cheap flops and boardinghouses was one with its own prices of entry.

San Francisco Population Census

1860	56,802
1870	140,473
1880	233,959
1890	298,997
1900	342,782
1910	416,912
1920	506,676
1930	634,394

showcased the opening of the Panama Canal. This exposition touted San Francisco's advancements in civic design, management and environmental safety measures.

Modern Days: 1920-1940

With this history set down, San Francisco progresses easily into the modern period with

no significant signs of slowing down. It is during this period that several more projects are begun (most notably the Golden Gate Bridge and the San Francisco/Oakland Bay Bridge — see sidebar) and the bay area's manufacturing sector begins to come into its heyday.

Modern Politics

The political structure of San Francisco is very similar to most other American cities. For most of the modern period, James Rolph (1912-1931) is mayor and his successor, Angelo Rossi, played virtually the same role and had the same support. Rolph entered office during the rebuilding period with promises of reforms and strong support of the labor movement. As a large portion of employment of the region was and is tied to such fields as steel manufacturing, food processing and ship industries, organized labor plays a strong role in the politics of modern San Francisco.

Besides the mayor, the general populace elects several city executives and an eleven

Polite Society

You must remember that the America of the Jones era was in many ways a very different country than today. In postmodern America, (1994+), social and economic class are virtually identical terms. In industrial America this was definitely not true. Polite society was a set of rules, not a financial net worth. Call these rules Puritan, call them Victorian, call them bourgeois — it was all of that and more. There were rules for everything. These rules covered hygiene, use of language, acceptable social vices (there weren't many and cover-up conventions were necessary), and acceptable opinions on virtually anything. Think of living your entire life so that your public image would be acceptable on a family television show.

Not only wasn't polite society an economic class, but it was very hard to buy your way in. People with a lot of money but the wrong mores just wouldn't be accepted. The 1990s concept that everybody is equal and everybody can do their own thing just do not apply here. Think of the club scene where all the money in the world won't get you past the door if you are pegged as the wrong type. Only today, it is a matter of beauty, youth and dress. Back then, it was a code of behavior. You may ponder if you choose whether this represents a step up or down.

The system operated by means of "public opinion." People were judged not just by their dress, speech, etc. but also by references — other upstanding people who could vouch for them. This went beyond the world of work where references were a must for jobs that polite people held. Respectable hotels and rooming houses also were only open to polite types. Also remember that the system is exclusionary. Polite, decent people did not frequent the wrong parts of

town, get into trouble with the law, get visited by wrong types, etc. Doing any of the above was a threat to reputation. Loss of reputation led to exclusion from polite society.

It was this exclusionary principal that led to so much of film noir and its companion fiction being concerned with blackmail. It wasn't a question of who or what you were but rather who or what people believed you were. Reputation was worth paying for, killing for, dying for.

Please note that polite did not mean wimp. Polite people could use violence, especially against inferiors, with little real threat to their reputation. Indeed, the "unwritten law" that violence could be used to avenge slights to honor was still largely in force through this period.

Also please note that polite did not imply a love of high culture. High culture went with a Europhilia (usually, but not always Anglophilia). These strata were effete and were a separate thing altogether from polite society. In set theory, they were a subset and regarded as acceptable but damnedly different by normal polite society. Polite society liked decent American things in pop culture. They belonged to churches, lodges, fraternal societies, civic groups — they did not frequent saloons.

The roleplaying significance of this is that while these types were a minority, they were a minority that controlled most of the commercial, financial and administrative life. They warred with the rougher types for control of the political sphere — but usually lost. Your characters must choose which type to play and live with the consequences of both the choice and their actions. Indy managed to go both ways, but lesser characters will find that difficult.

member board of supervisors. The mayor appoints the rest of the public department heads including the police chief, utilities chief and members of the civil service and planning boards. At this time, water and public transportation are municipally owned while gas

and electric are privately run.

Because the bay area is home to several separate counties with similar needs, there is some overlap in functions and positions. These positions are for such common problems as waste and resource management as well as

On the Waterfront

The maritime version of the drifter culture was a separate and distinct element from the drifters mentioned earlier. Air travel was in its infancy. The commerce of the world and the bulk of the passengers moved by ship. Such society was divided two ways — by rank and by employer.

Ships officers had basically the power of life and death in most situations at sea. The distinction between merchant and naval service was still recent enough so that custom still gave merchant officers the theoretical power of naval ones. Practically, it was a different matter. Mutiny was both more frequent in civil shipping and far less widely punished.

As a class, the officers came from several sources. Some were skilled mates who had been promoted. Many were “polite” types apprenticed into the life. A fair number were ex-naval officers. The bulk of them were career people who had joined in the late teens or early twenties and made the sea their life. They were overwhelmingly white Christian men of hardy physique. Virtually all were at least semiliterate.

The merchant marine equivalent of NCOs were mates. A few came from the

limited number of preparatory schools (usually technical people like radio operators were among these few). A few were apprentices hoping to quickly make officer. Mostly they were promoted able-bodied sailors, long on experience and quick with their fists. Discipline was enforced mostly by fist, club, and boot. Not all were literate and only some had technical abilities. They were primarily supervisors or bullies with experience.

The able-bodied sailors were a mix. The majority were long-serving seafaring people with papers, skills and experience. They signed for the voyage and would as easily work one flag as another. A minority was hired muscle with no special skills, papers, etc. When an insufficient number of these could be found, less scrupulous captains resorted to kidnapping (shanghaiing was the term of art). In these cases, you’d be slipped a mickey in some Barbary Coast dive and wake up with a headache 100 kilometers beyond the Golden Gate. You did the voyage or went over the side. The more disreputable tramps had a majority of the shanghaied help while the higher class vessels had none.

urban development. At the state level, officials are in control of the San Francisco Port Authority and the San Francisco–Oakland Toll Authority.

Social Activities and Other Notables

As mentioned in the section on the late 1800s, San Francisco has no shortage of cultural activities. It is home to a wide selection of theatres, opera houses, symphonies and museums, and all are still in operation into the twenties and thirties. There are also a number of parks and churches.

For the educationally inclined, San Francisco provides no end to the number of research libraries and sites. During the modern period, there are at least five separate univer-

sities including one for women (San Francisco College for Women) and one devoted to the arts (San Francisco Art Institute; the other three are S.F. State College, the University of S.F. and City College of S.F.). This not only provides great sources of information, but also provides many intellectual rivalries as researchers representing the different colleges try to outdo one another. San Francisco’s proximity to the relatively untouched American West and Southwest also allows local researchers to unearth the multitude of Native American and Mexican secrets hidden away in the nearby deserts

On the seedier side of the cultural street, there are of course quite a few vice areas in San Francisco. The most important of these is North Beach’s “Barbary Coast,” which has nearly every sort of after-dark activity imag-

Scheduled liners were the cream of the seafaring trade. Long term employment relationships, hand-picked crews, better accommodations — ocean travel as seen in Hollywood movies. The reality was closer to Captain Kantanga's ship in *Raiders of the Lost Ark* — tramp ships with no fixed schedule carrying general cargo and some passengers on an irregular schedule between 15–20 ports in an area. The crew had hot papers or often none at all. Customs took a lively interest in both the men and the cargo on these ships. However, these type of ships could be hired by hardy adventurers for a variety of services.

This was an era of fairly rigid border controls; however, seamen were among the few exceptions to the rule. Coming into a city aboard ship was an easy way to get in without exciting too much official interest. If you are already in the U.S., it is a discreet way out.

Imports and exports were far more rigorously screened than today. The volume of trade was smaller. The duties, prohibitions, etc. were vastly stricter. Again, as in *Raid-*

ers of the Lost Ark, the easiest way to move something was a false bill of lading on a tramp where the captain and the chief mates were bought off or friendly. Large artifacts or treasures are a major part of an adventurer's life ...

The world of the sea contained other semilinked fraternities — longshoremen and fisherfolk. The longshore folk shared the world but not the work of the merchant seamen. They lived in tenements adjacent to the piers, often in the same rooming houses. They frequented the same saloons. However, there was little interchange of personnel. So a good adventurer in the area would wish contacts in both groups.

The fisherfolk lived adjacent to the waterfront at North Beach by Fisherman's Wharf and in scattered colonies from Eureka to Monterey. At the heart of the fisherfolk were family operated boats. However, the bulk of the labor were seamen who drifted between one form of employment and the other mostly on whim. So a connection into fishers or merchants would give you secondary contacts into the other.

inable and which caters to anyone with the right amount of money. The Roaring Twenties and Thirties apply just as much to San Francisco as they do to New York and Chicago. Just remember, while New York has its rivers and Chicago has its Lake Michigan, San Francisco has its Golden Gate channel which is just as difficult to swim in with cement shoes.

Roleplaying in San Francisco

There have already been some brief details and ideas on roleplaying in San Francisco in the modern history and in the tour. Here are several more ways in which to utilize San Francisco in a *World of Indiana Jones* campaign along with some hooks and rumors to throw at players.

Encounters in a Bar

Each of the following encounters could start in a bar and can lead to just about anywhere in the San Francisco area.

- A White Russian refugee with medieval icons to sell shows up in the bar. The items he wishes to rid himself of are of museum quality but would be safer in a sale to a private collector. By talking to a few people at some local museums, the characters find out that there is a collector in the Midwest who is well-known in Orthodox circles who might be interested in the icons. As the characters investigate this, they find out that there is a White Russian militarist group claiming title to the icons as well as a U.S. customs officer who wishes to find the pieces because they are a part of an "undeclared shipment."

Lecture Notes: Building Bridges

Although San Francisco and its sister cities are all linked by an amazing network of railroads and cable car systems, the presence of the bay presents a tremendous obstacle to quick shipment of goods in and around the region as well as an obstacle to day-to-day travel of the region's workers. That's why during the 1930s, two separate bridge building projects were begun — the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge and the Golden Gate Bridge.

The San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge was the first to be completed in 1936. At a cost of 77 million dollars, it was an architectural marvel with a double-deck format that stretched over six kilometers. It consists of two separate suspension bridges over the west channel, a tunnel through Yerba Buena Island and a cantilever bridge over the east channel.

Six and a half months later in May of 1937, the Golden Gate Bridge was completed linking San Francisco to the northern peninsula. This suspension-style span which stretches 1,280 meters across the Golden Gate channel and has towers that rise 227 meters above the channel was built by Joseph Strauss and cost 35 million dollars. It was paid for by a six county bridge district which raised the funds through self-taxation and tolls.

- A Korean nationalist stumbles into the bar with a minor flesh wound on his arm. He is on the run from Japanese agents. He asks the characters if they could help him get out of San Francisco. He doesn't have anything to offer to the characters for their help, however.
- The characters are at this bar at the bidding of the Stanford Museum. Several valuable Egyptian artifacts have been stolen. The museum has insurance but would prefer to recover the objects. The characters have been given half the insurance value (\$75,000) to give to the thieves to recover the artifacts. As

Contacts, Part Two

Because of the social structure of the times, gamemasters should hold players strictly accountable for how they handle themselves socially. The contacts and street smarts to be able to successfully bridge the gap between respectable and non-respectable or between drifter and sailor will be the key to adventuring into the region beyond the city or into the seedier parts of the city itself.

Characters who opt out of the respectable life would be wise to make waterfront contacts. The complications would come from the union and political views that the character holds. Characters who decide to be respectable can obtain a lesser form of such advantages through contacts with such other respectable types as merchants, ships chandlers, and customs officials. As the waterfront is very clannish, players should have a large negative difficulty number in making contact without friends or references.

per instructions, the characters are wearing white suits with black shirts to this bar. They must wait at the bar until they have been contacted by the thieves. However, a case of mistaken identity could take place. Four hoods from the longshoremen's union are casing the place looking for some out-of-town shooters sent by the national union headquarters which is, shall we say, a family enterprise. The hoods' idea of what Mafia guys would wear is white suits with black shirts ...

Romance

Perhaps it's time to add a complication of some sort to one of the character's lives. Using romance is a good way to accomplish this. One of the better connected characters could have been involved with an Italian heiress (or heir) in the past. This character is sadly reminded of the relationship when a professor of Italian Literature at Berkeley hires the group to find the heiress. An antifascist, the heiress went underground in the States at the time of the Palmer raids in 1919-1920. She was last seen with people linked to the San Francisco local

of the seaman's union. Once the characters are on their investigations, they find out that there is a group of local hoods that was hired by the other heir who need a dead body to solidify their retainer's inheritance.

Supernatural

A supernatural twist in an adventure could help mystify the characters. For example, there are rumors that a recent arrival from the Chinese interior has brought back some interesting artifact. There is a stir on the streets about it — especially in Chinatown. Rumor also has it that several of the tongs are after this mysterious artifact. The characters could find out about it from some connections. Once they know that the artifact is a set of magical Chinese dragon bones, they could find themselves personally involved in figuring out if the bones are authentic. As they search for a qualified authenticator, they could be pursued by members of the tongs, approached by American paranormal addicts, and visited by people from various museums and universities.

Urban/Gangster

The presence of strong labor unions in San Francisco during the Roaring Twenties and Thirties naturally lends itself to all sorts of adventures. Players can be pitted against ruthless gangsters or prejudist union bosses (these two are not necessarily mutually exclusive) who are trying to gain control of the city.

- The characters could find themselves facing both gangsters and union strong-arms when they meet Bobby Barret. This man is shaking from fear when he stumbles upon the charac-

ters. He tells them that he's seen things in the Japanese zone by the Manchu Railroad that no one was ever supposed to know. Horrible things. And now they are after him. He needs an escort to his Uncle's ranch in north Montana where he believes that he will be safe. He tells the characters about the team of Ninja assassins on his trail, but he neglects to mention that he owes big gambling money to some gangsters and that a union is after him because he killed a Pinkerton in a labor dispute. Then there's that matter of Uncle's other heirs who might not be too happy to share the wealth ...

Union Strong-arm

AGILITY 9

Dodge 11, melee combat 11, stealth 10, unarmed combat 10

DEXTERITY 9

Fire combat 12, vehicle piloting: car/truck 10, vehicle piloting: water 10

ENDURANCE 9

STRENGTH 9

TOUGHNESS 9

INTELLECT 8

Trick 9

MIND 7

CONFIDENCE 9

Con 11, intimidation 12

CHARISMA 7

Taunt 8

Life Points: 2-5

Equipment: Pistol, damage value 17, ammo 6, range 3-10/15/40; club or crowbar, damage value STR+5/20. Dressed in work overalls and heavy boots.

Chapter Two

Chinatown

Introduction

Opium dens, tong assassins, priceless artifacts from before the dawn of time, ancient schools of magic with powerful but mysterious wizards, martial arts masters, herbal medicines that increase strength and restore health, strange people speaking an indecipherable tongue ... the Chinatown of the Jones Era resonates with a mysterious vibe that is part Fu Manchu and part ancient lore.

History of Chinatown

Chinese Immigration: 1850–1900

Although a few Chinese had reached San Francisco through the Chan trading ships, the real story of the Chinese in California starts with the Gold Rush. The Transmississippi West was already an area short of available white labor. The bulk of the settlers were family farmers not available for hire while many of the rest were drifters. The Gold Rush converted a high wage problem into a business nightmare. Every available man ran away to mine gold. Each of the many new ships were basically deserted by passengers and crew as they flocked to the gold fields. Giant business opportunities were created for everything from miner's outfitting to

laundry but there was no one for enterprising entrepreneurs to hire to work for them. Part of the demand was raised from our native nonwhite population: Christianized Indians, Hispanics, free or runaway African-Americans, or mix breeds — all of whom found social difficulties in the mining camps. However there were never enough of them and many of the few that there were braved white prejudice to work the goldfields anyway.

Suddenly there was a flood of Chinese immigration. In centuries past, there had been a tradition in South China of overseas emigration for economic opportunity. Then, during the 1850s and into the 1860s, China became embroiled in the Taiping Revolution causing many Chinese to want to leave their country. Already, there were major Chinese populations in Siam, Indochina, Malaya, the East Indies and the Philippines from this mass migration. Most were young men who came to make their fortune — although a few married locals or sent for wives to start a permanent community. As enterprising British and Americans learned of the plight of the Chinese, they tricked many of them into two and three year contracts that essentially turned them into slaves. Hundreds of thousands of "coolie" laborers (coolie is a derogatory term coming from the Mandarin "kuli"), most from

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the poorer Four Districts region of China, were packed aboard unsanitary and overcrowded ships headed for the *Gam Sann* ("golden mountains") of the west where they began their careers as common laborers. At times, the mortality rate aboard these ships was as high as 40 percent, but that meant little to Chinese who had even less hope of surviving in their own country. At least in going to the United States, they had the hope that some day they would make their own fortune.

In the nineteenth century, America was sharply divided between native and foreign born, between various Christian religions, between various countries of origin or states of birth. However, there was one thing that all white people could agree on, and that was their refusal to live in competition with "cheaper non-white sweated labor." Step by step, the Chinese were excluded from various fields of work, from smaller cities and then from the countryside altogether. They were forced into self-ruled ghettos called Chinatowns (of which the largest was San Francisco). Note that this was a gradual process. If you have contacts in Chinatown, they may well have a wealth of knowledge and contacts from their younger days when they worked in the Sierras or lived in Reno, etc.

Finding Work in America

During the 1850s, 60 percent of the Chinese were employed in the mines, but they soon discovered that this was not the dream that they had hoped to fulfill by coming to America. Not only was the work hard and the hours

long, as the rush wore on and claims dried up, the pressure and competition from returning white laborers began to be unbearable as well. Many Chinese were threatened or forcibly removed from their rightful claims by independent white miners who had the blind justice system on their side.

This forced the Chinese to look elsewhere for employment. Luckily, a big opportunity came with the railroads. When the predominantly Irish workers grew tired of the job as they hit the Rockies, the Chinese were called upon to take up the slack. In

the 1860s, the Big Four railroad barons of the west hired thousands of Chinese to blast their way through the mountains.

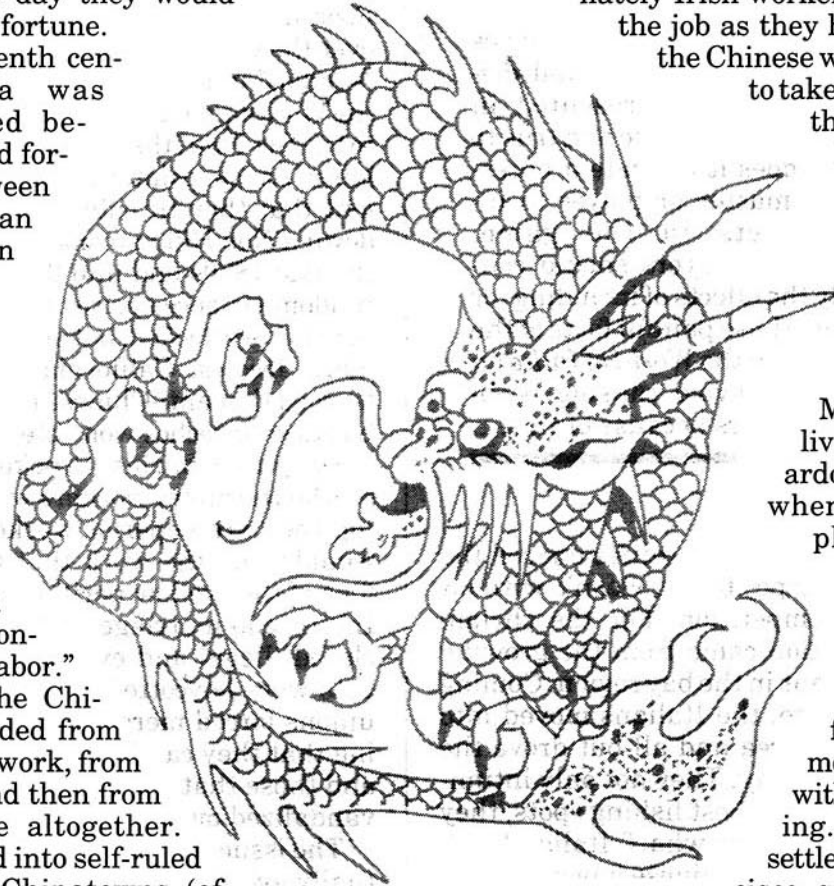
Many lost their lives in the hazardous journey, but when it was complete, the east and west were finally linked.

Besides the mines and railways, Chinese found employment more in line with their upbringing. Chinese that settled in San Francisco quickly took to

shrimpfishing. For the most part,

this shrimp went right back to where the fishers came from — the Orient. In 1880, over a million pounds of shrimp were caught, dried and sent back over the Pacific.

Other Chinese took leads from the Hispanic workers and sought employment on farms. Given their own rural background, this was a fairly easy transition for them and many farms employing Chinese became quite successful. On the farms, Chinese laborers harvested fruits, vegetables, cotton, and wheat, and tended some livestock.



Racism in the World of Indiana Jones

Although this point was brought up briefly in the rulebook, it must be stressed here again. Racism during the time period covered by the *World of Indiana Jones* is a painful reality. As such, some of these issues may be presented in *World of Indiana Jones* supplements and game materials. However, this presentation in no way promotes or condones the policies of bigotry, racial hatred or sexual discrimination. It is only presented in the interest of being complete and true to the times. Nor does it indicate a necessity for a gamemaster or player to include these facts in the game. Gamemasters and players should consider carefully the effects of including (or even excluding) these painful facts of the era when playing in the *World of Indiana Jones* and should avoid causing problems between players because of this.

Racism

The non-railway opportunities offered the Chinese a new hope, but it wasn't without hardship and competition. For the shrimp fishers, competition came from the growing populace of Italians in the bay region. Coming up from San Diego, the Italians moved into the North Beach area and all but drove the Chinese out of the bay. They not only intimidated them out of the best fishing spots, they eventually took over the wharf. Italian truck merchants also forced Chinese hawkers off of the docks.

On the farms, independent whites who had stayed on after the gold rushes resented the larger farms which were driving them out of business. The cheaper Chinese laborers that the larger farms had hired enabled them to control the market prices which slowly began to force the independents into bankruptcy. However, the smaller farmers struck a racial chord with the government which put economic pressure on farms with immigrant workers causing the Chinese to be relegated to minimal migrant worker-type tasks.

Even the few factories in which the Chinese found work were forcing them to work harder and more labor-intensive jobs which paid less than equivalent white labor. The average Chinese male often only made a salary equal to or less than the average white female at \$1.50 a day while white males were put into supervisory positions that were less strenuous and much higher paying at \$2.50 or \$3 a day.

This racism only got worse as the outcast Chinese began to start their own businesses. Poor, unemployed, mostly Irish laborers, upset over the Chinese running shops began to form "sandlot" unions. The largest of these groups, the Workingmen's Party, took the issue directly to the Big Four, the largest importer of Chinese labor. At one point, their protests grew so violent that they threatened to storm and burn down a Nob Hill mansion. Throughout most of the late 1870s and into the 1880s, this sort of random violence against Chinese workers was not only overlooked, but actually encouraged in many locales. California politicians quickly learned that anti-Chinese rhetoric and anti-big business speeches won votes.

Despite Charles Crocker's attempts to soothe the angry workers with speeches stating they are superior workers because they wouldn't do the work that Chinese did, the fear of the "yellow peril" eventually won out. Interracial marriages with Chinese were declared illegal and even Chinese-made products were boycotted. At one point, the cigar unions forced merchants to carry signs stating that they carried only white-made cigars and those that didn't often found their shops vandalized overnight.

The issues spread to other states and eventually even to the U.S. Congress. The racial paranoia had become so great that in 1882, Congress passed the Chinese Exclusion Act which halted the immigration of Chinese labor for the next ten years. The act would later be extended twice more for a total of thirty years making Chinese the only race specifically barred from entering the United States. Since there were few Chinese women in the U.S. before the act, the combination of the immigration law with existing bans on interracial marriage instantly created a whole society of bachelors in America unable to get ahead.

Lecture Notes: How Chinatown Worked

Think of Chinatown as a forced ghetto. The residents couldn't vote and basically had no civil rights. However, they were in large measure left alone except when they had disputes with outsiders. There was a certain amount of extended family and neighborhood petty justice but major matters were handled by the "Six Companies" and the tongs. The Six Companies was basically a chamber of commerce, but in some respects it was also an association of related families from the same district around Canton. Since companies were run by families and marriages were usually arranged, there is a considerable overlap in the two groups. Whether the Companies controlled the tongs or vice versa was hotly debated by the U.S. side but there was no real knowledge to back up the debate. Suffice it to say that what you really had was a type of joint rule that made sense to the locals. However, they saw no reason to explain the mechanics of their system to the white world.

Early Chinatown: 1880-1900

Because of this racial hysteria, the Chinese in San Francisco were forced by law to live and work only in the Chinatown section unless they were granted special privileges or worked in a servant capacity elsewhere in the city. Chinatown in the late 1800's was a small ghetto of only twelve blocks between Broadway and California on the north and south and Kearney and Stockton Streets on the east and west. They called it *Tangrenbu*, Chinese for "port of the people of Tang."

Without the influence of the city's white government, the community of Chinatown developed into a system of self-governing units. The most basic of these units was the family by which people of the same homeland lineage were gathered together. Families were made responsible for protecting one another in the strange new world, caring for the sick and the dead, and punishing unruly members.

When disputes ran outside of the family or between two families, the next unit of Chinatown society came into play. The district associations were based upon the original Cantonese districts of China from which most of the immigrants came. The families of each of these districts had representatives that served as arbitrators for disputes within their district. This often led to confusion for the occasional outsider in Chinatown because the districts that were used were not geographically based upon Chinatown streets but based on the geography of Canton (this also led to problems with unrepresented families of small or unpopular districts; see the sidebar on tongs).

When disputes arose between districts, the matter was taken up with the final unit of Chinatown society, the Chinese Six Companies. Since U.S. courts wouldn't hear Chinese disputes, the Six Companies were responsible for adjudicating all justice within Chinatown. In the 1880s, the Six Companies was comprised of representatives of the six major district associations but eventually grew to eight as families from other districts joined and rival associations dissolved. In addition to deciding justice within Chinatown, the Six Companies were one of the major voices promoting Chinese politics and social programs at the state level.

Chinatown in Turmoil: 1900-1920

In 1906, as if adding insult to injury, Chinatown was destroyed. The Great Earthquake which damaged so much of the rest of the city seemed to pick out Chinatown in particular. Because of the massive overcrowding caused by the racist policies of the time, the buildings of Chinatown were forced to be packed much more tightly than safety recommends. When the fires erupted after the earthquake, the spreading flames found it extremely easy to leap from building to building and consume everything. Almost literally, Chinatown was reduced to ashes in the blink of an eye.

This temporarily forced the Chinese to resettle a short distance northward on the edge of North Beach. However, because of the still rampant anti-Chinese sentiment in the city and their own desire to return to their unique

Lecture Notes: The Tongs

These societies represent a multifaceted mystery in western terms. They were often called hatchet men (a weapon of choice) or highbinders (the method in which they wore their hair). These societies represent a multifaceted mystery in western terms. They were by turns violent criminal gangs, local self-help societies, patriotic societies going back at least to the 17th century and probably much earlier, and mystical gnostic circles of wizards and acolytes. In times of troubles on the cusp of dynasties, they go political. In between, they become a bandit underground with some self-help aspects.

The Chinese revolution and Civil Wars (1911-1949) were such a cusp of dynasties period. The tongs allowed their political, revolutionary face to shine forth, usually on the side of the Nationalists (Sun Yat-sen, Chiang Kai-Shek) as well as those warlords that took an urban modernizing face, preferably with a south Chinese bias. This tended to align the tongs as a bloc against those factions — localists, pro-White Russian, pro-British, Imperialist, pro-Japanese, Communist (after 1926), northerners, Koreans, Manchurians, Mongols — that opposed their favored politicians and generals. This in turn caused the intratong wars to be put somewhat on hold. These are organizations that take the long view. It also reversed their economic incentives. Whereas previously Chinatowns such as San Francisco were sheep to be fleeced for the benefit of the mainland Chinese chapters, now the reverse was true. Money was funneled out of the mainland. So were people, treasures and antiquities, gold, and opium. Much of it was invested in the States, Hawaii and places south. The rest went for guns to be smuggled back to China.

world, they quickly resurrected a new Chinatown on top of the ashes of the old.

While some bemoan the destruction caused by the Great Earthquake, it had a completely unexpected and beneficial effect in the eyes of most San Franciscan Chinese. Many of the records of the city were destroyed during the fires. Quick-thinking Chinese took this amazing opportunity to apply for citizenship claiming that the fires had destroyed their U.S. birth certificates. This in turn allowed them to send for their children which automatically became U.S. citizens under the naturalization laws. With this boom in population, Chinatown gradually grew beyond its original boundaries and by the 1920s, it had added twelve more blocks to its area by expanding south to Bush Street and west to Powell. It also bound Chinatown more tightly into modern China's social and political convulsions.

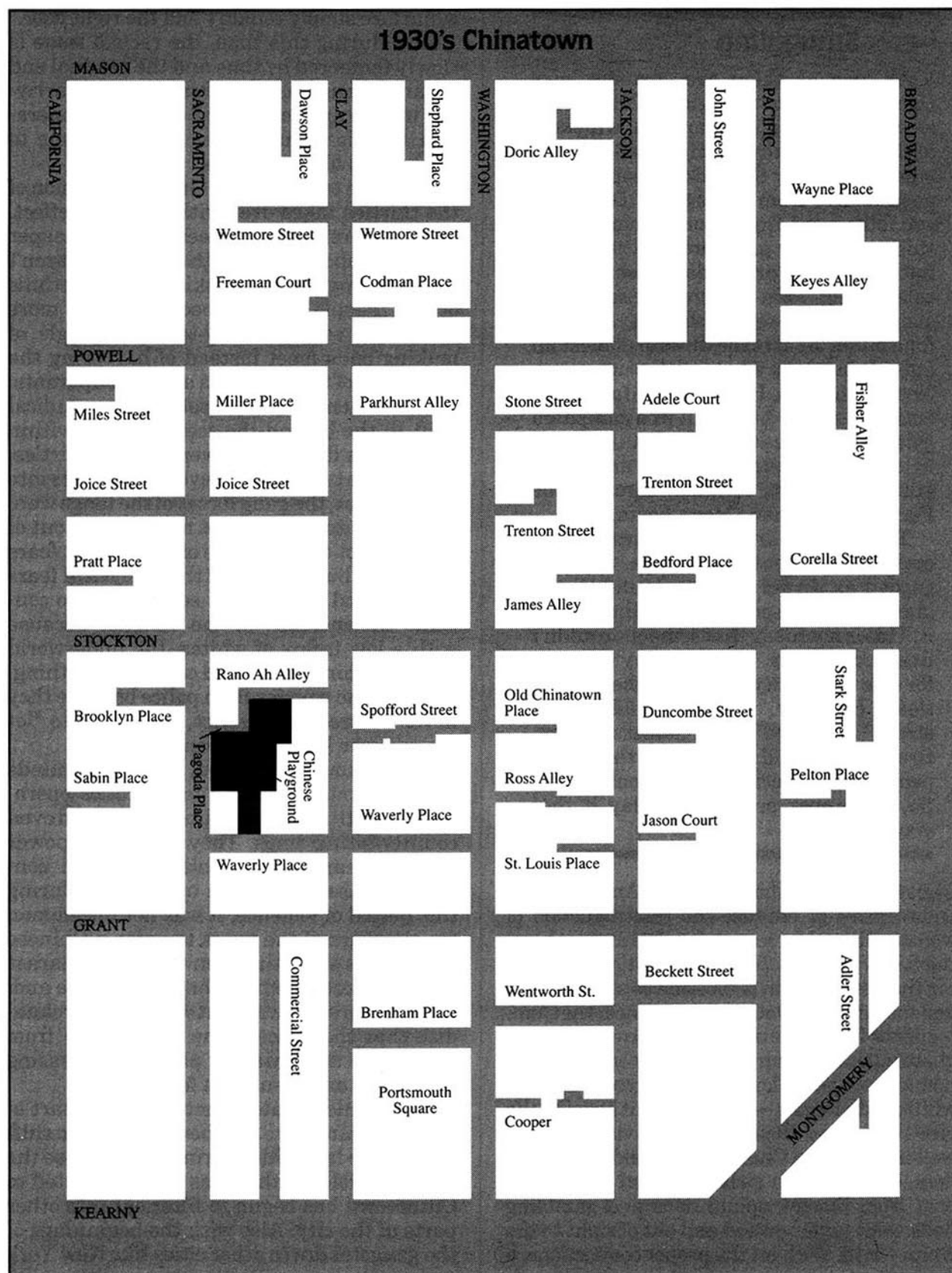
Not only did Chinatown undergo a transformation, but its inhabitants did as well. Because of the change in citizenship status of so many Chinese, many were able to come and go freely from China and America. This allowed some to return to their country for the first time in decades without fear of having to stay. This immersion back into their original, more traditional culture served as a reminder of what so many had struggled for. China's own revolutions of the time (Sun Yat-Sen came to power in 1911 with the formation of the Republic of China) added further focuses to their goals.

Educationally, it was a great benefit to many American-born Chinese that they and their children could return to their homeland. Once there, they received a much better education than in the poorly run state schools of the United States and reunited their spirits with the traditional religions of the Orient. When they finally returned to the United States, it was with a much greater hope for their future than ever before.

Modern Chinatown: 1920-1930

The post WWI period saw the new progressive state and local governments begin to make efforts to assert practical jurisdiction over these

1930's Chinatown



Smuggling

As long as there are customs laws there have been smugglers. This period saw a ripe trade in cigarettes, whiskey, and virtually any easily saleable consumer good over the docks. People made good money from smuggling. Dock and sea folks went from poor to comfortable this way. Petty ganglords became rich, but not Capone or Lucciano rich. From a roleplaying point of view, smuggling is something a disreputable party could do for a bankroll. It is the focus of at most an episode but not a whole adventure, much less a campaign. However, contacts with such types may be useful in a campaign going overseas as those that can smuggle in can also smuggle out — arranging guns, transport, contacts through the Pacific and Indian Ocean basin.

There was a drug trade concentrated mostly in Chinatown. Drugs were regarded as sordid and disreputable, not glamorous. The police took a dim view of it. This is not to say that someone couldn't find such things. Virtually any vice was for sale in any city if you had the connections. However, it wasn't sold on the street like today. Users, dealers, the entire milieu would not be what the type of people Indy associated with would touch. So, for proper period feel, play it that way.

Chinatowns. Whether because of American law enforcement or because the reintroduction of women allowed for a more familial atmosphere, the tong violence tapered off drastically, allowing the area to begin to blossom as a restaurant and tourist area. Once this happened, the Companies or tongs who economically controlled the ghetto quickly acquired a self-perpetuating economic interest in keeping the streets safe for whites with money — which meant keeping the vice trades and their associated violence very well hidden. The Chinatown of midnight murders, brothels with girls smuggled just off the boat from Macau, opium dens and gambling hells went underground and out of sight to the white world. Without the proper connections, a

white face simply couldn't find the right door.

Also during this time, the racism issue is slowly tempered by time and the gradual end of paranoia against the Chinese. Newly arriving immigrants and third or fourth generation Americans no longer have the time to waste with old prejudices.

After the twenties, the Great Depression of the thirties takes over with a similar effect. White laborers aren't concerned over cheaper Chinese labor because there simply aren't any jobs regardless of skin color or ethnic origin. People instead become much more concerned with the day-to-day struggle of making ends meet instead of harboring the hostilities of their parents and grandparents.

The violence issue is settled by a radical shift in the behind-the-scenes power within Chinatown during the twenties and thirties. Prior to the twenties and even a few years into the twenties, the gang forces of the tongs were fully in control. This kept most whites out of the area not only because of their racist fears of job loss, but because of their physical fears of harm and death. This served only to continue the increase in the violence because with a low influx of whites, the underworld forces of Chinatown could control everything. They had no worries from police because they never entered the district, preferring to "let the savages kill themselves."

Throughout this period, the masterminds of the six major tongs ran narcotics operations, prostitution, gambling houses and even counterfeiting rings. They kept their power through fear, murder, blackmail and constant harassment of the opposition. During this period of violence, it was not uncommon for members of the tongs to enter a Chinese merchant's shop, threaten the owner, harass or even sexually attack the owner's wife and/or daughters and walk out with any merchandise that they chose. The only escape from this persecution was to pay the increasing protection and insurance fees.

In the mid-to-late twenties at the start of modern Chinatown, the power begins to shift back to the law. This is primarily because the growing violence that was once restricted to Chinatown has begun to filter out into other parts of the city. Also with the beginnings of the gangster era in other cities like New York

INDIANAJONES™ and the Golden Vampires



Jaime Lombardo & Ron Hill

Gangs and Gangsters

This was the roaring twenties. Gangsters, molls, G-Men, prohibition, speakeasies, etc. Having said that, multiple words of caution are in order here. The Mafia, Cosa Nosta, Organization, Outfit, OC — call it what you will — is not right for San Francisco, northern California or the entire Northwest region. The gangsters as we know them from TV and the movies were a thing of the big industrial cities of the Atlantic seaboard and the Great Lakes states.

Basically, in the early 1920s, the southern Italian urban gangs first shot their way to dominance, then formed cartels between themselves and the surviving Irish, Jewish, etc. gangs to make an organization. There was some intercity cooperation between the east coast organization and greater Chicago but the two were basically separate worlds with Detroit and Cleveland somewhere between the two poles of power. However, outside of that region, the gangs never sorted themselves out in that fashion. The Italians, Mafia, etc. had always had major criminal enterprises in New Orleans and Miami but never dominated them the way they did New York or Philadelphia. The New York and Chicago organizations spread in the 1930s to Los Angeles and in the 1940s to Las Vegas, but that marks the limit.

San Francisco and most of the northwest stood in the pre-WWI pattern: an alliance of small, mostly ethnic localized gangs; corrupt cops; corrupt politicians; and the saloon owners. Depending on the city and the time, various parts of the coalition were dominant but it was at all times a somewhat floating powerbase. San Francisco was for this period dominated by the politi-

cians, specifically a political machine centered on the mayor's office.

Prohibition was probably as openly flouted in the northwest as it was in the big eastern cities. Whiskey was widely available and the bribes to run the trade permeated the whole law enforcement and political establishment. The difference between east and northwest was the lack of gangster dominance and a much wider spread of the profits. Partially this is due to lack of population density. Partially it was an almost uncontrollable Canadian border. Mostly it was the historic and social distance from the heart of prohibition in the rural midwest and south.

In this context, it would probably be intelligent to think of most police forces you meet as the gang with the badges. The emphasis was on order, not law. Crime was not supposed to inconvenience the Chamber of Commerce or respectable neighborhoods. The streets were basically safe. However, especially in the smaller cities, the law was for sale to any semirespectable type with money or political power. Indeed the company towns often had company cops, and private law such as railway dicks or Pinkertons were as real as official cops in most of the area. Private or public, it was a tough with a badge that the courts and government gave a license to so that he could use force to maintain order as long as respectable society wasn't inconvenienced in a major way. Standing on your rights was likely to get you a broken head, a fall up the staircase and two weeks of county time. This is why connections are so important. Quoting the Fourth or Fifth Amendment didn't mean a whole hell of a lot. Dropping a name who could call a police captain at home did.

and especially Chicago, federal agents begin arriving in other major cities to prevent similar outbreaks.

In Chinatown, the law's chief servant of justice is Captain John Manion and his special Chinatown Squad against vice and crime.

The methodology of the police during this time is similar to the tongs' own routine. If the police even bother giving a warning, it is only a quick "Police! Open up!" and then an equally swift kick to the door. Then anything that moves is either shot or confiscated. These

effective policies quickly lead to extensions on Manion's tenure as captain and eventually to his unofficial title of mayor of Chinatown.

Late Chinatown: 1940–1950

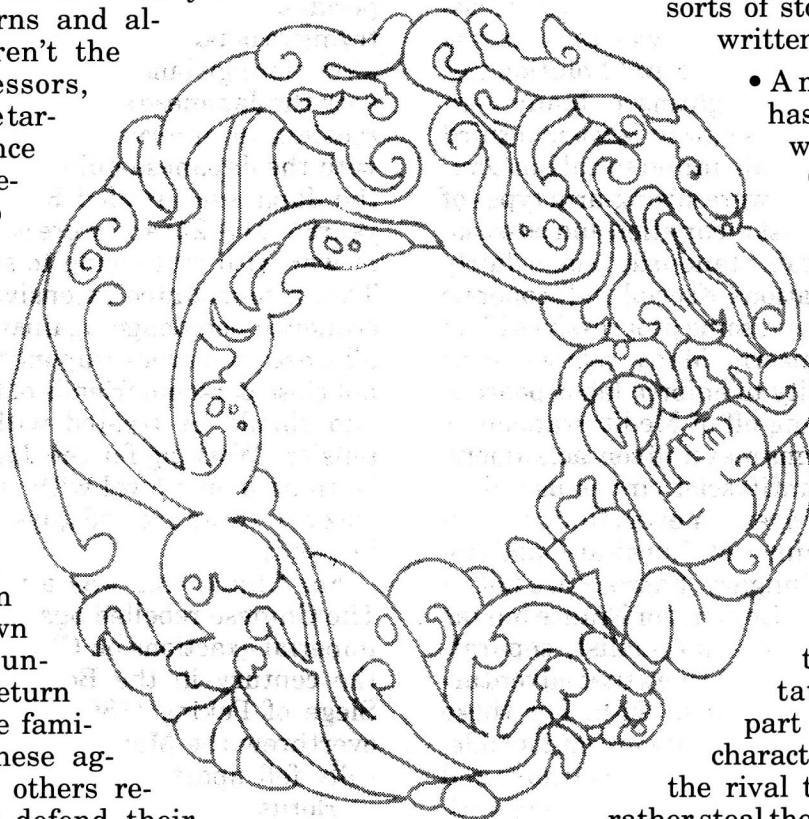
The fervor over Chinatown begins to die down quite a bit after the twenties and thirties and enters a quick period of emotional roller coasters in the late thirties and early forties. As the rest of the world becomes embroiled in the politics of World War II, so does Chinatown. At the beginning of the war, hysteria and paranoia over the "yellow peril" returns and although they aren't the overseas aggressors, some Chinese are targeted for violence because of their resemblance to Japanese.

As the war goes on, it becomes clearer who the real enemy is and as Japanese citizens are placed into internment camps, Chinese are freer to act on behalf of their own beleaguered countrymen. Many return to China to save families from Japanese aggressions while others return to simply defend their homeland.

This show of national pride brings a widespread acceptance among non-Asian Americans and eventually turns the tide of racism aggression against Chinese in California. In the late 1940s, the various exclusion acts are one by one repealed and eventually even the interracial marriage laws are struck down. This has the beneficial effect of allowing Chinese to intermingle outside of their traditional ghettos and slowly causes the end of adventuring in Chinatown.

Roleplaying in Chinatown

Most *World of Indiana Jones* campaigns will be centered in this era of change in Chinatown between the 1920s and 1940s. It is during this period that virtually all of the stereotypical oriental pulp adventures take place, from Charlie Chan-style detective stories to the mystical *Showdown in Little Tokyo* adventures. To help gamemasters get started on designing Chinatown-based adventures, here are some adventure hooks followed by a semi-detailed overview on the sorts of stories that can be written.



- A missionary family has vanished in the wilds of North China and are being held by associates of a local tong. Their relatives have raised money for a ransom. Since visiting Chinatown would attract too much unwanted attention, the characters have been told to meet the tong representative in another part of the city. The character's opposition are the rival tongs who would rather steal the money or sell the family themselves.

- The characters have a contact man in one of the Six Companies who has a proposition for them. Old Uncle Wu was a miner when he was run out of the goldfields above Shasta Lake in the winter of '02. He is near death and now realizes that he will never be able to go back himself to reclaim his treasure. He wishes to hire the characters to get to the still-working mine in a company town, get out the hidden gold dust using his treasure map and get it back to Chinatown. However, as a gesture of

Using Foreign Politicals

San Francisco was far more connected to the Pacific than to Europe. Nazis were an unknown sect in far away Germany and Austria. Fascists are another story. The large Italian community in the Bay Area was mostly of northern Italian origin, the original home region of the Fascist Party. The current Bank of America was then the Bank of Italy (private) and its upper management were in the main admirers of Il Duce. (Note: Do not read history backwards. Hitler was still a decade away, the war was two decades away, the Final Solution not even a rumor of a nightmare. Many very respectable Italians saw in fascism a third way between capitalism and socialism/communism. Fascists were strong-arm types of an ultranationalist inclination and possessing, by American standards, some fairly bizarre combinations of social and economic theories. However, some progressives liked their social concern. Many reactionaries liked their ability to enforce labor peace.)

