

LAMENTATIONS  
*of the*  
FLAME PRINCESS  
ADVENTURES

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BY  
KENNETH HITE







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First Edition, First Printing 2013

Published by Lamentations of the Flame Princess

Cover Artwork by Jason Rainville

Interior Artwork by Rich Longmore

Editing by Matthew Pook

Cartography, Layout and Design by Jez Gordon

Printed in Finland by Otava Publishing Company Ltd

ISBN 78-952-5904-43-7



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# INTRODUCTION

Two barely conceivable beings have fought a war for a generation over Sajavedra, a barely legendary land far to the southeast. They wish to claim its rich harvests of souls and fields, its intricate networks of ley lines and temples, for their own.

They have devastated it utterly.

A forgotten weapon in their war, a neglected sorcery fallen from a distracted archon's attention, lies in the Qelong River valley at the edge of this near-cosmic battlefield.

If you travel up the River, under the sound of immeasurable magics tearing holes in heaven above you, behind the shadow of mountain ranges heaving in death agony, you may find that weapon and may even read one of the runes incised upon it. You may learn what binds a Great One's spell.

Or, if the weapon cracked in falling, you may learn what that spell binds.

Things travel down the River, too.

Maps made before warring aeons deformed the ground may not guide you truly, but you can always follow the horror... the horror.

This exploratory adventure beckons your characters to unimaginable power, or to their death in a heap of never-to-be-named corpses.

You decide. The River doesn't care.

## REFEREE'S INTRODUCTION

Two elder beings, **Levh** and **Tilia**, fight an incomprehensible war over the once-rich land of Sajavedra, a war of mighty spells and magics beyond human knowledge, for all that it brings mortal magi and warlords in its train. Their war covers the land in immensity and madness: sky and water and land whirling and blending, geography warping, reality itself plastic, shelled and torn. One minor cantrip from this war misfired and fell to earth in the Qelong River valley, on the western edge of Sajavedra. Think of it as a jammed shell from a gunfight, ejected and forgotten as the battle rages on.

It is the Cylinder.

And the Cylinder's sorcery has, in its minor way, begun to deform the Qelong valley.

The Cylinder leaks **aakom**, a magical power contaminant.

It poisons the beasts and the plants, the water and the grayish loess soil. Food grows short, famine comes even where war had left pockets of health and fertility. The people of the valley have changed, the aakom turning them selfish, inhuman, and cruel. Actually, the war and famine have done that - the aakom gives them power to act on this change.

**Myrmidons** deranged and misdirected chew through the land, laying eggs in the river dwellers to hatch out more warriors. (See p.28 or details on the myrmidons.)

Greedy **Varangian mercenaries** have deserted the war and seek to fill their **lich-garuda** with aakom – most easily done by feeding it the livers and lights of the river folk. Then they can fly out of Sajavedra with plenty of aakom to sell in peaceful lands, and aakom-spells to use in those lands’ new wars. (See p.34 for details on the Varangians.)

The ancient guardian demon-mother of the land, for millennia held imprisoned by its stupas and canals, has awakened. The **Naga Qelong** wishes to return her children to her, turn the people of the valley into snake-humans. (See p.30-31 for details on the naga-kin.)

The keepers of the stupas, **monks** once sworn to peace and meditation, have chosen older sorceries to contain her, returning to the **lotus cults** spread by spores in the previous world. (See p.27 for details on the Lotus monks.)

## ABOUT THIS ADVENTURE

**Q**elong is a classic “exploration” adventure, set in a wet, poisoned sandbox. While the Cylinder is the focus of outside magic-seekers, and makes a convenient “center of the labyrinth” for goal-directed players, the Qelong Valley is a setting first and foremost. That means that antagonists – set against the heroes and against each other – and environments play major roles in driving drama, conflict, and story.

Like most exploration adventures, the story elements can appear both as random encounters and as geographically linked encounters: a party might meet naga-kin at random in the River valley, or where I have written them in at the Broken Bridge of Pralaj. Random encounter tables provide guides to the kinds of stories that might happen, not specific prescriptions for what will happen. Even the detailed encounter areas in this adventure are less story flow charts and more story fuel. For example, this book does not

provide a map of every building and tree in the town of Sajra Amvoel, neatly set about with 1d2 mercenaries in the smithy and the Dwarf in the fountain. I have no idea how your player characters will get to Sajra Amvoel. As prisoners? As allies? As part of a besieging army of naga-kin? Will they sneak into a town full of overconfident thugs, or be ambushed by brilliant combined-arms raiders? If the player characters have attacked a Varangian patrol (on a random encounter or at the river-blockage), the mercenaries will be expecting attackers. The Varangians will not simply sit in their hexes on the battle map and wait for the encounter to begin: the Referee should play them as intelligent foes that react like combat veterans to changing circumstances.

Every encounter in this adventure, random and “designed” alike, should respond to player action. The player characters will not trigger every encounter, and nor should they have to. This adventure contains more story than the average adventure, though perhaps not more than the average war-wounded province. It probably contains more story than the players will use, which means that the Referee can expand on the various hooks and hints laid out here, or not, as suits her style. In the final analysis, all this is up to the Referee. Even the contents can change, at her whim. Maybe all of the villages have been burned or the Lotus has not taken over all the monasteries yet, or there is a dragon somewhere because Karla always wants to fight a dragon and a Naga is not close enough. As with any adventure, the Referee can move things around, fudge rolls on the encounter table, or introduce her favorite NPCs or creatures into the setting.

Wherever they come from, story elements, once introduced, become part of a narrative in the players’ minds; Referees and players will find themselves almost unconsciously weaving further encounters into the ongoing story. A picaresque adventure – a series of dangers and incidents on the way to somewhere – is the likely result. This kind of adventure maps to general expectations of fantasy quest drama as well as to war stories like Valhalla Rising, Apocalypse Now, and The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly (especially the “war over the bridge” sequence), all of which were among my models for this adventure’s design.



They were also among my models for the general “feel” of the adventure. I see the Qelong Valley as a land of steam, smoke, mist, fog – high grasses and low mangroves, like the Dead Marshes or Beowulf’s fen country. All of this grows not in a placid pastoral Olden Tyme, or even a gently corroded Dark Age, but in the path – or technically on the sidelines – of a great and incomprehensible war. Houses and farms are burned, villagers gaunt and feral. Dogs whine over the carcasses of their masters, then tear out the intestines to feed themselves. Men kill each other for a handful of rice, or for a woman who can be beaten into cooking it. All around, sorcerous echoes and explosions ripple the skies, but as a constant drumbeat of vile thunder, not as anything aimed at anyone in the same country. The Qelong Valley has been poisoned by accident and forgotten by its killers. Only the scavengers remain, and the worms that grow in the corpse.

## PLACING THIS ADVENTURE IN YOUR CAMPAIGN

Put Sajavedra on the southeast edge of the map, unless your campaign world has a suitably mysterious land of gold, jades, ancient naga-magics, and lotus already available.

The intention is that the “Varangians” are fairly familiar sorts of people, ethnically or culturally related to the characters – fellow strangers in a strange land. This, of course, assumes that you are running a standard sort of “western European fantasy” campaign. If you are running a campaign without quasi-western protagonists, change the Varangians to match: maybe they are a band of samurai, or Eagle Knights, or impis. Change the names and titles of Captain Geary and Father Corvo, likewise.

If your campaign takes place on Earth or a close analogue, Sajavedra maps generally to Cambodia; the Qelong River valley specifically to the portion south and west of the Cardamom and Elephant Ranges.