Players coming off of Mediterranean or Balkan campaigns may find contacts among the fascist or antifascist circles useful as Italy had her fingers in everything within the general confines of Gibraltar-Chad-Somalia-Persia-Hungary. Fascists are not as major a power as England or France but far more involved with nationalist, separatists, gun runners and others that adventurers might want contacts with. For those who find period viewpoints uncomfortable, have them treat all fascists as bad guys and do the same gamemaster maneuvers with the antifascist circles that would exist in each Italian community overseas.

While Italians can be played two ways, the Japanese are the definite bad guys of the period. The nuances of Japanese internal and external politics will be skipped here — few Westerners understood them and still fewer to this day can agree on them. Treat official Japan as xenophobic, warlike and basically nasty. There are not opposition circles. However, not all Japanese-descended civilians are agents of Imperial Japan. Many were just poor people trying to make a living in what to them was a very foreign land. However, all registered with the Japanese embassy and many were recalled at intervals for reserve service with the Japanese military. In this period the Japanese invaded Russia for several years (1917–24) and were semiperpetually at war with and trying to subvert China. They also mounted extensive military and economic espionage against the U.S. and all western powers. Japanese contacts are not close personal friends of the characters and should be treated with a degree of tension. Working for the Japanese should be treated on a level with working for the Nazis — these are bad guys and everybody knows it.

For China, this was a period of chaos. The Chinese rebelled against the Western imperial exactions on China at the turn of the century in the Boxer Rebellion and Siege of Peking (1899–1901). They then overthrew the Manchu dynasty and basically fell apart. Chinese factions include warlords, nationalists of several stripes, communists, imperials, local separatists and front men for all of the imperial powers. All had their business companions and

faith, he wants a hostage — some contact of the characters' in the City who will answer with his or her head if the characters fail to come back.

- If the characters complete the Uncle Wu mission above, then Uncle Wu's cousin Chan wishes to have the characters do something for him. He is a very rich merchant now and

wants to rebuild his ancestral gravesites in the U.S. so that the proper shrines can be created. However, Grandfather's bones are under the tracks of the Union Pacific Railroad west of Donner Pass. The railroad has been most uncooperative in this matter. Chan has \$25,000 to give the characters if they can obtain Grandfather's remains. He will know if the remains are correct or not because of the

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supporters within the Chinatowns of the U.S. although in broad terms, the nationalists were the strongest in war and the communists the weakest. The nationalists were somewhat probusiness and anti-western when they weren't too busy fighting the communists or among themselves. All of the above were raising money frantically in the States while trying to hire arms and military specialists. In game terms, they can be good guys, neutrals, or bad guys.

The European colonialists all had trade links to San Francisco. Americans tended to dislike them as imperialists — which we didn't see ourselves as — but sympathize with them as fellow whites. Just play European colonialists as contacts leading to Pacific adventures. The key point is that British contacts will probably cause French enemies and the reverse. The French and British pulled away from each other after WWI and only drew closer under pressure from Hitler in the late 1930s.

The Russians will be your hardest to deal with. The Russian revolution and civil war cast loose several million refugees. They were united only in anticommunism and in hating each other. Every major port in the Pacific had its colony. They were constantly plotting and constantly selling off artifacts and antiquities. This is one of the few groups where it is best not to deal with them on a paranormal basis as Russian mythology would be too far outside the San Francisco theme.

ancient family heirloom that was buried with the body. However, Chan is not about to describe this heirloom to the characters.

Oriental Detective

The mysteriously wise Charlie Chan and many other pulp favorites give us one of the foremost ways that adventures may happen



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Internal Politicals, Unions, and Reds

Because of the drifter culture, the northwest was an early home to most American radical traditions and to America's earliest strong unions. San Francisco was a violently union town. Major strikes were frequent as were the use of Pinkertons and other hired law to try and break the unions. Unions aren't something you roleplay. However, being pro- or anti-Union involves you in a series of contacts. If your contacts are police-Pinkertons, etc., you will be anti-Union and the Union people will be your enemy. Same in reverse. This is one gap that cannot be bridged.

The gap gets much more important outside the City. The northwest was home to the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW). The politics of it really don't matter — have the gamemaster spout any radical working man's spiel that she can think of for Wobbly (or member of the IWW) gamemaster characters. The key comes elsewhere. The Wobbly influence was very strong across

the hobo camps and such places. Wobblies would throw nonmembers off boxcars they were riding. So if your characters run that way, they will have to fake it. However, this is also an era of company spies, blacklists, forced deportations, etc. Being caught by one as a professed Wobbly/Red can brand a character for life.

Note that communists per se really don't matter all that much. Communist was a dirty word used by the bosses to make native Reds seem foreign and unpatriotic. The Communist Party of the United States of America had very few members and most of those were in the Jewish and Italian neighborhoods of the big eastern cities. The big exception was in San Francisco in the waterfront unions. Both the seafarer's and longshoremen's unions in this port had notable Communist leaders and many sympathizers. As with Wobblies and the freight trains, your players have a choice. Making contacts in these circles in this city means taking a side.

in Chinatown. They are the chief detectives in mysteries with an oriental bend to them which always appear more complex than they really are. Once the end of the adventure is reached, the reader is left going, "Of course!" The key to creating adventures of this type is to keep the characters guessing. Give out deliberate false leads and numerous dead ends slowly interspersing tidbits of facts. The inevitable solution was right in front of the characters at the start of the adventure.

A good example of this is a story of poison and black widows which can be used to introduce players to the intrigues of Chinatown. The victim is a prominent businessman with ties to the homeland that may have brought upon him danger from the underworld. In order to get around U.S. customs regulations, the businessman had to go through intermediaries in the underworld. Recent rumors reveal that his business was failing despite this assistance and he was getting further and further behind in his payments. The poisoning appears to have been an "example" set for other underworld clients.

Much of this information is supplied by his grieving wife who appears devastated by the loss of her husband. In fact, it is the wife who is guilty of the crime and who is selling the business out to the underworld for a larger share of the profit. If caught, she claims that she caught her husband being unfaithful and set about in this intricate manner to first destroy his work and then his life. Players can either be fed bits of information to point to the wife (like her unusual knowledge of chemicals and herbs or a very recent insurance policy taken against her husband) or be directly confronted by her in the end when the players storm an underworld hideout.

Evil Seductress

AGILITY 9

Dodge 10, melee combat 10, stealth 10, unarmed combat 10

DEXTERITY 8

Fire combat 10

ENDURANCE 7

STRENGTH 7

TOUGHNESS 7

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INTELLECT 9

Deduction 10, espionage 10, forgery 10, perception 11, trick 11

MIND 8

Hypnotism 9, scholar: Chinese lore 9, scholar: poisons 11

CONFIDENCE 9

Con 10, streetwise 12, willpower 11

CHARISMA 10

Charm 13, disguise 11, etiquette 11, persuasion 11, taunt 12

Life Points: 5

Equipment: Dagger, damage value STR+4/19 with knockout poison unless Toughness vs. 12 is made; pistol, damage value 17, ammo 6, range 3-10/15/40. Dressed in silk, form fitting dress and stiletto shoes. Cigarettes.

Oriental Magics

The reports of sorcery and demons in Chinatown are widespread. It is openly admitted that many believe that demons are real and capable of walking the face of the earth. It is also commonly believed that there are those in Chinatown and other places who can summon and even control these demons

to do their evil bidding. More on these sorts of adventures are detailed later in the section on Chinese religions and mythologies.

Gang Violence

While Chicago has its Al Capones and New York has its Benny Siegels, Chinatown has its own unique breed of gangsters. During the early part of the modern period, gang violence is at its peak. Neglected for years by the establishment, the tongs and the families behind them have grown enormously in power. Virtually every business in Chinatown pays some sort of protection to them and none dare speak their names in public for fear of retribution.

Players can be introduced to the tongs in any number of ways. Because of their power, the tongs are very bold in their actions. They feel that they can abuse anybody for any reason at any time. If the players are visiting a Chinatown establishment like a small shop or casino, have a group of tong walk in. At first the gang members will blatantly ignore the outsiders while they pick on the local businessman or other patrons. As the players

The Chinese Mythos

When reading these descriptions of the various Chinese deities and legends, some may wonder about their truths. The fact is none of these "truths" can be verified because of the inaccuracies and problems in historical Chinese writings. Many writings have been lost to the ages or mortal abuse and as a result, many of the historical legends of China have become open to subjective interpretation. The "truth" is also subject to the time in which it is considered. Certainly, what many consider the "truth" today differs from the "truth" of the early twentieth century and especially differs from those of one or two thousand centuries ago. The "truths" as they are presented here are merely one of endless interpretations and tend to rely more heavily upon the beliefs of Taoist cults and texts.

With this in mind, gamemasters are even encouraged to make some of their own interpretations when adapting these "truths" to their campaigns. Considering that this information is presented for use with the *World of Indiana Jones* role-playing game which stresses the search for information as well as adventure in the early 20th century, reinterpretations can only add to the spice of the times. What makes legends wonderful is their mystery and the search for their origins.

become more irritated by the tongs' actions and confront the tongs, the tongs will immediately resort to violence. This can act as a lead in to several adventures.

If the tongs are beaten soundly and are forced to retreat or are sent to jail, the players will soon find themselves with a price on their head. Anywhere they go, they will be harassed and attacked. Merchants will eventually learn of the characters' identities and the characters will start receiving less and less of a welcome from shopkeepers. Some will even close their doors to avoid any potential trouble.

If you are using Chinatown as a continuing campaign setting, the players will be forced to confront the street thugs a second time and

Lecture Notes: Yin and Yang — Sun and Moon

The details of the Sun and Moon have been pulled apart from the legends for their special relationship to certain Taoist beliefs. The legend has it that at one point there were ten suns that were actually fruits of the Fusan tree, each inhabited by a crow or raven. At any given time, a single fruit appeared at the top of the tree to provide light for the Earth while the others all remained on the lower branches. However, one day, all of the suns appeared at the top of the tree at once and threatened to burn the Earth. To prevent this, the archer god Yi was sent forth to destroy the nine suns which were supposed to have remained on the lower branches. One by one, Yi shot and killed the crows within the suns causing them to drop to his feet.

Similarly, there are twelve moons, one for each lunar cycle, each inhabited by a hare and residing in a great lake west of the world. However, unlike their brother suns, the moons remain faithful to their ritual of remaining in the lake to be bathed by the goddess of the Moons, Ch'ang-o, the wife of Yi. Ch'ang-o also guards an immortality drug which she stole from her husband.

This parallel between the sun and moon forms a close connection to the fundamental Taoist concept of the Yin and Yang, or more appropriately, the Yang and the Yin. The Yang, associated with the fiery sun inhabited by a black crow, is the active and stronger half of the pair while the Yin, associated with the aquatic moon which houses a white rabbit, is the weaker and more passive of the pair. Together, the two forces uphold the belief that the universe is a dynamic system which must have at the same time both contradictions and harmonies. Unity must exist as well as diversity and all things must experience both order and chaos. At no time can one exist without the other.

eventually the higher ranking members behind the gang. After this confrontation, players will be forever embroiled in the inner politics of the tongs and may find themselves recruited by rival gangs or hunted by ally gangs. Their own family members and friends may become targets and players may find themselves doing the bidding of the very people that they are trying to overcome. These sorts of adventures won't necessarily happen constantly, but when mixed with the mysteries and supernatural adventures, the variety will keep players hooked on Chinatown for years.

Tong Gangster

AGILITY 10

Dodge 11, maneuver 11, melee combat 12, melee parry 12, stealth 10, unarmed combat 13, unarmed parry 13

DEXTERITY 9

Fire combat 10, missile weapons 10

ENDURANCE 8

STRENGTH 9

TOUGHNESS 9

INTELLECT 7

Forgery 9, perception 9, trick 9

MIND 7

Scholar: Chinese lore 8

CONFIDENCE 9

Con 10, intimidation 11, streetwise 10

CHARISMA 7

Taunt 8

Life Points: 2-5

Equipment: Dagger, damage value STR+4/19; pistol, damage value 17, ammo 6, range 3-10/15/40; poison dart, knockout unless Toughness vs. 12 is made; caltrops, damage value 10-15 depending on target's weight; flash and smoke powders. Dressed in tight T-shirt (with cigarettes rolled up in sleeve) and work pants.

External Problems

Chinatown does not have to remain an isolated setting for adventurers. Because it is part of San Francisco and deeply linked in racial and political troubles, players will frequently find themselves racing back and forth from the small ghetto to the city at large. If your players make friends with locals in Chinatown, have the friends placed in jeopardy by the groups of militant anti-Asians. This can be used especially in war campaigns

Lecture Notes: Sung Chiang and P'an Chin-lien

In the main text on the god of Wealth, it is mentioned that most professions have an associated deity. Even less honorable professions, such as thievery and prostitution, have their own deities. Thieves often follow Sung Chiang, a deified brigand who lived during the 12th century. After his death, Yen-wang-yeh, Lord Yama-King and head of the Ten-Law Courts (also detailed in the main text) questioned him about his mortal life. Chiang simply defended himself by saying that he was no worse than the corrupt mortal rulers of the times. Yen-wang-yeh investigated the rulers, found them more guilty than Chiang and rewarded his honesty in the face of Justice with godhood.

Likewise, prostitutes worship a former thief. P'an Chin-lien was a woman of questionable ethics whose daring eventually incurred the wrath of her father, who murdered her.

as the heat rises during the early stages of World War II. Radicals don't care that the Chinese aren't the Japanese, only that their skin is yellow and that they come from the other side of the Pacific.

Oriental Mystique

As mentioned in the adventure tips, Chinatown adventures very frequently have a mystical slant to them. The inhabitants of Chinatown are an extremely superstitious lot believing in all manners of sorcery and supernatural might. Because of this, it helps to have an understanding of the various Chinese religions and mythologies as one designs these sorts of adventures.

Three Systems

There are three different religions dominant in China. These are Buddhism, Taoism and Confucianism. Unlike religions in other countries they are non-exclusion religions which actually allow for their mutual co-existence and even intertwining of beliefs in order to form the

basis of Chinese philosophies. Buddhism, a religion originating in India, concerns itself with mortal suffering and the transcendence of that pain to Enlightenment. Taoism is a philosophy of harmony and simplicity that demands non-interference with the course of natural events (which is the domain of the gods). Confucianism is a broad system of ethics which stresses the reverence of elders and parents and the importance of education and harmony with others both in action and in thought.

Of these three, the Taoist beliefs are the most fantastical. It uses a strong basis in the traditional legends of Chinese villages to form its philosophy. It depends very highly upon the worship and fear of gods and their retributive nature. Because of this, it is not uncommon to hear of demons and sorcery when talking to an older person (one with stronger ties to the homeland) in Chinatown.

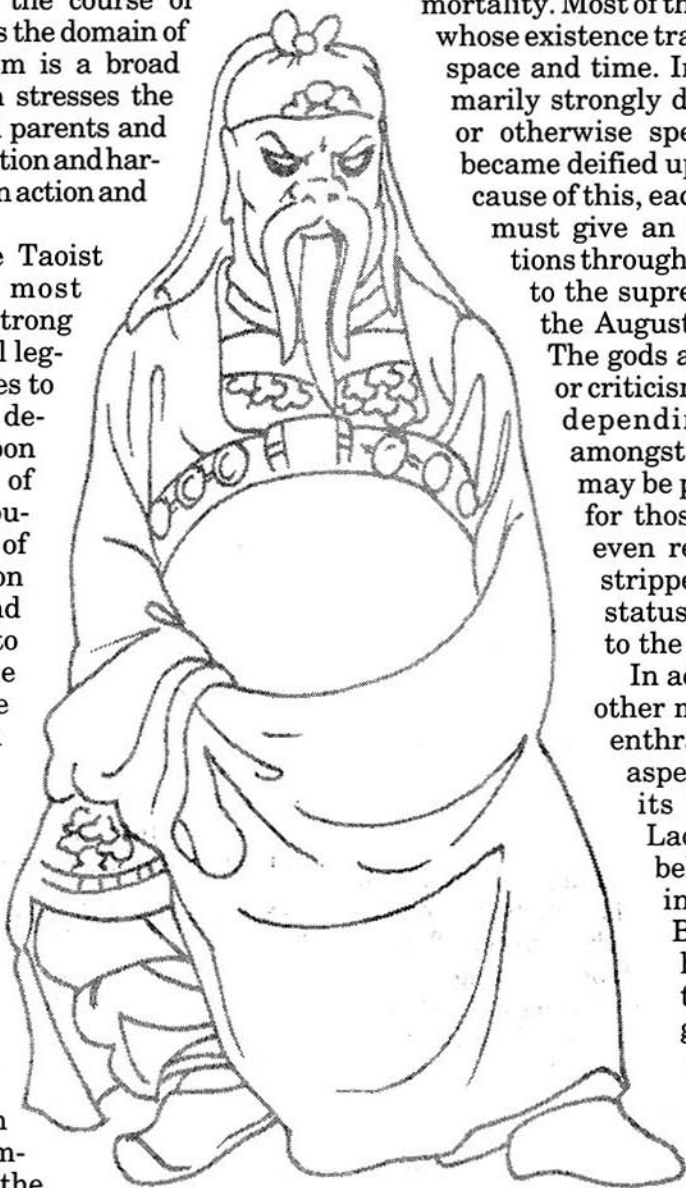
Buddhism, while dealing with transcendence to another plan of existence and reincarnation, does not overtly deal with the common elements of mystical religions such as gods, demons and magic. Similarly, Confucian philosophy shuns complete dependence upon the ancient legends of China and Taoism, grounding itself more in the actual relations between people. Ancestor worship is more philosophical than actual and one's parents should be considered the most revered.

The Chinese Pantheon and Legends

Perhaps the strangest aspect of Chinese mythology to get used to is its basis in mortality. Most of the gods are not beings whose existence transcends the limits of space and time. Instead, they are primarily strongly devout, accomplished or otherwise special mortals which became deified upon their deaths. Because of this, each year all of the gods must give an account of their actions throughout the previous year to the supreme deity of Taoism, the August Personage of Jade. The gods are then given praise or criticism of their actions and depending on their rank amongst the heavenly order, may be promoted or demoted for those actions. This may even result in a god being stripped of all supernatural status and being returned to the mortal plane.

In addition to this, many other mortals often become enthralled in the mystical aspects of Taoism. Even its legendary founder Lao-Tzu (a philosopher believed to have lived in the sixth century B.C.) is believed to have attained immortality and been granted the power to conquer demons. Others claim that Lao-Tzu may even have been an avatar or direct mortal servant of the

Heavenly Master of the First Origin. Chang Tao-ling, the man credited with Taoism's modern translation, has received eventual transcendence to the heavenly order. It is believed that he mastered the art of making drugs and created a vast array of potions which not only



— The Eight Immortals

In addition to the full array of deities, there are some immortals in Chinese legends which are not actually gods. It is unknown how these eight men became associated with one since they came from different eras and backgrounds. However, they are always spoken of together. The eight immortals are:

Han Chung-li: Believed to have created the first Elixir of Immortal Life.

Chang-kuo Lao: This immortal is best known for his mounts — a black ass and a white mule. Both could be ridden for leagues without tiring and the white mule could be folded up like a piece of paper.

Lan Ts'ai-ho: The most depressing of the group, he was a hermit in life who had only one shoe and who sang of the futility of life.

T'ieh-kuai Li: The stories of T'ieh-kuai Li vary but all include a crutch with which he walks. Some legends say that he lost his foot because of a failed spell. Other legends claim that upon his death, his original body was accidentally destroyed forcing him to take on the body of a beggar that died of hunger. The beggar's resurrected body remained weak and forced T'ieh-kuai Li to use a crutch for support.

Han Hsiang-tzu: The wisest of the Immortals who once predicted a snow-storm and saved his uncle's life.

Ts'ao Kuo-chiu: As a mortal, he was an Emperor, but he preferred to dabble in sorcery and alchemy.

Lu Tung-pin: Lu Tung-pin is the most active of the Immortals having even lost that status for a period. He is believed to punish the wicked, give luck to the good and sight to the diviners. He typically carries a sword with which he killed a dragon. He converted both Ts'ao Kuo-chiu and Ho Hsien-ku to Taoism.

Ho Hsien-ku: She stole from her step-mother to give to the poor and entered heaven in full daylight.



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allowed him to achieve immortality but also allowed him to fight with the King-demons.

August Personage of Jade

As mentioned above, the August Personage of Jade (Chinese name: Yu-ti or Shang-Ti) sits at the head of the Chinese pantheon. However, he has not always been in that position. At this point, he is the successor to the Heavenly Master of the First Origin. Just as he replaced the Heavenly Master before him, the August Personage of Jade will someday be replaced in his own right by another Heavenly Master — this one of the Dawn of Jade of the Golden Door who completes the supreme triad.

Beside Yu-ti (who is also known as the Jade Emperor and the Lord-King of the East) sits his wife, the Queen Mother Wang (also known as Hsi Wang Mu, Lady-Queen of the West). Together they rule from their palace atop the K'un-lun mountains which is the legendary home of the immortals. Yu-ti is traditionally garbed in the elaborate robes common to the mortal emperor. The Queen Mother is usually garbed in more standard ceremonial dress although she is instantly recognizable because of her amazing beauty.

Great Emperor of the Eastern Peak

To aid Yu-ti in watching over mankind is T'ai-yueh-ta-ti, the Great Emperor of the Eastern Peak (the peak is the mountain T'ai-shan in Shantung). He is charged with watching over men from the time they are born until the time that they die. His daughter, Pi-hsia-yuan-chun (Princess of the Streaked Clouds) is similarly responsible for watching women and children. Beneath these two deities are a number of others which are more directly responsible for all of life's aspects from pregnancy and birth, to health and prosperity, to sickness and death.

A note on Pi-hsia-yuan-chun: It is commonly believed that Taoists adapted many legends and elements of other religions into their own. In this instance, Pi-hsia-yuan-chun has a similar place in Buddhist philosophies as the goddess of mercy and fertility, Kuan-yin. She is often associated with caring for the sick and is so popular with families that an idol bearing her image can be found in nearly every Chinese home or apartment.

The God of Wealth

After Yu-ti and Pi-hsia-yuan-chun, the most popular god by far is Ts'ai-shen, the god of Wealth. His birthday on the fifth day of the first month is one of the most celebrated holidays in China and Chinatown. Even the least devout of Chinese will give an offering to Ts'ai-shen in the hopes that his powers are true. Towards the end of a New Year's celebration, children will begin running through the streets shouting "The God of Wealth is coming!" in preparation for the second celebration on the fifth.

Beneath the god of Wealth are several professional gods. Each profession has its own deity which has become associated with that profession through some action or attribute. Cobblers worship Sun Pin whose toes were cut off in a great battle and require layers of leather to hide them. Bookmakers and writers follow Ts'ai Lun, the god who invented paper. Gardeners follow the god of Garden Trees and Weavers follow the god of the Shuttle. Some of the other gods that follow can also be associated with professions.

The Storm Gods

For seafarers, there is T'ien Hou, the Empress of Heaven who is their professional patron. In addition, there is Lei-Kung (My Lord Thunder), Tien Mu (Lightning-Mother), Yu-tzu (Master of Rain), Yun-t'ung (Little Boy of the Clouds), and Feng-po and Feng p'o-p'o (the Winds) who comprise the gods of the storms who are as much feared as they are revered. Of these, Lei-Kung is usually the one that receives the most recognition as not only the originator of thunder but as the heavenly punisher of the guilty. Lei-Kung is a vengeful god and the sound of thunder is merely a manifestation of his chisel which strikes down the guilty. Similarly, lightning is a manifestation of Tien-Mu's hand mirrors, rain comes from the pot of Yu-tzu and clouds are gathered by Yun-t'ung. The winds are created by Feng-po's bottle, which he squeezes.

The Dragon-Kings

Another source of rain within the mortal plane comes from the four Dragon-Kings which rule over the seas. The Lung-Wang, as they are known collectively, are made up of Ao

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Kuang, Ao Jun, Ao Shun and Ao Ch'in. Each is responsible for the policing of various waters through the use of fish, crabs and other sea creatures. Even wells contain agents of the Lung-Wang and there are thousands of temples which contain statues of the Dragon-Kings.

During periods of floods or droughts, the Dragon-Kings are prayed to for relief. This is most commonly done in large processions in which a band precedes a large dragon banner made of cloth. Afterwards a sacrifice is made at the local Dragon-King temple. This banner also appears during traditional parades and is in honor of the Dragon-Kings — not a request for their aid.

The Dragon-Kings, despite their fierce name, are considered some of the kindest of the Chinese gods. While each Dragon-King lives in a crystal palace beneath the sea, they watch over sailors and fishermen and look for extreme acts of kindness. To test them, the Dragon-Kings often ask an underling to allow themselves to be captured. The underling, usually a fish or turtle, then asks for its freedom. If the fisherman grants it, then the Dragon-King visits him later with a gift of a giant pearl, magical claw or book or some other object of wealth.

Gods of Happiness

There are two other popular groups of gods, both responsible for happiness and mortal prosperity. The first is the triad of Shou-hsing, the god of Long Life, Fu-hsing, the god of Happiness and Lu-hsing, the god of Salaries. The members of the second group, an-

other triad, are the Agents of Heaven, Earth and Water.

Shou-hsing is most revered around a person's birthday when a silk cloth embroidered with his image, an aged bald man with white beard and eyebrows, is hung in a place of honor. It is Shou-hsing that is responsible for determining the dates of a person's birth and death. He marks these dates upon the tablets that he carries with

him. Fu-hsing spent his mortal life (sometime between the sixth and eighth centuries A.D.) as a tax collector, and, for never complaining about this often thankless and sometimes harsh role, Yu-ti elevated him to the position of the god of Happiness in the afterlife. Lu-hsing was similarly rewarded for his loyalty and devotion to the imperial administration. As a god, he oversees the distribution of rewards and government bureaucracies.

These three gods are almost always described together and usually in their human forms, but they are also associated with animal forms; the stork (a traditional birth symbol) for Shou-hsing, a bat (whose Chinese pronun-

ciation is Fu, the same as for happiness) for Fu-hsing and a deer (called Lu) for Lu-hsing. These gods are also frequently the gods of accountants, businessmen and other clerks.

The second group of gods consists of T'ien-kuan (the Agent of Heaven), Ti-kuan (the Agent of Earth) and Shui-kuan (the Agent of Water). The Agent of Heaven is responsible for bringing prosperity to men and is often pantomimed in Chinese theatrical plays. During the course of the play, the actor por-



Utilizing Magic in The World of Indiana Jones

Of course magic exists in some form in the *World of Indiana Jones*. Examples of it are quite blatant in all three of the original movies and in many of the spin-off products. However, in most instances, it is either not used or used sparingly by normal people. Because so much of Chinatown relies upon the mystical for its flavor, this must again be looked at. It is possible that tomes of magic and items imbued with magical powers will be found during the course of a Chinatown adventure. The number of tales and legends involving Oriental sorcerers is nearly limitless. Gamemasters are encouraged to sprinkle some of this into their own campaigns but are warned against using too much or allowing player characters to learn too much. Again looking back at those legends, most of the sorcerers are very powerful individuals who are acting in their own best interests at the expense of normal mortals. They are also always just barely defeated by the forces of good who rely on cunning and luck to overcome their opponent's powers. This analogy has all the makings of a standard adventure in which a player character party is pitted against a powerful game-master character. In other words, we suggest that if you want to use magic and sorcery in your campaigns that you limit it to gamemaster characters who you control. This way you can determine how much and how frequently magic appears during Chinatown adventures and you won't ever have to worry about the player characters becoming too powerful for normal adventures.

traying T'ien-kuan strolls throughout the audience offering up scrolls which represent wishes for happiness. The Agent of Earth, however, plays a much more serious role as the forgiver of sins, and the Agent of Water has the most serious task as the averter of evil. These gods receive several offerings annually to protect families from evil and harm.

God of the Hearth

Another god closely associated with the gods of Happiness is Tsao-wang, the god of the Hearth. His image, like Pi-hsia-yuan-chun, can be found in nearly every Chinese home because without it, a family can not be certain of receiving the blessing of Yu-ti. However, instead of an idol, the image of Tsao-wang is usually a picture which is hung in the kitchen of the household where it can watch over the family throughout the year. On the 24th day of the 12th month, after receiving a sacrifice from them, he ascends to the heavens to report on the family. Yu-ti then takes this report and tells the gods of Happiness what the family should receive in the coming year.

One special note on Tsao-wang's visit is that the 24th day of the 12th month is often plagued with trouble. Because he is away from his vigilant spot, many evildoers will take this opportunity to cause their trouble. While Tsao-wang is away, their actions can not be noted and aren't held against them on their final judgment day.

Gods of Literature and Examinations

Another pair of gods commonly worshipped by writers and bookkeepers are Weng Ch'ang, the god of Literature and his assistant, K'uei-hsing. Although the "inferior" of the two, K'uei-hsing is actually the more well-known. As a mortal, K'uei-hsing was a brilliant student that always passed his tests with amazing success. However, because of his extreme lack of beauty, when he completed his test for a doctorate, the Emperor refused to acknowledge the truth of his answers. He felt one as ugly as K'uei-hsing could not possibly know all of the answers and pronounced him a liar. K'uei-hsing, in a fit of despair, threw himself into the water to drown. Yu-ti immediately noticed this and after replaying the events leading up to his death, he rewarded K'uei-hsing's endless devotion to studies with a position over all examination participants and eventually made him the god of Truth.

Note: Some Taoists have also placed Confucius in a similar role. As a great mortal philosopher, Confucius has received deification as the Great Teacher having similar roles

to Weng Ch'ang and K'uei-hsing. Lao-tzu and Confucius are believed to have been contemporaries.

Kuan-ti

Kuan-ti is another mortal who received eventual deification for his actions while on the Earth. Kuan-ti was a general of the first and second centuries A.D. and became extremely popular through the work *Romance of the Three Kingdoms*. Because Kuan-ti was a warrior and leader who showed great foresight and judgment, Yu-ti made him the god of Fortunes and War. Unlike most religions, he is not a violent god of War, preferring to use his gift of fortune telling to prevent them from happening at all. When this fails, he sends his servants Shou-ts'ang and Kuan P'ing (the latter of whom is actually his son) to dispense justice against the guilty party in the dispute. He also often confers with Lei-Kung, the god of Thunder.

Gods of the Door

A common site throughout much of Chinatown is the appearance of two figures at the entryway of homes and businesses. These two figures, one with a black or red face and the other with a white face represent guardians. These guardians were originally Shen-t'u and Yu-lu who served to keep the dead from disturbing the living.

Later, they were replaced by the deified versions of Yu-ch'ih Ching-te and Ch'in Shu-pao. Both of these former generals were responsible for protecting the Emperor T'ai-tsung. Prior to their deaths, the Emperor had wrongly garnered the wrath of one of the Dragon-Kings who made nightly visits to the Imperial Palace. The generals protected the Emperor showing their bravery and devotion to the Imperial line and upon their later deaths, Yu-ti put them in the place of Shen-t'u and Yu-lu as chief guardians.

Note: Buddhist temples have a similar pair of guardians called Hen-Ha-erh-Chiang which are the Sniffing General and the Puffing General. Each are huge figures one with an open mouth and the other with a closed mouth.

Heaven and Hell

There are two separate heavenly planes in Chinese mythology. The first is the home of

the gods where Yu-ti and the Queen Mother rule on K'un-lun Mountain. It is equivalent to the Greek home of Mount Olympus. This is also where all of the non-deity spirits and immortals reside. The Lord-King and Lady-Queen live in separate palaces. Yu-ti's palace is more traditional resembling the Imperial palace of China, while Hsi Wang-mu lives in a palace made entirely of jade.

The second heaven is where most worthy mortals go upon death. In Taoism, this second heaven is called the Land of Extreme Felicity in the West. In Buddhism, it is the plane of Enlightenment, Amitabha Buddha. The realm is a wondrous place where all delights are fulfilled and which is filled with beautiful birds and colorful lotuses.

Like the divided Heaven, Chinese Hell is actually comprised of eighteen Hells which are presided over by the Ten Law-Courts. At the head of each of these courts are the Shih-tien Yen-wang (the Yama-Kings) of which Yen-wang-yeh (Lord Yama-King) is the primary judge. Yen-wang-yeh is also the general master of the Chinese Hells and answers solely to Yu-ti.

The arrangement of Hell is a countryside with several towns. The capital is Feng-tu where all of the Yama-Kings reside and where all of the Law Courts are. Outside of Feng-tu is Kuei-men-kuan, the Gate of Demons, through which all new souls pass. Beyond the Gate and outside of Feng-tu is the river How Nai-ho which has three bridges. These bridges are made of gold, silver, and plain wood and stone. The golden bridge is for the gods who visit Hell and leads to K'un-lun Mountain. The silver bridge is for virtuous souls that have achieved enlightenment and leads to the Extreme Felicity in the West. The final, non-descript bridge is for the souls which are destined for reincarnation. If a soul which has been deemed unworthy attempts to cross either the gold or the silver bridge, it feels itself drawn over the edge and into the river below. Once in the waters of the How Nai-ho, the soul is torn apart by the serpents which live there.

The various Law Courts of Hell are as follows. The First Court is charged with receiving the newly dead and determining whether or not they are worthy to proceed to the Extreme Felicity in the West. It also determines which of

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the eight punishment courts unworthy souls proceed to next to be given their sentence. The Second Court punishes dishonest male and female intermediaries and doctors. Evil emperors, forgers and traitors who are guilty of lying or otherwise deceiving their fellow man are sent to the Third Court. The Fourth Court handles misers and dishonest tradesmen guilty of avarice. The Fifth Court punishes murders, unbelievers and the lustful. The Sixth Court punishes blasphemy and sacrilege. The Seventh Court deals with those that sin against the body such as the robbing or defiling of graves or cannibalism. The Eighth Court is for crimes of love, adultery and faithlessness. The Ninth Court punishes those guilty of arson. Finally, the Tenth Court is a special court that determines how the worthy, but unenlightened or therecently punished will be returned to the mortal plane in their next life.

One special note is needed about the Ninth Court. In addition to punishing those guilty of arson, it is in charge of a special area of Hell. Just outside of Feng-tu is the town of Wangssu-ch'eng, Those Who Died in Accidents. Because of the strict order of reincarnation and enlightenment, those whose lives are ended prematurely through accidents or suicide are violently torn from that cycle. They arrive in Feng-tu and after going through the Ninth Court are confined to Wangssu-ch'eng for eternity. The only way for a soul to escape

this Chinese equivalent of Purgatory is for them to find another soul to replace them. In order for them to do this, they must first spend three years in the town before being allowed to return to the site of their death. Once there, they must find a way to get someone else to die in a similar manner so that the new soul can take their place. As one could probably understand, those Chinese that have faith in this legend carefully avoid accident sites and places of murder or suicide.

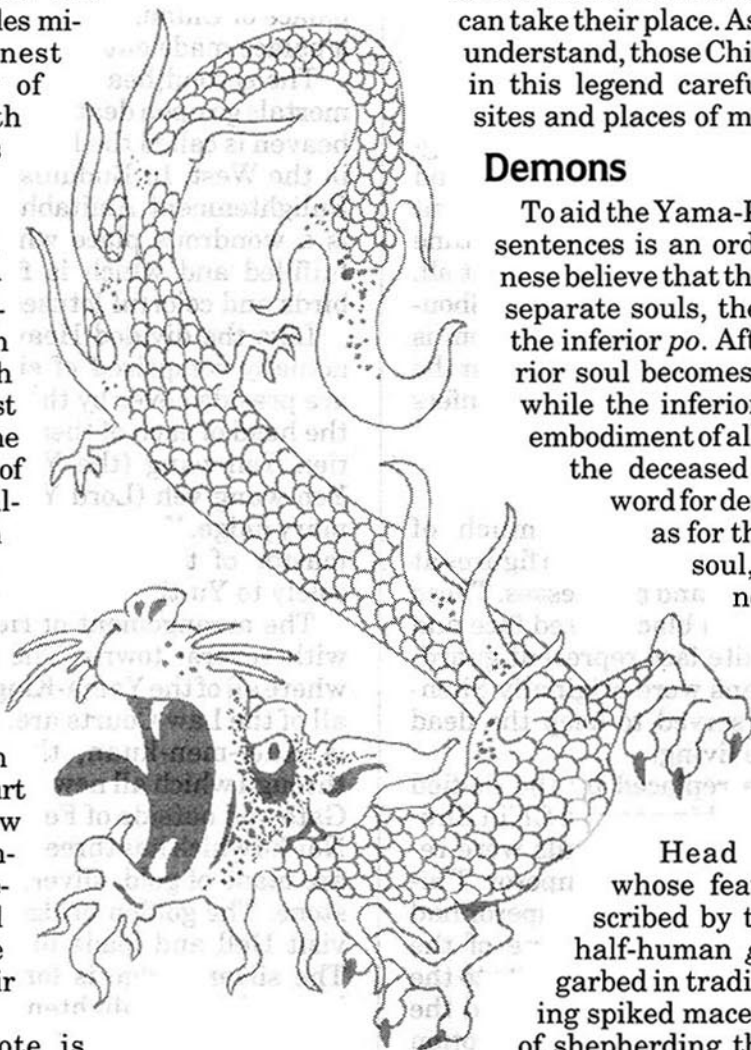
Demons

To aid the Yama-Kings in passing out sentences is an order of demons. Chinese believe that there are actually two separate souls, the superior *hun* and the inferior *po*. After death, the superior soul becomes a pure spirit *shen* while the inferior soul becomes the embodiment of all that was bad about the deceased *gui*. The Chinese word for demon is *gui*, the same as for the deceased inferior soul, and is used to refer not only to demons, but all forms of malevolent spirits and evil ghosts.

The most well-known of the *gui* are Ox-Head and Horse-Face whose features are well described by their names. These half-human *gui* are sometimes garbed in traditional armors bearing spiked maces and are in charge of shepherding the newly deceased.

They are controlled by the Yama-Kings who can tell when a person dies by reading their registers. The *gui* are then sent to the door and after passing a test of honesty by the Gods of the Door, are permitted to retrieve the soul for trial in the First Court.

The second group of *gui* are those that aid in punishing sinners. They help the Yama-Kings mete out the sentences of justice before the soul is sent to the Tenth Court for reincarnation. Punishments vary depending on the nature and severity of the mortal crime. Blas-



phemers and liars are forced to have their tongues cut out, misers are coated in melted gold and more violent criminals can find themselves subjected to crucifixion, beheading or other similar punishments.

The final group of *gui* are those that remain uncontrolled and which wander the mortal plane. Some *gui* are spirits of vengeance which return from the dead to right injustices. These are generally ghosts that haunt murderers and the like and are only seen by the evildoer. Other *gui* are mischievous spirits which somehow escaped the notice of the Law Courts and were able to remain on the mortal plane. Their sole purpose in life (or more appropriately, in death) is to cause trouble for the living. This generally only consists of things that get attention for the spirit such as scaring people, playing pranks on the wicked or inattentive or even petty thievery. The last type of *gui* are those that are truly evil. These do not stop with harmless pranks but continue onto acts which will cause real pain or suffering for their mortal victims. These free-moving *gui* are the ones that are typically summoned in rituals and which must be forcibly exorcised to rid a place of their evil.

Roleplaying the Chinese Mythology

To assist you in using some of these legends, here are a few more mystically-oriented adventure ideas.

Tales of the Sea

Taking a cue from the Dragon-King legends, gamemasters can test the virtuosity of their players. During the course of an adventure, the players could encounter some sort of sea creature who is either trapped or injured. If the players ignore it, then an image or representative of the Dragon-King appears to chastise or punish the characters. If the characters freely help the creature before it offers a prize for their aid, then the players have shown their true merits. The creature may endow the helper with a useful vision or small gift of value. If the creature must resort to bribery to win its freedom, then it simply vanishes afterwards leaving the characters to ponder the worth of their actions.

Vengeful Thunder

This mystical adventure requires the presence of Lei-Kung, the god of Thunder and Vengeance. At some point during an adventure, preferably one in which a Mistaken Identity card has been played, the weather takes a dramatic turn for the worse. The clouds roll in off of the ocean and the heavens let loose a torrential downpour. This is soon accompanied by a huge crack of thunder and brilliant flash of lightning. If the characters seek shelter inside, the thunder grows so loud and the lightning glows so brightly that it seems as if it is coming from directly outside. If the characters are stranded in the open or go outside to investigate, they are soon visited by a seeming incarnation of Lei-Kung.

Lei-Kung immediately points to the party member involved with the Mistaken Identity (or other appropriate card) and informs them that they are to be punished for heinous crimes against their fellow man. If the players foolishly attack Lei-Kung, he strikes back at them killing them (or suitably incapacitating them). If the players try to reason or question the god (or are subdued by him), they can find out that the accused person is guilty of murder and must justify his actions.

Naturally, the party member is innocent and if good enough proof of innocence is given, he is released. The party members will then learn over the course of the next few days that there is an impersonator running through Chinatown murdering hapless tourists. The players can confront and deal with the murderer or call upon Lei-Kung to enact justice on the correct party.

Night of Hell

This adventure must take part late in the Chinese year around the time of Tsao-wang's annual ascendance into the heavens. As that day nears, the players encounter stranger and stranger events. Minor mischiefs with unexplained circumstances continue to occur with greater frequency until the 24th day of the 12th month. On that day, all hell breaks loose, literally, unleashing a number of strange creatures that begin roaming the streets of Chinatown terrorizing the inhabitants. The players' role in this adventure is basically to protect themselves and others from harm

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until the next morning when the demons must return before they are seen by Tsao-wang.

You can use this as an opportunity to introduce a sorcerer to your campaign who claims to be responsible for the plague of demons or you could use any number of other legendary elements. One suggestion is to allow the characters some way to contact the Gods of the Door which inhabit the various statues throughout Chinatown. If successful, the statues will come to life and help combat the mischievous *gui* and return them to Wangssu-ch'eng where they belong.

Gui

AGILITY 9

Dodge 11, flight 11, maneuver 11, melee combat 12, melee parry 12, stealth 11, unarmed combat 13, unarmed parry 13

DEXTERITY 9

Thrown weapons 10

ENDURANCE 13

Resist Shock 15, resist fatigue 15

STRENGTH 13

TOUGHNESS 15 (13)

INTELLECT 7

Perception 9, trick 9

MIND 7

CONFIDENCE 13

Intimidation 15, willpower 15

CHARISMA 4

Taunt 10

Life Points: 3-5

Natural Tools: Thick hide, armor value TOU+2/15; claws, damage value STR+2/15.

Equipment: Humanoid *gui* hold and wield normal weapons. They are commonly described as having maces (damage value STR+5/20), swords (damage value STR+8/23) or lashes (damage value STR+3/18; see page 23 of the *World of Indiana Jones* for special bullwhip rules). They can also wear armor.

Roleplaying Notes: Feel free to season the *gui* to taste. They have been known to have all manner of abilities from casting spells to flight (natural and magical) to teleportation. They may also have magical protections which keep them from being harmed or which at least make them much tougher to kill.

Chapter Three

Demons of the Past

"Demons of the Past" is an open plot mini-adventure which is designed to introduce characters to San Francisco and Chinatown. It can either be run by itself or as the starting point for an ongoing campaign in the bay area. It has several places in it where the main adventure thread can be deviated from to allow characters to go off on tangents. They can either use existing characters or begin new ones.

The Major Beat

The main plot of the adventure revolves around the arrival and retrieval of a stolen Chinese artifact, an ancient sword. In the beginning of the adventure, the characters quickly find out about the theft of the artifact and its arrival in the Chinatown underworld. The adventure centers upon the recovery of the artifact for the Chinese museum it was stolen from. During the adventure, the characters will be faced with the two major themes of Oriental pulp fiction: mysticism and underworld gang violence. The characters will eventually learn that one of the tong gangs has stolen the sword in a bid for control of all of the underworld gangs. The mysticism aspect of the adventure is introduced by a third party which becomes involved in the hunt for the artifact. They are interested in the sword

because they believe it contains the soul of an evil general which they would like to bring back to life to help them take control over this new world in the West. This adventure will give characters exposure to several different aspects of Chinatown as well as new contacts in San Francisco.

Act One: Stolen!

SCENE ONE: Welcome to Hub City

The Situation

Standard. This scene allows you to introduce the players to the city of San Francisco. Feel free to do this in whatever manner is appropriate to the players' chosen profiles. This adventure is designed to be started whenever your characters feel comfortable with San Francisco so they can do some exploring and perhaps even partake in some other adventures before beginning this one. Here are a few examples of how they may arrive and what events may happen soon after their arrival.

The Expo: If your characters are interested in the discoveries and inventions of the 1930s, invite them to attend the Golden Gate

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Exposition. There are no special adventure ideas centered around this event other than the fact that it will draw a great deal of media attention. This is the perfect backdrop for egocentric villains that require national publicity of their exploits.

The Wharfs: If the characters do not have their own method of transportation, they will probably arrive by boat and enter San Francisco through the Wharf District. As they arrive, a huge melee breaks out on the dock in front of one of the warehouses. Characters that are drawn to the fight will learn that two merchants, one Italian and one Chinese, are disputing who should be able to purchase a fisherman's recent catch. If the characters side with the Chinese merchant, they will gain an enemy who has contacts in North Beach's Barbary Coast. Should they venture that way later or if they remain around the Wharf District, they may find themselves troubled by longshoremen and other union members. If the characters instead aid the Italian merchant, this could come back to haunt them later when the real adventure heads into Chinatown.

Long-Lost Relative: If the characters have no reason to come to San Francisco but are wandering aimlessly, have a long lost relative contact them. This relative naturally resides somewhere in San Francisco and can lead them on a guided tour of the city and introduce them to various personalities that you may want to use in later adventures.

Cut To ...

Eventually, you will need to get the real adventure started. When the characters are done getting their initial bearings, cut to Scene Two.

SCENE TWO: Open Sesame!

The Situation

Standard. Regardless of how they entered San Francisco, at some point their interests should be guided toward the Museum of Chinese Antiquities on the corner of Kearney and Sacramento Streets. It is here that they will learn of the arrival and subsequent theft of a priceless Chinese sword. The museum cura-

tor meets the characters and tells them the situation with an agitated tone to his voice. Read aloud or paraphrase:

"We received the burial sword of General Chiang about 72 hours ago. It was due to be put on display in a new exhibit devoted to the emperors and generals of the Han Dynasty opening next week. It was in a locked safe with a guard outside the room the whole time. Last night, the guard claims to have heard a commotion outside the museum and went to check on it for only a minute. When he returned, the door to the safe was wide open and the sword was gone." The curator wrings his hands and continues in almost a whisper.

"We have avoided contacting the police because they rarely help us out here in Chinatown. Also, we don't want to draw the attention of the media. Public knowledge of the theft would be a terrible blow to our prestige."

The Action

The characters can begin the search for the sword in a couple of different ways. If they question the guard, he will basically tell the same story as the museum curator. At about 11 p.m. the previous night, he heard a big commotion outside — like there was a fight or a fire or something. He went to check, but by the time he arrived, he only saw one fleeting figure darting around the corner of Sacramento Street and into a cross-alley. He didn't pursue.

The guard is hesitant to give any more details on the fugitive. In fact, unless a party member makes an *interrogation* or *intimidation* roll versus the guard's *willpower* of 9, he won't say anymore about the commotion at all. If the characters generate a total of 12 or less, he will only tell them that he thought it was probably a tong gang fight. If the characters generate a total of 13–15, then he will give a description of which gangs were involved. If the characters generate a 16 or better, then he can give a pretty good description of the fugitive.

Should the characters be unable to coerce anything else out of the guard, they can check the scene of the crime. An *perception* total

greater than 10 will allow the character to notice that the room has a drop ceiling and that one of the panels has been slightly shifted. This is probably the point of entry. If the characters check out the ceiling, they will find a small piece of torn cloth that could possibly identify whoever stole the sword.

Cut To ...

This scene ends when the characters start to check out their leads. They will need to head into Chinatown and into Scene Three.

SCENE THREE: Can You Identify This Man?

The Situation

Standard. The characters must now venture into Chinatown to try and find the thieves. As they have probably guessed, the commotion outside the museum last night was a diversion intended to draw the guard away. The characters also find out that the fugitive is part of the same tong gang from which the thief comes.

The Action

The characters will find it extremely hard to get any information from the locals. Play up their fear of tong retribution and even slam a few doors in their faces. They can eventually learn that the cloth is probably from a sash used to represent which tong the former owner is a part of.

This is one place where the adventure can be temporarily put on hold while the characters investigate other tangents. Feel free to send them off on false leads or give other adventure seeds. The only requirement of the main adventure is that the sword must be retrieved before next week's (seven days) museum opening.

Power Play

Throughout this and the next scene, you should give your characters the impression that there is a gang war going on. The sword is being used as a symbol of power and that not only did the thieves want it, but other gangs may be after it as well.

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Fight!

If your characters are itching for some action, you can finally bring in the tongs. While they are questioning one of the locals, the tongs will enter the establishment and begin causing trouble. At first it will appear that they are just doing it randomly, but this is actually a trap. They are trying to arrange themselves to gain the benefit of position in the establishment. When they finally get themselves set up, the shoot-out begins.

There are an equal number of gang members to party members. Use the stats given for tong gangsters on page 33.

Flight!

If the fight looks bad, the tongs will try to flee. This will allow the characters to pursue them through the streets of Chinatown. Even if the tongs are wounded, remember that they know the streets and alleys of Chinatown like the back of their hand and give them the advantage during the chase. If the tongs are captured they can be interrogated or taken off to jail. They won't be especially cooperative to character questioning and even less so to the

police. If the characters allow the tongs to go to jail, they will be free on bail within the hour.

The purpose of the remainder of this scene is to allow the characters to get involved in a cat-and-mouse game with the tongs. They should quickly learn about the frustration that often comes with dealing with the Chinese Underworld. Nothing is ever as it seems and they must learn that it takes patience to get anywhere in Chinatown.

Cut To ...

When you or your characters eventually tire of the cat-and-mouse game, head for Scene Four. If the characters have allowed the game to go on for too long, the museum will have to delay the opening of the exhibit and the characters will have already lost some prestige as effective crimefighters.

SCENE FOUR: End Play

The Situation

Dramatic. This is the conclusion to the first half of the adventure. When the charac-

ters have finally done enough tag-team with the underlings, the major characters of the tongs will come into play. Throughout the preceding scenes you should have played up the power play. In this final scene, the action will come to a head with a huge Chinese stand-off with the characters caught in the middle.

The Action

As the chase scene build to a climax, the characters will eventually find themselves heading down a dead end alley near the tongs' headquarters. Once there, they will find themselves extremely outnumbered and outclassed. At least 15 to 20 other gangsters are here along with some of their superiors. To make matters worse, just as the characters begin to reconsider the intelligence of cornering the gangsters, another large group arrives on the scene at the open end of the alley. The scene becomes very tense and explodes when someone makes the first move.

The ensuing melee and gunfight will pit all sides against one another. Characters can choose to take up whatever side they want and many of the original tong members will forget about the characters to fight the newly arrived gangsters. There are about 15-20 members in the new gang (an equal number on each side).

Tong Chieftain

AGILITY 11

Acrobatics 12, dodge 13, maneuver 13, melee combat 12, melee parry 12, stealth 12, unarmed combat 12, unarmed parry 12

DEXTERITY 10

Fire combat 11, missile weapons 11

ENDURANCE 8

STRENGTH 9

TOUGHNESS 9

INTELLECT 8

Forgery 9, perception 10, trick 10

MIND 8

Scholar: Chinese lore 10

CONFIDENCE 10

Bribery 11, con 11, gambling 11, interrogation 11, intimidation 12, streetwise 12

CHARISMA 7

Charm 8, taunt 8

Life Points: 5

Equipment: Pistol, damage value 17, ammo 6, range 3-10/15/40; sword, damage value STR+6/21; submachine gun, damage value 17, ammo 30, range 5-10/20/50

Finale

This act ends when either the characters are killed in the crossfire (which actually ends more than just the act) or when they can get the sword and escape with it. One of the original tong chieftains will be wielding the sword during the fight.

Awards

If the characters retrieve the sword successfully, they receive three life points for completing the first act. If they fail to do it before the museum's original exhibition date (i.e. within seven days), then they only receive two points.

Intermission Notes

As mentioned before, there are several points throughout the two act adventure that characters may stray away from the plot. If you want, here is a possible sideline that they can follow up on or that you can give them after the adventure.

Bleeding Sickness

Throughout Chinatown the last few nights people have been turning up dead. If the characters check, they will discover that a few even turned up dead outside Chinatown in the vicinity of the wharfs. There has been no common denominator to link the victims as they have been seemingly random deaths. The only thing that has been a common link between the victims is that all had clawed their own throats open and were caked in blood. Within Chinatown, nearly all of the deceased were found at or near the entrance of their own apartments.

If the characters watch Chinatown for a few nights, they may eventually catch a glimpse of a shadowy figure. A few minutes later, a scream will be heard and the characters can race to the scene. When they get there, they will find another victim of the "bleeding sickness" already deceased in the doorway of his apartment. The shadowy figure has seemingly vanished.

The shadowy figure is an oriental vampire that has recently arrived in Chinatown. He has simply been on the prowl for blood which is his only form of sustenance. His took his first few on the open wharf because he wasn't strong enough to venture elsewhere. Now he has been claiming one or two victims a night at various times.

Oriental vampires are special *gui* that have escaped from Wang-ssu-ch'eng, the Waiting Village of lost souls. Instead of being bound to find a replacement for themselves, these souls have been able to remain on Earth free to do whatever evil they desire. Their only requirement is that they receive a daily feeding of blood to keep their corporal forms intact. If they are unable to keep themselves sated on blood, their bodies decay and the souls return to Wang-ssu-ch'eng.

Oriental vampires are unnaturally strong, possessing strength much greater than normal men and are very difficult to injure. They are also able to transform themselves into various creatures including small animals such as snakes and songbirds. The latter form is important because an oriental vampire's greatest weakness is that he can not willingly enter a victim's home. He must first be invited or brought in by the victim. A cunning vampire often uses his shapechanging ability to turn into a less threatening form, such as the songbird, which the victim is lulled into bringing into her home. Once inside, the vampire reveals his true form and begins his feast.

Besides shapechanging, an older oriental vampire may have learned how to summon other minor *gui* to aid them. Once per lunar month, a vampire (one who has existed for at least a hundred years) can call up to four minor *gui* to assist it in its search for blood. Legend has it that the very oldest of oriental vampires, those generally only found back in China, are capable of even greater magics.

Oriental vampires do not normally possess fangs like their western counterparts. Instead, they often have long fingernails or claws that allow them to slice open their victim's throats. Then the vampire simply drinks from the wound — sometimes prolonging the death for hours.

If a vampire is attacked, it will first resort to trickery to escape. Knowing that their bodies are their link to remaining on this plane,

they prefer to avoid combat altogether. However, if forced, they will fight with vicious abandon. If defeated, the vampire's body will quickly decay, releasing the soul inside and forcing it back to Wang-ssu-ch'eng.

Oriental Vampire

AGILITY 13

Dodge 15, unarmed combat 15, unarmed parry 15

DEXTERITY 13

ENDURANCE 15

Resist shock 17, resist fatigue 17

STRENGTH 15

TOUGHNESS 17/15

INTELLECT 12

Perception 13, tracking 13, trick 15

MIND 9

CONFIDENCE 13

Intimidation 15, survival 14, willpower 17

CHARISMA 6

Taunt 9

Life Points: 5

Natural Weapons: Claws, damage value STR+3/18; toughened skin, armor value TOU+2/17.

Roleplaying Notes: Oriental vampires can shapechange into a number of different animals. Which one it chooses is left up to the gamemaster. If the gamemaster decides that this is an older vampire, it may be capable of summoning other *gui* (the statistics for *gui* are on page 42) to its side or may be able to use magic.

Act Two: Gone Again?!

SCENE ONE: Thieves, Thieves, Everywhere Thieves!

The Situation

Standard. This act can be introduced in a number of ways:

- **Stolen Again:** Once the sword is returned to the museum, it is stolen a second time. This time, however, witnesses can easily describe the several thieves that take the sword during daylight hours. They entered the museum and the exhibit room where the sword was displayed, started firing around randomly to suppress the crowd and then took the sword. The witnesses

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describe the thieves as Chinese men who did not have an apparent affiliation with any tong. One of the men did look old, however.

- **Waylaid:** The sword can be taken before it ever reaches the museum. A group of elders meets the characters somewhere between the big fight of Act One and the museum. They get to talking and suddenly there's a brilliant flash. When the characters finish clearing their eyes, the old men and the sword are gone. (You may want to give the characters a chance to detect this. With a high *perception* roll or an *alertness* card, one of the characters notices one of the old men reaching into a small pouch.)

- **A Battle of Four Armies:** The final method of transition between acts is to have the old men show up sometime during the final fight of Act One. In the confusion of the melee, they manage to steal the sword away from the tongs and flee.

Cut To ...

When you have finished the transition between the two acts, move on to Scene Two.

SCENE TWO: Can You Identify This Old Man?

The Situation

Standard. This scene is another search for strange people in Chinatown. This will give characters an opportunity to make further contacts in the district or even return to ones made in the first act.

The Action

Once again, there are several tongs looking for the people who stole the sword. The tongs will have learned who stole the sword a second time and will be searching for them just the same as the characters. They may want to hedge their bets by taking out the characters first. So, there could be several people shadowing the characters either with the intention of taking them out of the whole picture, or just to see if the characters can find the old men for them. Whatever the case may be (gamemaster's choice), it will take a *perception* total of 12 or an *alertness* card before the characters notice this shadow.

If the characters have a connection in Chinatown, then they should have no problem finding out the general whereabouts of the old men. The contact knows that the old men have a place in the sewers where they meet. Finding the specific spot in the sewers is another matter, however. The best that the contact can do for the characters is to tell them to go to the corner newsstand and find Li Szu.

What Li Szu Knows

The characters can find Li Szu at the newsstand just down the block. Read aloud or paraphrase:

As you walk up to the stand, you see an elderly Chinese man bending over to pick something up behind the counter. This gives you a brief opportunity to look at the rows of newspapers, magazines and books in Li Szu's stand before he straightens up and looks you in the eye. He doesn't say a word, but instead waits patiently for you to address him.

If the characters are fairly pleasant about how they go about their questioning, then Li Szu will tell them about the backstreet entrance that leads to the subbasement and the sewers. He will even give them a detailed description about how to get there. However, he will refuse to tell the characters how he knows what he knows. If pressed, the characters will find themselves distracted by a tong fight that is breaking out behind him. In the seconds that the characters look away, Li Szu will vanish.

If the characters start out treating Li Szu roughly, then the same distraction mentioned above will grab their attention. After the characters notice that Li Szu is gone, they should generate a *perception* total of 8 or use an *alertness* card to see the newspaper that is laid out squarely on top of all the other papers. It is a Chinese newspaper, but there is a message in red ink that stands out. It gives the characters the directions to where the old men are — in English.

Cut To ...

When the characters finally find the location of the old men, cut to Scene Three.

SCENE THREE: My, What Lovely Eyes You Have

The Situation

Dramatic. The old men are holed up in a labyrinth of subbasements and sewer pipes beneath Chinatown. Give the impression that it is extremely wet and icky down here and that there are *things* moving in the water. These are probably just rats, but it should keep the characters on edge.

The Action

When the characters finally track down the location of the old men, they are in the midst of a ritual ceremony. The room is lit entirely by candlelight and the sword is on a mantle across from the doorway. The old men are all dressed in formal medieval military garb and are chanting. They seem unaware of the approach of the characters and have a vacant look in their eyes.

The action begins the moment someone touches the sword. There is another brilliant flash and suddenly all of the old men are standing holding their swords. Their eyes still seem vacant as if they are being possessed.

Old Men (Possessed) (10)

AGILITY 10

Dodge 13, maneuver 13, melee combat 12, melee parry 12, unarmed combat 12, unarmed parry 12

DEXTERITY 10

ENDURANCE 10

Resist fatigue 13, resist shock 13

STRENGTH 10

TOUGHNESS 17 (10)

INTELLECT 0

Perception 10, trick 10

MIND 0

CONFIDENCE 10

Intimidation 12, willpower 12

CHARISMA 6

Taunt 9

Life Points: 5

Equipment: Sword, damage value STR+6/21; Decorative Chinese armor, armor value TOU +4/14

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Roleplaying Notes: In addition to their armor, the old men seem to be under some sort of protective spell. This increases their total TOU to 17.

Mysticism

If you wish to make this a true mystical battle, feel free to add in a few random spells. Alternatively, when the old men are struck down, the *gui* that are possessing them could be released and the characters will be forced to fight them instead. The statistics for *gui* are on page 42.

Aftermath

The second act and the adventure concludes when all of the possessed men are defeated (and/or the demons within them)

and the sword is retrieved. If questioned later, the old men will explain (hostilely) that they were trying to reincarnate the soul of General Chiang, a Han Dynasty warrior. Through their research they have learned that the sword is that of an extremely brutal general who died while in battle. It is believed that he uttered a curse on his death bed that would ensure his eventual return to the mortal plane. They will then go on a tangent describing the evils of the western world and how it someday will perish in a ball of flame.

Awards

For successfully completing this act and the adventure, the characters should receive another three life points.

Chapter Four

To Catch A Tiger

"To Catch a Tiger" begins in San Francisco, but is set in Seattle during the late thirties. The characters must venture to Seattle to investigate a strange mauling. Their investigations cause them to get involved with a secret cult which is searching for an important artifact that was stolen from them.

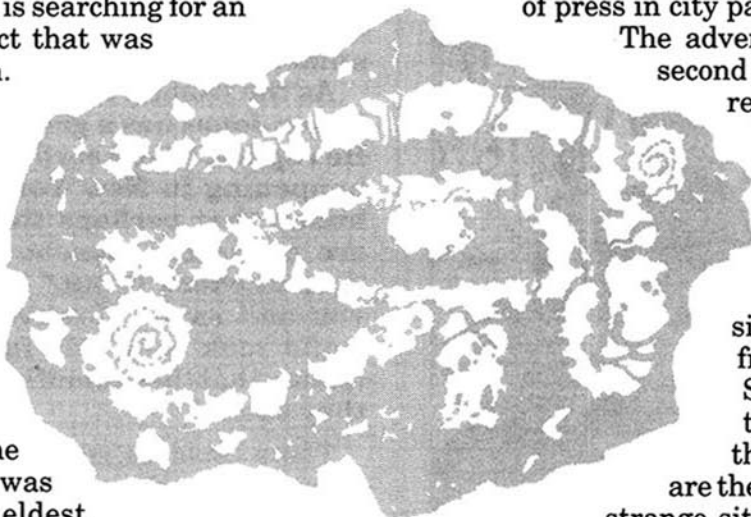
Adventure Background

In honor of their goddess, the worshipers of Bast made a silver and gold replica of the sistrum she carries. Known as the Lattice Tiger, it was carried by the eldest priestess of the Bast temple as a sign of respect and power. Two years ago the Tiger was stolen from a government museum in Cairo. International law enforcement agencies had no success locating the artifact.

Then, about six months ago, a strange mauling was reported in New York City where the victim was badly slashed and mauled by a

large feline of some kind. Because of the unusual and gory manner in which the victim was killed and the lack of any further maulings that might suggest that an escaped animal was roaming the city, the mauling got a lot of press in city papers.

The adventure begins after a second mauling is recently reported — this time in Seattle, Washington. The characters are asked to investigate the second mauling and find out what is responsible and how it got from New York City to Seattle. But when they get to Seattle, they find that not only are they dealing with a very strange situation, but someone is trying to keep them from learning anything. The characters will come across an Egyptian cult that is trying to recover the Tiger at any cost as well as a nefarious group of gangsters which will go even further to keep the Tiger in their possession. As they investigate, the characters will find out there is a lot more going on than just maulings.



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Act One: Beginning the Hunt

SCENE ONE: The Party

The Situation

Standard. The characters begin the adventure after receiving an invitation to a reception at the Elliot Hotel in San Francisco. The party is being given by Alfred L. Kroeber, director of the Museum of Anthropology located in San Francisco. He is trying to solicit funds for a new project in Mexico. Read the following aloud or paraphrase:

As you mingle among the guests, you can see the party is well-attended. It appears many people have come to hear about the new expedition Dr. Kroeber is planning. Among the guests you see is the famous Professor Jones. He's listening intently to a lady describing a recent mauling that happened in Seattle. Moving closer, you overhear the woman say, "Oh, it was in all the newspapers, but the *Times* had the goriest account. Apparently the poor man was ripped to pieces by some large cat! Parts of his body were thrown in all directions. What kind of animal would do such a thing?"

As the woman finishes her story, Professor Jones has a grim look on his face. He replies, "I've heard of a similar thing happening in New York City. I have a hunch that perhaps these two killings are connected somehow. I wish I had time to check it out." Then he turns to you and says, "However, perhaps you could look into this for me. I have a feeling that these maulings are more than they seem."

There could be several reasons why the characters might want to investigate this mauling for Professor Jones. For example, the party might want to earn the respect of the professor. Or perhaps the characters have reasons of their own to look into the mauling (such as a reporter wanting to pick up on a hot story). At this point, the gamemaster should provide some kind of incentive that will make the party want to investigate. It could be as easy as saying, "It looks like Professor Jones

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is depending on you to do this for him. If you do it well, perhaps he will recommend you for the next project that comes to his attention."

The Action

If the characters are willing to investigate the mauling, Professor Jones has a friend in Seattle who will take care of the group's hotel arrangements and provide them with a car. He will also see about getting any additional information and will send it to the characters via their hotel.



The group can either take the train or fly to Seattle. Flying will take about three hours while taking a train will take a couple of days. Once they arrive read the following aloud or paraphrase:

You arrive near Seattle at a small airport just outside the city. As is usual for this area of the country, it's raining. After a few minutes, a young woman walks up to you identifying herself as Linda Atkins, a friend of Professor Jones. You all then grab a taxi and head towards the city. During the ride, Linda tells you she is a teacher at the University of Washington. She met Professor Jones while working on a dig in South America.

Linda has arranged for you to stay at the Madison Hotel in the BellTown section of the city. The Madison is a four

story hotel located near the central business district. It has a small lobby with a restaurant attached. You have been reserved a suite with separate bedrooms. As you walk into the lobby, you notice that most of the people staying here seem to be businessmen.

Shortly after the group has settled in, a package will arrive from San Francisco from Professor Jones. Inside are newspaper articles from the *New York Times* and the *Seattle Star*, along with a short note. It reads:

Friends,

Remember that other mauling that happened in New York City a few months ago? Here are some articles about both the New York City and Seattle maulings for you to reference. Be careful. I understand Seattle can be a wild town.

-Indy

The Articles

The *New York Times*' article talks mostly about how the victim Larry Meyers was killed. The Seattle article identifies the other victim as Joey Holbrin, an employee of Sealane, a big importing company in Seattle. Like Meyers he had no real enemies and lived a pretty quiet life. His death was quite violent — apparently he fought fiercely with the animal before he was killed. The coroners, report stated that Holbrin had several broken bones and parts of his chest missing when he was examined. The reporter who wrote the article is Jeffrey Pierce, a regular reporter for the *Seattle Star*.

Cut To ...

With the information from the articles, the characters should either talk with the coroner or Jeffrey Pierce. If they choose the reporter, go to Scene Three. If they want to speak with the coroner, cut to Scene Two.

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SCENE TWO: Talking About the Dead

The Situation

Standard. The characters can get directions to the coroners' office from the hotel liaison, but he will look at them strangely. Once the characters are on their way, read the following aloud or paraphrase:

As you drive through Seattle, it's easy to see that many changes are happening here. Large signs arguing both for and against such things as forming unions, the New Deal, and other political statements can be seen all over the city. Seattle is a shipping and industrial town that still doesn't appear to have shaken off the effects of the Great Depression a few years earlier.

Making your way through the narrow streets, you arrive at the coroner's office. It's in a nondescript, single story building located in West Seattle. As you enter, you see a secretary sitting at a small desk. She looks you over a bit before

finally saying, "Good morning, is there something I can do for you?"

The Action

After talking with the characters, the secretary will go and get the coroner. Dr. Julius Hastings has been the city's coroner for over five years, during which he has seen what the violent aspects of the city's politics have done to people. Even with that, Holbrin's mauling shocked him. He knows Holbrin was involved in different illegal activities, but doesn't know who he was working for or what exactly he did. Questions about Holbrin could get Dr. Hastings in trouble, so the characters will need *persuasion* or *charm* total of 12 to see the body or his personal effects. Dr. Hastings will also ask for a "donation" of ten dollars to give to the city's "Poor Burial Fund." If the characters refuse to pay, they will firmly be told to leave. If the group pays, he will show them the body. Read aloud or paraphrase:

After getting the body from storage, Dr. Hastings starts to pull back the sheet. "Hope you have a strong stomach," he

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murmurs. The body looks badly beaten. There are several deep slashes across the chest and stomach. What really catches your eye, though, is that parts of the lower abdomen and the right shoulder were torn completely off. All that is left of the clothes are blood-stained and shredded remnants.

At this point, the characters should make a *perception* total of 8 to notice something on the body. If they make it, read aloud or paraphrase the following:

As the doctor turns his back to you, you notice a small piece of paper hanging in the remains of the suit jacket.

If the characters didn't make the *perception* roll, then have Dr. Hastings notice the paper. He will allow the characters to look at it if they can generate a *persuasion* or *charm* total of 10 or more.

The paper is an old dry cleaning bill that has Holbrin's street address on it. The address is 221 Owens Place, Apt. 6. The group will have to ask around to find out that Owens Place is in the Youngstown section of Seattle.

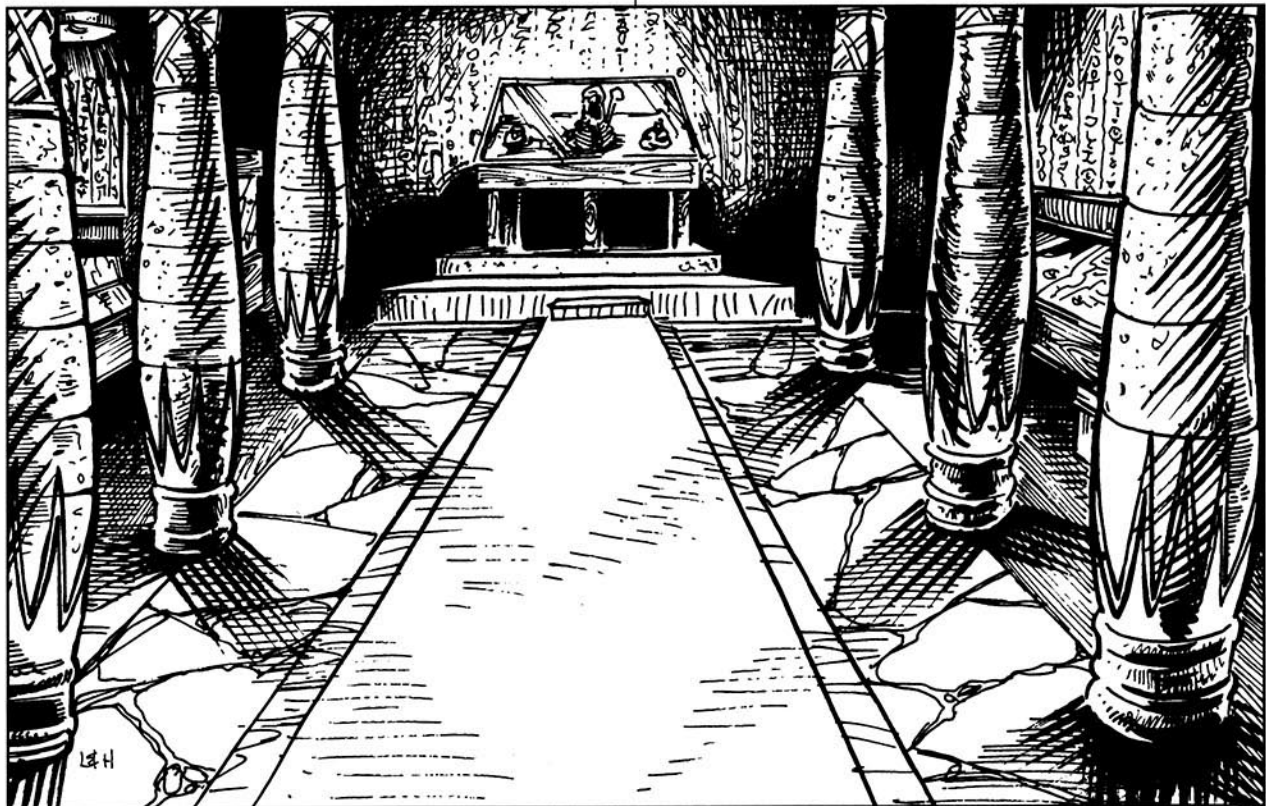
Cut To ...

If the characters have the street address, they may choose to go talk to the reporter or go directly to Holbrin's house. If they don't have the address or want to talk to Pierce, then go to Scene Three. If the group goes to the house, begin at Scene Four.

SCENE THREE: The Hunt Begins

The Situation

Standard. The *Seattle Star's* main offices are located in the business district. Because of the high-strung political climate in Seattle, many papers are being careful about what they publish. The *Star* recently had trouble because of a story about corrupt police chiefs who were protecting illegal gambling establishments. Strangely enough, another problem that cropped up recently was the Holbrin article. The *Star* got in trouble because it mentioned Sealane as the company Holbrin was working for. Pierce himself will talk to people, but mentioning the



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article directly might end the conversation quickly. Getting a *charm*, *persuasion*, or *journalism* total of 10 will keep Pierce talking. Read aloud or paraphrase:

You arrive at the Star building in downtown Seattle. After talking with the receptionist, you are led into a large room with many desks. Over the constant tapping of typewriters, the person you're following yells, "Hey Pierce! Some people wanna see you!" A tall man in a gray business suit gets up from his desk and walks toward you. "I'm Jeff Pierce. How can I help you?"

What Pierce Knows

Pierce was one of the first reporters to arrive in Youngstown at the mauling scene. When he saw the amount of blood and gore all over the place, he had to hold in the contents of his stomach. It looked like Holbrin had been attacked from behind, but he did not go down easily. The result was blood and long scratch marks on walls, the ground, everywhere. The police were called by someone in a nearby building who heard Holbrin yelling things like "get away from me," and "leave me alone." Pierce found out from a lady at the scene that Holbrin lived at 221 Owens place in room 6. From Holbrin's landlady, Pierce learned that Holbrin worked at Sealane. At this point Pierce will speak very softly, saying he does not know why, but just before his story was to go to press, it got moved from the front page to the back of the paper. Sealane is a very big company, and he thinks that they might have had something to do with it. He does not want any trouble, so he will just let the matter rest.

When they have finished with Pierce, the characters will need to get directions to Youngstown to find Holbrin's house. Asking around, or going back to the hotel will get them the information. The gamemaster may have them generate a *streetwise* total of 8 to avoid any bad situations.

SCENE FOUR: Holbrin's House

The Situation

Standard. Youngstown is one of the poorer areas of Seattle. It mainly consists of multi-

story tenements or small row houses. Owens Place is on the east side of Youngstown near the main industrial district. Holbrin lived in a well-kept four story walk up. Mrs. Picks, his former landlady, is anxious to rent out the room again. As a result, the characters can use *trick* or *con* skills (total of 8) to make her think they are asking about the room. When they are inside the room, read the following aloud or paraphrase:

"Sorry about the mess," says Mrs. Picks, "but no one's due to pick up Mr. Holbrins things for a couple of days yet." As Mrs. Picks opens the door, you can see that Holbrin lived in a large single room that has a bed, a small table, and a nightstand. There is a closet, but it looks mostly empty. While Mrs. Picks shows you around, you can see the room has already been thoroughly searched. There are two windows that look out on Owens Place. Just as you're leaving, you notice a couple of pieces of paper lying under the desk.

The characters will have to distract Mrs. Picks long enough for one of them to get the papers. Have the others who are not occupied make *perception* checks for totals of 9. Those who succeed will see a man dressed in a long overcoat standing on the street and looking up into the room. After the characters get the papers, they can try to rush downstairs, but the gangster will be gone. When the characters leave the house, read the following aloud or paraphrase:

Pulling the papers from your pocket, they read:

#746831D, Sealane, Harbor Island.

#568992S, Sealane, South Seattle.

These are old shipping labels that were left behind when the room was searched.

Cut To ...

The characters should now go back to their hotel and plan their next move. Once they have done this, cut to Act Two, Scene One.

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Act Two: Beware of the Hunters

SCENE ONE: Unexpected Guests

The Situation

Dramatic. The Sekhmet followers have been watching Holbrin's apartment for several days hoping to find anyone else who was involved with stealing the Tiger. The characters are the first people to visit the apartment since Holbrin's death. This has made the cultists very suspicious, so they follow the group back to their hotel. They're interested in finding out what the group knows and why they searched Holbrin's home. Since they are not sure the group is working for Stravec (who was Larry Meyer's boss), they will not be hostile, but will demand that the characters tell them all they know. Once the party has entered their room and settled down for a planning session, read the following aloud or paraphrase:

You're sitting around your room deciding your next move when you notice the scent of incense in the air. Near the door of the room, a mist begins to form, creeping in from under the door. It only takes seconds for the door to be completely obscured. Then, from the mist emerges a black panther on a gold leash. Holding the leash is a large, dark-skinned man who stands well over six feet tall. He is dressed in well-tailored three piece suit. On his left is a woman dressed in a long cloak. He bows slightly then says, "My priestess wishes to speak with you. Please tell her all you know about the Lattice Tiger."

The Action

The man holding the panther is Takul Assem, devoted attendant to Rathanan, a high priestess in the temple of Sekhmet. They have been looking for others involved in the theft of the Tiger. If the characters do not do anything hostile, the Sekhmet cultists will

talk with them. If they attack, Takul will drop the leash and pull out his .38. The cat will lunge for the nearest character, while the priestess will begin chanting. A desperate *persuasion* attempt will stop the fighting as long as all the characters put down their weapons.

If the fighting goes on longer than two rounds, read the following aloud:

The woman stops chanting and throws some powder into the air. Then she opens the front door. The man and panther then rush through the door as your entire hotel room bursts into flames. No one is killed, but everyone in the group must spend over a week in the hospital.

Once the characters heal, they can resume the investigation, but without the help of Takul.

Takul Assem

AGILITY 10

Dodge 11, melee combat 11 (sword 12), stealth 11

DEXTERITY 9

Fire combat 10

ENDURANCE 9

STRENGTH 10

TOUGHNESS 11

INTELLECT 8

Deduction 10, first aid 9, perception 9

MIND 9

Artist 10, language: English 11

CONFIDENCE 8

Faith: Sekhmet 11, intimidation 12, will-power 9

CHARISMA 9

Etiquette 10, persuasion 10

Life Points: 4

Equipment: Smith & Wesson .38, damage value 17, ammo 6; broadsword STR+8/23; hard leather vest (under suit jacket) TOU+4/19.

Description: A very tall well-built man with an imposing stare. Takul has been the personal protector and companion of Rathanan for many years. His English still has an accent, but it's easy to tell that he's been well-educated. Takul will willingly give his life to protect Rathanan.

Rathanan

AGILITY 10

Dodge 11, stealth 13, unarmed combat 12

DEXTERITY 11

Thrown weapons 13

ENDURANCE 7

STRENGTH 7

TOUGHNESS 9

INTELLECT 11

First aid 12, perception 12, science: herbalism 12

MIND 9

Medicine 10

CONFIDENCE 8

Faith (Sekhmet) 10, willpower 9

CHARISMA 8

Etiquette 9, persuasion 10

Life Points: 5

Equipment: Leather pouches containing healing herbs and spell components, including Dust of Fire (effect value (25) of the Dust is the damage value used against the target's Toughness).

Description: Rathanan is a slim young woman who appears to be in her mid-twenties. She carries herself in a regal manner, letting Takul take care of her basic needs. She seldom speaks but can relay much information with her facial expressions. Currently, she wears a long cloak that covers her from head to toe.

Black Panther

AGILITY 11

Dodge 12, long jumping 12, running 12, stealth 13, unarmed combat 13

DEXTERITY 11

ENDURANCE 9

STRENGTH 8

TOUGHNESS 10

INTELLECT 7

Perception 8, tracking 9

MIND 4

CONFIDENCE 7

Intimidation 11, willpower 10

CHARISMA 4

Life Points: None

Natural Tools: Thick fur TOU+5/15; claws STR+4/12; bite STR+7/15

Description: A very large specimen that looks both well fed and in excellent condition. The cat obeys both Takul and Rathanan, but is not openly friendly to either of them.

The Conversation

Takul will first demand the group give all the information they have—he'll use both his *persuasion* and *intimidation* skills to get as much out of the group as he can. During this time, the priestess will say nothing while the panther will sit at Takul's side. A *perception* roll of 8 will show that the panther is sniffing the air and that Rathanan is watching the cat closely.

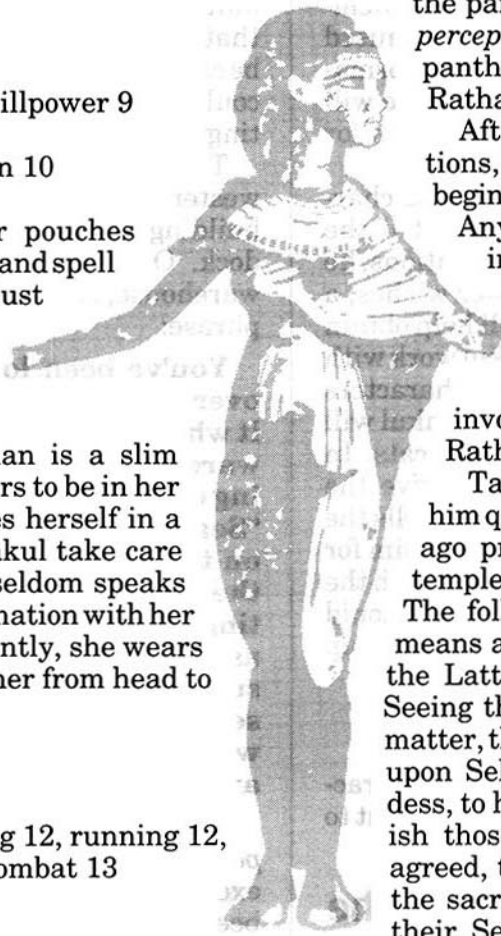
After Takul is finished asking questions, he will turn to the priestess and begin talking to her in a foreign tongue.

Any character with a *language* skill in Egyptian that reaches a total of 9 will understand what he is saying. Takul feels the characters have been honest with him, and he believes they are not involved in the theft of the Tiger. Rathanan will nod in agreement.

Takul will then let the group ask him questions. He explains that a year ago priestesses of Bast came to the temple of Sekhmet seeking their help. The followers of Bast had tried every means available to secure the return of the Lattice Tiger, but had no success. Seeing that reason would not settle the matter, the high priestesses of Bast called upon Sekhmet, the sister of their goddess, to help get the Tiger back and punish those who stole it. After Sekhmet agreed, the priestesses of Bast released the sacred cats of their temple to help their Sekhmet allies with the search.

Each cat is believed to be a reincarnation of Bast herself and are considered the ultimate protectors of her temple. There are three cats—one stays with Takul, while the tiger and the cheetah look for the thieves who stole the Tiger.

People who have helped steal the Tiger carry a special scent that only the cats and Rathanan can smell. It's a form of curse placed upon those who steal from the temple of Bast. The scent helped Takul locate one of the



people involved in New York City. Larry Meyers was working as a courier for a trading house co-owned by Lazar Atquin and Ivan Stravec. The man attacked Takul when he tried to question him and was killed by the panther. After searching Meyer's records, Takul found that the Tiger had been already shipped to a Seattle warehouse on Harbour Island. They have not yet searched the warehouse.

Takul and Rathanan care little about American laws and customs and don't consider themselves governed by them. This has caused Takul problems when trying to get information. Because this is a temple matter, he will not use the police or any other agencies for help.

At first he will be reluctant to let the characters help search for the Tiger, but if the group can convince him of their intentions, he will reconsider. If the gamemaster wishes, a character *persuasion* roll of 8 will help obtain Rathanan's permission to let Takul work with the characters. Not only will the characters receive a reward for their help, but Takul will also limit the activities of the Bast cats. In return the group must promise to give the Tiger to Takul — if they find it. Takul tells the characters that if they need to talk to him for any reason, they can leave a message with the hotel bellboy named Henry. Then they should return to their room and wait. He will show up shortly.

Cut To ...

After the agreement is made, the characters should investigate the warehouse. Cut to Scene Two.

SCENE TWO: Strangers in The Night

The Situation

Standard. Harbour Island is one of the more run-down warehouse areas in Seattle. Located north of Youngstown, it was built to help accommodate Seattle's increased shipping activities during the late twenties. By the mid-1930s, politics and the Great Depression had caused a decline in the shipping industry, resulting in surplus warehouses.

These were either left in disrepair or completely abandoned by their owners. The group should go by car, crossing over one of several bridges that connect the island with the mainland.

When the characters arrive, they will notice that not much is going on in the area. Some of the warehouses seem to be in use, while others appear deserted. Finding the warehouse they are looking for will require the group to look for signs or symbols on the buildings. There are people hanging around that the characters could ask but they should be careful who they choose. A *streetwise* check could be used to prevent the group from getting in trouble.

The Sealane warehouse is located on the western shore of the island. It is a single story building on the shorefront that has its own dock. Once the characters have found the warehouse, read the following aloud or paraphrase:

You've been looking at buildings for over an hour now and are pretty tired of it when you finally come to a single story warehouse near the waterfront. Looking carefully, you can make out the word "Sealane" printed faintly in a half circle on the northern wall. You quickly park the car, and survey the situation. Getting in looks easy — there is an open gate, as well as several holes in the fence that surrounds the building. The building itself looks like it hasn't been used in a while, and there appears to be no one around.

When the group has passed the fence, a *perception* or *Intellect* total of 9 will show that except for a recent set of tire tracks, no one has been here. A *deduction* or *tracking* roll of 11 will reveal that the tire marks are very new. If the group follows the tracks, they will find that the tracks lead around the building toward the dock. As the characters turn the corner, they will see a set of large open double doors. A careful look inside will show a black Ford Sedan parked in what used to be a loading area. The car is locked, and the engine is still warm from recent use.

Using *stealth*, the group will be able to enter the building undetected. This warehouse has not been used in a very long time.

The floors are covered with dust; what boxes and crates there are look very moldy and discolored. There are puddles of water from where the roof is leaking. After looking around, the group should generate a *perception* total of 8 to notice a light coming from the northeast corner of the building. Then read the following aloud or paraphrase:

The light appears to be coming from an office in the corner of the building — probably an old foreman's office. You can see a man talking on the phone at the desk. After a moment you recognize him! He is the fellow you saw standing outside Holbrin's apartment!

If the characters try to rush him, have him make a *perception* check for total of 9. If he succeeds, he will see he is outnumbered and will then drop the phone and bolt for the nearest door. The group will have to chase him down before he can get to the car. Since he knows the warehouse better than the characters, he should have a good chance of escaping.

If the group uses *stealth* or even a *trick*, they should roll against the man's *perception* skill. If successful, they will be able to catch him before he can leave the office. If not, they should be able to *maneuver* so he can not reach his car.

Fred Stein (Gangster)

AGILITY 8

Dodge 9, melee combat 9, stealth 9

DEXTERITY 9

Fire combat 11, lock picking 11, vehicle piloting: car/truck 10

ENDURANCE 9

Resist shock 10

STRENGTH 8

TOUGHNESS 10

INTELLECT 8

First aid 9, perception 10

MIND 7

CONFIDENCE 8

Bribery 10, interrogation 9, intimidation 9, streetwise 9, willpower 9

CHARISMA 7

Taunt 9

Life Points: 2-4

Equipment: .38 revolver, damage value

17, ammo 6; boot knife STR+4/19; hard leather vest (undercoat) TOU+4/19.