**Publisher’s Note:** *This adventure uses LotFP Weird Fantasy Role-Playing stats, using a silver money standard and ascending Armor ratings with an unarmored base of 12.*

## ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

A generally Lawful party might be hired by a sage or wizard to travel to the heart of this chaos and attempt essentially a controlled demolition of the Cylinder. By activating its runic “guidance system” (with an **Activate Cylinder** spell scroll—see p.47—that the sage supplies) the Cylinder should return to the main battle front, over the mountains. Maybe the Qelong Valley will return to normal after a few massacres. The Naga will go back to sleep, which is probably the important thing to Lawful types.

A generally Chaotic party has a real shot at selling the rune-plate from the Cylinder to a powerful Chaos mage. Chaos magi all over the world have heard of this amazingly wonderfully tempting and dangerous war, but getting too close means getting sucked into the fray. Having someone else go salvage even a fragment of this knowledge is a vastly superior plan.

A generally Neutral party may find themselves there by accident, sent on a wild goose chase (“rescue the head monk of Mandul Xiem from the Lotus”), or just decide to go to Sajavedra to loot the jades and lotus from a land whose soldiers are all dead or over the mountains being torn to shreds by inhuman magics.

## PLAYER CHARACTER GOALS

A generally Lawful party might be hired by a sage or wizard to travel to the heart of this chaos and attempt essentially a controlled demolition of the Cylinder. That is likely the first goal; others may occur to player characters, such as:

- Reach Mandul Xiem and see if you can find a non-Lotus monk willing to try anything non-insane. Failing that, loot it to the bare walls.
- Hijack the Varangians’ lich-garuda and fly the hell out of the Valley.
- Find out if anyone is guarding the legendary Mine of the Elephant.

# RUMORS



Each character is assumed to begin with one rumor randomly rolled on the following table. A character can learn additional rumors while in Qelong by spending 20sp for each additional roll desired on the table. Duplicate results are not rerolled.

## d50 RUMOR

- 1 The entire land is covered in invisible magical poison. It is in the earth, the water, the air!
- 2 Some of those who are sick manifest cruel curses; they cannot touch others without harming them.
- 3 Some of those who die from illness do not stay dead!
- 4 The weapons of the wizards beyond the mountains sometimes misfire and land in Qelong. Clever people might be able to harness that power!
- 5 Organized, professional soldiers under the banner of the hawk have deserted their posts and now occupy part of Qelong.
- 6 Foreign soldiers are slaughtering peasants and stealing their organs!
- 7 There's something rather artificial about some of those foreign soldiers.
- 8 Foreign soldiers have set up a base at Sajra Amvoel.
- 9 Jamqar Long is under foreign occupation. Those bastards rob everyone of what little they still have left!
- 10 The canal system formed a glyph which warded off great evil. With the breaking of the canals' patterns, the evil is free.
- 11 The river lives! It is a demon!
- 12 Entire villages have been slaughtered and their people replaced by disguised things.
- 13 Times are so bad that many mate with the spirit of the valley and create monstrous offspring that threaten to drown us all!
- 14 The monks of the Lotus no longer meditate in peace, but have mobilized to fight the evils in our land.
- 15 The monks of the Lotus mean to kill us all!
- 16 The golden Lotus is a flower of healing and strength.
- 17 Golden Lotus must be properly prepared before use or it is poisonous.
- 18 Those with true understanding of the golden Lotus are gifted with golden eyes.
- 19 Meditating upon the Lotus allows one to transcend physical limitations.
- 20 The column of coated men is like ants in more ways than one. Avoid them if you enjoy life!
- 21 Better to be dead than possessed by ants.
- 22 Fevers and plagues are rampant throughout the land.
- 23 The prophecy says the one who finds the Golden Spear will deliver us from this misery!
- 24 Stupas are protected by the gods.



- 25 Civilization has completely broken down. Only Qampong is safe, for now, as warlords and worse keep order in small pockets around the valley.
- 26 Do not deal violence lightly, as in these troubled times the spirits of the angry dead will linger on Earth.
- 27 The peasants of the valley have become experts in dealing with armored soldiers.
- 28 Food is so scarce that more and more people resort to cannibalism.
- 29 The men of the forests have degenerated into a primitive state. They are little more than beasts!
- 30 Seeing the Gaja Simha is an ill omen.
- 31 The Gaja Simha's body would be very valuable to any magician.
- 32 Avoid the magical mists.
- 33 I feel sorry for these refugees from the valley and beyond the mountains, really I do!  
But they do nothing but spread disease and eat the food us useful folks need.
- 34 Avoid the mountains. The soldiers looking for "volunteers" are the least of your worries there.
- 35 I hear there's some wizard from abroad looking for something he's calling "The Cylinder" out in the valley. It's supposed to be a magical weapon of some sort.
- 36 Qampong used to be where foreigners bought all the pepper and orchid cloaks from Sajavedra. We really had it good in those days.
- 37 Xam, the old capital of the province, is just gone now. Totally gone, replaced by a tall plateau that just didn't exist before.
- 38 Pralaj has fallen to aquatic evil.
- 39 Thip Qelay, the wondrous town built over the swamp, used to be known for its luxurious (and valuable!) orchid cloaks. These days, who knows?
- 40 The Mines of the Elephant are so named because their discoverer needed an elephant to remove all the sapphires, emeralds, opals, and diamonds found within them.
- 41 The Mines of the Elephant were destroyed when the war started... the wizards wanted gems of power.
- 42 Mandul Xiem is the only place in the valley untouched by war.
- 43 The monks of Mandul Xiem possess unimaginable amounts of treasure... and they are sworn pacifists! Anyone could just go and take it!
- 44 The great Naga has risen to deliver us from evil and corruption! Put your trust in her and her children!
- 45 The great lost weapon of the Mage War is just up the River!
- 46 Levh and Tilia are the names of the immortal wizards who fight beyond the mountains.
- 47 A great army is sweeping westward, destroying, looting, and even devouring all in its path!
- 48 Dwarfs are evil! Trust no dwarf you meet!
- 49 Pockets of undetonated magic bombs are everywhere! Every step in the valley is a danger!
- 50 When the magical curse is upon you, only chopping off your hands will end it.

# EXPLORATION



Each hex on the main map covers six miles. In a paddy or plains hex, you can see all of the hexes around you. In a hill or mountain hex (assuming that you are atop a high enough hill or mountain) you can see two hexes in any direction. Mountain hexes can be seen from two hexes away. In a swamp hex, the ever-present mists close in, and in a forest hex the trees likewise block your distant vistas; you cannot see out of your current hex. On the river, you can see two hexes up and down the river; on a coast, you can see two hexes up or down the coast likewise.

There are no roads worth mentioning; the Royal Road from the pass to Xam has been destroyed by decades of war and by harmful magics directing it into mist and shadow. Treat paddy hexes as forest hexes (1/2 normal movement rate) for travel purposes: although they are flooded and cut up by canals, log-corduroy trails occasionally surface.

## WEATHER

Sajavedra is a subtropical land in the monsoon belt. This means it has two seasons: rainy and warm (20s °Centigrade) and sticky and hot (upper 30s °Centigrade). The sticky-hot season is only dry by comparison to the rainy season; flash floods are still common even in the driest months (November to April). Monsoon rains during the rainy season count as storm conditions, lowering travel speeds to one-third normal. See p.28 for local effects of monsoon rains.