Description: Typical gangster type with the long overcoat, mean disposition, and gun. Stein is a bit smarter than your average gangster; that is how he got to where he is in the organization.

After capturing him, an *interrogation* attempt will reveal that he is Fred Stein and that he works as a runner for Charles Kincaid. Kincaid, who lives on Montlake Street near the Heights, is the man in charge of Ivan Stravec's illegal business activities in Seattle. Until recently Stein just worried about protecting couriers and shipments. But after the Holbrin's murder, Kincaid started getting real nervous. He ordered Stein to watch Holbrin's old apartment until it was cleaned out and to let him know if anyone came poking around. Stein doesn't know about the Tiger or its being stolen. He only knows that Kincaid has been acting very strange since Holbrin's death. It was Kincaid he was talking to on the telephone before the characters showed up. Stein was informing him of what happened at Holbrin's apartment and getting new instructions.

If Stein Escapes

If Stein does escape, the group can search the desk and find an address scribbled on a piece of paper. The address is 1740 Montlake Drive. There is no name for the address, but it belongs to Kincaid.

Cut To ...

The characters should get out of the warehouse as quickly as possible since Stein was talking to Kincaid and could have warned him about the group's arrival. Cut to Scene Three.

SCENE THREE: Driving Lessons

The Situation

Dramatic. Kincaid has sent a pair of thugs to go deal with the trouble at the warehouse. They will arrive just as the characters are getting into their car. Kincaid thinks this is another attack like the one that killed Holbrin

so he's ordered his men to shoot anything that moves. They arrive in a black 1935 Ford Sedan. Read the following aloud or paraphrase:

As you open the doors to your car, a black sedan pulls out right behind you. Their intent becomes obvious when a man leans out the front passenger side window and points a Tommy submachine gun in your direction. Your back windshield shatters as it's hit with his first burst, but no one is hurt. The choice is clear: you can try to lose them in the dark side streets on the island or you can make a mad dash for the nearest bridge and try to hide in the traffic on the other side.

The Action

The characters are in a desperate situation — the car can only take so much damage before it refuses to run. If the characters decide to try to drive away, then they will be exposed to gunfire until they can get the car moving. To succeed in getting away requires Critical Skill Resolution (see page 128 of *MasterBook*). The critical skill is *vehicle piloting: car/truck*, with Strength to be used in case of a *critical problem*. (Strength is used to drive because it's harder to drive a car without power steering.) If the characters get a *possible setback* at any time, then the sedan has managed to pull up beside them and will attempt to push them off the road (the driver's *vehicle piloting: car/truck* skill is 10; a total of 12 is needed for him to succeed).

Step A: The driver must start the car and get it moving. The DN for doing this without allowing the thugs to come up alongside the vehicle is 8. If the characters succeed, then they are able to move forward in front of the sedan.

Step B: There is sharp right turn ahead. To make the turn without sliding into the warehouse wall, both drivers must generate a total of 12. If the characters fail, then they are back at Step A. If only the thugs fail, then the characters are able to achieve Step C with +5 bonus to their skill for that step.

Step C: The backstreet takes another sharp turn to the right and runs alongside the docks.

To make the turn without skidding, both drivers must generate a total of 13. If the driver misses this roll, then the car skids onto a dock. However, if the driver misses it by more than five, then the car skids sideways along the dock and ends up hanging precariously over the water. The characters or thugs can make it out of the car without mishap, but the characters will be captured by the thugs. If the thugs miss the roll and the characters make it, then the characters are able to complete Step D with a +7 bonus to their skill for that step.

Step D: The bridge is ahead! To make it to the bridge without allowing the sedan to come up alongside the car, the driver must generate a total of 12. If the driver fails, then the thugs can make an attempt to push the car into the wall of a warehouse and make it stop. It takes two rounds for this maneuver to succeed. If the characters are able to make the roll, then they have succeeded in losing the thugs.

If the characters decide to escape from the sedan on foot, then they must *dodge* gunfire and make it to some cover. At this point, they can either wait for the thugs to leave their car or they can walk out of this area.

Awards

If the group met the Sekhmet cultists without a fight, award them one Life Point, whether they fought at first or not. If they got out of the car chase without being captured, give them a second Life Point.

A Blessing in Disguise

If the group does get captured, read the following aloud or paraphrase:

Each of you is pulled roughly from what's left of your car while the gangster with the Tommy gun watches your every move. You're then herded into the gangster's car. "Mr. Stravec wants to see ya," says the gunman as he climbs in beside you. "He's gonna show ya it ain't smart to mess around with him, heh, heh."

Cut To ...

If the group is captured, go to Act Three, Scene Two. If not, the group should first go

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back to the hotel to clean up. The hotel bellboy knows where they can get their car repaired without any questions. Takul will also want to know what happened. After that, the characters should check out Kincaid place. Cut to Act Three.

Act Three: Finding the Tiger's Den

SCENE ONE: Kincaid's House

Standard. Looking for Kincaid's house will take the group into the Montlake section of Seattle. This is a middle class part of the city known for townhouses and large Victorian homes. The people who live here are shop owners, tradesmen, or employees and managers of manufacturing companies in Seattle. It's a quiet area that has several police patrols during the day. Finding Kincaid's house will not be difficult if the group talked with Stein. If the characters are just using the slip of paper, they will have to ask around at local shops or with people on the street. If the characters ask too many questions, the game-master could have a policeman stop the characters and ask them questions about their behavior. Once the group has found the address, read the following aloud or paraphrase:

After a short search, you find a large townhouse surrounded by a thick hedge that stands over eight feet tall. You walk up to an iron gate that seems to be slightly ajar. All it takes is a light push to allow you to enter.

If the characters choose to enter, read aloud or paraphrase:

A cobblestone path takes you past a small, well-kept rose garden and up the to the main entrance of the house. At the front door, you see a man who appears to be a butler sweeping the front stoop. He looks up from his task as you approach and asks neutrally, "May I help you?"

As you begin to respond, a short, slightly overweight man comes out of the house followed by another person. The butler turns to the short man and says, "Master Kincaid, these people are here to see you."



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The short man looks taken aback for a moment. Finally, he says, "Okay, you're the guys who were at the warehouse right? Well, sorry to tell ya boys, but you can't pin nothing on me. I'll tell you what I will do though, if you'll be reasonable. Maybe we can make a deal. I've got something you want, and you have something I could use. So whaddaya say? Want to talk?"

If the characters wish to talk, read aloud or paraphrase:

After a short discussion, you decide to see what he has to offer and follow the butler and the short man into the house. You are led into a well-appointed living room and invited to sit down.

The Action

Thinking that the characters are responsible for the deaths of Holbrin and Meyers, Kincaid is willing to tell the group what he knows. After the second murder, he knew that anyone looking for the Tiger would eventually come to him, so he prepared for the situation. The gamemaster should use either *con* or *trick* checks to see if the characters can keep up the appearance, if that is the party's wish. Since the group's agreement with the Sekhmet cultists makes Kincaid's belief partially true, they should only need a total of 8 to be successful. If they should fail, Kincaid will not be as forthcoming with his information. The group will have to use *persuasion* to learn all he knows. Using *intimidation* in this situation will only make Kincaid hostile, and there are six armed gangsters in the house with him as guards (use Stein's stats).

A business associate of Stravec's for many years, Charles Kincaid rose to be one of the most important members of Stravec's organization. Now he mainly runs the dockside and smuggling activities. In the past, though, he ran Stravec's bootlegging operations during the prohibition.

Charles Kincaid

AGILITY 7

Dodge 8, melee combat 8 (knife 9)

DEXTERITY 7

Fire combat 9

ENDURANCE 8

STRENGTH 9

TOUGHNESS 9

INTELLECT 9

Deduction 10, forgery 10, perception 11, trick 10

MIND 8

Business 10

CONFIDENCE 8

Bribery 10, con 9, interrogation 9, intimidation 9, streetwise 9, willpower 10

CHARISMA 7

Charm 8, persuasion 9

Life Points: 2

Description: A slightly overweight man in his mid-forties, he knows that his better days are behind him. He depends on his men to keep things running. Stravec needs Kincaid for his keen knowledge of what political and economic business is being done in Seattle. This makes Kincaid one of the most important people in Stravec's operation.

What Kincaid Will Reveal

Kincaid had little direct involvement with the Tiger until it reached the United States. Then he was ordered by Stravec to take personal control of the Tiger's movement. Since so many people were looking for the Tiger, it was moved very slowly. Mostly it went from one place to another by courier. All of the couriers reported directly to either Kincaid or Stravec himself. By the time the Tiger finally reached Seattle, it had been traveling in the U.S. for over a year.

About six months after the Tiger arrived, the couriers who helped bring it started acting strangely. Many said they felt like they were being watched. It did not seem to matter where they were or what they were doing. For some reason, they would feel the hairs rise on the back of their neck. Every time they looked or searched around, nothing was there. Then guys started feeling like they were being followed — again no matter what they tried, they could not find anything. These couriers had such a bad case of paranoia that it began to affect their work performance in Stravec's operation. Kincaid could no longer trust some of his men with assignments. Stravec would not listen since he does not believe in Egyptian curses or other mumbo jumbo. He just

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wanted Kincaid to hire new men.

Then Kincaid got a phone call from New York. One of his men was sure he was being tailed, but he could not see who or what it was. Two days later the guy was found dead. The death itself was not upsetting to Kincaid because it is an accepted risk in the business. What shocked both Kincaid and his people was how the courier was killed. When Kincaid read the coroner's description of how the body had been ripped apart and that pieces of it were missing, he really started to worry about what they were dealing with. Then came Joey Holbrin's death. Joey had worked for Kincaid for many years and was highly trusted. After hearing of Holbrin's death, many of Kincaid's people started leaving town.

The Deal

Since he has no idea of who or what he is up against, Kincaid is willing to deal to save his own skin. He knows that the Tiger is being kept on Stravec's estate, but not its exact location. This is because Stravec does not let anyone near his collection and has his gangsters standing guard to make sure no one tries. Because Stravec considers the collection to be a personal matter, he does not like being asked about it. Kincaid has learned over the years not to mention the subject.

Since Kincaid thinks that the characters have control of what killed Meyers and Holbrin, he wants a promise from the group that if he gives them the location of Stravec's estate, that he won't end up the same way. The gamemaster may allow the characters use their *persuasion* or *charm* skills to make sure Kincaid is telling all he knows.

Kincaid will tell the group that Stravec lives on a large private estate in the Capitol section of Seattle. There is a manor house with four smaller buildings connected to it. The house sits on about three acres of lightly forested land. Kincaid is not sure of the total number of gangsters guarding the estate, but knows there are at least six walking the

grounds at all times. The estate has an iron fence on its perimeter and a low stone wall that surrounds the buildings. There is a guard house at the main gate that is always manned.

What Kincaid will NOT say

What Kincaid neglected to tell the characters was that by tomorrow, their promise will not matter for Kincaid will be on a plane heading for Florida. He also forgot to let the group know that he has already talked with Stravec and informed him of his plan to send the group to Stravec's estate. Stravec has used this time to set up a suitable welcome.

Cut To ...

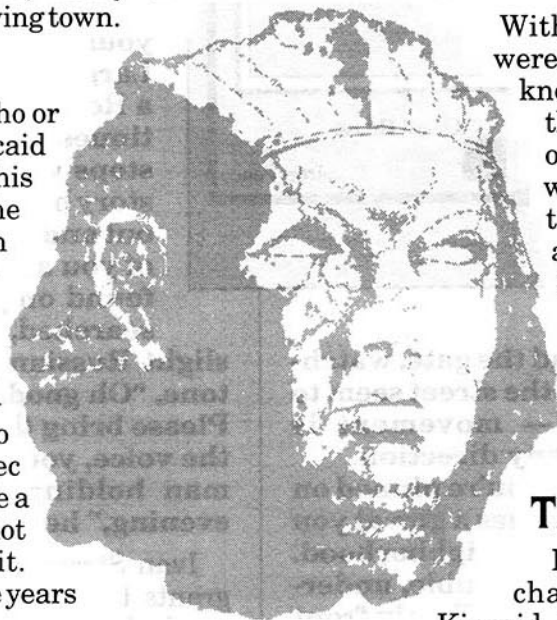
With the information they were given, the characters now know where the Tiger is, so they should go and check out Stravec's estate. If they wish, they can try to contact Takul, but will not be able to reach him. Cut to Scene Two.

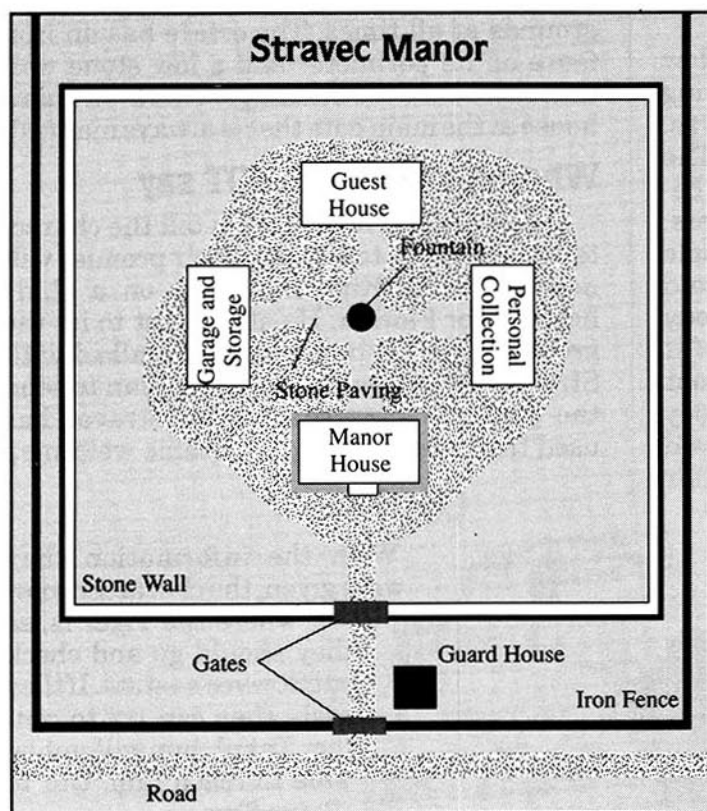
SCENE TWO: Shake, Rattle, and Roll

The Situation

Dramatic. While the characters are talking to Kincaid, Stravec has sent over ten of his men to capture the group after they leave the house. Once the characters are caught, Stravec has ordered them to be brought to his estate so he can have them interrogated. The group is escorted by the butler out the front door. On the porch are two men dressed in long overcoats who follow the group out of the yard. A *perception* total of 9 will alert the characters that there are more men standing at different locations on the street. After the characters reach the gate, read the following aloud or paraphrase:

While leaving the main gate, you notice that several people on the street are starting to move in your general direction. The two men who trailed behind





you are standing behind the gate, watching you. The people on the street seem to have you encircled — movement is blocked in just about any direction.

After a few moments, you're pinned on all sides. A man then flashes a gun at you and says, "This is a quiet neighborhood. The boss don't want any trouble, understand?" Two black sedans pull up in front of you. Two men pull the doors open, and you are motioned to get in. Getting in behind you, the main gangster says "I understand you guys want to see Mr. Stravec. Well, Mr Stravec also wants to see you, and he sent us to get ya. I guess it's your lucky day."

The characters can fight if they want to, but it will be a losing battle. Not only are there ten gangsters (again use Stein's stats), but also six policemen who are on Stravec's payroll that are ready to arrest the group should they manage to escape. If they are arrested, the group will find itself going to Stravec's manor anyway.

The Action

If the characters get in the car, they will be taken to the Capitol Hill area. This is the part of the city where the very rich and powerful people of Seattle live. The group will see very large houses and estates with well-kept yards and gardens. The drive is short and soon the car is pulling off the main road. Read the following aloud or paraphrase:

As your car approaches a large iron gate, two men appear and stand stolidly behind it. The driver signals to them and the gate opens. You drive past a wooded area then through a second smaller gate. On your left you can see the mansion. Large white marble columns give it a Roman appearance. The car continues past the manor house and stops when it reaches a small two story building. The gangsters all get out and draw their guns. Then each of you are relieved of any weapons found on you. As the last of you is searched, you hear a voice with a

slight Russian accent say in a pleased tone, "Oh good, my guests have arrived. Please bring them this way." Turning to the voice, you see a impeccably dressed man holding a walking stick. "Good evening," he says, "I am Ivan Stravec."

Ivan Stravec is the son of Russian immigrants that fled Russia after the Bolshevik revolution in 1917. He was 21 when he came with his parents to Seattle. Having once been a powerful landholding family under the Czars, Stravec's family was a prime target for the new Communist regime. The family had all their land, money, and valuables taken from them. What they had left after this loss was used for bribes to get out of the new Soviet Union.

All of this had a profound effect on Ivan. Seeing his family nearly destroyed and having to live in poverty for several years has made him very cynical about government and poor people. He fanatically hates communists and has a strong dislike for government in general. This is the main reason Stravec

started bootlegging during the Prohibition and got into other illegal activities after Prohibition ended. Seeing a strong reminder of how the Communists came to power in Russia, Stravec has helped many U.S. companies stop their workers from forming unions.

Ivan Stravec

AGILITY 9

Dodge 10, melee combat 10 (sword 12), unarmed combat 10

DEXTERITY 8

Fire combat 9

ENDURANCE 9

STRENGTH 8

TOUGHNESS 10

INTELLECT 11

Deduction 12, linguistics 12, perception 13

MIND 11

Business 13, languages: Arabic 12, languages: French 12, languages: German 12

CONFIDENCE 10

Bribery 13, interrogation 11, intimidation 15, willpower 12

CHARISMA 9

Etiquette 11, persuasion 13

Life Points: 6

Equipment: Stravec does not usually carry a gun because he prefers to use his walking stick which is actually a cane sword, damage value STR+7/22. He will wear a hard leather vest TOU+4/19 if he thinks he is going into a dangerous situation.

Description: Stravec is owner of one of the largest importing companies in Seattle and is considered a very powerful man in the city's business circles. Before his family's misfortune, Ivan was educated at some of the best private schools in Europe and lived a privileged life. He is known for having excellent taste and always being a perfect gentlemen. Stravec is heavy-handed with his employees and associates, constantly demanding more from them and not accepting excuses. His interest in ancient artifacts started about five years ago when he purchased the Scarab of Amar from a trading house in London.

Because of his familiarity with Egyptian mythology, Stravec knows that the characters had nothing to do with the murders. However, he does want to find out what they know. So the group is being taken to have a

private chat with Stravec and some of his men. Read the following aloud or paraphrase:

You are led into a large room that has several wooden chairs in the center of it. After being ordered to sit down, Stravec enters accompanied by six armed gangsters. Looking around, you see the room is quite spartan. Except for the chairs, there is only a bookcase and small table. A pair of bay windows look out on the grounds of the estate. Above, you notice there is a large sky light.

"So," says Stravec smugly as he walks toward you, "you're the group who decided to get involved in my affairs. I must admit, you did a good job of scaring Kincaid, but I am not so easily fooled. I know you didn't have anything to do with the murders of my employees. We are having this conversation so that before you take a little trip, you will tell me what you really do know. Now who shall we pick ..."

There is a loud crash from above! Looking up you see a large black panther leaping through the broken skylight. Another crash follows as a tiger and cheetah smash through one of the bay windows! Behind them you can see Takul. Dodging out of the way, Stravec yells to the gangsters, "Deal with this!!"

Remember that the characters have no weapons at this point, so using their *unarmed combat* skill is the best way they have to defeat the gangsters. Use Stein's statistics for the six gangsters. All of the gangsters are armed with .38s (damage value 17). For balance, the gamemaster might give characters a gun if one of the gangsters gets knocked down. Another possibility is to have Takul enter the fight. If the group is doing too well, three additional gangsters who were guarding outside can come in to help. Otherwise, Takul and the cats have already taken care of them. Any combat between the cats and the gangsters can be resolved separately — use the panthers' statistics for all the felines. During the fight, Stravec will manage to leave the room. Any character who is not fighting would need to generate a *perception* total of 15 to see where he went. A successful attempt reveals that Stravec was standing near the

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bookcase before he left. When the combat is finished, the characters can make a second *perception* check. A total of 10 will show that there is a faint scent of incense near the bookcase. If the characters notice the incense and investigate it, then read the following aloud or paraphrase:

You're sore and aching all over, but you've managed to defeat the thugs. After taking a minute to check each other out and deal with any serious wounds, you start looking around to see where Stravec went. Searching around the room quickly narrows down the possibilities until all that is left is the bookcase. Looking it over carefully, you see that it is an ornate five shelf unit made out of teak that doesn't appear to be attached to the wall. While looking closely, you can smell the faint scent of incense and feel a cool draft coming from the back of the bookcase. Searching the bookcase reveals a small lever located under the third shelf. Pulling the lever, you hear a light click, and the bookcase swings open like a door!

Opening the bookcase causes the scent of the incense to get much stronger. Before you is a narrow passage way lit by torches.

This is the secret entrance to where Stravec keeps his collection. Revealing it is part of a desperate plan Stravec has made to try and kill both the characters and the cultists. Like the ancient tombs of Egypt, the room can bury itself. Knowing that his artifacts will be protected, Stravec is on the second floor of the building, waiting for the group to get inside the chamber. He has also not yet called for any gangsters from the mansion since he feels that he has the situation under control. If the characters wish to go down the passage, then read aloud or paraphrase the following:

Slowly you make your way down the passageway. It is wide enough for only one person at a time. As you advance, you can see light coming from ahead of you. Nothing happens as you make it to the lighted entrance. Looking in, you can see what appears to be a pharaoh's burial chamber. The chamber is quite detailed. There is even a copy of the text and pictures of the Egyptian *Book of the*

Dead on the walls. There is a single walkway lined with four columns on each side. At the end of the walkway is a stone dais. Takul, who has been following behind you, says something in Egyptian and spits on the ground.

As you make your way into the room, you can see display cases both on the dais and behind the columns. Each case seems to hold a rare artifact. The case that draws you most, however, sits on the dais at the far end of the room. Inside a thick glass case, resting on a red silk pillow, is the Lattice Tiger. As you try to open the case, you hear a faint crackle from a loud speaker above you. Then a voice booms out, "Welcome, guests. I'm glad to see you found my collection! It's too bad that you won't be alive to tell anyone how extraordinary it is. Like the real tombs of the pharaohs, this room can bury itself."

As Stravec says this, you feel the floor beneath you start to shake. Above, you can hear explosions in the ceiling. The columns begin swaying and you see a large stone slab slowly sealing the doorway!

The characters and Takul must make Agility totals of 10 to stay on their feet. Anyone who fails will fall and must spend the round getting back up. The case with the Tiger cannot be lifted — the character trying to get the sistrum, can either try to pick the lock of the case (which will require a skill total of 13), or simply break it. The case is made of thick glass (TOU 8), so it could be broken, but a bad failure (missing it by five or more) could damage the Tiger. The slab is made of granite and will completely seal the entrance in eight rounds. Sticking pieces of rock or parts of one of the fallen pillars will stop the slab, but only for two rounds at best. This is because the pillars are made from lime stone and are not as strong as the slab. The gamemaster should feel free to adjust the situation as needed to give the characters a fair chance of success. After the group has gotten the Tiger and if they have managed to jam something under the descending slab, read the following aloud or paraphrase:

After getting the Tiger, you start trying to make your way out of the chamber. The problem is that there is only a small crawl space that each of you will have to wiggle through one at a time to get out. The rock that you placed to prop up the slab does hold, and you all make it through safely. The passageway is also filling up, but not as quickly. There is, however, thick black smoke coming in from the other side.

By the time you've made it up the passage, your eyes are burning and you're having difficulty breathing. Once at the doorway, you can see that the whole room is on fire. Making a mad dash through the broken window, you get out of the house with only minor cuts and burns.

Taking deep breaths of the cool air, you turn and see the entire building is engulfed in flames.

Aftermath

Because of the fire and the confusion it causes, the characters will be able to get off Stravec's estate without any problems. Once the group gets back to the hotel, Takul and Rathanan will pay them a visit. Takul will explain that after the characters went to Kincaid's house, Rathanan sensed that the group was in danger. So she sent Takul and the cats to help them. If asked how she knew where they were, Takul will only smile.

If the characters live up to their agreement, Takul will thank them for their help and give the name and number of the Egyptian official who is paying the reward. Also, he will provide a full report of the group's efforts in helping recover the Tiger to the official.

If the characters try to keep the Tiger (which is worth several thousand dollars), Takul will take it as a personal insult. Then, with the cats' help, he will vow to hunt down and kill every character who broke their promise. Needless to say, keeping the sistrum is not a good idea.

Should the group fail to get to Stravec, then the Sekhmet cultists will eventually deal with him themselves. This will mean that several additional members of Stravec's organization

will also be killed. Seattle's newspapers will be filled with reports of a man-eating feline stalking the streets of the city.

As for Stravec, no one seems to know or is willing to talk about what happened to him. It will be reported that the fire was started by a short in the building's electric wiring. Since the fire, Stravec has not been seen publicly in Seattle. But no newspaper has reported his death.

Awards

If the characters escape from the Egyptian trap, then they should receive one Life Point each. If they escape with the Lattice Tiger intact, then they should each receive one more Life Point. Should the Lattice Tiger be

returned to Takul, then they will receive the additional reward of \$2,000 from the Egyptian official that Takul mentions and two Life Points each.

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Faulkner, R. *The Egyptian Book of The Dead*, San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 1994.

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Chapter Five

The Crystal Skull

Listen, my son, and learn well: before the days of the Europeans who stole from us and raped our daughters, there were others. We toiled for them, we bled for for them, and they lived off the results of our sweat and tears. But these were no invaders or foreign colonials; these were our own people. When we were not their slaves, we were their warriors; when we did not die under their lash, we died under their enemies' spears.

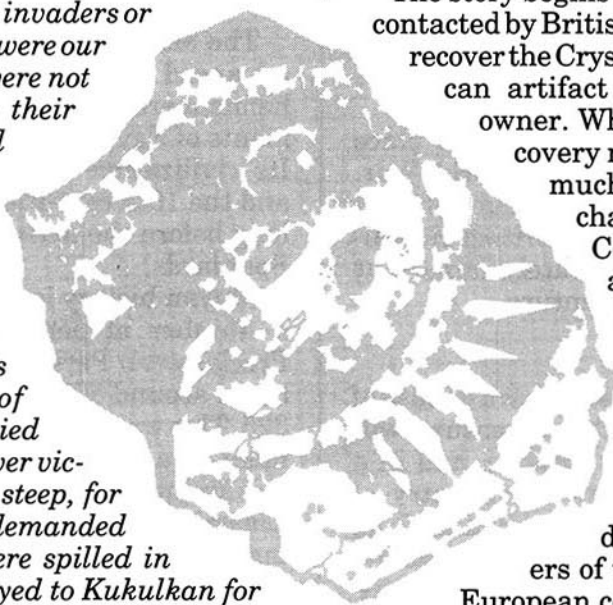
Theirs was the power of the Skull of Ah Puch, the dark Lord of Death. Our rulers courted the House of Skulls, for he who curried their dark favors was ever victorious. The price was steep, for the Skull of Ah Puch demanded blood; torrents of it were spilled in his dark name. We prayed to Kukulcan for deliverance, and it came, in the House of the Serpent, which delivered us from the dark Skull. For many years, the Skull was missing, and now it has been found. How much longer before the House of Skulls is reborn? How soon before we throw off the colonials only for our

own native tyranny? How soon before the bloodshed of the past becomes part of the present?

The Situation

The story begins with the characters being contacted by British authorities to help them recover the Crystal Skull, a Central American artifact stolen from its current owner. What begins as a simple recovery mission will turn out to be much more complex, as the characters are dragged into Central American politics and ancient Mesoamerican mythology. Ultimately, the party becomes involved in the struggle of two rival cults for the control of the Crystal Skull. One cult, the House of Skulls, wants to draw upon the dark powers of the Skull to drive out the European colonials and set up a new Mesoamerican empire. The other cult, the House of the Serpent, is opposed to the evils of the Skull, and wants to get rid of it.

Characters with an interest in or some knowledge of Mesoamerican archaeology or anthropology may be helpful, but such knowl-



This Adventure

This is a one-act, ten scene adventure. It is meant for players who are interested in roleplaying and finding out more about Mayan culture and history — players and characters who are interested in action scene after action scene may find themselves a little bored with the beginning of the adventure.

Also, since this is a *ten scene* act, characters will want to conserve their Life Points. The end of the adventure is very dramatic and dangerous, and if the characters waste their Life Points fighting “small fry” in the beginning, they’ll be in trouble at the end.

Of course, since there are so many investigative scenes, the characters will be allowed to exchange cards several times — nine times, in fact — before the end of the adventure. They should all be able to come up with some nasty combinations by the end.

edge is not required; a gamemaster character will be introduced into the adventure who can provide any necessary information.

Timeframe

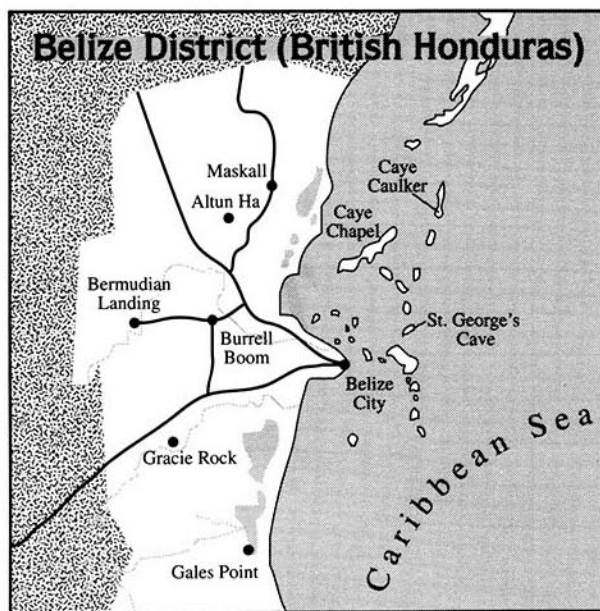
This adventure is designed to take place any time prior to the Second World War. Ideally, the adventure should occur between February and April, which is British Honduras’ dry season — a moderately important feature later on in the adventure.

Settings

The player characters’ hometown or base of operation is irrelevant; the adventure will take place in Mexico City, Mexico, and in a number of locations across the country of British Honduras (now known as Belize), from its capital city to smaller villages to undiscovered Mayan sites in British Honduras’ rainforests. It can conclude with the characters returning home or going to England.

Background Information

In this adventure, most of the information appearing in the sidebars is intended for the



characters. This information, identified as either “Lecture Notes” or “Travellers’ Almanac,” can be read aloud, copied, paraphrased, or disseminated however the gamemaster feels fit. West End gives you permission to photocopy this material for personal use only.

Who were the Maya?

The Mayan can be easily labelled the most advanced native civilization of the Western hemisphere, easily rivalling the accomplishments of Egypt and the ancient Middle East. Its civilization flourished between the 4th and the 16th centuries, reaching its pinnacle long before the arrival of Columbus and the Spaniards.

Mayan history is traditionally broken into a number of periods. The Formative (or Preclassical) Period is usually considered to begin around 500 B.C., continuing until A.D. 325. This was the period that saw the development of a unique Mayan culture. However, this unique culture found its fruition in the Classic Period, which lasted until approximately A.D. 925. This period saw the growth of Mayan cities and ritual centers; over 40 cities are believed to have been built, each with a population between 5,000 and 50,000 people. Principal cities include Tikal, Copán and Palenque, among others. These cities provided a wealth of elaborate sculpture and relief carving (particularly on *stela*, or in-

scribed monumental columns), as well as advanced architectural techniques evidenced in the great relief-covered stone plazas, palaces, and pyramids that dotted the countryside.

In addition, Mayan civilization developed a comprehensive hieroglyphic writing system, with anywhere from 500 to 800 characters, as well as one of the most advanced astronomical and mathematical systems, including the use of the zero and a correction for the Leap Year — both intellectual pinnacles of achievement. Mayan population at its peak is suspected to have reached 2,000,000 people, most of whom were settled in the Guatemalan lowlands. The Post-Classic period (A.D. 925–1519) saw the decline of the Mayan civilization, with the eventual abandonment of the many cities and ritual centers. The actual reason for this abandonment has yet to be determined, but possible explanations offered include warfare, disease, and revolt by the disenfranchised lower class. While some cities (e.g., Chichén Itzá in the Yucatan highlands) flourished for a while yet, by the time the Spaniards arrived in the 16th century, the Maya were little more than village dwellers.

The bulk of the Mayan accomplishment is discernible in the remains of the Mayan cities and architecture. Because of the climate of Central America, cloth or other organic materials do not have a long lifespan; only stone and other durable materials were able to withstand the environmental stress, and it is from these details that archeologists began to piece together the fragments of Mayan civilization. Archeologists, scientists and explorers have long been interested in the origins and the fate of the Maya, and systematic investigation of the cities began in the early

19th century. However, many advances were made after World War Two, which began to substantially alter the scholarly understanding of what the Mayan civilization had been.

Two Views

There are two classical understandings of Mayan civilization; the first had slowly developed since the dawn of Mayan archaeology and would be current during the time of this game, while the latter view has only recently come to light.

Traditional

Scholars of the 1930s believed that the Mayan society was composed of a stargazing priesthood and a faithful peasantry. The “cities” were little more than ceremonial centers, domiciling only the rulers and priests. Because the peasants practiced a slash-and-burn agriculture, they had to remain mobile, coming to the cities only for religious worship and ritual and to supply the priests with food and labor. As a whole, the Mayan people were viewed as unique among the Mesoamericans, gentle pacifists living in harmony within the rainforest.

Revised

A new paradigm of Mayan life is currently being constructed, as more and more hieroglyphs are being translated and as archeological excavation of the many city-sites is underway. The city of Tikal, for example, has evidence of a complex network of canals and raised fields, as well as various fortifications. The city is believed to have been home to as many as 10,000 residents (with another 40,000 in the “suburbs”), been supported by a complex agricultural system that was not created by casual slash-and-burn, and to have



Lecture Notes: Indy on the Maya

I personally do not believe that the relationship between rich and poor in Mayan civilization was as kind and gentle as current scholarship has it. I do not have any archaeological proof for this, but take a look at history: When, in the course of history, has such a dichotomy ever been successfully maintained? The rich lorded over the poor, and if the poor were happy, it was because they were told to be. I think that once the Mayan hieroglyph code is cracked, we'll start to see a whole new picture of Mayan civilization.

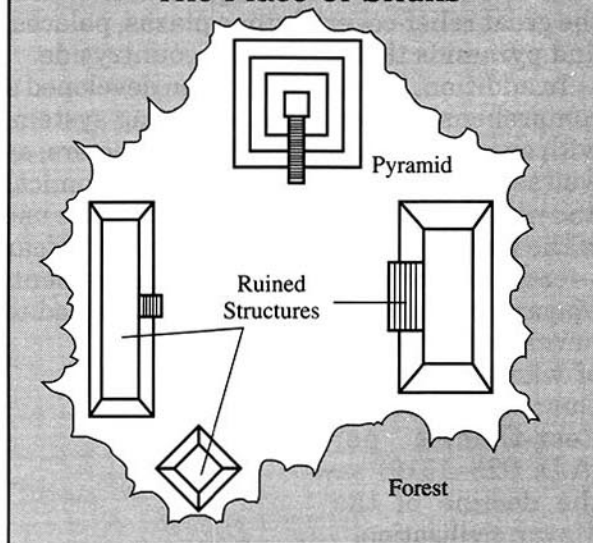
actually been in a state of warfare: the evidence from this one city thus contradicts three "established" tenets of Mayan anthropology. Furthermore, the dichotomy between rich and poor was hardly peaceful; sacred areas were accessible only by the affluent, the rich lived in urban estates, and the poor rarely got to enjoy the fruits of their labor. The Mayan civilization is now believed to have been decimated by constant warfare — with prisoners tortured and slated for sacrifice — in addition to peasant revolt and a host of other environmental problems.

Hidden History: The Crystal Skull

The following information should not be known by any of the characters. If a player character is a Mestizo from British Honduras or Guatemala, then he might know some of the information at the gamemaster's discretion.

The Crystal Skull antedates the Maya, the Olmecs, and the other civilizations that developed in Central America. It may have been Atlantean, but no evidence or lore supports this conjecture; in fact, the artifact may even predate Atlantean or other antediluvian civilizations. Its origins and history prior to the Maya is not relevant to this adventure, and such information is left up to the gamemaster to solve if he so desires.

The Place of Skulls



The House of Skulls

Around A.D. 700 — approximately four centuries into the Classic period — a religious priesthood/cult emerged, called the the House of Skulls. This cult bore the Crystal Skull, claiming that it was none other than the Skull of Ah Puch, the "Lord of Death" (typically depicted with a fleshless nose and lower jaw, and an exposed spine), the god of sacrifice, and the House of Skulls claimed to curry the favors of the gods.

The high priest of this cult, the Father of Skulls, claimed to be the intermediary for the gods, and promised great rewards to those who supported him and his cult. Various Mayan leaders sought the service of the House of Skulls, and those leaders that pleased the cult usually found themselves victorious in battle, no matter what the odds. Such was the power of the House of Skulls and the Crystal Skull: Victory was assured.

The House of the Serpent

The Maya have always been a religious people, and they feared the dark specter of death that this cult worshipped. The Maya had a pantheon of gods — many noticeably less baleful as Ah Puch — and the Maya feared that these gods would be jealous; the strife in heaven would find its way to earth as well. Even worse, devotion to the dark gods could only lead the Mayan people astray and into danger.

Lecture notes: Indy on the Crystal Skull

The "Crystal Skull," also known as the "Skull of Doom" as well as the prosaic "Mitchell-Hedges skull" is a piece of solid quartz crystal, carefully ground and polished into the size and shape of a human skull. It was found in 1927 by Frederick Mitchell-Hedges, a British explorer and archaeologist, in the ruins of the Mayan city of Lubaantún in British Honduras. Although the actual discovery was said to have been by Anna Mitchell-Hedges, his adopted daughter, Frederick is always credited with the discovery.

The Crystal Skull is alleged to have many supernatural powers. Mitchell-Hedges believed that the Crystal Skull was used by Mayan priests in their rituals, and that death was always somehow connected to the Skull. He asserted that a Mayan high priest could, by concentrating on the Skull, bring death to someone else. The Skull is also alleged to have certain divinatory powers; if someone of the appropriate psychic temperament gazed at the surface of the Skull, then visions of the past or future would appear. It is also rumoured to produce a number of inexplicable phenomena:

those in its vicinity have allegedly seen it glow brightly, or even create a sharp singing noise. Some would like to believe that the Crystal Skull is Atlantean in origin, actually predating the Maya. Remember, however, that archaeology is fact, not speculation!

Archaeologists have yet to fully agree upon what the Crystal Skull's real origins are. The skull is a common motif in Mesoamerican art, and a number of "crystal skulls" have been found, and their origins authenticated. This Crystal Skull, however, is rare in the perfection of its design; most other artifacts of a similar nature are often little more than stylized skulls, while this one is a perfect replica of a human skull, complete with a hinged movable lower jaw.

Mitchell-Hedges has kept the Crystal Skull among his belongings. Although he has not released it to a museum — where I personally believe it belongs — he has been willing to let authorities examine it whenever possible, particularly if he thinks that such actions will help validate his claim. Why the Mexican government has not attempted to claim it as a national treasure is beyond me.

A small secret society was formed in response to the threat of the House of Skulls; it called itself the House of the Serpent, in honor of Kukulkán — the great serpent deity, the civilizing god of the Mesoamerican peoples — and was dedicated to undoing the ways of the House of Skulls. Almost always it turned out that the members or advocates of the House of Skulls were the aristocracy, and their opponents were the peasantry.

For over a century, the two Houses warred. The House of the Serpent lacked any authority, but it knew the ways of the forests, and its raids were typically those of guerilla warriors. The House of Skulls was in league with the nobility and was typically well-protected and bore the mantle of authority. Sometimes the House of the Serpent was able to disrupt a sacrifice; other times, its raids were failures, and many warriors for Kukulkán found themselves slated to be the next sacrifice.

Finally, the two Houses clashed in a temple in Lubaantún, a Mayan city in British Honduras. With warriors from both Houses dead, the Father of Skulls vied with the Father of the Serpent, two shamans locked in a battle neither wholly physical nor wholly mental — the conflict was said to bring down the very foundations of the temple structure around the two shamans. The details of the conflict were not known, but it had been assumed that the House of Skulls was destroyed here, with the death of the last known Father of Skulls. The Crystal Skull disappeared some time around the 9th century — ironically, right around the same time that the city of Lubaantún was abandoned, for reasons unknown.

Unfortunately, the Skull was not destroyed, nor was the House of Skulls disbanded. The Skull merely disappeared until the British archaeologist Mitchell-Hedges came along. The

INDIANA JONES™ and the Golden Vampires



Paul Daly

House of Skulls had not died, either; while time had certainly taken its toll on it, the secrets of the Skull were passed down through the generations of a few select families. For many generations, the "House of Skulls" and the "Father of Skulls" were figures of Mayan folklore, used like the bogeyman to scare naughty children.

Likewise, the House of the Serpent faded into obscurity. It had thought itself victorious, so many of its members returned to normal lives. Some among them feared that the Skull might return, though, and they prepared for this eventuality; the House of the Serpent continued, its secrets also passed down through the generations to a few select families.

The Powers of the Skull

There was no scientific qualification or quantification of what the Crystal Skull could do; the Mayans spoke of its powers in hushed whispers, but left nothing written. Its powers have always been mentioned in innuendo, passed on through oral tradition. Only the Father of Skulls is said to know the full

spectrum of powers possessed by the Skull.

Its powers of divination and remote slaying, as well as the bizarre phenomena attributed to it, are attested to in its oral history. With each power of the Skull, however, a sacrifice of blood was required. Some sacrifices were smaller than others, to be sure, but a ritual of blood was required. At the very least, these two abilities required some ritual bloodletting on the part of the individual using the Skull.

The most important ability of the Skull, however, and the one which certainly concerned the House of Skulls the most, was its talismanic function — whichever ruler was courting the House of Skulls usually ended up victorious in battle. Even when fighting against seemingly impossible odds, victory was assured. Unfortunately, the Skull had to be appeased by human sacrifice, and the Skull was a demanding god: sometimes mass sacrifices were called for the Father of Skulls. Such sacrifices could come from victims and captives of warfare, while other times the rulers simply chose their own people as suitable victims.

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Ultimately, it seemed, wherever the Skull went, destruction and warfare would follow. The Mayans that lived under the colonial yoke would easily attest to this fact. Even when the Skull was not used for its ritual purposes, many feared that the mere presence of the Skull was enough to draw down bloodshed and sorrow.

One final rumor is known: the Crystal Skull could not be destroyed or disposed of; a terrible fate was in store for anyone who attempted to do away with the Skull.

The Crystal Skull's abilities, appropriate to its nature as an artifact, should defy pure quantification. Gamemasters should rely upon their judgement and storytelling abilities whenever any of the uses of the Skull are called for.

SCENE ONE: A Call For Help

The Situation

Standard. This adventure begins with the characters being contacted via telephone by British authorities (chief among them Inspector Clyde Davies), regarding a theft from Farley Castle, the residence of F.A. Mitchell-Hedges. Built in the 17th century by Simon the Red, "King of the Gypsies," Farley Castle housed thousands of archaeological treasures, chief among them the Crystal Skull — the very item which was stolen.

Any number of reasons can be developed for the authorities contacting the characters. If any of them were colleagues or students of Professor Indiana Jones, then Indy could have recommended the characters' names to the authorities; likewise if they simply have developed some reputation as trouble-shooters, bounty-hunters, scholars on Mesoamerican studies, etc.

According to Inspector Davies, the Skull was stolen "five days ago" (from the beginning of the adventure, whenever it will be set). The authorities had hushed up the details of the theft, working privately on it without public misinformation or gossip. They were notified by Indiana Jones that individuals in Mexico City had just recovered an item which may be the Crystal Skull. These individuals are offering to return the item for a "small fee" — a sum the authorities would rather not reveal,

but admit that it is very minor considering the potential value of the antiquity should the privateers decide to put the Skull on the market.

These individuals in Mexico City were apparently indebted to Professor Indiana Jones (for some reason they chose not to discuss), so they contacted him to let him know that they had found the Skull. Even though they were apparently "associates" of Indy (at one point), they are still privateers, and are not fully trustworthy. Indy was busy working on another assignment, so he turned the matter over to the authorities (possibly with a recommendation that the characters be contacted). Although Indy would certainly rather see the Crystal Skull in a museum, he recognized that at least the scholarly community would have access to it if it were in Mitchell-Hedges possession rather than that of a wealthy Mesoamerican crimelord or corrupt politician who might lock the Skull away forever.

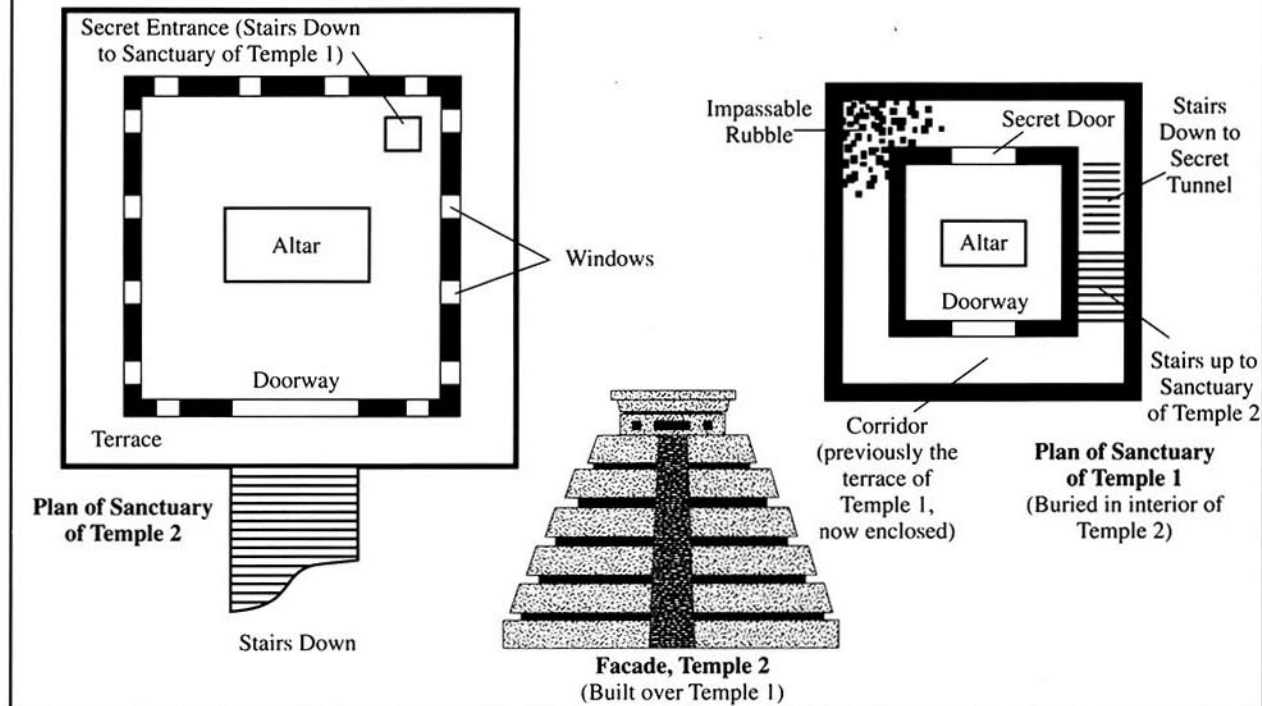
The characters are asked if they will meet with Professor Rosemary Clarke (an American residing in British Honduras) in Mexico City to validate the find and to escort the item back to England. Prof. Clarke is needed for her archaeological expertise, and the characters are called upon for their apparent trustworthiness. Once in Mexico City, the characters will be contacted by the individuals who have the Skull.

The gamemaster will have to construct appropriate incentive for the characters — either they owe Indy a favor, or they might be willing to jump at the chance to prove themselves to him, or they might even require a little financial incentive (this should certainly be the last option for a group of noble-spirited adventurers!) The authorities are willing to fund all transportation costs and reasonable outfitting for the party.

Who Stole the Skull?

The Crystal Skull was stolen by nothing more than a common group of simple art thieves. This group became aware of the Skull's potential value in the right market — namely, in Mexico City — as well as of the lax security currently surrounding the Skull. They arranged to steal the Skull and were already on the flight from London to Mexico City before

Temple of The Place of Skulls



Mitchell-Hedges could even become aware of the theft.

This group will play only a small part in the upcoming adventure. Essentially, they only serve the purpose of getting the Skull away from England where it can be stolen by a group with far more nefarious purposes; they also provide a brief moment of adventure for the characters to keep them from getting bored. If the gamemaster desires to modify the group so that it is a set of rivals of the characters, or a recurring group of antiquities thieves, then this will help further integrate the adventure into an ongoing campaign. Otherwise, the group is relatively unimportant.

Of course, the party will probably think that this group of art thieves will be a major threat throughout the adventure. Let them think this — it will just confuse them!

The Action

This scene is purely an introductory one. If the characters wish to use their time in London to talk to Mitchell-Hedges or to visit the library and learn more about the Crystal Skull, they can. Otherwise, the scene ends

fairly quickly as the adventurers board a plane to Mexico City.

Cut To ...

The trip to Mexico City is uneventful and quick. The adventurers arrive in Scene Two.

SCENE TWO: Mexico City

The Situation

Standard. The majority of the action in Mexico City is nothing more than a red herring. It sets the scene for the introduction of a major gamemaster character, briefly gets the Crystal Skull into the hands of the characters, allows them some action early into the game, and then ultimately leads to the actual adventure.

Travel Times

The following times represent travel by air from a number of locations, with Mexico City as the destination; travel times are approximate. These figures are calculated according to a twin-propellor airplane travelling at 145 kph.

Traveller's Almanac: Mexico City

History: Mexico City, or *Ciudad de México*, the capital of Mexico, was founded by Spaniards in 1521 on the remains of the Aztec capital of Tenochtitlán. Legend tells of an eagle eating a snake and landing on a cactus — *tenuch* in Aztec — on an island near the southwest shore of Lake Texcoco. This act fulfilled an Aztec prophecy which marked the site for the new city. Regardless, the Aztecs began developing Tenochtitlán in 1325. Another Indian group began Tlaltelolco, another city on a nearby island, in 1327. By the Spaniards' arrival in 1519, Tenochtitlán had already forcibly absorbed Tlaltelolco and filled in the lagoon between the two sites. Under the Aztecs, the new city had grown to approximately 300,000 people, and was the religious and civic center of the Anáhuac confederation. When the conquistador Hernán Cortés and his associates arrived on November 8, 1519, their arrival was welcomed and rewarded by their host, Montezuma II. Montezuma was ultimately imprisoned and killed, and the Aztec capital was taken on August 13, 1521. The city was razed and construction was begun on what was to be the capital of New Spain.

The city was Spanish for three centuries until Mexico gained independence in 1821. It was occupied by U.S. forces briefly during the Mexican War. By 1920, the capital of Mexico has 620,000 residents and was a modern city with an improved street system and public utilities.

Geography: The city sits in the Valley of Mexico, at an elevation of 7,349 feet (2,240 meters). The depression is surrounded by the peaks of the Sierra Nevada mountains. Because it is located on the former bed of a lake as well as a major fault-zone, the city is prone to flooding, settling, tremors, and the occasional violent earthquake. The climate is mild except for a few days in mid-winter.

Places of Note: Mexico City's gridiron layout of streets, plazas, and square city-blocks is a remnant of the original Aztec capital as well as the pattern of Spanish town foundations in the Caribbean.

The *Zócalo*, or the Templo Mayor — originally a major Aztec governmental and ritual center — is the large square which is the heart of the city. It is the site of many festive civic and cultural events. On its north side is the Metropolitan Cathedral, constructed partly of stone from Aztec temples. Begun in 1573, it was finally completed in 1791. On the *Zócalo*'s east side is the Palacio Nacional (National Palace), occupying the site of what was originally the palace of Montezuma. The Municipal Palace, on the *Zócalo*'s south side, is City Hall; further south is the City Museum, documenting the city's history. Finally, the western side of the *Zócalo* is lined with arcaded shops and the *Monte de Piedad* (National Pawnshop), which was established in the 18th century, with weekly auctions at government-controlled prices.

Several blocks north of the *Zócalo*, are the Plaza and Church of Santo Domingo, once the headquarters of the Order of Preachers (commonly known as the Dominican Order), and the nearby former Palace of the Inquisition. West of the *Zócalo*, along Avenida Madero — originally a roadway in Tenochtitlán — are a number of colonial structures. Also near this thoroughfare are the *Palacio de Bellas Artes* (Palace of the Fine Arts), a large Art Deco museum, theatre, and restaurant. Bellas Artes is located on the Alameda, a downtown park that used to be an Aztec market and then the site of burnings during the Inquisition.

Finally, beyond the Alameda, is the Paseo de la Reforma, a 19th century boulevard fashioned after the Champs-Élysées of Paris. The Paseo acts as boundary for the *Zona Rosa* (Pink Zone), a haven for tourists, with shops, restaurants, and hotels.

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Golden Vampires

Travel Time Chart

London: travel to New York first: 5,572 km/38.5 hours; then from New York to Mexico City

New York: 3,364 km/23.25 hours

Chicago: 2,276 km/18.75 hours

San Francisco: 3,036 km/21 hours

Travel from any other European city is probably best handled by travelling to London first; travel from any Asian city is best handled by travelling to San Francisco. Other travel times are listed in the *World of Indiana Jones*, pages 26–27 (the source of the above information).

(These alternate departure points are listed in case the gamemaster has no way to get the adventurers to London prior to the beginning of the adventure.)

The adventurers will either be wired money from the British authorities, or travel arrangements will be handled through the nearest consulate or embassy. The gamemaster should choose whichever set-up is more convenient; make it easy, since getting to Mexico City should be a given, and not a source of conflict.

Mexico City has a thriving Mesoamerican antiquities black market, and the British authorities are concerned that the Crystal Skull, if left too long in Mexico City, will inevitably attract the attention of particularly unscrupulous and wealthy Mesosamericans. Unfortunately, Mexican authorities are also rather sensitive to archaeological issues — particularly concerning returning a Mesoamerican antiquity to a European country instead of allowing it to stay in Central America — and they are best not approached unless absolutely necessary.

When the player characters' plane lands in Mexico City, they will be met by Prof. Rosemary Clarke, who will be waiting for them at the airport.

Rosemary Clarke

AGILITY 9

Beast riding: horse 10, climbing 12, dodge 10, melee combat 12, swimming 10

DEXTERITY 9



Paul Daly

Special Note: Rosemary Clarke

Professor Clarke has been written up as a player character, even though she is a gamemaster character, for a reason. If the gamemaster wishes, he can let a player in on much of the adventure and the history of the Skull and have that player play Professor Clarke. The player will have to be careful not to reveal too much of the information he or she knows, however (so as not to spoil the adventure), and, occasionally, the gamemaster will take complete control of Professor Clarke for reasons that become clear later on. Of course, Professor Clarke can be run as a normal gamemaster character just as easily.

Fire combat 9 (pistol 12)

ENDURANCE 9

STRENGTH 7

TOUGHNESS 10

INTELLECT 9

First aid 12

MIND 11

Language: Spanish 14, language: Mayan 12, research 12, scholar: archaeology 15 (Mayan 17), scholar: Mesoamerican culture 13, scholar: history 13 (Mesoamerican 16)

CONFIDENCE 8

Willpower 10

CHARISMA 8

Persuasion 10

Life Points: 4

BACKGROUND

Advantages: Contacts (CI): Rosemary has a number of friends in the British Honduras government; Wealth (CI): Rosemary's father is from a well-to-do Chicago lawfirm; Skill Bonus (CI): +1 on Mayan studies (*language, Mesoamerican history, and Mayan archaeology*); Cultures (CII): Rosemary has a keen knowledge of, and good friendship with, the indigenous Maya of Guatemala and British Honduras; Luck (CII); Animal friendship (CIII): Rosemary has always had a way with animals, particularly cats.

Compensations: Employed (CI): Although

not a British citizen, she is currently employed by the British Honduras Department of Antiquities; Prejudice (CI): Rosemary is a woman in a man's field, and is sometimes looked down on by colleagues; Quirk (CI): Rosemary is very outspoken, even when it is not the best course of action; Advantage Flaw (CII); Rosemary does not always have a Mestizo's trust — she is one of the colonials, after all; Sense of Duty (CII): Rosemary feels strongly that British Honduras (and the rest of Mesoamerica) should be freed from its colonial bonds; Burn-Out (CIII): Rosemary's father thinks that her profession is a waste of time and she should be looking for a husband. The more popular or important she becomes, the more irritated he becomes, and is likely to disinherit her.

Equipment: Binoculars; notepad and pen; Webley Mark 6, damage value 19, ammo 6, range 3-10/25/50/150

Description: Rosemary Clarke is a professor of archaeology and anthropology. Educated at Chicago and Oxford, she is an expert in Mayan history and archaeology. She is assisting the ministry of antiquities in British Honduras, while undertaking private research on the folklore of the contemporary Maya of Belize and Guatemala. Rosemary is liked by the Maya she is researching, and has a close rapport with them in spite of her governmental association.

Rosemary is an attractive woman in her early thirties, with shoulder-length brunette hair (that turns to blonde frequently under the sun). Although she is very serious and dedicated, she knows how to have fun as well.

Professor Clarke has been in Mexico City for two days already, and has already arranged rooms for the entire party at Casa Zamora, a small but elegantly-appointed hotel in the Zona Rosa, courtesy of Mr. Mitchell-Hedges. Prof. Clarke is familiar with Mexico City, and offers to be their guide as necessary.

Professor Clarke is being followed by Mayan cultists from British Honduras, who are aware of her mission and are just as interested in recovering the Skull. Although Professor Clarke and the characters are to return the Skull to England, the cultists (who are from the reborn House of Skulls) intend to return the Skull to their cult. The House of Skulls

Traveller's Almanac: The University of Mexico

Located in the southern part of Mexico City, the National Autonomous University of Mexico — or *Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México* — has faculties and research centers and institutes in a variety of fields in the arts and sciences.

The University was founded in 1551 as the Royal and Pontifical University, opening for classes in 1553. Its prominence grew quickly, granting almost 30,000 baccalaureate degrees during the colonial period. At first controlled by the Roman Catholic Church, the university was closed by the government 1867. It reopened in 1910, and was finally granted autonomy in 1929.

has nothing to do with the original theft of the Skull; however, their leader, the Father of Skulls, has become aware of the Skull's theft and its presence in Mexico, so he is taking advantage of this opportunity to recover the Skull.

Travellers Abroad

Casa Zamora is a quaint hotel with a small cafe on the premises; its clientele is typically upper-class Europeans. The four-story building is U-shaped, with rooms overlooking a small flowered courtyard in the back. Rooms are available in suites, consisting of a central sitting room, an adjoining bathroom, and a bedroom with two small but comfortable beds. Obviously, more than one suite may be necessary depending upon the party's size. The characters' rooms will overlook the courtyard; although the rooms are small, they are comfortable, with rich furnishings and an attention to comfortable detail.

Allow the characters a few days of exploring the cantinas, bars, and museums of Mexico City. A travel guide of Mexico City might liven up descriptions; just make sure the characters don't get bored with trivial detail. Give the characters free rein to examine the city. Some characters, particularly those that enjoy research and investigation, may wish to interview individuals prominent in the Cen-



tral American antiquities scene. Such individuals can be contacted through any number of antiquarian shops, books shops, museums, or the University of Mexico.

Perceptive characters may eventually note a few suspicious individuals, and possibly that they are being followed. Appropriate *anthropology* rolls might allow them to determine a Maya heritage, but nothing more can be deduced about the individuals.

After a few days of touristy and getting to know Professor Clarke, the characters will find a note waiting for them at their hotel, indicating that the individuals with the Crystal Skull are ready to meet them:

We have the Skull, and are ready to discuss terms. Meet us tonight at midnight, Cafe Hidalgo.

Pedro

Professor Clarke knows where the cafe is. Although it is located in the Zona Rosa, it is on a smaller sidestreet, one with considerably less traffic — particularly at night.

Cafe Hidalgo

Read or paraphrase the following:

You accompany Professor Clarke down the Avenida Insurgentes, warily eying

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the nighttime traffic which appears that much more sinister than what you see by daylight. Finally, turning off one of the sidestreets to what would normally be a quaint-looking thoroughfare by day, you see the sign for the "Cafe Hidalgo." The shades are drawn on the large glass windows, and you might even think that it is closed.

Regardless, Rosemary approaches the front door of the Cafe, past the empty sidewalk tables, and knocks on the door. A tired-looking fellow in waiter's garb opens the door, and converses briefly with Rosemary in muttered Spanish. Shooting a suspicious look to your group, he motions you inward.

The Cafe is indeed closed for regular business; the majority of its business comes during the daylight hours, and its owner — with just enough friends in the wrong places — rents out the establishment for late-night meetings. Within the Cafe, the bar is empty, and the chairs are all placed atop the small tables. At the far end of the Cafe, a number of booths in curtained alcoves afford greater privacy. Pedro, the individual meeting with the party, is in one curtained booth. Pedro peers past the curtains, and, seeing the party, motions them to join him in the small private booth.

The booth is just large enough to seat five people around an oval wooden table. A short, surly looking individual, his eyes darting nervously around at you and past you, rises briefly — as much as he can in such cramped environs. Offering his hand in greeting, he says "I am Pedro. It is a distinct pleasure to

meet colleagues of Senor Jones."

After the introductions, he reiterates that he is only acting because of a great favor owed to "Senor Jones," and he would much rather make a hefty profit from the Skull, but is willing to settle for a "handling" fee instead. He unwraps from a thick canvas bundle what could only be the Crystal Skull: even in the dim candle-light booth, the polished surface glistens eerily.

His story is simple: he represents a group of individuals who engage in black market antiquities. They came upon the Crystal Skull in the hands of another group of privateers, and "liberated" the Skull. In other words: The thieves stole it from the thieves who had stolen the Skull from England.

The characters should be given a chance to handle the Skull, along with Professor Clarke, who will verify the item. Professor Clarke will turn over a small bundle to the agent, who will hastily open it, flip through currency, and then stuff it in his jacket. He will thank the characters, and will seem to actually glad to be rid of "that thing," which gives him the creeps.

At this instant, the curtain will be swung open: standing there will be a number of unpleasant-looking gentlemen, European from their dress and appearance.

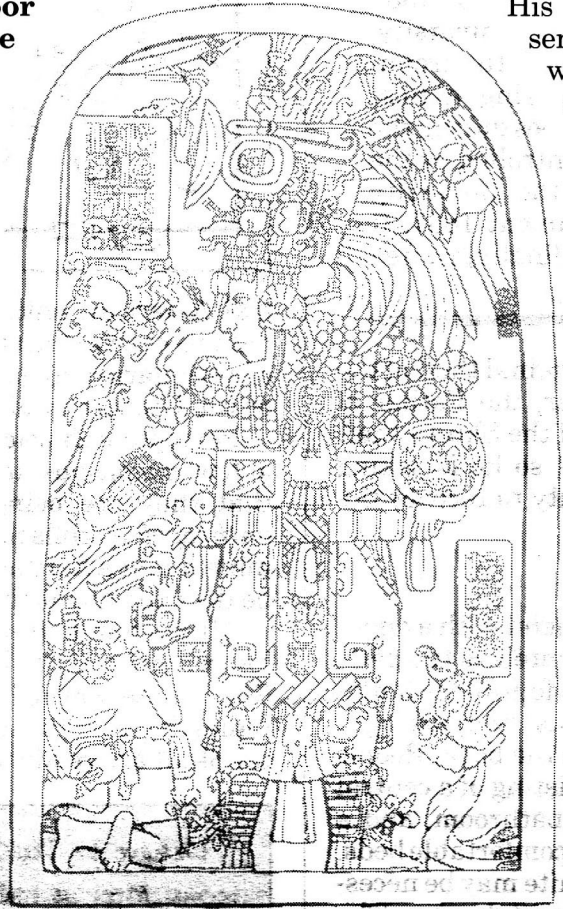
Standard Thief (One Per Adventurer)

AGILITY 9

Climbing 12, dodge 13, escape artist 11, stealth 16, unarmed combat 12, unarmed parry 11,

DEXTERITY 8

Fire combat 12, lock picking 15, prestidigitation 9 (pick pockets 12)



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Paul Daly

ENDURANCE 9

STRENGTH 9

TOUGHNESS 10

INTELLECT 7

Perception 10

MIND 8

CONFIDENCE 8

Intimidation 14, willpower 11

CHARISMA 7

Life Points: 1 each

Equipment: Smith & Wesson .38, damage value 17, ammo 6; sawed-off chair legs, damage value STR+4/17

Description: Each thief should have his own distinctive look — if the gamemaster gets time to describe them — but they are all pretty much the same: “Eurotrash” thieves. The thieves will burst in and surprise the adventurers (unless someone was standing guard), but they are not casual murderers ... they would prefer to use their superior position to *intimidate* the adventurers. Of course, Pedro won’t be so lucky ...

These are, of course, the original thieves of the Skull, who finally managed to track down Pedro and his associates. Guns drawn, they

will ask for the Skull, and usher the characters, Professor Clarke, and Pedro out the booth into the main room of the Cafe. There they will club Pedro into unconsciousness, and, announcing that “this is what happens to people who cross them,” they’ll bring the barrel of the gun to his head.

If the characters haven’t fought back yet — an admittedly unlikely course of action — Prof. Clarke will put up a struggle, draw a gun, shout a few colorful expletives and probably start a decent fight in the Cafe.

The Action

This is a good opportunity for a gunfight and chase scene in the Cafe Hidalgo — allow the tables to provide some partial cover, while stools and chairs — in addition, of course, to bottles of tequila — become decent bludgeoning weapons. Anyone hiding behind the bar will, incidentally, find the tied-up, unconscious body of the waiter that let them in. At no time should the characters actually be seriously endangered, but they should certainly feel like they are in danger; this fight scene is, after all, only a bit of a tease in the adventure.

A Grateful Pedro

If the characters save Pedro from the thieves, he will be extremely grateful. While this will not help the adventurers during this endeavor (Pedro is going to take the hint and go "underground" for a while), Pedro can be used as a contact in Mexico City or, indeed, anywhere in Central America for future adventures.

The gamemaster should try to encourage the players to keep track of favors owed and owed to them, and of people they meet. The more often gamemaster characters show up in adventures, the more "real" they are to the players. Keep track of anyone you create like Pedro, and your adventure campaign will prosper.

It should end with the characters retrieving the Skull (again), and the thieves being taken care of — either being driven off or defeated. This does not mean being murdered; they can be tied up, left unconscious, the authorities called, whatever. It is of course possible that some thieves will end up slain in the conflict.

There is one event that certainly should occur, and the gamemaster should feel compelled to maneuver things however possible so that this event takes place. Whomever ends up carrying the Skull, be it villain or hero, should get hit, stabbed, struck, shot or otherwise wounded, at least once. At the end of the conflict, describe the Skull, its surface slick with fresh blood. This bloodletting is important for the Skull's first display of power in front of the characters, which will take place later on that night.

Outside the Cafe, hidden in the shadows, will be the Maya who have been following Professor Clarke. Of course, they have trailed the party to the Cafe Hidalgo, and will suspect that the Skull has now exchanged hands with the party.

The evening should end with the characters keeping the Skull in their possession, and possibly saving Pedro's life. Professor Clarke will indicate that she will contact the British authorities in the morning to arrange imme-

diately passage to England. Although a flight out of the country would be best, no flights can be arranged that late at night. She will also advise strongly against anyone trying to drive out of the city, citing the possibility of being waylaid by standard brigands looking for some rich, stupid Americans to rob late at night.

This stage of the scene should end with the characters preparing for bed.

Variables

There are a few variables that must be discussed and considered. The primary ones are listed below:

• **The Thieves Get Away with the Skull:**

This *cannot* happen. If the adventurers do have an incredible run of bad luck, and the thieves do get away, this should lead to a running chase and the thieves either dropping the Skull or finally being defeated. At the very worst, some of Pedro's "accomplices" chip in and help the adventurers.

• **Rosemary Clarke Dies:** This is only possible if a player has assumed this character for the adventure and does something fairly stupid or very unlucky. In this case, Rosemary's intern, Jacque Martine, shows up and vows to help the characters. Jacque has much of the knowledge Professor Clarke does, but may have a few more physical skills as well (sorry, gamemaster, you'll have to create Jacque yourself).

• **Catching a Thief:** The thieves are exactly what they seem: Art thieves. They heard about an "easy score" and they also heard the best market for the Skull was Mexico City. They are not part of a bigger conspiracy and know nothing about the Skull's history — though a captured thief might make something up if he thinks it will save his skin.

• **The Player Characters Really Fight Back:**

Professor Clarke should warn the characters that, while carrying pistols, single-shot rifles and knives in Mexico City is considered fairly normal, actually *using* them is a bad thing. Anyone used to carrying a more dangerous weapon should be encouraged to leave it in their luggage or get hassled — this is a city, after all. Anyone who *uses* something like a grenade or submachine gun should be arrested and detained ... possibly for the rest

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of the adventure. Remember, Indiana Jones is not supposed to be about the biggest gun — rather, it is about high adventure.

Cut To ...

When the adventurers retire, the adventure truly begins in Scene Three.

SCENE THREE: Strange Encounters

The Situation

Standard Scene. Read or paraphrase the following once the adventurers are in bed:

Your dreams are murky and disturbing; a hazy crimson cloud and the din of men's screams. Suddenly, a single high-pitched chime is heard, and your vision clears.

You dream of an ancient Mayan kingdom; you are there, in a body not your own, but the lithe dark-skinned form of a colorfully-dressed Mayan warrior. You raise your hand and an obsidian blade salutes the sky; your enemy lies dead at your feet. Blood and sweat streak your body.

A flash of light, and another chime:

You stand atop a pyramid, hordes of warriors at the pyramid's base. Your long robes part, and ornate skull tattoos cover your skin. In your right hand, you hold a dagger; in your left hand, you hold a beating heart, cut from the chest of the youth at your feet, his corpse strapped to an altar.

A flash of light, and another chime:

You struggle with a man, his naked body painted in snake-motifs. You hold the Crystal Skull in your left hand, and you attempt to drive a dagger into your opponent's breast with your right hand; he, in turn, grapples his hands to yours. You are in a temple of some sort, blood-stained glyphs on the walls, corpses tossed randomly aside. The building begins to shake, and the ceiling starts to collapse on you.

Finally, your eyes open to the hotel room, but you hear the chime again, this time a continuous, low peal which is already starting to fade.



Paul Daly

Lecture Notes: The Mayan Bloodline

Everyone talks about the disappearance of the Maya. Well, they didn't disappear.

Their kingdoms may have fallen, but the Maya are still with us. The indigenous peoples of Guatemala, Quintana Roo, British Honduras, and the rainforests of Central America are the exact physical duplicates of the Maya we see engraved and inscribed in Mayan architecture. Many of the elements of the culture still exist; the Mayan peasant of today is not very

different from the Mayan peasant of the 8th century.

Physically, Mayan men are on the average just over five feet tall, Mayan women just under. Tending toward muscular bodies, in part because of their physical lifestyle, their hair is straight and black, their heads round, their faces broad with pronounced cheekbones, and their dark eyes almost almond shaped with Epicanthic folds.

The characters can easily trace this fading note to the the Skull, which also appears to be glowing — almost *pulsating* — faintly from an unspecified source within. These scenes were all from the Skull's past, and were genuine experiences of postcognitive clairvoyance. If any of the characters were awake throughout the night, they heard the chime and entered a trance, coming out of it at the same time that the characters awake.

Every player character (and Prof. Clarke) will have the exact same dream. Professor Clarke (and any other knowledgeable player character with an appropriate *scholarly* skill roll, DN 13) will be able to identify the scenes as probably late Classical Maya, in the 8th or 9th century.

Most likely no one will know what caused the visions. This particular feature was activated by the blood from the evening's earlier conflict.

Foiled Again!

The Skull is not long for the party's possession.

After the characters retire (again), the cultists will break into the room and steal the Skull. If the characters do not have anyone "on watch," then the operation is simple: The Mayas break in and silently take the Skull.

If any characters are awake (e.g., on watch), then this presents a problem. The thieves have a number of methods of breaking in, any or all of which may need to be utilized to effectively steal the Skull with minimal resistance.

Cultist, House of Skulls (One Per Adventurer)

AGILITY 11

Climb 14, dodge 13, melee combat 12 (dagger 15), melee parry 11 (dagger 13), unarmed combat 13, stealth 15

DEXTERITY 9

Lock picking 13, missile weapons 10 (blowgun 13)

ENDURANCE 10

STRENGTH 10

TOUGHNESS 11

INTELLECT 8

Camouflage 12, first aid 10, scholar: House of Skulls 12, scholar: Mayan history 11, tracking 14

MIND 7

Language: English 8, language: Spanish 8

CONFIDENCE 9

Faith: Crystal Skull 13, survival: rainforest 12

CHARISMA 7

Life Points: 2 each

Equipment: Dagger, damage value STR+4/19; Blowgun, damage value STR+4/19, plus poison

Poison: Sleep-drug: every round after a character is struck by a poison-tipped dart, he or she must make an Endurance check, with a -7 modifier (this is a potent drug). Failure causes the victim to tumble into unconsciousness for 1d10 minutes (a *first aid* total of 23 will wake the character up faster — modifiers for applying stimulants could apply).

Motivation: These are thieves, not assassins or warriors. Their goal is to steal the Skull with a minimum of fuss and as little

Travellers' Almanac: British Honduras

History: The Mayan peoples flourished in this land and in nearby Guatemala between the 4th and 9th centuries, ultimately emigrating to Yucatan.

The first Europeans to live here, however, were British settlers with their Jamaican slaves in 1640, coming to cut logwood. While the British government did not claim the territory, it attempted to protect the log-cutters by treaties with Spain. Even after defeating a Spanish force off the coast in 1798, the British government still did not claim the territory, but the settlers certainly claimed it was British by conquest.

Both Guatemala and Mexico tried to claim sovereignty over British Honduras after their independence from Spain in 1821, but Britain rejected these claims. Great Britain finally declared British Honduras a Colony in 1862 and a Crown Colony in 1871. Mexico agreed by treaty to relinquish any claims to British Honduras, but Guatemala still claims sovereignty on occasion.

Geography: British Honduras is bordered

by Mexico on the north and Guatemala on the west and southwest; its east coast is protected by an almost continuous 150-mile line of reefs and islands, protecting British Honduras from the Caribbean. The climate is typically humid. Temperatures on the coast rarely exceed 90°F, with cooler nights. Inland day temperatures can exceed 100°F.

Places of Note: The only urban place of note in British Honduras is the city of Belize, its capital. The city is antiquated and run down, and is made of mostly old clapboard buildings on stilts. The banks of the Belize River, which meanders through the center of town, are often dirty and possessed of a rather noxious odor. Of course, some nicer structures do exist in the city, particularly those owned by the wealthy or those in power.

The other places of note within British Honduras are the hundreds of Mayan archaeological sites, many still unexamined, and probably many more still even discovered.

bloodshed as possible. They are not opposed to killing, but they want to take the Skull and depart; they hope that by stealing the Skull at the right moment, the party will not have any suspects and will merely assume that the Skull has been recovered, yet again, by a group of privateers and smugglers. Besides, indiscriminate and random death not consecrated with the proper ritual is a wasted sacrifice.

Option 1: Breaking & Entering

If the characters are all apparently asleep, then the Mayan cultists need only to pick the locks of the front door and sneak in to retrieve the Skull. The Maya will favor a two-pronged approach through the door and the window (descending by rope from the roof). If they are feeling particularly paranoid, they will stick each sleeping adventurer with a blowgun dart to assure he stays sleeping.

Option 2: Conflict

The cultists will be armed with blowguns, which they will use on anyone who is awake and likely to sound an alarm or put up a struggle. They will not kill anyone unless they absolutely have to, realizing that their best chances of escape lie in a quick and bloodless robbery.

If the party "takes watches," then this should happen during Rosemary's watch; this will ensure surprise is against the characters, and minimize die-rolling for the gamemaster.

The Result

Regardless of what method is used, the outcome is the same: The next morning, the Crystal Skull is missing. Even if the adventurers manage to defeat all the Skull thieves, miraculously, one of them escapes with the prize.

Investigations at the hotel will indicate that a small group of mysterious individuals

Travellers' Almanac: The Many Peoples of British Honduras

British Honduras is unique among its neighbors in its English, rather than Spanish, heritage. Its history is predicated on the interaction between a variety of diverse cultures, including:

Creole: Those descended from African slaves that were imported to work in colonial industry. Creoles are the clear ethnic majority in British Honduras, and many consider themselves the true citizens.

Mestizos: Persons of mixed Spanish-native Indian descent. Many of British Honduras' Mestizos were descendants of the mid-19th century Yucatan Caste War refugees, who helped initiate the sugarcane industry in British Honduras.

Maya: Descendents of pre-Columbian British Honduras and Guatemala, members of the Yucatecan, Mopán, and Kekchí Maya. The Maya are, of course, the area's earliest inhabitants.

Garifuna/Black Carib: Descendents of African slaves who intermarried with native American inhabitants of the eastern Caribbean.

Others: Smaller ethnic groups live in British Honduras, including East Indians, Arabs, Chinese, Europeans and Americans.

English is the official language of British Honduras, but one can hear Spanish, Mayan dialects, and a Spanish/African/Carib/English patois called *Creole*, the latter spoken mostly by the Creole inhabitants of the nation.

Great Britain has been reluctant to allow citizens of this colony the right of self-government. The country is managed by a governor appointed by Britain, and most of its government office-holders, as well as land-owners, are from the European minority in the nation. British Honduras has long pushed for the rights to self-governance and freedom from British authority.

was reportedly seen leaving the hotel very early in the morning; their speech was overheard by a Mestizo bellboy who will report that the individuals were speaking in a dialect local to British Honduras from where the boy's mother originally hails. The thieves, based upon their descriptions and language, were apparently full-blooded Maya: Not an unusual situation, but unusual to that hotel. The individuals were overheard discussing catching a flight to the city of Belize, in British Honduras. Essentially, the characters should be geared toward departing for Belize.

The investigation should not be as easy as it sounds. The characters should look for clues in the room, in the hallway, and perhaps follow a few dead ends (like questioning local criminals or threatening hotel security). The bellboy only steps forward when the adventurers ask him or they are stymied in all other investigations. If you have him step forward too early, the investigation will seem too easy.

Note: If you want to be really clever, you can build a whole scene around the adventure, maybe not even using the bellboy's infor-

mation to the fullest. You might have the adventurers find clues pointing toward British Honduras (maybe one of the Mayan thieves were wearing clothing currently "in fashion" in B.H., or one of them is carrying a clue to their transportation). The more you make the players "figure out," the better.

SCENE FOUR: Next Stop: Belize!

The Situation

Standard. A number of methods are available for travel to Belize, from train to auto. The characters will most likely opt for flying, however. The quickest method: 1108 km (8 hours) from Mexico City.

Planes fly to Belize on an irregular basis, and the gamemaster can be kind-hearted and allow one to be scheduled for the next few days, or say that there are none scheduled for another week. The characters will then most likely want to charter a private flight as soon as possible; Rosemary, acting as Mitchell-

Hedges' liaison, will be able to arrange payment easily. Due to family-related investments, she herself is fairly well-to-do, and offers to lodge the party at her spacious home in Belize.

Rosemary indicates that a meeting should be scheduled with Kevin Harper, one of the colonial administrators. Although he is not an entirely pleasant personality, as a representative of the Crown he should be notified of the party's visit to British Honduras. She is also confident that she might be able to get some assistance from the local Maya peoples, who are fond of her. Finally, she expects a good amount of assistance from her friend Peter Creighton, an English Mestizo sugarcane plantation owner. Creighton was born in British Honduras to a British landowner and a Mestizo woman; educated at Oxford — where she met him — he returned to British Honduras to take over his father's plantation. His mixed blood and upbringing have made him uniquely sympathetic to the concerns of both the British government and the local peoples of British Honduras. Rosemary has been in touch with him since her arrival in Mexico City, and he has promised to be of assistance however possible.

Arrival

When the plane lands at a small airstrip just outside of Belize, it is met by a private car owned by Peter Creighton. The car (or cars, if necessary, depending upon the party's size) drives the party to Rosemary's house, a large Queen Anne-style house in one of Belize's more wealthy (a relative term considering the country's poverty) districts. Rosemary's residence is managed by a live-in Mestizo steward who has already prepared guest rooms for the guests. Depending upon the time of their arrival, a hot meal will also be ready.

Investigations

Presumably, the characters will be ready to begin their investigations the moment they arrive in British Honduras. They can speak with a number of individuals; the general attitude of the individuals in question is up to the gamemaster, as is the extent of the information. This will have to be roleplayed well by the gamemaster of course; the party can hardly

expect to have vital information handed to them on a platter. The gamemaster should follow the party's lead, and let them go wherever they want to (or are able).

Belize Airstrip

The party will most likely inquire about the arrival of other planes at the airstrip, searching for clues about the Mayan thieves who may very well have landed here just a little while ahead of the party. At the airstrip, the party will meet George Sandoval, the airstrip manager, who can provide some information.

Sandoval will report that another plane did arrive shortly before the party's plane. (The actual time should depend upon how much of a lead the Mayan thieves had. Most likely it will be half a day to a day in advance.) Sandoval will claim that the plane (*The Shanghai Surprise*) was chartered and was not expected on the schedule.

If the characters arrive within a day after *The Shanghai Surprise*, then they can speak with her pilot, Chuck Hughes. Hughes is staying the day at a cheap guest house in Belize, resting before his trip back to Mexico City. If the characters arrive over a day after the Maya, then the basic information that follows can be learned from Sandoval, who shared a cup of coffee with Hughes. This can be a fun encounter with good roleplaying of Hughes, the bitter and world-weary pilot.

Hughes is currently living in Mexico City, laying low from some creditors in the Orient, most notably in Hong Kong. He is running the odd job to earn money to cover up a "previous indiscretion" on his part. He will not describe the situation, but he will mention it with a sneer and shrug. His passengers were a group of "Indians" (however many the gamemaster needed or desires for the Skull's theft), who approached him at a bar late at night and asked for immediate transport to Belize. Hughes was ready to laugh in their faces until they pulled a load of bills — American dollars, even — and started peeling them out and laying them on the table before him. The Indians were quiet on the flight, speaking only on occasion to themselves, except for the one time he heard them singing. It almost sounded like they were playing a chime of some sort, but he called back at them to knock

Traveller's Almanac: Insurrection and Independence in British Honduras

The peoples of British Honduras are clamoring for their independence. The British government's lack of prompt assistance after the last destructive hurricane only heightened these feelings. In addition, the horrible conditions of laborers at mahogany camps and sugarcane plantations, akin to slavery, helped widen the gulf between working poor and landowning rich. In 1934, the poor responded with riots, strikes and demonstrations: although these were not new to British Honduras, this was the beginning of their movement for independence.

it off and the noise stopped. When he landed, the Indians were met by another Indian in a battered truck, who drove them off. Hughes will be able to describe the Indians, who will physically resemble those seen in the hotel (or at least will sound like full-blooded Maya).

The Heartless Administrator

At some point early into their visit to Belize, the party should meet with Kevin Harper, a new colonial administrator.

Read or paraphrase the following:

You are ushered into Mr. Harper's office, a large room furnished in mahogany and other dark woods. The humidity and heat in the office are barely ameliorated by the large ceiling fan, noisily circling above you. Behind the desk, a man in his late fifties, his hair receding from a rather shiny brow, looks above his tiny reading glasses at you. The scowl on his face seems reflective of his general temperament more than any particular indication of his current state of mind.

He will appraise the party of a few of the current difficulties in British Honduras. Unfortunately, the characters have arrived during the country's infant independence stage; more and more of the country's natives are

agitating for liberation from the British Crown, some even violently so.

Harper is not, unfortunately, a sympathetic fellow — while he will treat the party with the utmost respect (since they are working on behalf of the Crown) and he will be particularly deferential to any British citizens, he will show absolutely no concern for the peoples of British Honduras. It is obvious that he considers them backwards primitives with no hope for redemption or improvement.

To make matters worse, Harper will relate that rumors from across British Honduras have the police worried; some insurrectionists have allegedly been stockpiling firearms and automatic weapons. The authorities are concerned about the veracity of the rumors, their implications, and how the insurrectionists — typically nothing more than angry farmers and laborers — have been able to get hold of such weapons.

Furthermore, Harper indicates that it has long been the opinion of the natives of British Honduras that the Crystal Skull, having been found in that country, and most likely a relic of it, belongs there. Of course, because the party is acting on behalf of the British authorities to return an item stolen from a British citizen, Harper promises that the government and officials of British Honduras are pledged to assist them; however, it is likely that the peoples of British Honduras — or, "the primitives," as Harper drily sniffs — upon finding out that the Crystal Skull is in Belize again, may actually try to hinder the party.

After leaving the meeting with Harper, Rosemary will indicate that he is not the most popular fellow in the colonial government, particularly because of his harsh attitude. Harper is obviously unsympathetic to the plight of the poor laborer in British Honduras, and is apparently more concerned with maintaining law and order in the country. His colleagues assume that he will either learn to modify his views, or he will ultimately leave his post in British Honduras in favor of another country.

Peter Creighton

Peter Creighton, secretly the new high priest of the House of Skulls, is in many respects the

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lynchpin of this adventure. Rosemary will introduce him to the characters soon after their arrival in British Honduras; depending upon their time of arrival and the party's inclination, it is likely that he will invite them to his home for dinner; otherwise, he will merely entertain them however best fits into their schedule.

Creighton will be friendly and helpful with the characters, and he will do his best to assist the characters in meeting with prominent landowners or other colonial authorities, confident that they will be unable to learn anything. He is also a good source for local history and will appear to enjoy telling them stories about the region and the peoples.

If the discussion ever turns to politics, he will say that he believes that the British government has a role in helping the peoples of British Honduras until they are capable of self-leadership; when this comes, then Britain should release its colony. Until then, though, it is a British colony and its peoples should abide by the rules of the government.

Creighton will appear to have no particular opinion on the Crystal Skull; if asked about it, he will merely refer to that "antiquity which belongs in a museum." He will claim to not know of any particular supernatural attributes of the Skull, and it will also be evident that he appears a skeptic towards the supernatural — which he is not, but it is a role he plays.

Peter Creighton, the Father of Skulls

AGILITY 8

Beast riding: horse 10, dodge 14, melee combat 16, stealth 11

DEXTERITY 8

Fire combat 10 (pistol 14)

ENDURANCE 8

STRENGTH 7

TOUGHNESS 9

INTELLECT 11

Divination: astrology 13*, perception 14,

trick 16

MIND 12

Business 13, language: Latin 14, language: Mayan, research 12, scholar: Mayan cultures 12, scholar: Mesoamerican history 13, scholar: political science 13 (Latin America 16), scholar: Mayan occultism 15

CONFIDENCE 13

Faith: Crystal Skull 22, interrogation 14, intimidation 14

CHARISMA 12

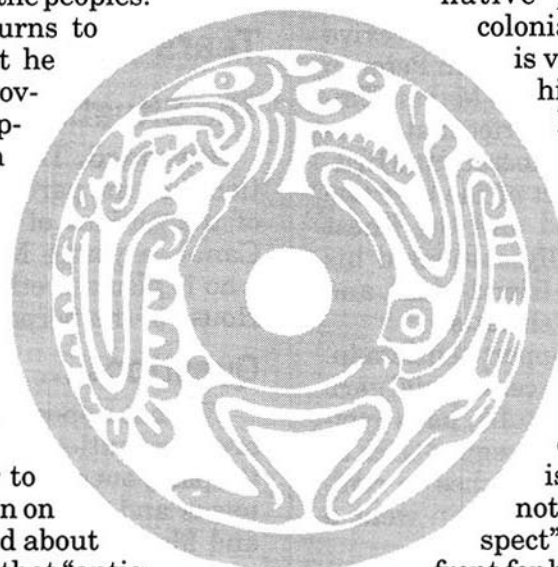
Charm 13, etiquette 14, persuasion 15

Life Points: 6

Advantages: Fame (CI): Creighton is well-known in British Honduras, by both the native people and the British colonials. Wealth (CII): Creighton is very wealthy, thanks to both his family holdings as well as his own knack for business and his understanding of the current political climate of British Honduras. Special Effects (CIII): Creighton has the ability to use *divination* and *faith* as limited special effects skills.