That said, the ongoing magical war in Sajavedra has tied the normal winds and rains up like knotted snakes. Cataclysmic monsoons can pour over the mountains (instead of rushing up from the sea), followed by baking drought for three days, followed by glowing purple hail. The Naga awakes; the land is in turmoil. If all else fails, throw in a flash flood or an earthquake. Magical fallout effects smite the Valley, dropping like sheet lightning or drifting down like cotton-wood seeds: people's eyes change color, their fingers lengthen or deform, the rocks become hollowed out from the inside, horribly bloated toads appear everywhere and die immediately choking and meeping in agony. Lead the player characters through fields where **Time Stop** eats its own tail; stampede them under herds of oxen maddened and beset by self-renewing meteor swarms; as they examine a burned-out cellar, a drifting incendiary cloud or freezing sphere spell might just "go off" anywhere. These are the land mines sown by lesser magi killed long ago and forgotten ever since.

## DISEASE

Diseases in Sajavedra are mostly:

- **FEVERS:** (incubation period one week, interval of four hours, infection time four days, -1 to Strength),
- Good old **PLAGUE:** (incubation period one day, interval of three hours, infection time two days, -2 to Constitution) has reappeared in the wake of the war. Infection vectors are, for the most part,



up to the Referee: inhaling swamp water, exposure in the rain, and looting dead bodies are excellent possibilities.

- **TYPHUS:** (incubation period ten days, interval one day, infection time two weeks, -1d2 hp), is endemic in the villages, spread by retreating armies and refugees.

## AAKOM

**A**akom is a substance somewhere between mana, azoth, and plutonium. It powers the ineffable and eldritch sorceries of truly exalted archmagi; Magic-Users may have heard of it as something horrifically dangerous, something that even demons do not use with impunity. Levh and Tilia use it to lubricate their spells' true energies. The Cylinder contains a thread, or field, or demonic mouth, or seed of aakom kept mostly in check (or rather, aimed and channeled) by the rune on its side. Except that this Cylinder was faulty, which is why the transcendent thaumaturge who pulled it from its bandolier flung it aside.

So the aakom leaks out into the Valley, into the water and soil. And of course, into the people who drink and bathe in the water, and grow crops in the soil and eat them. And into the beasts, though much of their aakom has been drawn into the awakened Naga Qelong. Enough of it though, remains to poison the whole countryside, including the adventurers.

The Referee (and the players, in some games) should keep track of each character's running total level of aakom poisoning.

**Purify Food and Drink** works one-quarter as effectively against aakom soiled foodstuffs; one casting can only purify enough food and water for three people.

When accumulated levels of aakom exceed a character's current Hit Points, roll to save versus Magic. (Halflings roll to save versus Poison.) Subtract -1 from this roll for each 10 points by which the aakom total exceeds the character's Hit Points.

## CHARACTERS GET AAKOM POISONING UNDER THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS:

- For each three days of breathing the air of the Valley (spending any time at all in any hex on the map except a mountain): **1 point**
- For each two days of eating aakom-tainted food (rice or fish especially, but almost everything edible in the Valley is now aakom-tainted): **1 point**
- For each day of drinking aakom-polluted water: **1 point**
- For each wound taken in the open air and not immediately cauterized with fire, oil, carbolic, or a Cure spell: **1 point per 3 hp of damage taken.**
- For each Hit Point or attribute point lost to disease or poison in the Valley: **1 point per 2 hp of damage taken; 2 points of aakom gained for each 1 attribute point lost.**
- For each wound taken from the bite of an aakom-tainted beast, fish, or insect (again, pretty much all of them): **1 point per 2 hp of damage taken.**
- For each wound taken from the claws or bite of a naga-kin or the Naga: **1 point per hp of damage taken.**

If the character succeeds in this roll, he need not roll again until his accumulated aakom total reaches another 10 points above his Hit Points. Note that being wounded, suffering a disease, etc. counts as lowering a character's Hit Points for this purpose!

Halflings triple their Hit Points for the purposes of all aakom poisoning calculations.

If any character fails the saving throw, the following effects apply.

## AAKOM POISONING

The most important effects of aakom are its effect on the human mind and soul. It twists both, exerting a dark magnetic force pulling them toward ultimate chaos and corrosion. Even Chaotic characters recoil from the laughing, grotesque specters somehow revealed in the corner of their vision as innately part of the very angles and helices of existence. Those poisoned by aakom become nihilistic or self-destructive, or both; even the meaning that the human ego assigns itself is peeled away in the boiling illumination of aakom. Those poisoned may take their new vision of humanity out on each other, or simply react with appalling inhumanity to strangers, especially vulnerable ones. Think of starveling rats, or rabid dogs – then think of something less human.

### Aakom poisoning also has specific rules effects:

- Thanks to night sweats, feverish hallucinations, and random burning sensations, characters recover less energy by sleeping. Characters must sleep a minimum of six hours, not four, per twenty-four hour time period to avoid the penalties for Sleep Deprivation.
- All characters suffer a -1 penalty to all missile attacks, plus a further -1 for each 10 points by which the aakom total exceeds their Hit Points.
- All characters suffer a -1 penalty to all saving throws against Poison, Magical Devices, and Magic, as well as against all diseases and drugs, plus a further -1 for each 10 points by which the aakom total exceeds their Hit Points.
- All characters suffer a -1 penalty to Wisdom, plus a further -1 for each 10 points by which the aakom total exceeds their Hit Points. Searching and Foraging rolls, rolls to surprise foes, and other sense and perception rolls are made on 1d12 rather than 1d6, halving normal chances.
- Once all the player characters are aakom-poisoned, the Referee makes rolls to get lost for the party on 1d4 rather than 1d6.

- Spell-casters roll 1d10 and compare the result to the level of the spell they cast. If the die roll is higher (for instance, they roll a 5 while casting a 3rd level spell), they cast the spell as normal. If the die roll is lower than the spell level (for instance, they roll a 2 while casting a 3rd level spell), then something goes wrong (roll 1d8 for effect) as the aakom distorts and intoxicates the caster's normal magics:

### d8 SPELL EFFECT

- 1 Spell seems to work, but is only a harmless illusion.
- 2 Spell works, but exposes caster to fever (as per p.8). Save versus Poison at -2.
- 3 Spell works, but on an unintended target (ally if harmful, foe if beneficial).
- 4 Spell produces the reverse of its normal effect.
- 5 Caster takes 1d4 points of aakom poisoning; spell works on both target and unintended target.
- 6 Instead of normal effect, spell creates snakes (as in *The Serpent Touch*, see p.47) from all water within 10' of caster. The snakes are uncontrollable. Any snakebite causes aakom poisoning as per a naga-kin bite.
- 7 Caster takes 1d6 damage and 1d6 aakom; spell fails.
- 8 Caster takes 1d4 aakom per level of the spell; spell fails.

If a character (or NPC) dies while suffering from aakom poisoning, there is a 1 in 6 chance that he will rise again as a zombie NPC under the Referee's control. (For Chaotic characters, that chance is 2 in 6.) He will not necessarily rise immediately; the aakom must work its way throughout his veins. The Referee should awaken aakom zombies when it is dramatically effective, tactically deadly, or just plain creepy.



## Aakom Curse

There is also a 1 in 12 chance (1 in 6 for Chaotic characters) for aakom-poisoned characters to develop an aakom curse effect even while alive. This is an uncontrollable, always-on, touch-only version of one of (choose or roll 1d8) the following spells:

### 1d8 AAKOM CURSE EFFECT

- 1 *Cause Disease*
- 2 *Cause Poison* (the reverse of *Neutralize Poison*)
- 3 *Cause Serious Wounds*
- 4 *Feeblemind*
- 5 *Insect Plague* (appears centered on the touched person)
- 6 *Slow*
- 7 *The Serpent Touch* (see p.47); cannot be given orders)
- 8 *Stinking Cloud* (appears centered on the touched person)

Like a normal spell, using this power is a full action. It cannot be concealed; bilious lime-colored energies flare and fluoresce around the caster and remain detectable on the victim for hours or even days afterwards. It occurs whenever the character touches another human (or a wooden shaft, in the case of *The Serpent Touch*) with his bare hands. If the Referee or any other player thinks it is possible for a cursed character to have accidentally touched someone (passing them a scroll or canteen, say) the cursed character must roll under his Dexterity on 1d20 to avoid having done so.

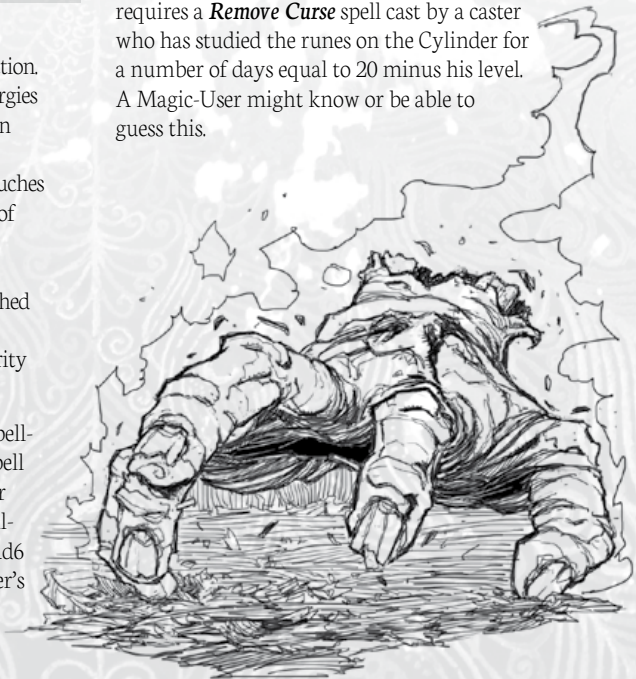
If the character with this curse is already a spell-caster, using this power depletes one of his spell slots. If he has no spell slots remaining (either because he is out of spell slots, or is not a spell-caster to begin with), using this power adds 1d6 aakom to his total. Chopping off the character's hands does end this condition.

All characters and NPCs cursed with such effects reanimate as zombies (as above) after death. They keep those powers in that state, but their use drops to 1d6 times per day. If their zombie hands are chopped off, the hands remain animate and keep those powers. A crawling, animate, enraged hand with one of those powers makes an excellent random encounter to find in the player characters' bedrolls. An animate zombie hand has Armor 12, 1-2 Hit Dice, is as fast as a man, Morale 10, 4 in 6 Stealth, and can strangle its victim, causing paralyzation (1d3 hp damage per round while paralyzed) if it is not casting its spell.

## CURING AAKOM

*Cure Disease* merely masks the symptoms by concentrating the aakom in the sufferer's liver and kidneys. The sufferer "loses" 1d6 points of aakom per level of the caster, and keeps them off until the sufferer's aakom level once more exceeds his Hit Points. Then all of the "lost" points return just in time for the saving throw.

Permanently removing aakom from a sufferer requires a *Remove Curse* spell cast by a caster who has studied the runes on the Cylinder for a number of days equal to 20 minus his level. A Magic-User might know or be able to guess this.



## GENERAL FEATURES

**I**n addition to the various terrain types, the map shows a number of general features in more than one hex. Most of these are constructed, but some are large natural features such as the Qelong River. When characters are in these areas, the Referee should use her judgment to decide what, specifically, happens aside from a brief, if lurid, description of the scenery. Some possibilities appear in these sections as encounter seeds.

## CANAL

*This stretch of fetid, oily standing water is separated from the muddy plain by a slime-covered retaining wall. Its regular shape reveals its origin as one of the canals in this province.*

Before the war began, canals cut through the Valley as an irrigation and transportation network. The canals also served to focus the ley energies of the province, keeping the Naga bound and quiescent, and sending power to the king and to the other gods of the Valley. The opening bombardments of the war disrupted these channels, isolating individual villages and beginning the cycle of famine and flooding across the Valley.

- Water-borne parasites, such as leeches. Save versus Poison or lose 1d2 hp due to blood loss, gain 1d2 points of aakom, and save again or get a fever.
- A sampan with its bottom staved in. A Tinkering roll could repair it.
- A drowned woman, lying bloated at the bottom of the canal, holding her two children under the water. Is she an aakom zombie? Are her children? Or perhaps a qmoc praj ( see p.23) haunts this canal.
- The canal is dry as a bone, the stone and brick bleached an unnatural color by a skyburst of magic.

## LOTUS FIELD

*Riotous golden petals seem to blanket the water, rolling like frozen waves of amber. The smell is intoxicating; it promises spices and silken rest and beautiful dreams of sated lust. A wooden framework like that of a ship's ribs is barely visible beneath the largest tussock in this vermilion carpet of flowers.*

These are the legendary lotus flowers of Sajavedra, cultivated by the monks for their aid in meditation, their medicinal properties (if used judiciously), and their symmetrical symbolism of the Law. A Cleric, Elf, or Magic-User who rolls under their Intelligence on 1d20 recognizes the blossoms. They are water plants, growing on the surface of ponds and pools, the monks grew them in wooden frames to make harvesting them more convenient.

- A hive of enormous bees, grown fat on lotus pollen, will attack anyone who disturbs the blossoms. They fly and attack in swooping, interlaced patterns reminiscent of the lotus blossom's shape. Immune to any material weapon, a swarm automatically inflicts 1d4 damage per round that the character remains in the lotus field; can be dispelled by **Stinking Cloud** or a strong wind.
- This lotus field grows all the way to the edge of a deep quarry. Characters who fail to remember that lotuses are aquatic plants could plunge through the carpet of flowers into a 20' deep shaft full of ice-cold water.
- A carnivorous fish lives underneath the lotus field. Armor 13, 2 Hit Dice, bite 1d6. Or a school (2d8) of them.
- A monk (Level 1d4 Cleric) on the shore, meditating under the influence of lotus. He is high enough that he will answer three questions honestly (if babblingly) before responding in any other fashion such as flight or attack.





## Lotus Effects

If the caster knows how to use it (Referee's discretion or another Intelligence roll), a fresh lotus flower adds +1 to the Hit Points recovered from any **Cure Wounds** spell. Dried lotus petals are worth a great deal to healers and magicians outside Sajavedra (15sp/oz.); intact, blooming lotus flowers are worth even more, but would have to be transported in glass jars of water exposed to sunlight. Harvesting lotus petals from the water without drying them for at least 3 days results in worthless, moldy lotus petals and (if you keep breathing the mold spores and fail a save versus Breath Weapon) some sort of horrible hallucinatory fever. It is up to the Referee whether any player character knows these details; a merchant in Qampong does on a 3 in 6, a monk does on a 4 in 6.