Compensations: Bigotry (CI): Creighton's bigotry is an unusual, and not easily-noticed one. His apparent "respect" for Mayan culture is only a front for his belief in its superiority to anything western — other than British culture, the other facet of his bigotry. Advantage Flaw (CII): both Creighton's wealth and fame will be lost should his role in the House of Skulls be uncovered too early (namely, before its victory).

Description: Creighton is a mixed-descent Mestizo/English wealthy sugarcane plantation owner and is of some import in local politics; he appears, to all observers, to be loyal to the British government and the status quo, although supportive of the rights of the local populace. As such, he is often viewed as an intermediary in local disputes, and is contacted for advice and help by both the locals and the nationals. Creighton's money and political clout come from his father, who established the plantation many years ago;



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his politics and ideology come from his mother, a Guatemalan Mestizo. His mother and Mestizo nursemaids raised Peter with whispered tales of the glories of the Mayan Empire, and the promises that it would rise again. In his early adulthood, Peter was approached by remnants of the House of Skulls, and he was initiated into their secret ways, learning the rites of dark shamanism.

Peter Creighton is now secretly the leader of the House of Skulls; he intends, with the aid of the Crystal Skull, to unite British Honduras and Guatemala, and ultimately, all of Mesoamerica, and to drive out the European colonials. Creighton has learned the arcane rituals that are used in conjunction with the Crystal Skull; his ultimate goal is to revive the glory of the Mayan peoples (with Peter in charge) in a new Mesoamerican Mayan Empire. Peter is essentially the perfect elitist: he considers himself Mayan aristocracy and British nobility, the best product of the best two worlds — the purest blood and the finest upbringing. He has carefully cultivated his image as intermediary and friend-to-all, and takes full advantage of the situation.

Creighton is a slim, dapper gentleman. When he is not dressed in the ceremonial garb of a priest of the House of Skulls, he is typically in a white linen suit, a swagger-stick at his side. If the gamemaster wishes to complete the stereotype, Creighton can wear a panama hat during the day.

It is because of his friendship with Rosemary Clarke that Creighton learned of her mission to Mexico City. Creighton had been planning to have the Skull stolen at some point in the future, but never anticipated the opportunity that had just been made. He arranged to have her followed by operatives from the House of Skulls. It is he who is secretly funding the insurrectionists, and his agents are currently planning on kidnapping none other than Kevin Harper, the colonial administrator, for use in a sacrifice to dedicate the Crystal Skull to their new purpose.

Give the characters a few days of exhaustive but unproductive searches. If they seem at a loss or unmotivated, use Rosemary or Creighton to give them ideas or just move them along. At the end of the few days, they should have some valuable information about

the current state of events in British Honduras and some information about the identity of the Skull's thieves, but no information on where to find the Skull.

The Action

There is a lot of roleplaying opportunity in this scene, but not much actual action. Allow the adventurers to poke around and get involved in local affairs — perhaps a brawl or two concerning the rights or wrongs of independent government — but not find much of anything out. They should begin to feel frustration before you cut to Scene Five.

SCENE FIVE: The Forest of Tears

The Situation

Standard. The most important information that the party can learn comes from one of the natives of British Honduras, Rafael Canul, a young Mestizo plantation worker who is also secretly the chief shaman of the House of the Serpent.

Questions ...

When it appears that the party's search is proving fruitless, Rosemary will offer to lead the party out of Belize into a number of smaller towns and villages, to speak with the Maya and Mestizos that live nearby. It would appear that rumors have already spread about the Crystal Skull's return, and maybe the natives are able to speak about things that the authorities are ignorant of. The fact that there is gossip about the Skull should be particularly unusual if the characters had decided to keep the information about the Skull's return as confidential as possible, speaking only to officials under the strictest confidence. After all, the Colonial office might not want restless and agitated independence-minded locals to learn that a cultural relic has been returned to its homeland.

She proposes a day trip to a number of locations and can arrange horses (which represent the best means of transport through the region) for the party. She is able to identify on a map of the region around Belize City the general location of a number of villages and

towns, which are too small and underpopulated to appear on most maps.

The party leaves at dawn after a breakfast of fresh fruits and breads on the veranda of Rosemary's house. It does not matter which village is visited first, or what order they are visited in; the same scenario is repeated ultimately for each village.

Each town is nothing more than a collection of huts and hovels which Maya and Mestizo peasants inhabit in utter poverty. In each town, Rosemary will be recognized by someone and be very warmly greeted. She and the party will be invited into someone's home (typically, the village elder's) and offered a drink (usually coffee—the advice “don't drink the water” holds equally true in much of British Honduras). English is the national language of the country, and everyone speaks at least a little bit of it; Rosemary will introduce the characters and let them do the talking (“My friends would like to speak with you ...”).

Unfortunately, one of three things happen. If the characters mention the Crystal Skull, the villagers will either: a) feign utter ignorance; b) pale in fear and unsuccessfully feign ignorance; c) smile warmly and say “yes, yes, it is back where it belongs, no?” No villagers will be able to or willing to provide information about the individuals who stole the Skull. This scene will repeat itself from village to village.

In truth, many villagers do not know who the thieves are, but rumors are being whispered that the House of Skulls — previously considered by many a bedtime story to frighten naughty children — has returned and that the British will soon be leaving. Some natives see this as a good thing; others fear the consequences. But none will be willing to speak, particularly since some strangers have already been in town, warning the natives not to help the “outlanders” in their search for the Skull.

Note that the characters are bound to find this frustrating; they are supposed to. Many times players treat investigation as a riddle: Ask the right questions, get the right answers. This is fine for some occasions, but the locals here either do not have information or are simply unwilling to report it. If the char-

acters are ready to give up too soon, have Rosemary express her concern, dismay, and complete surprise at the attitude of the local peoples, and push on to the next village.

Finally, when the last village is reached, a different scene should occur.

... Answers!

Read or paraphrase the following, after the adventurers have spent a few days prowling around the countryside:

As you ride into the village, you see that some villagers have already gathered. Three coarse-looking individuals appear to be the center of attention; the villagers gather around them with looks of what could almost certainly be described as fear on their faces. Hearing your arrival, the crowd turns your way.

The three strangers are representatives from the House of Skulls, simply terrorizing the village into silence (and generally being arrogant bullies in addition). Upon seeing the party, the three enforcers will control the conversation for the villagers.

Rosemary leans over in her saddle, whispering to you, “I don't know these fellows.” Nonetheless, she calls out a greeting in a local tongue; their responses, although unintelligible to you, still sound stony.

The enforcers will try to get the party to leave, without even the slightest bit of conversation, uttering comments like “you are not wanted here” and the occasional veiled threat. Rosemary will demand to speak with the village elder, further agitating the enforcers.

An older woman finally steps forward, and speaks. “I am here,” she says.

“Pardon our manners ...” but before she can continue, one of the enforcers reaches out and strikes the woman across the face, knocking her to the ground.

This will incite the villagers, who will start a sortie against the enforcers. If the characters have not yet intervened — and remember, Rosemary Clarke is not just a gamemaster's method of pushing characters into conflict; she is a hot-headed individual! — the enforcers will pull pistols and start pistol-whipping the crowd. The party will probably get involved in the conflict at this point.

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Warrior Cultist, House of Skulls (1 per Adventurer)

AGILITY 11

Beast riding: horse 14, dodge 13, melee combat 12 (dagger 16, club 13), melee parry 11, unarmed combat 13

DEXTERITY 9

Fire combat 10, thrown weapons 12

ENDURANCE 10

Resist shock 14

STRENGTH 10

TOUGHNESS 11 (13)

INTELLECT 8

Camouflage 12, trick 10

MIND 8

Language: English 9, scholar: Crystal Skull 12

CONFIDENCE 9

Faith: Crystal Skull 12, intimidation 15, survival: rainforest 12, willpower 10

CHARISMA 7

Life Points: 1 each

Equipment: Dagger, damage value STR+4/19; club, damage value STR+5/20; pistol, damage value 19, ammo 6, leather garments, armor value TOU+2/17

Description: These enforcers will be dressed in simple, if heavy, peasant garb, armed with daggers and pistols. They are not entirely stupid and will realize that they are outgunned or outmatched once the characters enter the fray and will try to head for the forest for safety. If the characters follow, so be it.

If the cultists are beaten or driven off, the villagers will be grateful that the party came to their aid. The elder, slightly battered but not truly injured, will invite the party into her hut for a drink and a talk. She will not be able to provide much information, but she will offer that the three men have been going from town to town, warning and threatening the townsfolk not to talk to the "outsiders." She will appear genuinely frightened at any mention of the Crystal Skull, muttering a barely-audible invocation against it. Read aloud, after some questioning:

As you speak with the elder, the curtain to your hut is drawn aside. A young man enters, wearing the simple clothes of a common laborer, his well-muscled body moving with a subtle grace and

Lecture Notes: Kukulcán

Kukulcán — identified as Quetzalcóatl by the Aztecs — symbolically depicted as a plumed snake, is the great culture hero of Mesoamerica. Where other gods lacked corporeal nature, he has a human body; it was he who taught the people virtue and law. Some legends state that he was driven out by the jealous warrior deity Tezcatlipoca, others say that he ascended into heaven and became the planet Venus, and others say that he will return at a future time. The snake has long been a motif of Mesoamerican art, and it does not connote the negative imagery or meaning that is attributed to it in Western (particularly Christian) iconography.

power. He looks at you all, and nods a greeting to the elder; her surprise and joy are evident on her face, but she silently withdraws from the gathering leaving you to the stranger.

This is Rafael Canul.

Most likely, the characters will be curious as to why the elder defers to this young man. Rest assured, they will find out.

If the characters, perhaps feeling perhaps a bit short-tempered and generally in a collective bad-mood, decide to draw weapons on him (for whatever paranoid reason), he will only look at them and say calmly, in perfect English, "Unless you have a means of making a corpse give you the information you need, your weapons will do you no good. Please put them away." He will wait calmly, sitting on the ground, his hands clasped on his knees, looking at no one in particular.

Rafael Canul, Shaman of the House of the Serpent

AGILITY 10

Beast riding: horse 13, climbing 11, dodge 14, melee combat 12, swimming 12, unarmed combat 13, unarmed parry 12

DEXTERITY 10

Fire combat 13

ENDURANCE 11

STRENGTH 8

TOUGHNESS 10

INTELLECT 8

First aid 15

MIND 10

Language: Spanish 13, language: English 12, language: Mayan 14, scholar: Mesoamerican culture 14, scholar: Mesoamerican history 14, scholar: Mayan shamanism 15

CONFIDENCE 13

Faith: House of Serpents 16, willpower 17

CHARISMA 10

Persuasion 11

Life Points: 4

BACKGROUND

Advantages: Additional Skill Add (CI), already incorporated into Mayan shamanism skill; Self-Healing (CIII): Rafael has studied a variety of meditation techniques, giving him partial mastery over his own body.

Compensations: Enemy (CI): the House of Skulls seeks to eliminate the House of the Serpent, but luckily for Rafael, the House of the Serpent's location (in addition to his role in it) are unknown. Sense of Duty (CIII): Rafael is compelled by a sense of duty to protect his peoples against the House of Skulls and the Crystal Skull.

Description: Rafael Canul is a Mestizo plantation worker, as well as a shaman of the House of the Serpent, the society which has always fought against the Crystal Skull. He is also part of Belize's growing independence movement, but he believes that this independence should be accomplished through legitimate political means. He is utterly opposed to any use of the Crystal Skull. Rafael, at age 23, is probably too young to lead the House of the Serpent in this time of crisis, but such is his lot. The general public does not know about Rafael's involvement in the House of the Serpent, but he is well-respected as a community leader.

Rafael is a well-built man, his dark hair and almond eyes betraying his Maya blood, but his fairer skin showing some European ancestry. When he is not dressed as a warrior-shaman of the House of the Serpent, he dresses in common laborer clothes. Beneath his clothing, his body is ritually scarred and tattooed with snake designs, creating an intricate serpentine labyrinth across his torso, thighs, and upper arms. His clothing typically covers the telltale tattooing and scars.

Rafael asks the party's indulgence to tell a story that will answer many questions, and he begins:

When I was a child, my father took me away from our home and into the mountains. We travelled for many days, eating only what we could find in the forest and the dirt. Finally we reached a high mountain, and we stood in a circle of fallen rocks and stones. "Look around," my father said to me, and I did.

"All I see is rocks," I answered.

"You see our past," my father answered. "You see the remains of a building that our forefathers toiled to build and died to defend. This has always been our lot in life: to build for others, to fight for others, to die for them. But always we continue, for we are the children of the gods." This was when my father taught me about my heritage.

I know that you seek the Crystal Skull, and I will help you find it.

If the gamemaster has the resolve (and the time) to memorize the above statement (or something approximate) and deliver it without recourse to looking at his scenario materials, it will be much more effective. Rafael speaks quietly, and softly, almost to himself.

Rafael will then tell the story of the House of Skulls and the House of the Serpent, and how they have always struggled. He will tell of the abilities of the Crystal Skull when used by those who know how. Finally, he tells them that he has always been taught that those who tried to destroy the Skull always fail, and always disastrously; doom awaits those who seek the destruction of the dark gods' tool.

Rafael does not know who the current leaders of the House of Skulls are, and he has only vague suspicions as to where they operate — but he currently has "agents working on it." He strongly believes that the House of Skulls is behind the stockpile of weapons — confirming any possible link that the characters might have suspected between the events.

Rafael also tells the party that the locals have heard rumours of the return of the Skull, and they are of two minds: some are ecstatic, recalling the legends of the glorious Maya Empire; they believe that the Skull will be a valuable aid in not just seeking political

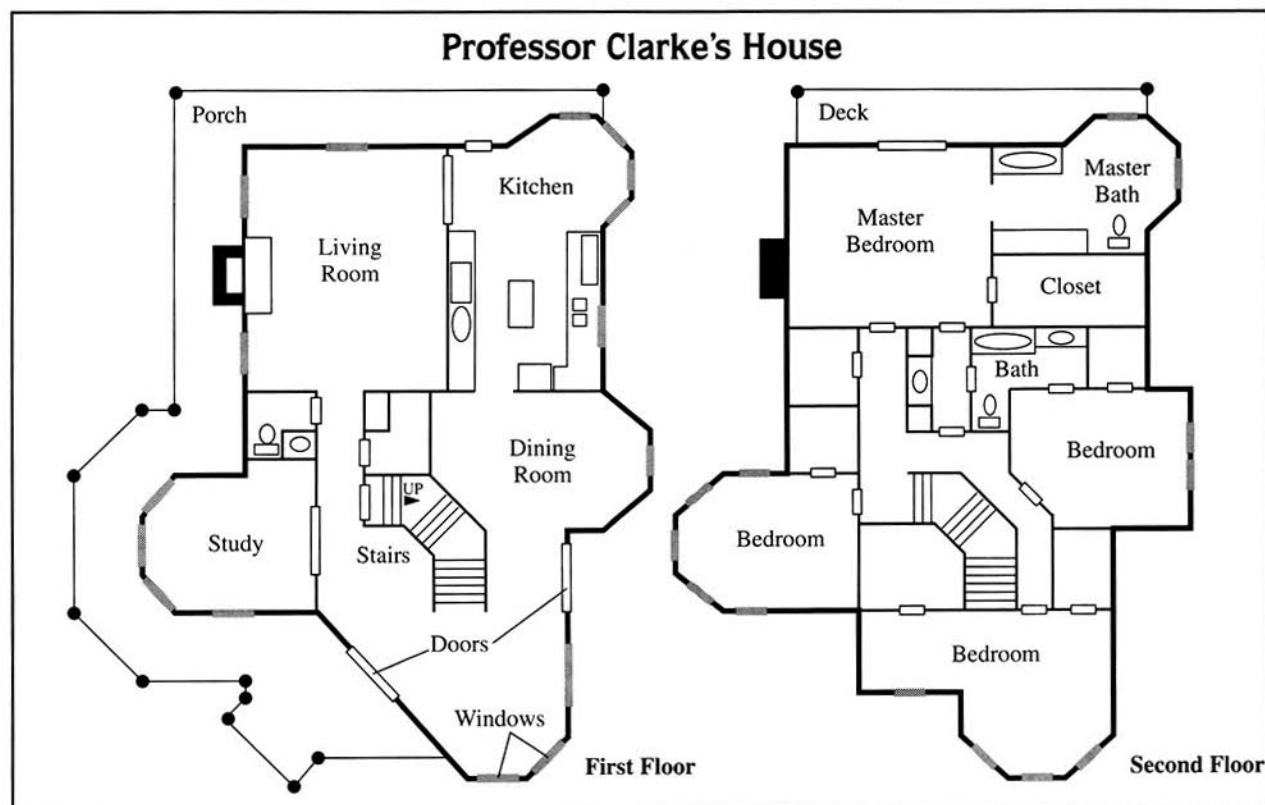
independence, but also driving out the British and all the colonials and creating a unified Mesoamerican empire. Other natives are frightened, remembering the dark rumours that also accompany the Skull. Rafael is obviously of the latter camp, and he is disturbed that so many natives seem to support the return of the Skull.

Finally, Rafael will tell the party that many strangers have been travelling to the villages, threatening the locals, and telling them not to report anything to the British officials. Furthermore, these hostile Maya seem particularly interested in the activities of the party, and have demanded that they receive reports of the party's activity should they speak with anyone. No one will know why or who these hostile Maya are. Both Rosemary and Rafael will promise to look into these reports, and Rosemary also indicates that she will approach the British authorities on this matter. Rafael asks that the characters do not reveal his allegiance to the House of the Serpent should they speak to the authorities. He is perfectly content with the authorities learning about the House of Skulls, which will probably be perceived as nothing more than an insurrectionist group of some kind.

With this, Rafael leaves, indicating that he will contact them again. At this point, he feels that security has been compromised, and he fears that the House of Skulls seeks his death, so he must go into hiding. If anyone wants to reach him, "the spirits" will tell him. The characters are left to ride back to Belize in darkness, contemplating Rafael's disturbing words.

The Heartless Administrator (Part Two)

Unfortunately, upon returning to Belize, the characters will learn that Kevin Harper has been found slain, his heart cut from his chest. A successful *scholar* roll of 10 or higher (*archaeology* or *history*, particularly with a *Mayan* specialization or focus) will let the characters know that heart-extraction was a common form of sacrifice for the classical Maya. (While this may seem obvious to some, this roll is particularly appropriate for characters of the 1930's, who do not have the benefit of educational television programming!)



Cut To ...

Now that Kevin Harper has been killed, things really start to heat up. Someone might be moving to eliminate those who are looking for the Crystal Skull ... or there might be some darker plot growing here. Cut to Scene Six.

SCENE SIX: The Spider's Web

The Situation

Standard. Give the characters another day to continue their investigations. Chances are that there are few people that they can contact anymore that will be of any help. Further communication with the authorities will only reveal that one stockpile of numerous ("hundreds") semi-automatic weapons was recovered, but that the locals guarding them committed suicide before they could be apprehended. Their bodies, upon further examination, were revealed to have been tattooed with skull-like designs. Furthermore, British Intelligence is finally getting involved and is trying to locate the funding for the weapons. Beyond this, however, no information on the

Crystal Skull is available; the colonial administration and the police authorities are definitely more concerned with the state of the nation and the death of Harper.

At this point, though, the characters have caused too much trouble; the locals are talking about the party's search for the Skull, and they are starting to debate and argue about whether the return of the Skull is to be desired or feared. Creighton and the House of Skulls have decided to strike. Harper's sacrifice was simply to consecrate the Skull, to reawaken it to its full might and to draw down the might of the dark gods. Their next sacrifice will be to bless the insurrectionists' first planned attack on British offices and outposts; but first the characters have to be dealt with ...

Home Sweet Home

Late the following evening, the characters will have another late-night encounter with the House of Skulls. Rosemary, pleading fatigue and a headache, will have retired early; in truth, she will have received a note that was allegedly from Rafael, asking to meet with her ... alone.

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The House of Skulls' assassins will silently enter Rosemary's home at around midnight through a variety of entrances, and will converge upon the characters wherever they may be; because of the late hour, the characters will most likely be asleep in their rooms. Refer to the floorplans of Rosemary's house for details (and for combat when it becomes necessary).

Ask all the players to make *perception* checks; the DN for sleeping characters is 18, for waking characters 13. Any character with an *alertness* card should be allowed to play it now. Those that make their check are alert to the sounds of movement throughout Rosemary's house:

Something rouses you from your slumber — a feeling of apprehension and dread. At first you dismiss it as signs of stress, exhaustion, and frustration, but then you think you hear, quite briefly, a noise from downstairs. While it might be Rosemary or one of your companions going for a late-night drink in the kitchen, something tells you it is otherwise ...

The characters who awoke will have two rounds between waking (or becoming alert) and the assassins breaking into their rooms. Characters who are asleep take one full round to be wakened by other characters. Then the attack begins. There will be at least two cultists per character, though not all will attack at once. A few will burst in on the characters, and then others will follow through windows, doors, or hiding places as the combat progresses.

Assassin Cultist, House of Skulls

AGILITY 11

Climb 12, dodge 16, melee combat 12 (dagger 16), melee parry 13, stealth 17, unarmed combat 13, unarmed parry 12

DEXTERITY 9

Fire combat 12, lock picking 13

ENDURANCE 10

Resist shock 12

STRENGTH 10

TOUGHNESS 11 (14)

INTELLECT 8

Camouflage 12, trick 15

MIND 8

Scholar: Crystal Skull 12

CONFIDENCE 9

Faith: Crystal Skull 12, survival: rainforest 12, willpower 13

CHARISMA 7

Life Points: 2 each

Equipment: Poisoned daggers, damage value STR+4/19 plus poison (see below); pistols, pistol, damage value 19, ammo 6, pain-resistant drug (see below), armor value TOU+3/19, *resist shock*, +2

Poison: The venom on each blade is deadly. If a character suffers a *wound* or better from any strike with a dagger, he must make an Endurance roll versus a damage value of 24 plus a bonus number *every round thereafter* or take the result points on the "Damage" column of the Success Chart. When the character is finally driven unconscious, he must make another roll every *hour* until he dies or is given the antidote. The local hospital has the antidote for the poison (a derivative of a local snake venom) — the application of the antidote will cure any wounds caused by the poison within one hour.

Pain-resistant Drug: A peculiar drug created by the House of Skulls causes the assassins to be immune to K and O damage for ten minutes. It also gives them +2 to their *resist shock* value and +3 to their Toughness attribute. After ten minutes, each assassin will take a K that does not go away until he has slept for at least four hours.

Description: These warriors are dressed in traditional Maya garb, their faces obscured by stylized skull-masks, their bodies adorned with ritual scars and tattoos. They are fanatically loyal to the House of Skulls.

The motive of the assassins is to kill the characters. The motive of the gamemaster, however, should be to let the characters realize how overwhelmed they are. Try to weaken the characters however possible; wound them and disarm them rather than going for outright slaughter, so that they realize exactly what danger they are in. The poisoned daggers should help — when a character finally takes a wound from one, and then starts taking damage every round (or spending Life Points to resist it), the characters should start to think about fleeing the combat.

Safety In Numbers

As soon as the characters appear totally overwhelmed, introduce a new set of gamemaster characters into the equation. These are members of the House of the Serpent, arriving just in time to save the characters.

Warrior Cultist, House of the Serpent

There will be 3–5 warriors present, depending upon how many are needed to even the odds. You can use the stats for the House of Skulls Warriors (appearing in an earlier scene). Their contribution to the battle, however, will be mainly a change in morale — the assassins will immediately realize that the House of the Serpent is aware of them and will probably try to flee. They are armed with clubs and daggers, though they may have pistols if absolutely necessary.

Description: These warriors will be dressed as common laborers, their scars and tattoos covered (more or less) by ragged clothing.

The arrival of the House of the Serpent will surprise the assassins and will give the characters the advantage they need to win. After defeating the House of Skulls' assassins, the members of the House of the Serpent will address the characters, indicating that they had been sent by Rafael to get the characters.

Eventually it will be noticed that Rosemary did not join the fray. A thorough examination of her house will reveal two things: first, her steward, dead in his room, his throat slit; second, Rosemary's room empty, a note on her dresser:

I have information on the Skull's whereabouts and desire to speak with you alone. Come tonight to the Jaguar Stela at 11 p.m., and please come alone. I can trust no one else in this.

Rafael

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Those from the House of the Serpent will know that Rafael did not send this note; he had thought that Rosemary would be with the rest of the party. It should be obvious that Rosemary was tricked, and she is most likely in trouble.

The characters will probably not know where "the Jaguar Stela" is; it is an inscribed column known only to those intimately familiar with Mayan archaeology of British Honduras. The members of the House of the Serpent will be able to identify the site, locating it a half-hour north of Belize. The House of the Serpent's warriors will be willing to take the characters there, but they will obviously prefer that they escort the characters to Rafael immediately, who will know how to deal with the situation. The warriors came on horseback and brought additional horses for the player characters' use.

Variables

If any of the characters need to go to the hospital, the members of the House of the Serpent will escort them there and then go to "check out" the Jaguar Stela, in case this is a trap.

If one of the players has been playing Rosemary Clarke up to this point, he or she could take over a House of the Serpent Cultist temporarily and stick with the party as a guide/guard.

Cut To ...

When everyone is ready to go, cut to Scene Seven.

SCENE SEVEN: Xibalba, The Underworld

The Situation

Standard: The warriors escort the characters outside of Belize and guide them to Xibalba, the secret home of the House of the Serpent. Before entering one part of the forest, they have to blindfold the characters, ensuring their safety but requesting their cooperation in this matter; the House of the Serpent's hidden temple must remain that — hidden.

After another short ride, the player charac-

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ters' horses, which are slowly and carefully guided by the warriors, stop. The warriors assist the characters in dismounting but insist that the blindfolds remain. They will finally lead the characters down a stone stairwell, giving the characters the feeling that they are sinking deeper and deeper into the earth.

Read or paraphrase the following:

Finally, your blindfolds are removed, and you find yourself standing in the middle of a large stone-enclosed chamber, its walls covered with intricate and well-preserved carvings and bas reliefs which flicker in the torchlight which illuminates the cavern. You notice that a snake motif runs strongly throughout the iconography, and you momentarily associate the serpent god Kukulkán with the crafty and sinister symbolism of the snake depicted in Western art and legend.

Even those of you without expertise in Mesoamerican archaeology realize that you stand in one of the most perfectly preserved chambers of the ancient Maya peoples. You are surrounded by over a dozen armed Mayan warriors, dressed in traditional garb, some armed with daggers and spears, others armed with rifles and handguns. Their bodies are a living tapestry of serpentine tattoos.

Rafael stands before you, similarly dressed, his hands clasped behind his back. "Welcome to Xibalba."

Xibalba (pronounced *Shi-bal-báh*), the "place of awe," is the Mayan Underworld, where gods, spirits, and humans meet and mingle. It is the source of shamanic ecstasy and prophetic dream, living magic and centuries-old ritual. This location, adopting the name Xibalba as a metaphor for the House of the Serpent's source of power, is a well-preserved, and still "undiscovered" subterranean complex built by the House many, many centuries ago and maintained by its descendents over the generations.

Read or paraphrase the following:

Rafael sits on the cold stone floor of the cavern, and you notice that the warriors around him do the same, seemingly

on his cue. He gestures you to the ground before him. "We have much to discuss."

Rafael had summoned the party to speak with them about his latest research on the Crystal Skull and the House of Skulls. Added to this is the complication that Rosemary Clarke has been, quite apparently, kidnapped.

Rafael's information follows; the gamemaster can deliver it however he best sees fit:

- **Rosemary's Abduction.** Soon after Rafael sent his warriors out to summon the party, he received word from an agent that a young peasant couple, dallying in the woods for some private pleasures, had seen Rosemary, apparently waiting by some old Mayan ruins, attacked by three men "dressed as skeletons" — obviously more warriors for the House of Skulls. Rosemary was able to take out one of her would-be captors with her revolver, until she was clubbed into unconsciousness. Rafael raises his hand, and a warrior wordlessly hands to him a Webley — Rosemary's revolver, recovered from the site of her abduction. A *perception* skill roll of 8 will reveal it is definitely Rosemary's revolver and that it has been fired within a few hours.

- **The House of Skulls.** Rafael has located the current base of operations for the House of Skulls: an abandoned Mayan site some 48 kilometers north of Belize.

- **The Dead Administrator.** The slain colonial, Rafael believes, was an initial sacrifice by the House of Skulls simply to consecrate and dedicate the Crystal Skull — to "re-awaken" it, as the case may be.

- **First Strike.** Rafael's agents have been hearing rumors that something important is happening tonight or tomorrow; people are agitated, and they are hungry for independence. More automatic weapons are being distributed among the people.

Rafael's Fears

Read or paraphrase the following:

I prayed this evening, and the gods heard my prayer. They granted me a terrible vision: I saw our country burning, I saw her children, Briton and Maya, Creole and Carib alike, dying. I saw a beating heart, dripping blood across the

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Paul Daly

Lecture Notes: Bloodletting in Maya Ritual

The role of bloodletting in Classic Mayan ritual cannot be underestimated. Blood is ultimately connected to the soul, *ch'ulel*, and this connection is fundamental to understanding the Mayan world view and emphasis on sacrifice. Classic Mayan images depict *ch'ulel* as stylized droplets of blood falling from people's hands. The Maya who lets blood is feeding his god with *ch'ulel* and giving some of his soul; this blood and soul are ever recycled between humans and gods.

land; I saw an army of skeletal warriors, gaunt and emaciated, dressed and ornamented like our ancestors of so long ago but armed with current weapons, covering this country in a field of blood.

In short, Rafael fears that the House of Skulls plans another sacrifice tonight, to coincide with a planned attack on prominent Brit-

ish offices and outposts. Such an attack would normally be suicidal (if not simply foolish), but with the Crystal Skull at their side, the House of Skulls will be victorious. Rosemary, Rafael believes, is to be that sacrifice.

Rafael plans on raiding the House of Skulls to interrupt the sacrifice — to save both Rosemary and countless other lives. He asks the characters to join him.

The Vision Serpent

If the characters accept the offer, Rafael indicates that plans for departure are underway.

Read or paraphrase the following:

Rafael stands and dismisses his entourage of warriors. "I invite you to join me in a sacred ritual, so that we may dedicate our actions to the gods. I myself am prepared for the ritual of bloodletting, an offering of blood and *ch'ulel*, the stuff of the soul, and I ask you to participate with me. This is a voluntary sacrifice, and one that I offer to make up for the death of the colonial administrator sacrificed to the Skull."

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If any characters (or players) seem hesitant, then Rafael will indicate that the offering is entirely voluntary, and that it can go to whichever deity they worship, even the Christian one. Rafael's appeal should be earnest and direct.

If any characters submit — and for a successful conclusion to this adventure, at least one player character should submit, so the gamemaster should be persuasive — then Rafael will take the characters down a long corridor, its many carvings barely illuminated in the weak flickering torchlight, into a small circular cavern. The walls of this cavern are smooth, lacking any decoration or carving; the floor, however, is tiled with jade. At the center of the room is a brazier, filled with burning embers and incense.

Rafael will explain the significance of bloodletting to anyone who is interested or concerned. Blood is not the only conveyer of *ch'ulel*: Maize, copal incense, and jade also contained soul, and these substances are worked into the floor beneath the tiles, to endow this chamber with a portal to the Otherworld. This chamber was also the site of much ritual bloodletting — entirely voluntary — to further endow the portal, but this is an element that Rafael will most likely leave out of his tour.

Rafael sits next to the brazier and invites the characters to do the same. From a bag at his waist, he will draw forth a few strips of paper and a small obsidian blade fragment. Extending his left hand over some paper, he will wordlessly slash the blade across his palm, allowing the blood to drip onto some

paper. Without speaking (unless he absolutely has to), he will look at the next player character, silently inviting the same, letting their blood drip and flow onto scattered strips of paper. It is irrelevant for the purpose of the sacrifice whether the right or left hand is used, but combat repercussions of a slashed hand will be evident, and most characters will probably offer their off-hand.

Read or paraphrase the following:

Rafael gathers the blood-smeared strips together and, with a handful of incense from his waistpouch, he tosses the bundle into the brazier, which flares into life.

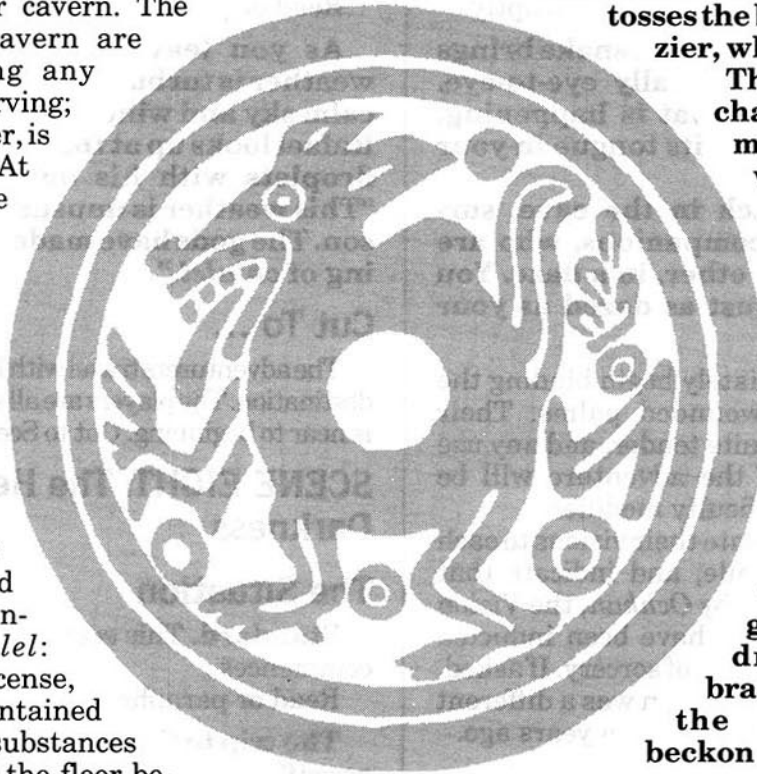
The heat in the small chamber becomes almost unbearable within moments, and a thick musky smoke begins to fill the chamber.

Rafael sits, staring expressionlessly into the brazier, the flames dancing in the sheen of sweat starting to form on his face, chest and shoulders. Your own gaze is irresistibly drawn into the brazier's center, where the dancing flames beckon to you ...

At this point, the gamemaster may want to speak with the characters one by one. Each player character will receive the same vision, as follows.

You are barely able to tear yourself away from your fascination with the burning embers, and looking around, you see that you are suddenly alone. The chamber is no different, the same brazier burns, the same thick musk fills the room, but your companions and Rafael are gone.

Allow the player character a few minutes to explore the chamber. When the character



approaches the entrance to the chamber, an immense snake enters the room. The snake itself does not look like any snake which a player character with the appropriate skill could hope to name, incidentally; its markings are unidentifiable (and irrelevant). The snake will approach the player character.

At this point, the player character may be tempted to draw a weapon or take another hostile action. This is to be avoided. First try to persuade the player character out of it: "For some reason, you don't feel threatened; you feel almost protected..." If the player character persists, then the vision ends abruptly.

Rearing up on its tail, the snake brings its face close you, literally eye-to-eye. Before you realize what is happening, the snake has slipped its tongue in your mouth.

And you are back in the cave, surrounded by your companions, who are all looking at each other, in a daze. You suspect you look just as dazed as your friends.

Rafael will immediately begin binding the player characters' wounded palms. Their bound hand will be quite tender, and any use of it for the rest of the adventure will be hampered by a -2 difficulty modifier.

If the characters relate their visions to each other, Rafael will smile, and indicate that they have been visited by *Ochkan*, the Vision Serpent, and that they have been inducted into the Mayan mysteries of sorcery. If asked, Rafael will say that his vision was a different one, but *Ochkan* visited him ten years ago.

Preparations

After the vision quest, Rafael will lead the characters back to the community chamber, and any preparations that will be needed prior to departure will be taken care of at this time. The House of the Serpent will be able to provide characters with ammunition for most common automatic weapons (they have their own stockpile, of course), clothing, transportation, and a passel of other miscellaneous needs. Rafael will be insistent upon leaving quite soon, as no doubt will the characters.

Rafael will be leading approximately a dozen warriors for the House of the Serpent, dressed in

classic Mayan garb and armed with a variety of melee weapons and firearms. Rafael himself will be armed with Rosemary's revolver and a dagger. The characters (at least those who participated in the sacrifice) will not be blindfolded on the way out — they are now members of the House of the Serpent, Rafael explains. The characters will be led through a labyrinthine network of tunnels and chambers and up a staircase, finally exiting the complex via a camouflaged exit in the side of a forested hill. Outside, a dozen more warriors will be waiting, with horses for everyone.

Read or paraphrase the following:

As you leave, you notice that the weather is turbulent and stormy, not the calm sky and winds of earlier in the day. Rafael looks up at the skies, feeling a few droplets with his outstretched hand. "This weather is unusual for the dry season. The gods have made their own offering of *ch'ulel*."

Cut To ...

The adventurers travel with Rafael toward their destination. The players are all set; the final drama is near to beginning. Cut to Scene Eight.

SCENE EIGHT: The Heart of Darkness

The Situation

Standard. This scene begins as the travel commences.

Read or paraphrase the following:

The trip to the House of Skulls' place of sacrifice is a quiet one, the silence disturbed by the sounds of the horses' fast and steady gait, thunder, or the call of the occasional wild cat or tropical bird. The route covers both established roads and hidden paths, goes through dark woodlands, and sometimes just travels across a wind-swept savannah.

Finally, the forest starts to thicken, and the group is forced to leave the horses behind with two of the Serpents' warriors. Rafael points ahead, and through the underbrush and the creeping flora, a number of fires can be seen burning: the place of sacrifice for the House of Skulls.

Lecture Notes: "Mayan Pyramids"

As early as 1912, we've had evidence that the Maya built pyramids and other structures stratigraphically, one building atop another, often leaving the earlier structures virtually intact. It is not unusual to find three structures occupying the same space: one from the Preclassic period, one from the Early Classic period, and one from the Late Classic. The wealth of archaeological treasures — and by this I refer to informational value, not just monetary — is almost undreamt of.

Rafael confers with a few warriors, and the group will disband, leaving only Rafael, one additional warrior, and the characters together; the other warriors silently break off in groups of two or three to head through the forest in different directions and attempt to take care of the roving warriors which no doubt guard the Place of Skulls.

The Place of Skulls

At the heart of this site is the pyramidal temple which has been christened the "Place of Skulls." It is here that the House of Skulls performed their first sacrifice to the newly recovered Crystal Skull, and it is here that the sacrifice of Rosemary Clarke will guarantee success in the first strike against the British colonials.

The temple is a multi-tiered pyramid, roughly 20 meters tall, topped by an enclosed sanctuary. Each "tier" of the temple is approximately three meters tall. A single stairway reaches from the ground to the sanctuary atop the structure. The stairway, approximately twenty meters long, ascends at an angle just over 45 degrees. This pyramid is built atop an older pyramid, and the sacrifice is actually taking place within the sanctuary of the older pyramid, now in the "bowels" of the larger pyramid. Torches burn brightly atop the final tier of the pyramid.

This pyramid, like the rest of the surrounding structures, is covered with vegetation and wildlife. Some of the staircase has eroded over time;

other portions of it are covered with just enough vegetation to make an ascent rather slippery, but not enough vegetation to hold on to.

Ascending the Pyramid

Because the House of Skulls is sequestered within the pyramid, the party will have to endeavor to ascend the pyramid. Anyone attempting to ascend the pyramid will have to make a successful Agility roll (standard DN) per turn. Gamemasters can determine how many Agility rolls are required to ascend the structure, based upon the character's Movement Rates, the length of the staircase, and the method of ascent:

Method	Rate	DN Modifiers
Careful ascent	MRG	none
Quick ascent	MRGx2	+3

The pyramid does, of course, provide one additional complication: four warriors for the House of Skulls will be posted atop the pyramid, firing at anyone they see attempting to ascend. If the damage calls for a *knockdown*, the character has to make an additional Agility check to avoid losing his balance and falling. Falling damage can be determined according to standard falling rules — although the fall is not a sheer drop, it essentially involves repeatedly rolling and bouncing off steps. Merciful gamemasters might choose to modify this damage in the character's favor, allowing them to die a more dramatic death later.

The sanctuary is actually a smaller structure placed atop the last terrace of the pyramid; it has one entrance and fourteen small windows. The warriors atop the pyramid will be focusing the majority of their attention upon the staircase, however, so crafty characters might try to ascend the pyramid tier-by-tier in the rear of the Temple. Because of the tiered nature of the pyramid, such characters will actually have a better chance of reaching the top unseen.

The Sanctuary

Once the characters actually manage to enter the sanctuary, read or paraphrase the following:

Unlike the exterior of the pyramid, the interior of this chamber has been thor-

oughly cleaned of all vegetation and wild growth. The walls are covered with a relief of what appears to be a procession of men, their hands bound and their heads downturned. The floor, in contrast to the walls, is made of a series of simple tiles. A raised slab rests in the center of the chamber, unadorned except for a sequence of stylized skulls which line the surface of the apparent altar.

The relief lining the walls is also covered in hieroglyphs. In the unlikely event that a player character can read them, they indicate that the men depicted in the relief are all prisoners-of-war, being taken to the place of sacrifice.

Require the characters to make an Intellect roll (or a *perception* roll for those with the skill): anyone with a skill total of 15 or higher will notice that one of the skulls (one facing the rear of the sanctuary) carved into the altar is more finely detailed than the others. Allow the characters to examine the skull: Ask the players specifically how they are doing the examination. If any player character inserts his finger (or a similar instrument) into the mouth of the skull, then read the following:

A loud click resounds from behind the skull, and you hear behind you a loud harsh grating sound. A section of the floor actually swings downward, revealing a steep staircase descending into the bowels of the pyramid.

(Obviously, someone must do this in order to progress. Allow the adventurers additional *perception* checks to find the catch if no one offers to stick his finger in the skull's mouth.)

The staircase descends abruptly at an angle steeper than that of the stairs outside the pyramid; the stair is approximately 25 uneven steps. At the bottom of the stair is a narrow corridor. A lever at the bottom of the stairs, when pulled, will return the trap-door to its original setting.

Read or paraphrase the following:

As you reach the bottom of the steeply descending staircase, the first thing that draws your attention is the rhythmic chanting which echoes through the cor-

ridor ahead of you. The second thing which you notice, however briefly, is the unusual architecture of the corridor: the wall to your right features relief-sculpture similar to much of what you have seen in Maya buildings; to your left, the wall appears like little more than rough-hewn blocks stacked atop each other. This crude detail continues to the ceiling, while the floor appears to be designed of more carefully placed tiles. The corridor turns sharply to the right, dimly lit by an unidentified source.

This corridor is actually what used to be the terrace of an earlier temple; the more ornately designed floor and wall are, of course, remnants of the previous structure, while the crude blocks of the other wall and the ceiling are just the interior of the new structure.

A warrior for the House of Skulls will be ready in the corridor with a gun, and will fire upon anyone who turns the corner from the staircase. The characters will also see that in the corridor is the opening to the sanctuary of the older temple, light pouring out from within the chamber. The corridor continues past the entrance and turns right; past this turn, the corridor is blocked with rubble and is impassable. If necessary, you can use stats for the Warrior Cultists appearing earlier in this adventure for the enemy here.

The Heart of Evil

Creighton, as the Father of Skulls, is located within the older pyramid's sanctuary, already beginning the ritual. He is assisted by two acolytes, while three more warriors will be present within the sanctuary.