The lotus blossoms can also be smoked, infused into tea, chewed like tobacco, or crushed and their liquor dropped into the eyes or nose. Using lotus causes blissful hallucinations, openness to fellow humans, and eventually peaceful, restorative slumber (+2 on all saving throws versus Poison to resist disease; double the recovery of Hit Points). A long-time lotus-user has deep, golden eyes. Lotus in the bloodstream also causes a save versus Paralyzation; if that save is unsuccessful, it has the following further effects:

- It prevents further aakom accumulation for the time being.
- It prevents any attack on or resistance to a fellow lotus-user (save versus Paralyzation again at -3 to attack or resist anyhow).
- It lowers the user's Intelligence by 1 per day of use. When the user's Intelligence reaches 0, he must make a save versus Poison. If he fails it, he is immediately restored to his previous Intelligence -1, but as a permanent servant of the lotus. If he succeeds, he simply slips into a coma. **Cure Disease** burns away the lotus from the inside, at the cost of 1hp for each point of lost Intelligence regained.

## MYRMIDON TRACK

*The land is stripped bare. Not even a single blade of grass relieves the gray expanse running straight as a spear from horizon to horizon. Wider than any road you've ever seen, the soil here seems tamped down as by the passage of two hundred feet moving in perfect unison.*

This is the track of the myrmidons, soldiers infested with insects and sent to war by one of the archmagi. This particular company got lost or misdirected, or completed its mission and was never assigned another one. Now it simply chews its way across the Valley, killing and eating everything that it can, including women and children. In men, the myrmidons lay cysts of eggs, and in response to their unknowable biorhythms, sometimes wait for them to hatch.

- Look! A small manor house was here once. The thatch and wood have been devoured, of course, and the dung mortar licked from between the bricks, but some of the metal implements - nails, a pot or pan, a paring knife - might be found and salvaged. As might some coins, at the Referee's discretion.
- 1d4 horribly bloated men - myrmidon egg-hosts - lie in the field next to the track, surrounded by a few rotting vegetables and corpses left for the young to feed on when they hatch. The egg-hosts are nearly helpless, and their eyes beg for death. See the description of the egg-hosts on p.29.
- A hamlet near the track resists any and all intruders with horrific cannibal ferocity (bite for 1d3), wearing homemade crockery armor (Armor 14, smashes to pieces if hit with a blunt instrument), and foaming at the mouth with Morale 12. The settlement holds no treasure except a wounded myrmidon (in chains) now worshiped by the maddened peasants.
- The track passes through a graveyard. The corpses in its path have been exhumed and eaten, leaving a clutch of very irate, but mostly ineffectual, ghosts. It is up to the Referee whether they have any specific powers (Cause Fear, maybe, or 1d2 icy touch) besides making noises and shrieking.

## NEW LAKE

*The landscape seems built of patchwork, luminescent green and flashing silver alternating across the horizon. Dragonflies and hummingbirds hover, iridescent, over pale, recumbent lilies and less identifiable blossoms. Beneath the water, you see flashes of treetops, buildings, and upturned faces. Everywhere is the smell of metal and lightning; the writhing sky seems doubtful in its place over the land.*

When the initial bombardments hit the ley network around Mandul Xiem, they fragmented the magical substrate of the whole province. Land shifted and changed in fundamental fashion, creating the “new lakes” where the old magic pooled and shifted, trying to reach a new sorcerous equilibrium underneath a heaven splintered and cracked by eldritch war. The result is dimensional portals, veils into the underworld, enigmatic connections to the astral plane – anything that the Referee needs to add to the setting can come out of here. Or sure, she can just put in a blobby, tentacled horror. People like those.

- Under the glassy water, the most powerful Lawful character sees a golden spear floating on the back of an enormous turtle. This is an illusion; the Referee rolls that character’s save versus Magic at -3 to dispel. Otherwise, the character withdraws the spear (a corroded bronze spear with a wide, long blade; no special damage bonuses) and believes that he is the hero born to save Sajavedra from its enemies.
- A character sees himself poling a flat boat across the lake. His double bears a fatal wound, the one that will kill him. If he talks to his death-fetch, all blows that could deal that wound are at +1 to hit him until he receives **Remove Curse**.
- The lakeshore connects tesseract-style to another lakeshore. The characters are sent into a Great Maze (as the **Maze** spell); escape times are Days and Hours, not Turns and Rounds. Individual player characters may escape at different places, into different hexes, scattered all across the new lakes area of the map.

## QELONG RIVER

*The Qelong River runs before you, the current swift and foaming one minute and still as a painting the next. The surface reflects the crackling, luminous sky wherever clouds of mist are not rising from it in waves. Everywhere you hear the hiss of water over stone, of water-born breezes rippling reeds and trees. Strange reflections reveal fat catfish and round stones scaling the river bottom, then fallen soil darkens the water like some dead demon’s blood.*

Traveling up the River with a sail set allows normal movement for the day: 18 miles, or three hexes. Rowing or poling a craft up-River reduces progress to 12 miles, or 2 hexes, except in storms, when any travel on the River becomes nearly impossible. During a monsoon, roll 1d6: the boat swamps on a 1-3, runs downriver toward the sea on a 4, stays in place getting waterlogged on a 5, and runs aground on a 6. (Roll randomly to determine which bank the boat runs ashore on; grounding the boat does 1d6 shp.)

The River’s tutelary deity, the Naga Qelong, has awakened and can materialize anywhere along the River. (See p.30 for the Naga’s statistics.) The Naga can also change the River’s course during a monsoon: while visibility drops to nothing, the River moves. The Referee can mark the new course on her map.

- Coming downriver toward the characters are 1d4 sampans, loaded to the gunwales with refugees (6+1d6 per boat). If the encounter is downstream of Jamqar Long, the refugees have no treasure, weapons, or young women among them. Regardless of where the encounter takes place, the refugees are starving and lousy with lice and the typhus (see p.9) the insects carry. They will loudly beg for alms, try to climb on board the characters’ boat, and generally make a horrendous nuisance of themselves. Remember that 1 in 12 refugees may have an aakom curse power; all, of course, are completely contaminated with aakom by now.



## STUPA

*From this distance, it almost looks as if nothing has happened to the stupa. Its rounded dome and tapered point stand out against the sky, seeming to tame it by calm example. Do prayer bells echo on the wind, or is it the clatter of arms? Smaller pillars and structures are visible on the edges of the main shrine; a smell of incense and fire touches your nostrils, a faint memory or even a promise of peace.*

Before the war, stupas dedicated to Sajavedra's fierce and sensual gods dotted the landscape. Each dome (rounded, pointed, spiral, smooth) held a relic of some mighty cleric or monk, a true saint whose miraculous ways harnessed the energies of the land and bound them into a harmonious pattern. The nearby wats, or monasteries, housed monks dedicated to meditation, and to separating the devout pilgrims of the land from their sacrifices and donations.

The Lotus monks seek to reoccupy every stupa in the land and begin meditation, chanting, and other ritual actions to bring the land and Lotus back into harmony. The Referee can mark the map where the Lotus has taken a stupa, if tracking the Lotus becomes a player goal.

Any given stupa marked on the map might be intact, burned, smashed by sorcerous bombardment, home to a mercenary troop or crowd of refugees or band of Lotus-monks. Or all three. Or it might be completely deserted save for a monster – possibly an angry deva incensed at losing its worship, or a minor basilisk awakened in sympathy with the Naga, or a cannibalistic ogre. It is up to the Referee.

A character taking any part in destroying or desecrating an intact stupa – Lotus infested or not – must save versus Magic or get hit with **Bestow Curse** (-2 to all saving throws against Poison).