Read or paraphrase the following to any characters who enter the sanctuary:

As you enter the chamber, you take in this scene in an instant. In the center of the torchlit chamber is another altar, and the body slung atop it is unmistakably Rosemary Clarke; her body is covered by innumerable slashes, and rivulets of blood run down her limbs to the stone surface beneath her. It is impossible to determine if she is alive. A black robed figure stands behind her, chanting slowly in an alien tongue, his face

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concealed by a stylized skull mask and headdress. In his upraised right hand is the Crystal Skull, gleaming in the torchlight. In the skull-faced figure's left hand is an obsidian dagger, its surface already slicked with blood. As you enter, his eyes, discernible through the skull mask, instantly focus on you.

Creighton is not an idiot. He will not have completed the ritual by the time the characters arrive, but he will not simply stand there chanting and presenting an immobile target for the irate characters to casually target with countless firearms. He will already be alerted by the sound of the gunshot from the corridor, and he'll be ready for a quick departure if necessary.

The instant characters appear in the chamber, Creighton will duck below the altar, protected by his two acolytes, and activate a secret door in the back wall of the chamber. The characters, meanwhile, will have to contend with the warriors, who are among the most dangerous in the House of Skulls. Although the characters will be able to see the previously unseen door in the rear of the chamber open (and then close), their view of Creighton (still unidentifiable, of course) departing the chamber will be obscured by the altar.

Elite Warrior Cultist, House of Skulls (1 per Adventurer)

AGILITY 13

Climb 14, dodge 17, melee combat 18, melee parry 17, unarmed combat 15, unarmed parry 13

DEXTERITY 10

Fire combat 15, thrown weapons 11

ENDURANCE 10

STRENGTH 11

Resist shock 18

TOUGHNESS 11 (13)

INTELLECT 8

Camouflage 12

MIND 8

Scholar: Crystal Skull 14

CONFIDENCE 9

Faith: Crystal Skull 15, intimidation 16, willpower 15

CHARISMA 7

Life Points: 2

Equipment: Dagger, damage value STR+4/19; leather armor, armor value TOU+2/17; pistol, damage value 19, ammo 6

Description: These warriors are dressed in ritual Mayan garb, their faces obscured by stylized skull-masks, their bodies adorned with ritual scars and tattoos. They are armed with handguns, which they will not hesitate to use, but will prefer battering their foes to death with their massive fists and strength.

Acolyte Cultist, House of Skulls

AGILITY 10

Dodge 12, melee combat 12 (dagger 14), melee parry 11, stealth 11

DEXTERITY 9

ENDURANCE 8

STRENGTH 7

TOUGHNESS 9

INTELLECT 8

Perception 10, trick 9

MIND 8

Scholar: Crystal Skull 10, scholar: Mayan occultism 11

CONFIDENCE 9

Faith: Crystal Skull 12

CHARISMA 7

Life Points: 0-1 each

Equipment: Dagger, damage value STR+4/19; acolyte dress and tattoos

Description: These acolytes are mere youths, dressed in ritual Mayan garb, armed only with daggers. In a fight, they will be confused and probably try to flee, fighting only to protect themselves. They will likely surrender, particularly if the warriors are defeated and Creighton disappears.

Any player character who manages to check on Rosemary will discover that, in spite of tremendous blood-loss, she is alive. The slashes across her arms and legs were only part of the ritual bloodletting and were not meant to kill; the *coup de grâce* would have come when the Father of Skulls cut her heart out.

After defeating the warriors, the characters will discover that the "Father of Skulls" has left the room. They can probably discern that the opening and closing of the door earlier in the scene must have been Creighton departing. Because the door has closed, it is not easily identifiable anymore; its seams have merged once again into the carefully

crafted relief of the chamber. A player character with a successful *perception* check (DN 15) will be able to identify the outline of the door. Opening it, of course, is another matter.

Creighton Escapes!

It is important for the end of the adventure that Creighton escape the battle. This won't be too hard for the gamemaster to arrange — there are hordes of worshippers and warriors in the way, not to mention Professor Clarke to think of. But don't worry; he isn't going far.

The characters will eventually be able to discover that on the very bottom panel of the door is a stylized skull resembling that on the altar of the newer temple above; by pressing against the open mouth of the skull, as with the previous skull, the "secret door" can be opened.

However, one more scene must take place before the characters actually have the opportunity to examine the door ...

SCENE NINE: The Father of Skulls

The Situation

Dramatic. Creighton, upon entering the corridor behind the secret door, will turn toward the staircase that descends to an escape tunnel. However, instead of escaping — an act he could be capable of, if he were acting rationally — Creighton will call upon a last power of the Skull. He will cut his own palm; blood pouring over the Skull, he will stare into it, seeing the characters within the chamber. Creighton will project all his hate and ill-will into the Skull. He plans to kill the characters,

and complete the sacrifice, one way or the other — and since the characters have become too much of a nuisance, then they will make excellent victims.

Within the chamber, the party (including Rafael and Rosemary, if she is still conscious) will collapse in pain. Read or paraphrase the following:

Your body is engulfed in a paroxysm of sharp pain, and you collapse to the ground. When you open your eyes again, mere seconds later, you appear to be floating in a thick grey mist, damp and suffocating. Walking toward you in the colorless fog is the Father of Skulls; his every stride is accompanied by a noise like thunder, which you realize is the beating of your own heart.

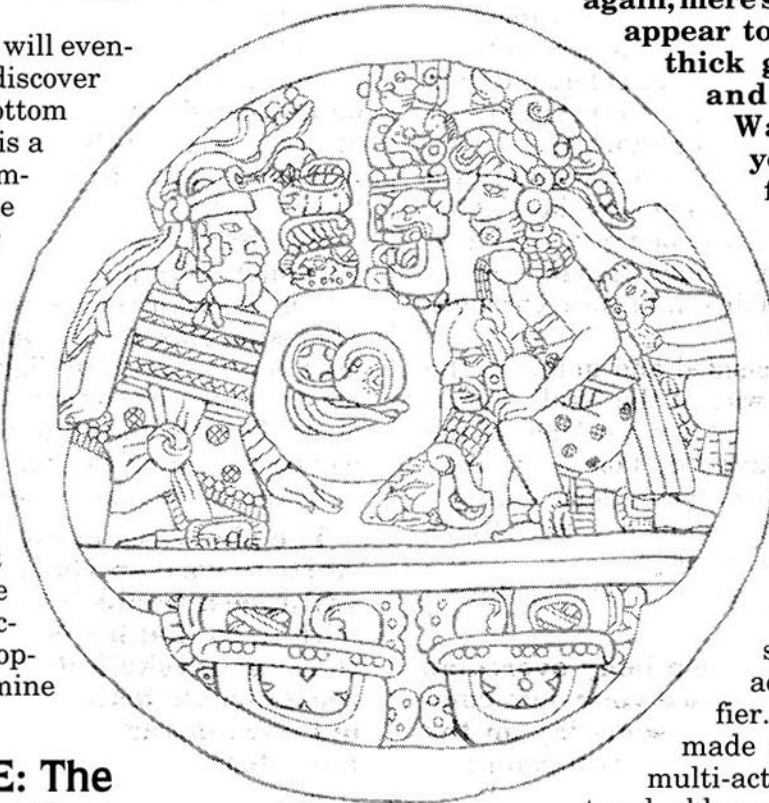
Any character who can make an Endurance roll versus a DN of 23 can act with a -4 modifier. This roll must be made each round (as a multi-action), or the character doubles over in pain again.

Anyone who manages to attack Creighton finds out the Father of Skulls is merely a phantasm; an illusion or ghost.

The Father of Skulls stops walking, and begins laughing ... a slow, steady laugh that rises in pitch and finally echoes throughout your ears. A tight pain lances through your breast, and you can barely avoid screaming.

Psychic Battle

Creighton has engaged in a form of psychic combat with the characters, and it is one that, thanks to the Crystal Skull, they should be



destined to lose. The Crystal Skull merely facilitates the attack, providing an “arena” of sorts, as well as giving the attacker a weapon while leaving the victims defenseless.

This combat takes the form of an Attribute battle. Creighton rolls his *faith*: *Crystal Skull* versus each party member’s Confidence, own *faith* focus, or *willpower*. Characters may only declare an *active defense* (thanks to the Skull) if they can beat the Endurance DN listed above. The result points of the attack are read on the “Damage” column of the Success Chart as “spiritual damage.” Creighton will attack each adventurer once, or until he manages to damage that character, and then move on. Spiritual damage acts just like regular damage — it will kill a character.

Should an adventurer somehow generate a defensive total higher than Creighton’s, the reversal of damage does not occur. The Crystal Skull is powerful enough to make certain that Creighton remains unharmed throughout the battle.

While this is one-sided and unfair to the party, such is the way of the Skull. Fortunately, it will not last for too long. If the adventurers still have Life Points or cards, they should survive with only some damage. Of course, if someone is killed ... well, that’s the peril of the supernatural.

Read or paraphrase the following during an attack:

As you feel your own body overcome by sharp agony, you see your own companions equally beset; some lay on the ground, writhing in obvious torment.

The Serpent Strikes!

Thankfully for the characters, they are not alone in this combat; they have pledged their services to the House of the Serpent, and Kukulkán will assist them in their hour of need against the Skull.

In the midst of combat against the Father of Skulls, the characters that had engaged in the bloodletting ritual at Xibalba will feel their scars burning. Looking at their palms, they will see the scar erupting in a geyser of flame toward the heavens. They will feel renewed, and any and all damage taken from Creighton’s attack will be restored. At this point, begin the psychic combat anew, but with the following conditions:

- Characters can now attack the Father of Skulls in the same manner they were attacked (a Confidence or *faith* battle).
- The Father of Skulls will take damage normally.
- The adventurers no longer have to resist the pain attack with their Endurance. The House of Serpents has removed that obstacle.

The only benefit which Creighton still has is sort of a “desperation” effort by the Crystal Skull. By pouring more energy into Creighton, it will allow him to attack each character *simultaneously*, and it will also allow him to mount an *active defense* every round without a multi-action penalty. So, even though he is outnumbered, the Crystal Skull allows him to attack each character without any negative modifier *and* roll for his own defense against their attacks.

But numbers will be the advantage. Creighton will realize, soon enough, that he is losing (unless, of course, he gets really lucky). The Skull, alas, is a demanding master. One does not use the Skull lightly, and one does not draw upon its powers without the promise of sacrifice. If it starts to appear that Creighton will be that sacrifice, then so be it.

As the battle rages on, read the following:

The phantasm of the Father of Skulls starts to weaken visibly; his skull-mask will appear to sink into his skin, merging with it, so that his face is nothing more than a gaunt skull-like face, with vaguely recognizable features. Finally, he cries out one long agonizing scream, and the mist clears ...

The characters are “back” in the chamber, returned from their enforced trance. Anyone who had engaged in the bloodletting ritual at Xibalba will now see that their palms have healed into perfect scars; the bandages appear to have actually burned off.

Allow the characters a chance to examine the secret door and discover the opening mechanism. Within the tunnel, they will find the Father of Skulls, collapsed in a heap. When they remove his mask, they will finally learn that the Father of Skulls was Peter Creighton.

Read or paraphrase the following:

Creighton’s face and body appear swol-

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len and discolored. Examination proves him to be dead, his heart stopped. His face is drawn into a gaunt cry of pain, his mouth open, his eyes rolled back into his head. His entire body starts to remind you of the wounds caused by a snake bite, but you are unable to find puncture marks anywhere that you might search. Rafael looks down dispassionately at Creighton and says "Kukulán has passed judgement on the House of Skulls."

SCENE TEN: Aftermath

The Situation

Standard. The adventure might seem to be concluded, but it has not ... just yet. There are still a few minor matters to take care of.

Read or paraphrase the following:

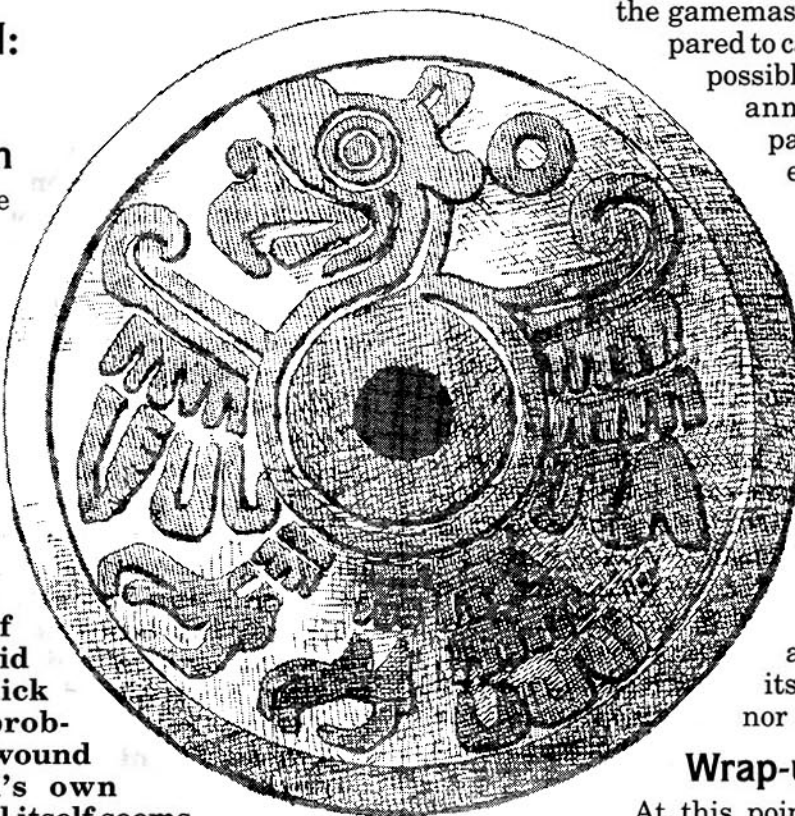
Rafael pries the Skull out of Creighton's rigid grasp. It is slick with blood, probably from the wound in Creighton's own palm. The Skull itself seems to grimace in delight at the events it has caused. Wiping the blood from the Skull's surface, he hands the Skull to you. "Take it from here," he begs. "It must leave British Honduras, Central America, even this entire western hemisphere. Its secrets, I fear, are known to too many who can take advantage of its awful power."

Rafael will go so far as begging the characters to take it back to Europe. There, he feels, the Skull can be better guarded; now that it has been stolen once, it will be more securely watched, and there are fewer individuals in

Europe who will know of the Crystal Skull's true value.

If any characters want to dispose of it in any fashion (e.g., dropping it in a volcano, sinking it in an ocean, etc.), Rafael will remind the party of the legends that anyone who tried to destroy the Skull has come to a catastrophic end. Rosemary, now conscious, will agree with him and will ask the characters to accompany her to England, where it will be returned to Frederick Mitchell-Hedges.

Unfortunately, this is a threat that the gamemaster should be prepared to carry out as fully as possible. While outright annihilation of the party might be a bit extreme, the gamemaster should ensure that any attempts to destroy the Crystal Skull meet with at the very least, failure, and at the very worst, catastrophe. Finding a method to destroy the Skull might be a worthy adventure in and of itself, and not a minor afterthought.



Wrap-up

At this point, the party will probably be interested in leaving the temple. Any wounds will probably be tended to, including Rosemary's — she will be *moderately wounded*.

Outside the pyramid, the party will find a few wounded members of the House of the Serpent gathered at the foot of the pyramid. The majority of the warriors for the House of the Serpent will be dead, but on the other hand the House of Skulls will have been successfully routed. Most of its members will also be dead, while the rest fled into the woods. Without strong leadership and without the Crystal Skull, it is unlikely that the

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House of Skulls will be resurrected at any point.

Rafael will escort the party back to Rosemary's home. He will be undecided about his own role in the future; with the Crystal Skull "recovered" and the House of the Skulls routed, his next course of action is unclear. He will certainly be involved in British Honduras' independence movement — that much is clear. The rest of his involvement in the adventure will depend upon the characters. He will be present to see them off, and if they ever return to British Honduras he will certainly be of assistance to them.

Upon returning to Belize, the party will find much of the city active despite the late hour. Stopping anyone on the street, they will learn that a number of individuals attempted attacks on prominent British offices and officers, but were easily defeated. The authorities are on their way to discovering the location of the final weapons stockpiles as well.

Rosemary will contact Mitchell-Hedges almost immediately upon reaching her home, and passage will be booked for England the next day: flight to Mexico City, and then another flight from Mexico City to London.

Of course, this could easily segue to another adventure in England, if the gamemaster so desires. Mitchell-Hedges is willing to pay for the entire party's trip to London and then back to their home cities thereafter. In England, any number of adventures could occur, from recovering King Arthur's lost sword to a run-in with Druids ... not to mention anyone else who wants to test the power of the Crystal Skull ...

Epilogue

One final scene should occur, to conclude the scenario. This scene does not have any real bearing on the course of the adventure,

but it still has merit nonetheless. This scene should occur after the Skull has been returned to its current "owner." If the party has somehow managed to destroy the Skull, this scene can happen nonetheless; either way, it adds a final air of mystery to the Skull.

On the party's return trip home — asleep on the plane, in their cabins on a ship, whatever method they choose — a final dream comes to them. Read or paraphrase the following:

Your dreams are murky, disturbed and filled with a hazy crimson cloud and the din of men's screams. Suddenly, a single high-pitched chime is heard, and your vision clears.

In your dream, you are soaring above a familiar but unidentifiable countryside; your vision focuses closer to the ground, and you see columns of tanks and motorcycles, units of men in dark uniforms, and a red and black eagle-crested banner fluttering above them.

A flash of light, and another chime:

You see a modern city, any European city: a conflagration, buildings afire, centuries of history burning to the ground.

A flash of light, and another chime:

You see a fenced enclosure, filled with rows of gaunt corpses, the horror dawning on you that they are not corpses, but barely living humans, dressed in grey rags and striped uniforms, bleak eyes staring heavenward for an answer to their prayers ...

A flash of light, and another chime:

You see the Crystal Skull, its perpetual grimace now a grin of delight ...

The Crystal Skull is, of course, in Europe, where far more bloodshed awaits. Its destiny is inescapable. It has been consecrated in blood, and a world of bloodletting awaits it.

Chapter Six

Face of Destruction

Adventure Background

"Face of Destruction" is set in Guatemala in 1937. The adventure focuses on a magical jade mask that is sealed inside a pyramid in the ruined Mayan city of Tikal. The location of the mask is revealed by an inscription on a stone monument, now broken into three pieces. The characters find themselves in conflict with opposing factions from the Spanish Civil War, one of which wants to locate the mask and use it in the war. The characters must figure out which faction (if any) to support, and they must also decide whether or not the mask should be unearthed and used.

Act One : Troubled Waters

SCENE ONE: Getting Started

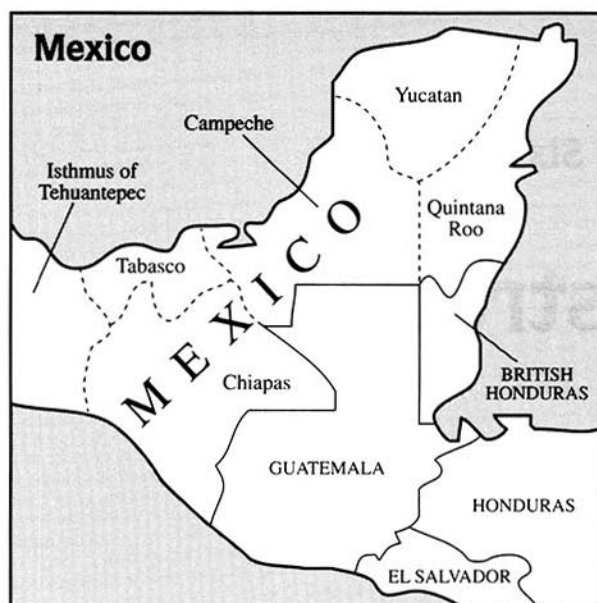
The Situation

Standard. The characters can begin this adventure in any large city, preferably one with a prestigious museum, art gallery, or university with which one of the characters is connected as an archaeologist, curator, or professor. Otherwise, the institution is the Museum of the Primitive Arts in Washington, D.C.

The institution will soon be mounting a special exhibition that will feature a collection of funerary art from around the world, entitled "Voices From Beyond the Grave." The centerpiece will be a recent find by archaeologist Sylvester G. Oberley, whose team is conducting excavations in Uaxactun (pronounced "wah-shack-toon"), a ruined Mayan city in northern Guatemala. Oberley recently unearthed a fragment of a stela — a carved stone monument erected to commemorate an important event in the life of a Mayan noble.

Newspapers describe the fragment as about one meter wide, half a meter thick, and 1.5 meters long. It represents approximately the top third of the stela and shows a man wearing an elaborate feather headdress. Preliminary analysis of the inscription that runs down one side of the stela indicates that this is Smoking Frog, a war leader from the nearby city of Tikal (pronounced "tee-call"), whose army conquered Uaxactun in A.D. 378. The inscription shows that Smoking Frog was buried in Tikal inside a pyramid that ... The glyphs break off at this point.

The stela fragment is being shipped to the museum aboard the *Pacifico*, a Mexican freighter that carries produce for the United Fruit Company. A few days after the ship departs Puerto Barrios, Guatemala, it myste-



riously disappears in calm weather after making a brief and somewhat confusing distress call. According to newspaper reports, an oil slick was found in the area where the *Pacifico* was thought to have gone down, but no bodies or life rafts were spotted. It is presumed that the stela fragment now lies on the bottom of the ocean.

The Action

The museum is devastated by the loss. If one of the characters is employed there, he or she is asked to travel to Guatemala, locate Oberley at his dig, and tell him the bad news. The character must then arrange for another item from the dig to be the new centerpiece of the exhibit.

Characters with other professions can also be drawn into the action. A private investigator might be asked to look into the loss for insurance purposes, travelling to the dig to question Oberley about the dollar value of the lost stela fragment. Because the trip involves a hike through the Guatemalan wilderness, a soldier of fortune or ex-soldier might be asked to go along to provide protection. It is also possible that a reporter might be intrigued by the mysterious sinking of the freighter and want to follow up on the story. The journalist's editor suggests interviewing Oberley for his reaction to the artifact's loss.

A gangster might speculate that the sinking was intended to cover up the theft of the stela — and might decide that the black market antiquities business must be highly profitable. Perhaps the gangster should pay a visit to Oberley's dig to see if other stela fragments are available for the taking ...

The Sinking

The newspaper reports on the sinking contain a transcript of the *Pacifico's* distress signal. The mayday call was partially obscured by static, but sections of it could be understood. The transcript reads:

"Mayday! Mayday! This is the freighter *Pacifico*. We have been hit by a ... taking on water through the hole in our hull ... were forced to come to a halt when an Italian ... spotted a periscope earlier ... our cargo and ... some of them spoke Spanish and wore red berets ... rest of the crew has been ... ship listing violently to starboard ... shock in the leg, so I can't get to the life... *Madre de dios*, she's rolling over! Mayday! Mayday! Can anybody hear m..."

END OF TRANSMISSION.

The story behind the distress signal is that the *Pacifico* was stopped by an Italian naval submarine carrying Spanish Nationalists — rebels fighting Spain's republican government. The Spaniards boarded the freighter, machine gunned the crew, and stole the stela fragment. The sub then torpedoed the freighter and submerged, not realizing that the *Pacifico's* radio operator was still alive.

It is common knowledge that the Italians are involved in the Spanish civil war; the first Italian "volunteers" arrived in Spain in December of 1936 to fight on the side of the

Nationalists. Even though Mexico is supporting the other side in the war, it doesn't make sense for an Italian submarine to venture into the Gulf of Mexico to attack a civilian freighter carrying a cargo of tinned fruit to an American port.

Characters who make the connection with the Spanish civil war and who do some *research* (difficulty 10) can deduce that the men in the red berets may be Carlists — a faction in the war that wants to restore the Spanish monarchy. Specifically, the Carlists wish to restore the descendants of Carlos de Borbón, whom they believe should have ascended the throne in 1833. The Carlists want to turn Spain into a theocracy ruled by an elite of “warrior priests.” The red beret is an important part of their militia uniform, as is a badge depicting the Catholic “sacred heart,” which they sew onto the left breast of their jackets. The Carlists call this medallion a “bullet stopper” and believe it will protect them on the battlefield. The Carlists also go by the name of the Society of the Exterminating Angels.

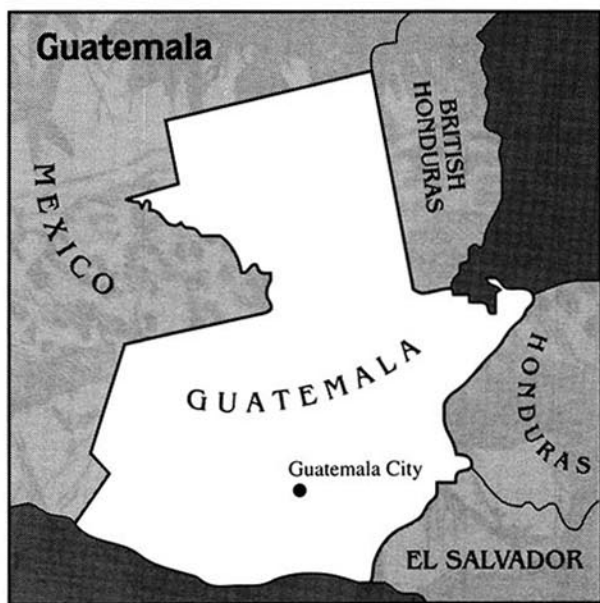
Cut To ...

The gamemaster should ask the players how they intend to get to Guatemala. The precise location of Oberley's dig is not known, but the starting point for finding it is a small town called Flores, situated on Lake Péten-Itzá. After allowing the players time to provision themselves, cut to Act Two.

Act Two: Jungle Journeys

The ruined city of Uaxactun is located about forty kilometers from Guatemala's northeastern border with Mexico. The usual way to get there is to travel by boat to Puerto Barrios or to Belize City in neighboring British Honduras (Belize). From these ports it's a journey of approximately 300 kilometers or 240 kilometers respectively along dirt roads to Flores. Alternatively, characters might fly to Guatemala City, then make their way by car or truck nearly 515 kilometers to Flores.

The last 48 kilometers of the journey (from the eastern tip of Lake Péten-Itzá to the archaeological site) are along a trail through dense jungle. The characters will need to hire a local guide in order to find the site, which



can only be reached on foot or by mule; the journey takes approximately thirteen hours on foot or eight hours by mule. The site can be spotted from the air as a series of low green humps (vegetation-shrouded pyramids), but there is no place for an aircraft to land.

Should the gamemaster desire, the journey can be spiced up with a jaguar attack (use the tiger statistics on page 61 of the *World of Indiana Jones WorldBook*) or by an encounter with spider monkeys who try to steal the players' food (use the monkey statistics on page 59 of the *WorldBook*).

SCENE ONE: Encounters In Flores

The Situation

Standard. Flores is a small town on a wide lake known as Péten-Itzá. The town has dirt roads, wooden sidewalks, and few conveniences aside from a general store that caters to local farmers. The local Indians farm maize (corn), beans and squash in much the same manner that their Mayan ancestors did, and in fact still speak Mayan as their first language. Many also speak Spanish; few speak English.

The local guides are all Mayan Indians dressed in traditional peasant clothing — white pants and shirts tied with brilliantly

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colored sashes, sandals, and wide-brimmed straw fedoras. Guides can be hired for the equivalent of 10 cents per day. Renting a mule costs 25 cents per day. Unfortunately, if the characters try to rent one, they are told that no mules are currently available.

The Action

Each character involved in making the arrangements for a local guide should make a *perception* check. The character with the highest total notices that another person is seeking to enlist the services of a guide to view “*los ruinas*.” The fellow speaks excellent Spanish; a *language: Spanish* skill (difficulty 8) enables a character to recognize the accent as being that of a Spaniard, rather than that of a Latin American. Read aloud or paraphrase:

The man is in his mid-twenties. A cloth cap hides shaggy brown hair, and he wears plain brown trousers and a white shirt, open at the neck. His walking boots are splashed with dried mud. He holds a cigarette in yellow-stained fingers and glances at you with dark, intelligent eyes.

If the characters talk to the man, he introduces himself as Raoul Martinez, a “tourist” visiting Guatemala. If the characters do not approach Raoul themselves, he takes the initiative and strikes up a friendly conversation with them. He is quite talkative and speaks excellent English, which he says he learned while studying political science in London. He asks what they are doing in Flores, expressing a keen interest if they mention Sylvester Oberley’s archaeological dig — although he pretends not to recognize the name.

“Are you acquaintances of this man?” Raoul asks. “Do you think Señor Oberley would let me tour the archaeological site?” He politely asks the characters if they will take him along, but does not insist on accompanying them.

Raoul says that he has spent the last six months touring the backroads of Central America. “Flores is the biggest town I’ve visited in quite some time.” He would like to return to his native Spain but is unable to do so, due to the civil war that is raging there. The Nationalists — whom he refers to as “those filthy fascists” — are besieging his

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home town of Madrid. Yes, he has family there, but he is confident that they are all right: "The Republicans shall not let the fascists into the city. 'They shall not pass' is their battle cry. My family will be safe." He watches the characters closely after saying this. He is trying to determine whether they are Nationalist sympathizers — or worse yet, agents of the Carlists.

At this point, the gamemaster should ask the characters to make *deduction* checks (difficulty 8). Success allows the character to realize the following:

Throughout 1936, volunteers from America, Canada and Britain were signing up for the International Brigades — foreign volunteers who fought in the Spanish civil war on the side of the Republicans. The characters either know somebody who signed up — or may have thought about joining the International Brigades themselves. They have seen Republican recruiting literature published one month ago in which the slogan of Madrid's defenders was first reported. They realize that anyone who is touring the backroads and who has been out of touch with events in Spain would not know the current slogan.

If questioned, Raoul covers by saying that he was recently in Guatemala City and telegraphed his family to make sure they were all right. He makes this lie sound reasonable enough, but there is one more clue. Raoul carries with him a pack of *Gusto Cigarrillos* — a brand of cigarettes available only in Spain. He's a heavy smoker, so it's likely that he'd have run out of cigarettes after travelling for "months." The characters must specifically state that they are inspecting a cigarette — either one offered to them by Raoul (it tastes different from the cigarettes they're used to) or one he's discarded — before receiving this clue.

Raoul's Real Background

In fact, Raoul has just arrived in Guatemala from Spain. He is one of seven anarcho-syndicalists (anarchists fighting on the side of the Republicans) who have come to Guatemala for the same reason that the characters have — to seek out Oberley's dig.

In the years leading up to the Spanish civil war, a number of attacks were made on

churches in Madrid as various left-wing factions challenged the dominance of the Catholic church. Raoul participated in one such arson attack on a church in 1931. As he lit the match, however, his eye was caught by a thin, leather-bound book that looked to be quite old. Thinking he might be able to sell it, Raoul hid the book under his coat. When he later took it to an antiquities dealer, he was shocked to learn how valuable it was.

Bound inside the leather cover was a previously unpublished chapter by the Franciscan friar Diego de Landa, who had published a treatise on Mayan customs and history in the 1560s. This unpublished chapter outlined the history of Uaxactun and described Smoking Frog's conquest and destruction of that city. The victory was attributed to a magical device — clearly an element of pure myth, or so Raoul thought.

The manuscript was so rare that it would be impossible to sell quietly. And so Raoul tucked it away and submerged himself in the revolutionary struggle. But in recent months, when perusing an American newspaper, he came across an article on the Museum of the Primitive Arts' upcoming exhibit and his eye was caught by the name Smoking Frog. A few days later, he read about the disappearance of the stela fragment and figured out the meaning of the *Pacifico's* distress signal. Clearly the Nationalists took the myth of a magical device that could level a city much more seriously — seriously enough, in fact, to sink a ship to obtain a stela fragment that described Smoking Frog's final resting place.

And so Raoul and his comrades have come to Guatemala in an attempt to thwart the Carlist's plans. They arrived in Flores just a few hours before the characters did and are now trying to arrange for guides to take them to Uaxactun. They wish to travel by mule, and it is taking the locals some time to assemble the twelve mules needed to carry the seven anarchists, two guides, and the Spaniards' "camp supplies" (which contain not only food and bedding but also rifles, and several sticks of dynamite).

Raoul's companions are camped in tents by Lake Péten-Itzá (hence Raoul's muddy boots). As soon as he finishes talking with the characters, Raoul sneaks away to the tents to

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warn his companions that others are interested in the Uaxactun site. Even if the characters' reactions have convinced Raoul that they are not Nationalist operatives, he is worried and tells his companions to be on their guard.

The characters can follow Raoul to the camp by using their *stealth* to beat his *perception*. If he notices them, he changes direction, pretending to be "going for a stroll" by the lake and putting off his return to the tents until after dark.

The characters can also locate the anarchist camp by asking the locals if any other foreigners are in Flores. The Indians can tell the characters that seven *gringos* (including Raoul) are camped by the lake, 1.5 kilometers east of town. "They're the ones who have hired all the mules."

Only if the characters specifically ask do the locals tell them that another Spanish-speaking *gringo* was in town about two weeks ago. The man said he needed a guide, but asked "strange questions." If pressed, the locals say the man wanted to hire someone who knew how to operate a camera. And no, the *gringo* was not wearing a red beret, but he did have a *corazón de Cristo* (heart of Christ) sewn onto his jacket.

Cut To ...

If the characters' suspicions were not aroused, they may let Raoul accompany them to Uaxactun. He plays the part of the fascinated tourist, only dropping this cover when the anarchists raid the site. If this is the case, cut to Scene Three.

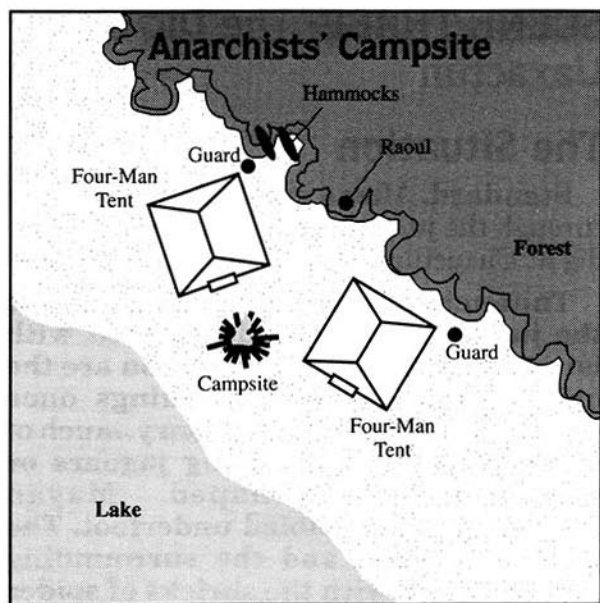
If, however, the characters follow Raoul or learn through their enquiries of the presence of a group of foreigners and want to investigate, cut to Scene Two instead.

SCENE TWO: Anarchists' Campsite

The Situation

Dramatic. When the characters arrive at Flores, the anarchists are camped just outside of town. Early the next morning, the anarchists set out for Uaxactun by mule. To avoid being spotted by the characters, they take a less used (and slightly longer) trail and

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set up camp a kilometer or two from the archaeological site. They raid the dig at Uaxactun the next morning, just before dawn.

The characters may encounter the anarchists' camp either at Flores or after reaching Uaxactun. In either case, it is laid out in the same manner.

During the day they spend waiting in Flores while Raoul arranges for guides, his six comrades wait at the camp, playing cards beside the lake. Their rifles are hidden just inside the tents in their bedrolls. The men are engrossed in their game and thus suffer a -3 penalty to their *perception*.

At night (either in Flores or in the jungle near Uaxactun) the two canvas tents each contain two sleeping men who only wake up if there is a loud noise or if the alarm is raised. Their rifles are close at hand. Two more men stand guard outside, carrying rifles and hidden by darkness. Nearby, Raoul has stepped out into the jungle to have a smoke; the red glow of his *cigarrillo* gives away his position. Two Native guides sleep in hammocks strung between nearby trees.

From inside one of the tents comes a faint yellow glow. Shadows on the wall of this tent show the still forms of the men sleeping inside.

The Action

To sneak into the camp, the characters must make a *stealth* check versus the *percep-*

tion of each anarchist who is awake. If the characters are spotted, the alarm will immediately be raised. The anarchists attempt to capture and question intruders, but will only use their rifles if the characters attack. Captured characters will be held prisoner until after the raid on the archaeological site, then will be set free.

Anarchists (7)

AGILITY 8

Dodge 10, melee combat 9, stealth 10, unarmed combat 10

DEXTERITY 8

Fire combat 10 (rifle 12)

ENDURANCE 8

STRENGTH 8

TOUGHNESS 9

INTELLECT 9

Demolitions 10, first aid 10, perception 10

MIND 9

CONFIDENCE 10

Willpower 12

CHARISMA 8

Persuasion 12

Life Points: 3

Equipment: Old fashioned Swiss Schmidt Rubin M1911 bolt action rifles, damage value 18, ammo 6, range 5-15/50/150/250. The anarchists can also fight with their machetes (damage value STR+3). As a group, the anarchists have 10 sticks of dynamite. Each stick is set with a 10-second fuse and has a damage value of 23. These are not intended to be used as weapons but in a pinch may be lit and thrown like grenades.

Description: The anarchists all speak Spanish as a first language but can speak English, albeit with a heavy accent. Their high *willpower* comes from a belief in their anarchist cause; their *persuasion* takes the form of criticisms of the capitalist system and strident lectures about the strength of the proletariat, the power of a general strike, and the superiority of a decentralized, anarchic political "system."

Inside the Tents

The tent that is illuminated with the faint glow (a lantern turned down very low) contains a folding table on top of which has been placed the book that Raoul found in the church.

The inside front cover is inscribed with the words: "Relato de los Mayas, Friar Diego de Landa, 1562." Read aloud or paraphrase:

A book with a cracked leather binding lies open on a folding table. A lantern, its wick turned down low, casts a yellow glow over age-stained pages. The pages of the book are filled with handwriting in script that seems to be an archaic form of Spanish. In the margins are tiny illustrations drawn in ink and hand-tinted. These show a pyramid coming to pieces in what seems to be an explosion. An Indian in a feathered headdress, his face painted green, holds a ceremonial flint blade above his head.

Inside the book is a piece of paper on which words have been typed. The typewritten note is in Spanish. It reads:

"And Smoking Frog demolished and threw down the buildings of Uaxactun. Thousands died that day when he directed his glance in their direction. And for his valor, Smoking Frog was named ahau (king) of Uaxactun. He ruled the city for 18 tuns (years), and upon his death his body was returned to Tikal for burial. That which the gods had given him, the magical device that reduced the city of Uaxactun to rubble, was buried with the great ahau. For is not jade the currency of the dead? Let no man disturb the resting place of Smoking Frog, lest the magic that sleeps there trigger the fifth great destruction before its allotted time."

Cut To ...

If the characters discovered the campsite while the anarchists are still at Flores, cut to Scene Three. If they visit the campsite after the anarchists' raid, cut to Scene Five.

SCENE THREE: The Dig at Uaxactun

The Situation

Standard. After a gruelling 13 hour hike through the jungle, the characters reach the dig at Uaxactun. Read aloud or paraphrase:

The ancient Mayan city is all but lost to the jungle; high mounds covered with large trees and thick vegetation are the only indications that buildings once stood here. Crumbling masonry, much of it decorated with snarling jaguars or intricate, block-shaped Mayan hieroglyphs, is tumbled underfoot. The heat is intense, and the surrounding jungle echoes with the shrieks of spider monkeys and the raucous cries of colorful birds. Two dozen sweating Indian workers labor with pickaxe, shovel, and saw to clear away vegetation and debris from the face of a steeply sloping pyramid.

The Action

The characters are greeted by Sylvester Oberley. Read aloud or paraphrase:

A man in his mid-forties turns to greet you. He wears a straw hat, heavy boots, suspenders, and white shirt with sleeves rolled up. A folding ruler pokes out of one shirt pocket, while his hands hold a trowel and brush.

"Hello!" he cries. "Visitors! You're certainly a rarity in these parts. What brings you to Uaxactun?"

The gamemaster should let the characters direct the interaction with Oberley. The archaeologist does not yet know about the loss of the stela fragment and is saddened by the news. "What a great loss for science," he says. If questioned about its dollar value, he calls the fragment "priceless" but eventually concedes that an antiquities collector might pay several thousand dollars for it.

Fortunately for the Museum of the Primitive Arts, Oberley unearthed a second fragment of the same stela just last week. It is

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about the same size as the first and is broken at top and bottom, suggesting that it is the middle piece. It weighs hundreds of pounds and so has been left lying where it was unearthed.

This fragment depicts the torso of a man wearing a jaguar-skin cape and other Mayan finery and has glyphs running down one side. Oberley can translate these for the characters. The inscription indicates that Smoking Frog's tomb lies inside a pyramid dedicated to Kukulcan, the feathered serpent god. The inscription begins to describe the entrance to the tomb, but is broken at that point.

Tikal is located 24 kilometers south of Uaxactun (about a five-hour journey on foot, or three hours by mule). Oberley surveyed the site in the 1920's, recording many of its hieroglyphic inscriptions and is familiar with its layout. If questioned, he can describe the pyramid in question — it has a distinctive staircase, the sides of which resemble two undulating serpents, flowing down either side of the stairs. At the base of each is a serpent head with a mane of feathers.

Oberley houses the characters overnight in

a shack made from hand-hewn boards. It contains living quarters and an office where smaller artifacts are stored. The office is filled with pieces of pottery, small statues, and carved lintels (door frames), all of them carefully numbered and stacked on shelves. There are also a number of rubbings — papers that have been placed over inscriptions and then rubbed with charcoal to reproduce the images and glyphs carved in the stone. Most have yet to be catalogued.

Oberley plays host to the characters that night, breaking out a bottle of whiskey to share with them. His cook — an Indian named Jesus (pronounced "hey-soos") prepares a traditional Guatemalan meal of cocoa-flavored chicken, cooked in banana leaves and served with beans. Oberley mentions that Jesus is much better than his last cook. "The fellow nearly poisoned me. I had to send him away." Jesus has a handlebar moustache and wears a silver crucifix on a chain around his neck. Oberley comments that he's "much better at cooking than at digging." Only if specifically asked will Oberley add that Jesus has been at the dig for just two weeks, and that the "food

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poisoning" incident occurred twelve days ago.

Oberley is an expert on Mayan mythology and enjoys discussing it. If the characters show him Friar de Landa's manuscript he gets very excited and explains its significance. He can also tell them about the "fifth great destruction." (If the characters do not have the book, Oberley tells them about the cycles of destruction in a generalized conversation about Mayan mythology.) Read the following aloud:

"The Mayans believed that the earth was regularly destroyed and created anew, once every 13 *baktuns* — a period of just over 5,125 years. The first destruction was caused by jaguars. The second came via the air and the third came by fire. The fourth destruction occurred in the year 3114 B.C., when a flood engulfed the earth. We know that destruction from the story of Noah and the ark. According to the Mayans, the fifth cataclysm will occur on Dec. 24, 2011, when our world will be destroyed by earthquakes."

Professor Sylvester G. Oberley

AGILITY 8

DEXTERITY 8

Fire combat (rifle 12).

ENDURANCE 8

STRENGTH 8

TOUGHNESS 9

INTELLECT 12

First aid 14, navigation 15, perception 16.

MIND 12

Cartography 14, language: Mayan hieroglyphs 18, language: Spanish 14, research 14, scholar: archaeology 18.

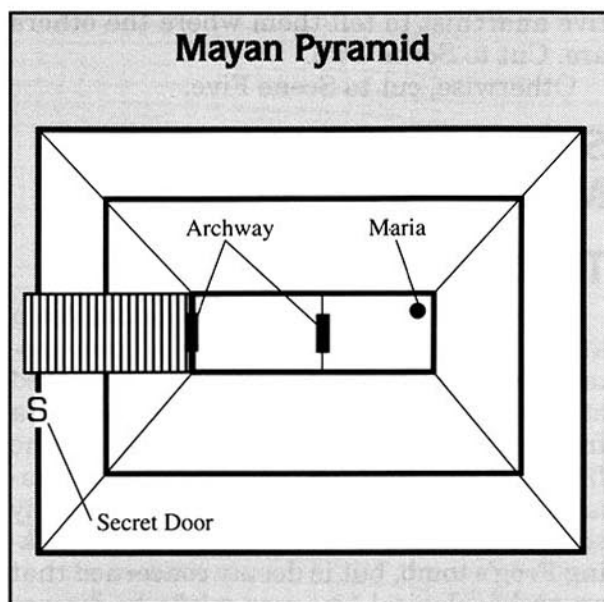
CONFIDENCE 9

CHARISMA 10

Life Points: 5

Equipment: Winchester lever-action rifle, damage value 21, ammo 5, range 5-15/50/150/250; various archaeological tools; camping gear.

Description: Professor Oberley has dedicated his life to the study of Mayan architecture and hieroglyphics. He is friendly but too busy to waste much time talking to non-archaeologists — Guatemala's rainy seasons limit his work and he tries to get as much surveying and excavation in as he can during the dry months.



Cut To ...

The gamemaster should wind the scene down with the characters going to bed that night; if they want to set out immediately for Tikal, Oberley dissuades them with tales of hungry jaguars prowling the jungle at night. Cut to Scene Four.

SCENE FOUR: Raid on Uaxactun

The Situation

Dramatic. The next morning, the anarchists stage a raid on the dig. It begins with an explosion — the anarchists use five of their sticks of dynamite to shatter the most recently discovered stela fragment into a thousand pieces. This done, they try to capture hostages at gunpoint and force them to excavate further in an attempt to find the base of the stela. (They plan to use their remaining five sticks of dynamite to destroy it, too.) Alternatively, they do the digging themselves, firing shots into the air to keep the characters and workers away.

The Action

The gamemaster may have to adjust the action slightly if a guard is placed on the stela fragment that night. If one of the Indian

workers is asked to keep watch, he has disappeared by morning (he was given a hefty bribe by the anarchists and told to leave for home). If it's the characters keeping watch, the anarchists stage a distraction; one of them allows the characters to see and perhaps even capture him, drawing them away, while others set the dynamite. The characters may return just in time to see the lit fuse — but too late to do anything but run from the impending explosion. Alternatively, if the characters do not yet suspect Raoul, he provides the distraction, calling them away to investigate some "mysterious lights." These turn out to be fireflies.

Ideally, the stela fragment should be destroyed. During the raid, the anarchists only fire upon the characters if attacked. They yell (in Spanish) slogans such as, "The power of the proletariat shall prevail! Long live the republic!"

Ultimately, the search for the missing stela fragment proves futile. The base is no longer in the immediate area where the upper two fragments were found. Frustrated, the anarchists slip away into the jungle to their camp, leaving their hostages tied hand and foot to prevent pursuit.

If any of the anarchists are captured, they can be questioned. The characters can pit their *interrogation* or *intimidation* skills against the anarchist's *willpower*, but a better route would be for the characters to convince their captive that they strongly support the Republican cause in the Spanish civil war. Perhaps one of the characters has a brother fighting with the International Brigades ...

Eventually, the anarchist tells the characters what he is doing in Guatemala. The gamemaster can summarize the information found in Raoul's "Real Background" section. The anarchist tries to persuade the characters to help him prevent the Carlists from obtaining the other stela fragments and locating the destructive magical item, which the Carlists are certain to use in the war.

Cut To ...

If the characters have not yet discovered the anarchists' camp, they can do so by using *tracking* (difficulty 8) to follow an anarchist back through the jungle, or may force a cap-



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tive anarchist to tell them where the others are. Cut to Scene Two.

Otherwise, cut to Scene Five.

SCENE FIVE: A Thief in Our Midst

The Situation

Standard. After things have settled down at the dig, the characters have a quiet moment to interact with Oberley. He is incensed at the “senseless destruction” of the stela fragment and regards the anarchists (once he finds out who they are) as “uneducated communist rabble.” He refuses to believe that any sort of magical item might be buried in Smoking Frog’s tomb, but is deeply concerned that an archaeological treasure might be forever destroyed if the tomb is opened by “amateurs.” He’s more than willing to accompany the characters to Tikal to make sure that this does not happen.

The Action

While the characters are interacting with Oberley, one of his workers rushes up to report that thieves have struck the excavation office. Oddly, instead of stealing valuable artifacts, the thieves took *los pinturas* — the charcoal rubbings. Every single one of them is gone.

Jesus is also missing. His hammock is still strung behind Oberley’s living quarters, but no one has seen the cook since the raid. He left a pack containing his belongings behind; inside is an expensive, Italian-made camera with an unexposed roll of film inside.

The explanation is that Jesus is an agent of the Carlists. Two weeks ago (before the second stela fragment was found) he sought work at the archaeological dig as digger. But he proved inept, breaking several artifacts. He knew that he was about to be fired and so he tried a ruse to stay on at the site. He put a mild toxin into Oberley’s food, causing the archaeologist to become violently ill after a meal. When Oberley fired his cook, Jesus volunteered to replace him.

The Carlists instructed Jesus to wait until the other pieces of the stela had been discovered, photograph them, and bring the film to

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a previously arranged location halfway between Uaxactun and Tikal. Jesus had not yet had an opportunity to take any photos when the raid took place. Afraid that the anarchists would shoot him if they learned he was working for their enemies, he panicked and ran. But he had the foresight to steal the rubbings, one of which contains an image of the glyphs on the second stela fragment.

Characters with the *tracking* skill can follow the route Jesus took through the jungle. (If none of the characters has this skill, one of their guides or one of the Indian workers at the dig site can help.) After following it south for about eleven kilometers, they will find Jesus' body. The cook's chest is stitched with bullets. Clearly he has been machine gunned; there are shell casings everywhere. He's been dead for an hour or two, at least.

There are also signs that someone has been camped out on this spot for several days: a bedroll, empty food tins, and cigarette butts litter the ground. The cigarettes are Spanish, but of a different brand (*Mejor Cigarrillos*) than those smoked by Raoul. The trail of this individual disappears into a stream after a few hundred meters. It is impossible to say which direction Jesus' killer went in.

Jesus lies on a heap of blood-splattered papers—the rubbings. If the characters search through these, have them make a *perception* check (difficulty 5). Success means the character realizes that the rubbing of the second stela fragment is missing.

If Oberley is with the characters, he makes a startling discovery while flipping through the rubbings. One shows the feet and lower robes of a human figure, and bears the name glyphs "Smoking Frog." It is of the bottom third of the stela!

A handwritten note in one corner of the paper indicates that the rubbing was taken from an unidentified stone fragment found half a mile north of the Uaxactun site, in the wall of an unidentified building. (The stela fragment was reused in ancient times by later Mayan architects.)

If Oberley is not present, any character who makes a *perception* check (difficulty 12) recognizes the rubbing for what it is. It will be impossible to read the glyphs, however, without the *language: Mayan hieroglyphics* skill.

The glyphs indicate that the entrance to Smoking Frog's tomb is gained "through Kukulcan's mouth."

Cut To ...

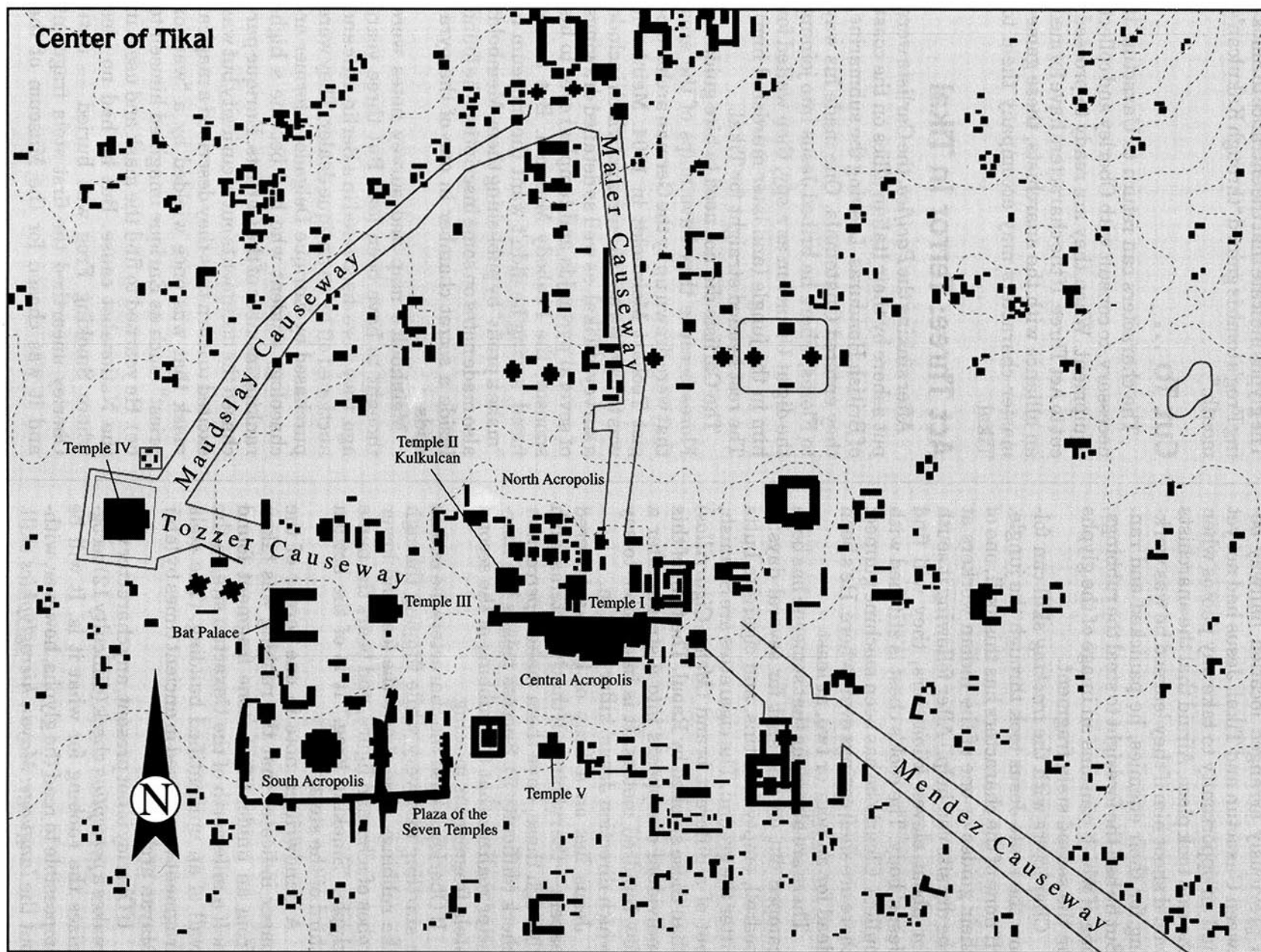
The characters can return to Uaxactun, if necessary, to consult with Oberley and collect equipment. When they are ready to proceed, cut to Act Three. If the characters have formed an alliance with the anarchists, these game-master characters may accompany them to Tikal.

Act Three: Terror In Tikal

After sinking the *Pacifico*, the Carlists were put ashore by their Italian allies on the coast of British Honduras. Leaving the submarine, they entered Guatemala. One made his way to Flores, where he bribed Jesus into joining the dig at Uaxactun as a spy, then waited for him in the jungle (and later murdered him). The rest headed straight for Tikal.

The Carlists did not need to hire guides in Flores because they have maps of the area that were drawn up by the German archaeologist Teobart Meinholdt in 1904. Meinholdt was to have turned these maps (which include a survey of Tikal, as well as detailed drawings of several pyramids and temples) over to his sponsor, the Peabody Museum. But he refused, saying he didn't want the museum to "make a profit" by publishing them. Meinholdt also made notes on some inscriptions he found inside a secret chamber in one of the pyramids.

Meinholdt's map and survey notes were thought to have been lost. But three years ago, they were discovered in a Berlin attic and auctioned off by an antique dealer. They were purchased by Enrique Delgado, a former archaeology student who had become a high-ranking member of the Carlists. Enrique purchased the documents out of curiosity but was excited to learn that they described a magical mask that was once wielded by a "warrior priest" (such as Enrique imagined himself to be). He yearned to find the mask and use it in the Nationalist cause. But he had no idea where Smoking Frog was buried—until Oberley unearthed the first stela fragment and it was chosen for the Museum of the



Primitive Arts exhibit. Enrique had to move quickly to intercept the fragment, which he was certain would reveal the location of the tomb to the world. When it proved only to give the location as "Tikal," Enrique took more subtle steps, planting a spy in Oberley's camp and travelling to Tikal himself to begin a systematic search for Smoking Frog's tomb.

SCENE ONE: The Secret Chamber

The Situation

Dramatic. The Carlists are encamped inside a rectangular structure atop one of the larger pyramids in the ruined city's central acropolis. Vegetation was cleared from the pyramid by explorers in the 1880s, but small shrubs still cover the sides and back of the partially ruined structure. The stairs on the front of the pyramid (its south face) are extremely steep — 90 narrow steps rise at a 60-degree angle — but they're the easiest route up. To climb the sides without stairs, a character must use the *climbing* skill (difficulty 12).

The rectangular structure at the top of the pyramid has two rooms, each six meters long but no more than two meters deep, joined by an archway at their midpoints. The entrance to these rooms is at the top of the stairs — an open doorway. At night it is guarded by two sentries, who listen for movement on the stairs (the tumbling of loose masonry, for example) and shine a flashlight into the darkness below if they hear anything. If they spot intruders they will shoot first and ask questions later.

Inside these two rooms, the Carlists have spread out bedrolls and camping gear. In the far room, they keep a prisoner — Maria, an Indian woman whom they kidnapped from a local farm. Unless she is rescued by the characters, Maria will be sacrificed by the Carlists in an effort to open Smoking Frog's tomb. She is bound hand and foot and has a gag in her mouth.

At the base of this pyramid, to the right of the staircase, is the secret chamber mentioned in Meinholdt's documents.

There are a dozen Carlists at Tikal, under

the command of Enrique Delgado. All wear the red beret and are well armed. They are not afraid to use their weapons. Their battle cry is "*Viva Cristorey!*" ("Long live Christ the king!"). Thanks to Jesus, they now know that Republican soldiers are in the area, and are keeping a careful watch for potential attackers.

Carlists (13)

AGILITY 9

Dodge 11, melee combat 11, stealth 10, unarmed combat 11.

DEXTERITY 9

Fire combat 11 (rifle 15).

ENDURANCE 10

STRENGTH 11

TOUGHNESS 11

INTELLECT 7

Perception 10.

MIND 7

CONFIDENCE 10

Intimidation 12, willpower 12.

CHARISMA 7

Life Points: 3

Equipment: Italian-made Mannlicher Carcano bolt-action rifles, damage value 21, ammo 6, range 5-15/50/150/250. Enrique has a Spanish-made Astra semi-automatic 9mm handgun, damage value 17, ammo 8, range 4-10/25/50/150.

Description: The Carlists all speak Spanish as a first language but can speak English, albeit with a heavy accent. They wear normal civilian clothes, decorated with the sacred heart medallion, army boots, and red berets. They carry themselves with haughty pride, believing they are chosen not only to serve the "true" Spanish monarchy, but also to serve God.

The Action

Due to the thick jungle that has overgrown this ancient city, it should be relatively easy for the characters to sneak up on the Carlists. If the characters are being really obvious in their approach, however, the gamemaster might want to surprise them with a patrol of two Carlists. Surprisingly, the Carlists shoot only to wound, aiming for the legs. The gunshots draw the attention of two other Carlists, who arrive within a minute (ten combat rounds). Should the Carlists win the fight,

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any characters who are captured are dragged away to the Carlists' camp atop the pyramid. They are first interrogated, then saved for the upcoming sacrifice.

Stealthier characters can follow the two Carlists on patrol back to their camp. Here (assuming it is daytime) two men in red berets and holding machine guns are standing on top of the pyramid. They are surveying the jungle below, alert for signs of movement. At the base of the pyramid, a man wearing a military officer's cap and black pants with a red stripe down the leg is studying a piece of paper with dark markings on it. This is Enrique. He is using his limited knowledge of Mayan hieroglyphics to try and puzzle out the inscription on the rubbing of the second stela fragment. After a moment or two he unrolls a large map (Meinholdt's) and consults it. Then he walks toward the base of the pyramid and shoves against one of the heavy stones to the right of the staircase. It slides open with a grinding noise, revealing a secret tunnel. Folding up his papers and placing them inside a leather pouch, he lights a lantern, shouts something to the men on top of the pyramid, then crawls inside.

Enrique remains inside the tunnel for half an hour. During this time, the characters may wish to sneak up on him by crossing the 18 meters of open space between the jungle and the base of the pyramid. To do so, they must pit their *stealth* skill against the *perception* of the Carlists on top of the pyramid; the characters suffer a -3 penalty due to the attentiveness of the guards.

The tunnel leading into the pyramid is 0.5 meters wide, 1.5 meters high, and 4.5 meters long. It leads to a narrow chamber that is 2 meters wide and 3 meters long. Enrique stands at one end of this room, engrossed in studying the mural painted on its wall. He will not notice characters who enter the tunnel unless they make a lot of noise. He has left the leather pouch containing the map lying near the mouth of the tunnel, just inside the room. The characters can easily steal it without him spotting them, but then must use their *stealth* skill a second time to slip away from the base of the pyramid and back into the jungle.

Should the characters attack Enrique, they gain surprise. They must knock him out within

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one combat round or he will yell for help to the guards outside. Because Enrique is inside the chamber his cries are muffled; the guards must use their *perception* (difficulty 14) to hear him. But each guard gets to make this check once on each combat round that Enrique is yelling. When they at last hear him, the guards charge down the steps (this takes three full combat rounds) and stand at the entrance to the tunnel with their machine guns, ordering those inside to come out. They do not shoot into the chamber if Enrique is alive. And yes, Enrique can be used as a hostage — but as soon as he is released or killed, the Carlists will be merciless in their pursuit of the characters.

Alternatively, the characters can wait until night to examine the secret chamber. (They're going to need a light source.) Opening the secret door quietly involves using *stealth* (difficulty 5); failure alerts the guards above, who use their flashlights to see what made the noise and shoot if they spot intruders on a *perception* check (difficulty 15).

When the characters at last look into the secret chamber, read aloud or paraphrase:

The soft yellow light of the lantern illuminates a room whose walls are painted with brilliant murals. On the wall to the left, a Mayan king in a jaguar-skin cape and brilliant blue quetzal feathers stands haughtily over bound captives, while musicians play flutes and drums. The king's face is painted green. Gods in elaborate headdresses look down as nobles perform ritual sacrifices, piercing their tongues with sharp spines.

On the wall opposite the tunnel, five scenes are painted. The first shows hundreds of jaguars tearing apart people, animals — even buildings. In the second scene, the sky over a village is hazy and grey. Skeletal corpses lie on the ground. The third scene shows houses and fields engulfed by fire. In the fourth scene, humans and animals splash in water that has engulfed a city. In the final scene, buildings are falling to pieces, collapsing and crushing people. In the background hangs a green sun with blank eyes and an open mouth.

On the wall to the right, a man clad in

a ghastly jumpsuit made from the flayed skin of a human being holds a green mask in one hand. In his other hand is a bloody heart. The landscape behind him is dark, except for a rosy sun half hidden by the horizon and a bright star. This wall is also painted with a number of Mayan hieroglyphs; one corner of the inscription has flaked away.

If Enrique is in the chamber, he is standing with his back to the tunnel, studying the sacrificial scene on the right-hand wall.

If Oberley is with the characters, he can translate the hieroglyphs. Otherwise, the characters can learn what the hieroglyphs say by reading Meinholdt's survey notes.

The mural (painted on the east wall) gives a clue as to when the sacrifice must be performed: in the morning, at sunrise, when the planet Venus can be seen in the eastern sky.

Meinholdt's Maps

Enrique carries Meinholdt's original maps and survey notes with him at all times. They are neatly folded and stored inside a leather pouch. The characters can obtain this pouch either by stealing it while Enrique is inside the secret chamber or by stealing it at night from the Carlists' camp at the top of the pyramid (a much riskier proposition). Alternatively, they could obtain the pouch by overpowering Enrique during the day — again, a risky proposition, since Enrique is always accompanied by two armed Carlists.

There are three maps inside the pouch. One is a general map of the region, on which the archaeological sites of Tikal and Uaxactun have been noted. The second is an overview of Tikal. Careful scrutiny of this map using *perception* (difficulty 5) will locate one pyramid that has the notation "Kukulcan" beside it. The third is a detailed sketch of this pyramid, with a mark that corresponds to the entrance of the secret chamber and the words "interesting inscriptions" written beside it in German.

The survey notes that accompany the maps include a translation of the hieroglyphs inside the secret chamber, as well as some notes by Meinholdt. The original notes are in German, but Enrique has scribbled a Spanish translation in the margins. Assuming that the char-

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acters read one of these languages (or can find someone who does), read the following aloud:

Translation of the Hieroglyphs: "In the fourth *tun* of Yax Moch Xoc's reign, Smoking Frog was given command of the forces of Tikal. To ensure his victory over Uaxactun, the priests gave him the Face of Destruction, one of the five that will trigger the close of our current cycle. With the powerful magics in this mask, Smoking Frog harnessed the powers of the earth itself, levelling the city of Uaxactun. He cast down its buildings and broke apart its mighty temples and pyramids; all that he glanced at was reduced to rubble. Truly, he was the greatest warrior priest of our time, and thus was he named *ahau* of Uaxactun.

"To honor Smoking Frog's victory, the Face of Destruction was buried with him, together with the usual funerary offerings. When the planets are aligned and the appointed day comes for the close of our current cycle, let the five masks be lifted from their resting places and delivered into the hands of the priests. To open the tomb where Smoking Frog lies, seek out the *chac mool* atop the pyramid that houses Smoking Frog. Fill its bowl with a still-beating human heart, and the way shall be made clear. The ritual must be performed when ..."

Remainder of text missing.

"Imagine! The tomb of a Mayan king, untouched for centuries and filled with archaeological treasures. Could one of

these jungle-shrouded mounds truly hold riches equal to the pyramids of Egypt? But does the tomb of Smoking Frog lie in Tikal or in Uaxactun? Which of the literally hundreds of pyramid mounds does it occupy? Yes, the *chac mool* is a clue — not every temple atop every pyramid houses the statue of a reclining man, holding a bowl on his stomach. But where to begin? It would take an army of workers a decade or more to cut back the jungle and find the right spot. And what if someone took the blood sacrifice seriously and attempted it? No rational person would use this

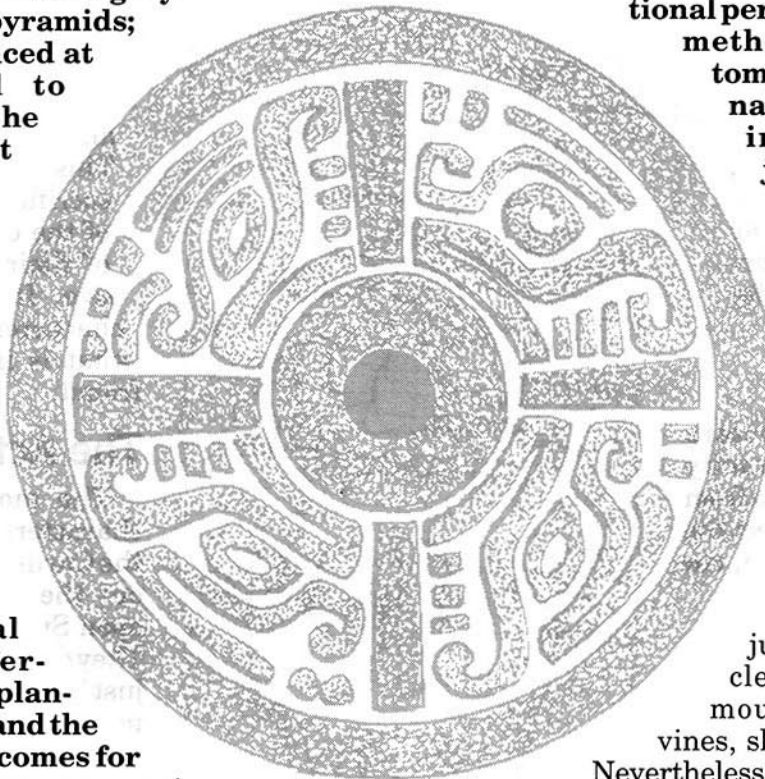
method to 'open' the tomb, just as no rational person believes in the mumbo-jumbo of a magical mask. But one can never predict human nature ..."

Pyramid of Kukulcan

The pyramid that houses Smoking Frog's tomb lies a mile to the north of the Carlists' camp. The jungle has not been cleared from it; the mound is covered in vines, shrubs — even trees.

Nevertheless it is recognizable due to its unique staircase, flanked with feathered serpents, the stone faces of which protrude from the encroaching vegetation. The pyramid is about 30 meters high and has steeply sloping sides.

Thanks to the rubbing from the second stela fragment, the Carlists have identified the tomb (it's clearly indicated on Meinholdt's map). Three of them, armed with machine guns, stand guard around the base of the pyramid. Their *perception* checks suffer a -3 penalty, due to the ample cover provided by the jungle.



Oberley is familiar with Tikal and can lead the characters to this pyramid. The entrance to Smoking Frog's tomb is through the mouth of the feathered serpent on the left. Human muscle power is not enough to open it.

Several sticks of dynamite could do the job, but the resulting rubble would need to be cleared away — a process that will take at least ten minutes. The explosion will also bring every Carlist in Tikal running. Two arrive each minute until all are present. If the characters win this battle, they can explore the pyramid at their leisure and find the sarcophagus. If the Carlists win the battle, the sacrifice is not necessary; they can clear the rubble, find the sarcophagus, and take the mask.

Cut To ...

Once the characters have had an opportunity to steal the documents from Enrique and/or inspect the Pyramid of Kukulcan, cut to Scene Two.

SCENE TWO: Sacred Hearts

The Situation

Dramatic. Thanks to the the rubbing from the second stela fragment, the Carlists know which pyramid houses Smoking Frog's tomb. The day after the characters arrive at Tikal, the Carlists attempt to open the tomb using a sacrifice, as described in the murals in the secret chamber. Unless the characters have captured or killed him, Enrique directs the sacrifice; otherwise, another of the Carlists steps in to take his place. And unless the

characters have freed her, the sacrificial victim is Maria. Alternatively, the Carlists may sacrifice another prisoner — perhaps a captured anarchist or even one of the characters. (If they have no prisoners they will need to capture one.)

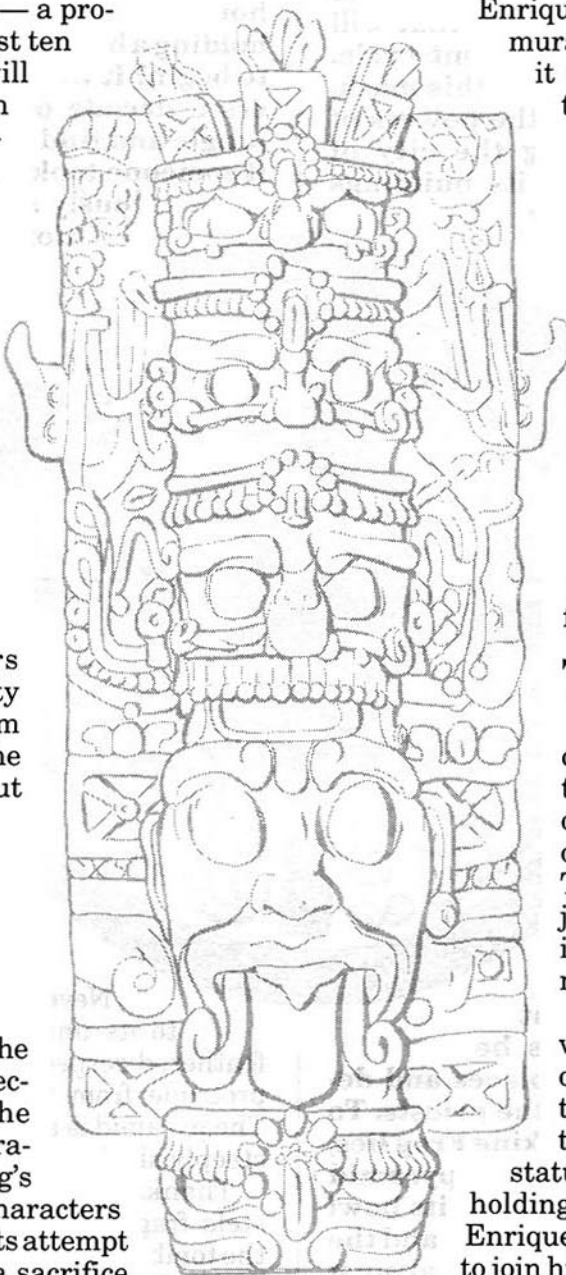
At the gamemaster's discretion, Enrique may have interpreted the mural incorrectly. He knows that it depicts Venus, but thinks the sacrifice must be carried out at sunset, rather than at sunrise. He sacrifices one prisoner on the evening that the characters arrive in Tikal — but with no effect. Realizing his mistake, he plans to sacrifice another the next morning. This "false start" to the sacrifice works best if one of the characters (or one of their allies) is a captive. It gives the other characters a preview of what is in store for their friend.

The Action

The morning after the characters arrive at Tikal, the Carlists prepare to carry out the sacrifice that will open Smoking Frog's tomb. They depart from their camp just before dawn with Maria in tow and head for the Pyramid of Kukulcan.

While the other Carlists wait below, Enrique and two other men climb to the top of the pyramid and clear away the vegetation, revealing the statue of a reclining *chac mool* holding a bowl on its stomach. Enrique then signals for the others to join him. They carry Maria to the top of the pyramid.

Unless the characters can stop the sacrifice, read the following aloud, altering the text if a different prisoner is being sacrificed:



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The Face of Destruction

Skill Used: Psionic manipulation

Difficulty Number: 10–15

Feedback Value: 20 per use

Effect Value: 35

Duration: Earthquake lasts for 1 second per magnitude, plus 10 seconds at full magnitude

Range: Sight

Cast Time: 1 second per point on the Richter scale

The mask lying on the corpse of Smoking Frog has the power to cause extremely violent earthquakes (of up to 8 on the Richter scale) in an extremely focused manner. The area to be affected can range from approximately 30 square meters (a small building) to 160 square kilometers (a medium-sized town). Outside of this area of effect, only minor tremors are felt.

This earthquake is focused and directed by the person wearing the mask, who must use the *psionic manipulation* skill to control it. Focusing on a single building has a difficulty number of 10, while focusing on an entire town has a difficulty number of

15. The effects are triggered by looking through the eye holes of the mask and concentrating. The quake continues for 10 seconds after the wearer has brought the earthquake up to the desired magnitude.

Any character looking through the eyes of the mask who does not have the *psionic manipulation* skill (in the world of Indiana Jones, this includes everyone) will trigger an uncontrolled earthquake centered upon the spot where that character stands. The magnitude of the earthquake is equal to the number of seconds the character holds the mask to his or her face. At 8+ seconds, the result is an extremely violent earthquake that topples trees, collapses buildings, and makes it impossible to stand or move. The earthquake ends 10 seconds after reaching the appropriate magnitude.

The Face of Destruction can be destroyed by ordinary means; jade is a hard stone, but the mask will break if smashed. Should all of the pieces be reassembled, however, the mask will function once more.

The dark-haired woman lies where she was tossed on the ground, in front of the stone statue. The man standing over her holds a bloody hunting knife before him and makes the sign of the cross. “*Viva Cristo rey!*” he shouts as the other men cheer. Then he places the other object that he is holding into the bowl that the statue holds. As the man rises from his grisly task, a low grinding noise fills the air. The men on top of the pyramid push closer as the statue begins to sink into the stone below it. They cluster around the statue, intent upon it as it begins its slow descent into the pyramid.

Not having seen the third stela fragment (and the completed text of the hieroglyphs), the Carlists think that the way into the pyramid lies through the statue. They are waiting for it to sink fully into the pyramid, revealing an opening (watching it reduces their *perception* by a penalty of -5). The statue sinks for

one full minute (six rounds).

The actual entrance, however, is through the mouth of the feathered serpent on the left side of the staircase. Here, a hole about 1.5 meters wide and 1 meter high is opening (again, over six rounds). If the characters are quiet and quick, they can reach this opening before the Carlists notice them. Within three rounds, it's large enough for someone to crawl inside. The serpent proves to be a hollow pipe; the floor is smooth and rises at about a 60-degree angle.

Smoking Frog's stone sarcophagus is hidden inside this pipe at the top of the pyramid. When the statue has sunk completely into the pyramid, a series of levers are tripped, releasing the sarcophagus. It slides down the inside of the pipe and out through the opening in the feathered serpent's mouth. Anyone inside the pipe at the time has two options: stop climbing and use the pipe as a slide to escape (this requires *acrobatics* (difficulty 5) or *Agility*

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(DN 12) or be crushed by the heavy stone sarcophagus (damage value 24).

When it's time for the sarcophagus to slide from the tunnel, read the following aloud:

All is silent for a moment or two, save for the faraway screech of a monkey in the jungle. Then you hear a loud rumbling noise. Something is sliding through the hollow body of the feathered serpent at tremendous speed!

In another instant, a sarcophagus bursts out of the mouth of the serpent and plows a furrow in the earth. The heavy thud of its landing jars the lid from it.

Inside the stone coffin lies a skeletal corpse. You see the glint of gold and the bright sea-green of a jade mask that completely covers the skeleton's face. The mask is carved from a single piece of jade, smooth but for the eye and mouth holes bored into it.

By the time the sarcophagus makes its appearance, the Carlists have realized that the way into the "tomb" of Smoking Frog does not lie through the depression created by the sinking statue. (In fact, there is no tomb at all, only the narrow tunnel designed to hold the sarcophagus.) Due to the noise it made in its descent, they spot the sarcophagus immediately and instantly recognize the jade mask as the object that they were looking for. They take whatever steps are necessary to prevent the characters from reaching the mask first — firing machine guns and racing

down the sides of the pyramid (it takes three rounds to reach the bottom). They fight an all-out battle to recover the mask; the characters must disable or kill all of the Carlists before this scene is over.

If anyone uses the mask (which triggers an earthquake), stones are dislodged from pyramids all around the characters, each of whom must *dodge* (difficulty 8) to avoid being hit by a large stone (damage value 20).

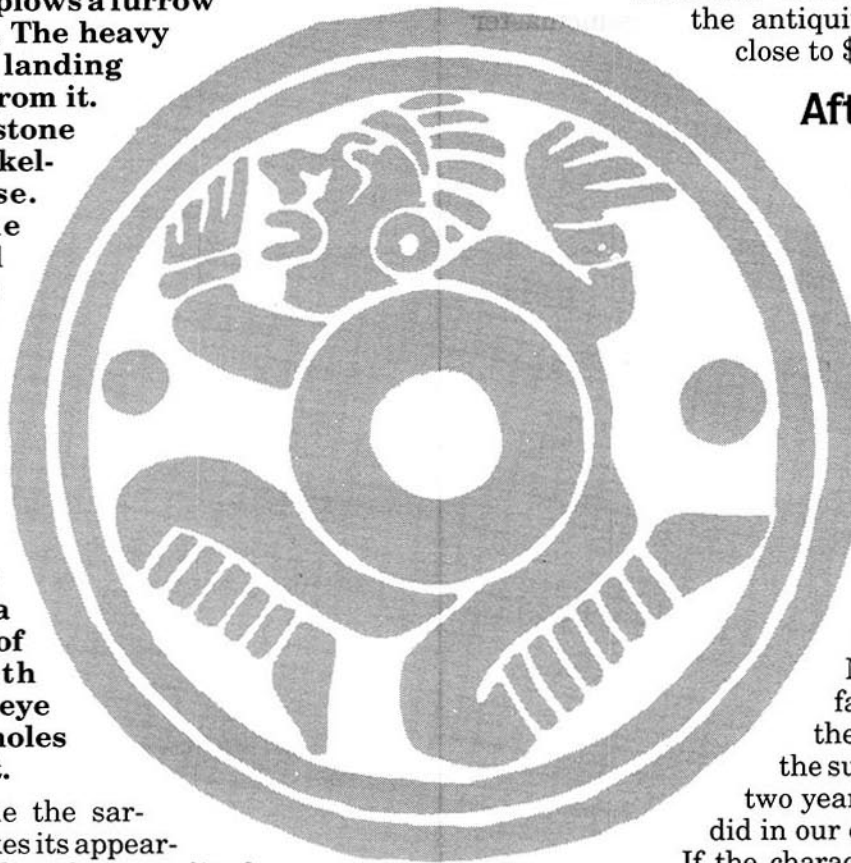
Inside the sarcophagus are two gold ear-plugs, a gold necklace, and two gold bracelets. These could be sold on the antiquities market for close to \$4,000 U.S.

Aftermath

If the Carlists succeed in grabbing the mask and getting away from the characters, they make their way back through the jungle and meet the Italian submarine. Returning to Spain, they use the mask to level Madrid. The city falls (literally) to the Nationalists in the summer of 1937 — two years earlier than it did in our own history.

If the characters capture the mask and defeat the Carlists, they can experiment with it but will be unable to focus its effects. If the anarchists have become allies of the characters and are present when the mask is found, they insist that the mask be broken and its pieces scattered so that its destructive power can never be used.

If the characters did not form an alliance with the anarchists, it is possible that the anarchists have followed the characters to Tikal. If the characters look like they're going to keep the



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mask, then the anarchists attack them, seeking to capture the mask and destroy it themselves.

As alluded to by the translation of the hieroglyphs in the secret chamber, there are a total of five Faces of Destruction. If all five are used at once at the appointed time (Dec. 24, 2011), the entire earth will be rocked by earthquakes, triggering the “fifth destruction” of Mayan mythology. One of these masks is buried with Lord Shield Pacal in the Temple of Inscriptions at Palenque in Mexico; another is buried with an unknown noble of the 6th century A.D. in Chiapas, Mexico. The other two ... well, that’s up to the gamemaster to decide.

Awards

Award each character three Life Points for surviving this adventure. Subtract one point for each victim sacrificed by the Carlists and add one point for each prisoner rescued by the characters. Award one extra point to any character who solved any of the puzzles in this adventure. The total number of Life Points awarded to each character should not exceed five.

ELDERLY SCHOLAR

NAME	HEIGHT	WEIGHT	AGE	SEX	
ATTRIBUTES AGILITY 8 DEXTERITY 8 ENDURANCE 8 STRENGTH 8 INTELLECT 9 Deduction 11, linguistics 10, perception 11, teaching 11 MIND 11 Languages: English 12, medicine 12, research 12, scholar: ancient languages 12, scholar: arcane knowledge 14, scholar: history 13 CONFIDENCE 8 Interrogation 9, streetwise 9 (Chinatown 10), willpower 10 CHARISMA 8 Charm 9		DERIVED ATTRIBUTES 9 TOUGHNESS 9 TOUGHNESS (w/armor) 4 MRS (Movement Rate, Swimming) 7 MRG (Movement Rate, Ground) 3 MRC (Movement Rate, Climbing) 3 MRJ (Movement Rate, Jumping)		COMBAT BOX WOUND LEVEL ☐ <i>Light</i> ☐ <i>Moderate</i> ☐ <i>Heavy</i> ☐ <i>Incapacitated</i> ☐ <i>Mortal</i>	K O MODIFIERS no modifier -2 to physical skills -4 physical & -2 all other skills -8 to all skills automatic KO; see text
		LIFE POINTS 5	SKILL POINTS	SHOCK CAPACITY SHOCK TAKEN	

BACKGROUND

Advantages: Additional Skill Adds (CI), +1 to *streetwise* (Chinatown); Fame (CI), well-known in Chinatown; Wealth (CI), requires no job — living off of family money and gifts; Contacts (CII), knows people throughout Chinatown; Culture (CII), knows a great deal about the goings-on in Chinatown; Luck (CIII).

Compensations: Cultural Unfamiliarity (CI), has never travelled outside China or Chinatown; Quirk (CI), the “mentor” tends to speak down to younger people; Sense of Duty (CI), feels compelled to help family members out when there is need, Age (CII), the character is over 50; Prejudice (CII), suffers from the Chinese prejudices; Enemy (CIII), has an influential city official constantly interfering in the worst possible way.

DESCRIPTION

You are well-known in Chinatown as a scholarly man. Young children come to you for your stories and elders often seek your counsel. Having arrived in Chinatown as a young lad before the turn of the century, your aged eyes have seen much. Your native tongue is Chinese, although you do have a good grasp of English. When you were younger, you made an enemy out of someone who is now a crooked, but influential, city official.

EQUIPMENT

Simple clothes; walking stick; a large number of books on all topics.



“When wise man cannot act, he waits and bides his time.”

BONUS CHART

DIE	9 11										21 26 31 36 41												
ROLL	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	10	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	25	30	35	40	45	+5
BONUS #	-10	-8	-7	-6	-5	-3	-1	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	+1

NAME	HEIGHT	WEIGHT	AGE	SEX	
ATTRIBUTES AGILITY 7 Dodge 8, melee parry 8 DEXTERITY 7 Fire combat 8, thrown weapons 8, vehicle piloting: car 8 ENDURANCE 8 STRENGTH 8 INTELLECT 10 Deduction 13, linguistics 11, perception 12, trick 11 MIND 10 Hypnotism 11, language: English 11, medicine 11, science: criminology 11 CONFIDENCE 9 Con 10, streetwise 10, willpower 10 CHARISMA 9 Disguise 10		DERIVED ATTRIBUTES 9 TOUGHNESS 9 TOUGHNESS (w/armor) 5 MRS (Movement Rate, Swimming) 6 MRG (Movement Rate, Ground) 3 MRC (Movement Rate, Climbing) 3 MRJ (Movement Rate, Jumping)		COMBAT BOX WOUND LEVEL ☐ Light ☐ Moderate ☐ Heavy ☐ Incapacitated ☐ Mortal	K O MODIFIERS no modifier -2 to physical skills -4 physical & -2 all other skills -8 to all skills automatic KO; see text
LIFE POINTS 5		SKILL POINTS	SHOCK CAPACITY SHOCK TAKEN		

BACKGROUND

Advantages: Contacts (CI), has a few friends outside Chinatown; Law Enforcement (CI), can carry a gun; Wealth (CI), detective practice is successful; Contacts (CII), has an influential friend inside Chinatown who is willing to help him whenever needed; Luck (CII); Special Ability (CIII), Master of Disguise.

Compensations: Advantage Flaw (CI), the money that you have is tied up in your detective practice; Quirk (CI), enigmatic; Sense of Duty (CI), can leave no mystery unsolved; Debt (CII), owes someone a large favor; Prejudice (CII), often at odds with "western" detectives; Enemy (CIII), someone who was "put away" by the detective is out to get him back.

DESCRIPTION

You have a wisdom that defies explanation. Crooks for decades have been trying to outwit you and your predecessors but none have succeeded. Your mentor was a true master at being able to see through even the most complex of schemes to find the simple truth that lay behind them. Now it is your turn to make your mark and to solve the limitless mysteries before you.

EQUIPMENT

Smoking pipe and snuff; silk robes; Smith & Wesson .38, damage value 17, ammo 6, range 3-10/25/40/140.



"Some clues, like fine rice wine, can be appreciated only with time."

BONUS CHART

DIE ROLL	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	26	31	36	41
BONUS #	-10	-8	-7	-6	-5	-3	-1	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	+5

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INDIANA JONES™ AND THE GOLDEN VAMPIRES

by James Estes, Evan Jamieson, Brian Sean Perry and Lisa Smedman

Watch the fog roll in over the bay. Take a stroll down busy Market Street. Explore the streets of Chinatown. Mingle with the many people on Fisherman's Wharf. See all of the sights that San Francisco has to offer in this book ... but be prepared to experience exciting adventures and solve puzzling mysteries along the way.

Indiana Jones and the Golden Vampires contains useful information for planning adventures in a new location — San Francisco. Not only is there an adventure inside that will introduce both the gamemaster and the players to this exciting city, but there are three more action-packed adventures as well that will provide even more excitement. So, if you're looking for a good place to base a campaign, look no further. San Francisco is your gateway to adventure!

Indiana Jones and the Golden Vampires is a supplement for the Indiana Jones roleplaying game. You need the *MasterBook* and *The World of Indiana Jones Worldbook* to use this companion piece effectively.