- This stupa seems burned from the outside, but intact from the inside. It contains nothing but a scroll, which constantly reads itself in echoing and sonorous tones, unrolling slowly across the lectern with no hand turning it. It takes four hours for the scroll to read entirely through itself. The language is unfamiliar and

- The characters' boat approaches a sunken tree. Anyone actively searching for dangers in the water will notice it in time to take evasive action; otherwise it tears out the bottom of the characters' boat, doing 1d10 shp. If the Referee wants to be a jerk, there is an ambush party of 1d6 naga-kin at the bottom of the river under the tree, waiting for their dinner.
- The character with the lowest Hit Points (or the most Chaotic tendencies) has a vision of the River uncoiling like a long, beautiful, snake-woman, her mouth full of fangs and her body trailing the mere matter of the world off of her like oil from a sweating jug. This reveals the awakened Naga nature of the River – depending on the Referee's idea of the campaign, the Naga might attempt to seduce the character, predict his death, offer a favor, or otherwise contaminate the character's mind. The character henceforth is at -2 to resist any illusion while in the Valley. If the Referee deems it likely, the character may be able to deduce from this vision that the River's Naga has, in fact, awakened.
- A river bird (Armor 13, 5 hp, Morale 7 or 10 in its nest) makes a sudden attack on a character, trying to grab something shiny (ideally something small, metallic, and very valuable or magical; or maybe something papery and light like a scroll or map). The character must roll to avoid surprise (5 or 6 on 1d6 or lose an action); the bird makes one attack at +3. If it succeeds, it grabs the item and flies away at top speed (twice an unencumbered man's top speed).



ancient (-3 to Language checks); it deals with the nature of Time, a god who slowly smothers the other gods to death and drowns their bodies. The smell of frankincense and the sound of bells are thick within. Characters inside the stupa who step outside emerge at a different time from the time that they entered (centuries, weeks, hours, back or forward, it is up the Referee); characters outside notice only a few minutes passing. If characters leave at exactly the place in the scroll's reading that they entered, they return exactly to the point when they left from; outside it seems that they only ducked into the stupa for a fraction of a second. Picking up the scroll stops the reading and possibly unleashes a Symbol on all within.

- This stupa has been animated by a magical blast: the dome is a skull, the arches are eyes, the minarets are talons, the stone carvings, shafts, and benches inside are its teeth and gullet. It plays possum, even providing light and warmth to attract food. (A dwarf has a chance to detect its true nature with an Architecture roll.) Being made of stone, it has Armor 20, 200 shp, attacks at +8, roll one attack simultaneously against every character inside the stupa, a successful attack doing 1d10 grinding damage as it tosses and chews them. Breaking down the stupa's jaw-door takes an Architecture roll (to find the weak spot) and 4 shp of inflicted damage. If the deva's eye-tooth at the heart of the reliquary is destroyed (only a Sajavedran monk or a Cleric with a really good Intelligence roll even knows to look for it), the stupa immediately collapses; all those inside take 7d6 hp worth of damage from falling rocks and must save versus Paralyzation to avoid being trapped in the rubble.
- This stupa has been hit by a magical ground-penetrator; the stupa's architecture echoes and mirrors itself down into the depths of the earth. Water and slow-moving stone sounds emanate from below; magical crystals grow like tumors on the windows and arches barely visible in the pit. If the crystals do anything except provide light (and possibly targeting vectors for other foes' spells), add a monster down there in the dark just to keep things fair.

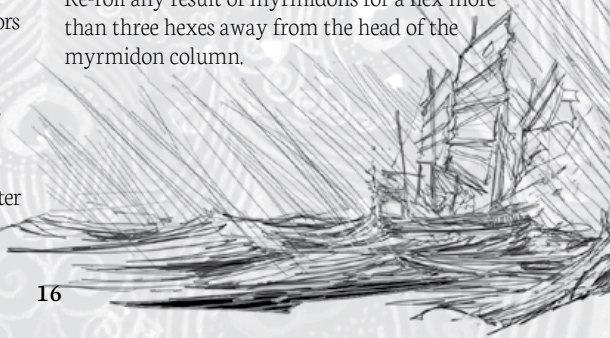
- The stupa contains a lovely gilded carving of the sun goddess' marriage on the inside wall. It is light and warm inside. The non-Lotused monk inside, Vhao Uora, will aid the characters if he can, and if they are not blasphemous desecrators. (Treat him as a 3rd Level Cleric.) He knows the general state of affairs at Xam and Mandul Xiem, and may know what is going on elsewhere (2 in 6 chance).

## RANDOM ENCOUNTERS

The nature of the random encounter depends primarily on the terrain being moved through at the time. The Referee should check (roll 2d10) for a random encounter every day, if she has not already used an encounter above (under General Features) or below (under Encounter Areas). Or even if she has, the Referee is the best judge of her game's pacing. She should also pick whichever hex seems most interesting for the encounter roll, or choose that randomly, too. Numbers, likewise, are just suggestions.

This adventure has four major factions with power bases in the Valley: the Varangians at Sajra Amvoel, the Naga-kin at Thip Qelay, the Lotus monks at Mandul Xiem, and the myrmidons at the head of their column. For a random encounter within one hex of those power bases, first roll 1d6. On a 1-3, the characters encounter that result times 1d10 members of the respective faction, most likely out on patrol or courier duty. For example: the Referee rolls a 2 for an encounter in a hex within one hex of Thip Qelay. The result is 2d10 Naga-kin. On a 4-6, roll for the hex as normal.

Re-roll any result of myrmidons for a hex more than three hexes away from the head of the myrmidon column.





## COAST ENCOUNTERS

Encounters in coastal hexes depend on the underlying sort of terrain. Swamps will be mangrove swamps; plains will be beaches of sand, clay, and stone. Hills erupt from foaming channels; mountains end in sudden, towering cliffs with the surf beating angrily below.

Roll on the main terrain type. The results get tuned to the coastal environment: villagers become fishermen, for example, and bandits become pirates.

If you get a “Nothing” result on the roll in the main terrain type, roll again here.

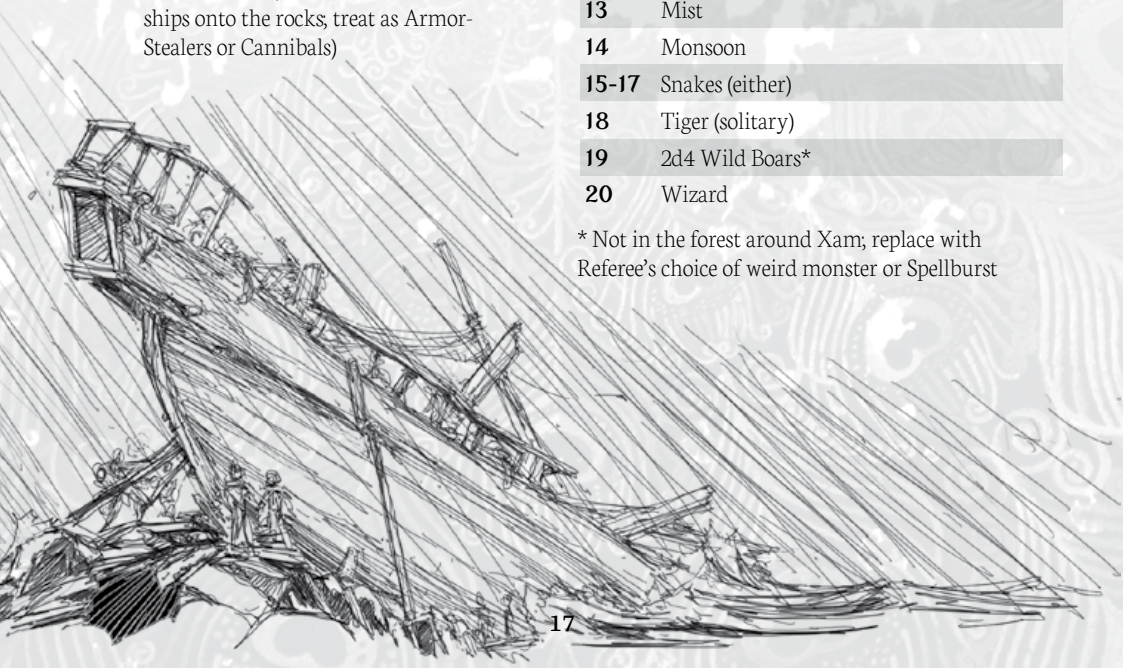
2d10 COAST ENCOUNTER	
2	Angry Ghost (Araq or Beisaq)
3-4	2d8 Crocodiles
5	Coasting Cog (offshore, full complement + 3d10% extra hands; could be attracted by signals or other communication)
6	5d10 Needlefish
7-15	Nothing
16-17	Snakes (either)
18-20	2d6 Wreckers (set false fires to lure ships onto the rocks; treat as Armor-Stealers or Cannibals)

## FOREST ENCOUNTERS

These encounters apply generally to both deciduous forests (in the north and uplands of the Valley) and to the jungles (in the coastal areas, including the hilly areas south of Qampong). The forest around Xam is an alien landscape; see p. 38. Even when “normal” results appear for Xam, add feelers, scales or feathers, extra pairs of limbs, the occasional extra magical effect (Blink, say, or Wall of Iron), and strange coloration to “re-skin” the encounter as an exotic danger from Outside.

2d10 FOREST ENCOUNTER	
2	Angry Ghost (Dereqlan, Qmoc Praj)*
3	Gaja Simha
4	Bandit camp (3d10 bandits, 2d12 camp followers)*
5	1d12 Cannibals*
6	2d4 Dholes*
7	1d12 Elephants
8	2d10 Forest Folk*
9-11	Nothing
12	Insect Cloud
13	Mist
14	Monsoon
15-17	Snakes (either)
18	Tiger (solitary)
19	2d4 Wild Boars*
20	Wizard

\* Not in the forest around Xam; replace with Referee’s choice of weird monster or Spellburst



## HILL ENCOUNTERS

The hills in this part of Sajavedra vary between strange bald round-tops and upthrust volcanic folds ripe with tree cover. For forested hills, roll on either this table or the Forest table above. A “Villagers” result likely reveals a cardamom or pepper farm; this spice may be valuable (5sp/oz for cardamom; 10sp/oz at least for pepper) in the characters’ homeland.

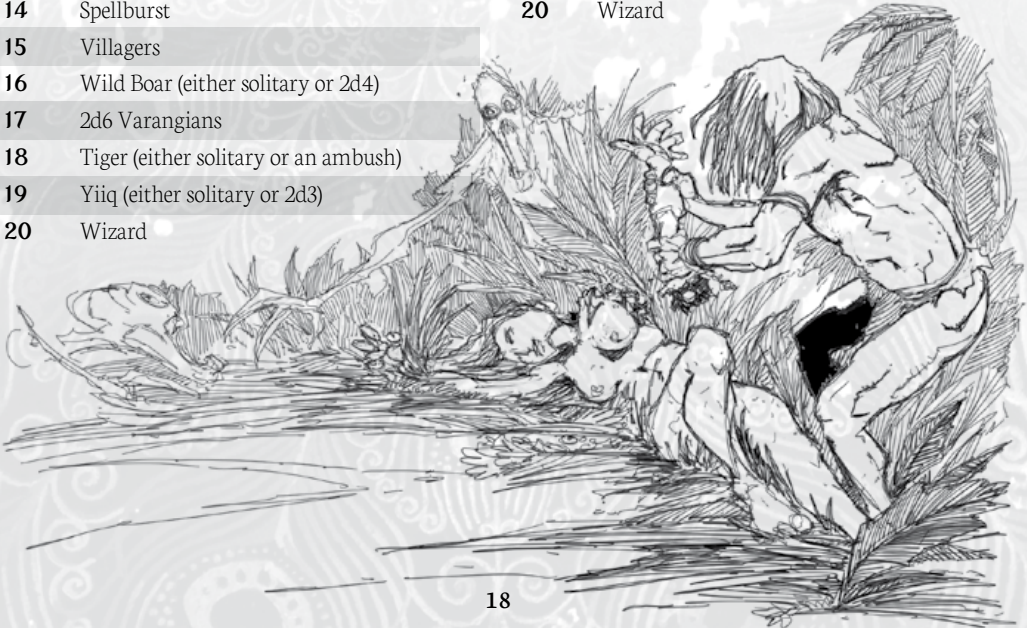
2d10	HILL ENCOUNTER
2	Angry Ghost (Beisaq)
3	1d12 Elephants
4	2d6 Cannibals
5	Carrion Beasts (2d8 Vultures)
6	Monsoon
7	2d6 Bandits or Bandit Camp (3d10 bandits, 2d12 camp followers)
8	2d6 Dholes
9	3d10 Refugees
10	Ruins
11	Nothing
12	Snakes (either)
13	1d4x10 Soldiers
14	Spellburst
15	Villagers
16	Wild Boar (either solitary or 2d4)
17	2d6 Varangians
18	Tiger (either solitary or an ambush)
19	Yiiq (either solitary or 2d3)
20	Wizard

## MOUNTAIN ENCOUNTERS

These mountains are generally forested with only a few bare slopes. They rise to around 3,000 to 5,000 feet above sea level.

If the characters’ party includes a dwarf, the Referee may wish to add a wandering dwarf on a result of 5, rather than more soldiers. The soldiers are most likely to appear in the passes on the northeast corner and eastern edge of the map than in mountain hexes generally; the Referee should feel free to re-roll a result that drops soldiers somewhere else at random.

2d10	MOUNTAIN ENCOUNTER
2	Cannibal (solitary)
3	Carrion Beasts (2d8 Vultures)
4	Ruins
5-6	2d3x10 Soldiers
7	2d10 Forest Folk (if the hex is also forested)
8-15	Nothing
16	Spellburst
17	Wild Boar (solitary)
18	Tiger (either solitary or pride)
19	Yiiq (solitary)
20	Wizard





## PADDY ENCOUNTERS

The cultivated part of the Valley is mostly terraced rice paddies. Or rather, it was, before the magical bombardments, looting armies, flash flooding, and general devastation. Now it is a haunted death-scape – but it is also the only reliable source of food in the Valley. Peasants are worked nearly to death by famine-panicked overlords, or surly and taciturn as they hide their harvests and kill those who might watch.

## PLAINS ENCOUNTERS

The plains in the Valley are a mix of shrub and grassland. They aren't perfectly flat seas of grass like the steppes or pampas of more temperate climes; they have gullies, rolling ridges, thorn thickets, and the occasional mire as well. Roll these encounters on 2d12.

### 2d10 PADDY ENCOUNTER

2	1d3 Angry Ghosts (Araq)
3	2d6 Armor-stealers
4	1d8 Lotus Monks
5	Carrion Beasts (any)
6	2d10 Dholes
7	Insect Cloud
8	3d6 Bandits
9	Mist
10	Monsoon
11	Nothing
12	Ruins (burned or drowned)
13	2d8 Naga-kin
14	Plague
15	1d6x10 Refugees
16	Villagers
17	Snakes (either)
18	2d8 Varangians
19	Spellburst
20	2d8 Myrmidons

### 2d12 PLAINS ENCOUNTER

2	Angry Ghost (Beisaq, Qmoc Praj)
3	1d10 Cannibals
4	2d4 Armor-Stealers
5	2d6 Bandits
6	2d6 Dholes
7	1d12 Elephants
8	Insect Cloud
9	2d8 Lotus Monks
10	Mist
11	Villagers
12-15	Nothing
16	1d3x10 Refugees
17	Ruins
18	Snakes (either)
19	2d10 Soldiers
20	2d4 Wild Boars
21	2d10 Varangians
22	Monsoon
23	Tiger (solitary or pride)
24	Wizard

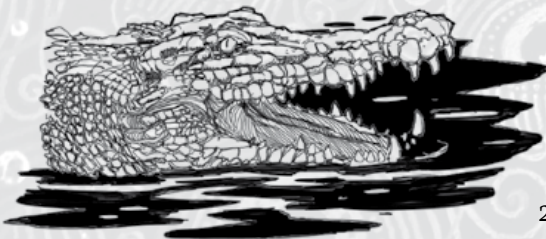


## RIVER VALLEY ENCOUNTERS

Use this table for hexes along the Qelong River or its main tributaries. Roll 2d12 on this table. For other river valleys, use this table but replace a result of 20 with a Spellburst.

2d12	RIVER VALLEY ENCOUNTER
2	1d6 Angry Ghosts (Araq, Qmoc Praj)
3	2d6 Armor-Stealers
4	3d6 Bandits
5	Carrion Beasts (1d6 Giant Catfish)
6	3d8 Crocodiles
7	4d6 Dholes
8	Insect Cloud
9	2d10 Varangians
10	Mist
11	Monsoon
12-13	Nothing
14	Snakes (1d4 pythons or 1d12 cobras)
15	3d8 Naga-kin
16	Villagers
17	Plague
18	1d8x10 Refugees*
19	Drowned Ruins
20	Naga Qelong
21	5d10 Needlefish
22	2d8 Lotus Monks
23	2d10 Soldiers
24	Wizard

\* If the encounter is downstream of Jamqar Long, the refugees have no treasure, weapons, or young women among them.



## SWAMP ENCOUNTERS

The swamps in this area range from black mangrove swamps that never see the sun to the reedy fens around the New Lakes.

2d10	SWAMP ENCOUNTER
2	Angry Ghost (Beisaq, Dereqlan)
3	3d6 Cannibals
4	Bandit Camp (2d6 bandits and 1d8 camp followers)
5	Carrion Beasts (1d3 Giant Catfish)
6	2d8 Crocodiles
7	Insect Cloud
8-14	Nothing
15	Mist
16	3d8 Naga-kin
17	Monsoon
18	2d4 Lotus Monks
19	Snakes (either)
20	Wild Boar (solitary)



## VILLAGE ENCOUNTERS

The normal pattern for a Sajavedran village is a number of family houses, each standing on pilings to postpone rot and set in a small kitchen garden, in a rotating pattern spiraling out from a central fountain, water-clock, or bell. At the center of town is the headman's house; if the village is a rich one, it has a tavern and a shrine also. All villages have a smithy, on the edge of town surrounded by water to avoid fires as the houses are made of wood, bamboo, and thatch. The smithy, and sometimes the shrine, is made of mud brick. Some small craftsmen (barrel-makers, net-weavers, etc.) work out of the ground floor of their family houses.



Surrounding the village are paddy fields, hog runs, enclosures for the oxen or water buffalo, fishing seines, and other ways of feeding the locals; in normal times, the villagers work these fields communally, keeping track of land tenure through arguments, lawsuits, and drunken poetry recitals.

Things are not normal now. No village in the Valley has survived entirely intact. A very few of them are swollen with refugees and slowly dying of typhus and famine. Most of them are burned out, torched and looted by one or another army. Some have dangerous or desperate inhabitants, scraping life from the ruins. If the village has any population at all, 60% are women, 15% are children, and 20% are elderly or crippled men. The remainder (and 10% of the women) can be considered Level 0 Fighters (Armor 12, minor weapons or repurposed agricultural polearms). For every 10 Fighters, there is one 1st Level Fighter (bamboo armor, Armor 14, sword or axe and short bow). There is a 1 in 3 chance that the village has a monk or shaman: either a 1st Level Cleric or a 1st Level Magic-User.

Any halfway decent strangers will easily attract the attention of the desperate villagers who implore the strangers to take them on as retainers, except for men of fighting age and ability who are far more reluctant to leave town than normal (positive reaction and a 1 in 12 chance).

2d10 CONDITION OF VILLAGE	
2-4	One or two families remain in mostly deserted village: 1d4x10 villagers.
5-8	Hamlet: 6d6 villagers; roll on Villagers table on p35 for specifics and encounter type.
9- 17	Burned out ruins. Drowned ruins if the village is near the River, a lake, or a swamp.
18-20	Bloated with refugees: 2d6x 100 villagers; 2 in 6 chance of plague or typhus.

The villagers are usually all aakom-poisoned, of course, but a village might have a small lotus patch, the most gifted cook among them mixing the petals into their food to keep the aakom at bay. This has its own consequences, of course; without monastic training, the more susceptible villagers simply stop moving for hours at a time as the lotus has its way with them. This does little to get the crops in. Other villages simply chop the hands off anyone who shows signs of aakom curse. Including, of course, visiting characters.

Roll on each table below, once for the condition of the village, and once for the primary encounter therein. If the Referee likes, she can roll more than once for an encounter, either because it is a busy village, or the player characters intend to stick around there for a while in order to heal. For a burned-out or otherwise ruined village, see the Ruins result p.32. On any die result divisible by 8, the village has a stupa, which the Lotus monks either already occupy (1 in 4 chance) or plan to occupy at all costs.

2d10 VILLAGE ENCOUNTER	
2-3	Gang of aakom-cursed locals (2d4, attack as 1st Level Fighters) ruling village by fear.
4	1d4 Angry Ghosts (Araq)
5-8	2d3 Cannibals (family of cannibals operating a tavern and eating refugees and strangers).
9	Bandits (harassing, occupying, or besieging the village); equal to 2d10% of village population.
10-12	2d10 Armor-Stealers
13-14	4d4 Soldiers ruling village by force (1 in 6 chance of Varangians).
15-16	Dhole pack (5d6) on village outskirts.
17	2d4 lotus monks looking for lotus or recruits or slaves to dig a geomantic canal.
18-20	2d6 Naga-kin infiltrating the village, drowning people and replacing them.

# CREATURES

## ANGRY GHOSTS

Sajavedra is home to many different sorts of angry ghosts. In general, ghosts are insubstantial, and can only be harmed by magic. They are undead and have the standard immunities to Sleep, Charm, etc. Unless given different values below, they have Armor 12, 1d4 Hit Dice, and can blink from place to place or skitter there twice as fast as an unencumbered man. Their Morale is almost always 12, but can be lowered by the presence of a Cleric who has cast Turn Undead. Some angry ghosts can be propitiated with offerings or even by the death of their foes! Araq, beisaq, and qmoc praj treat Turn Undead attempts by anyone but a Sajavedran monk as though they had 4 Hit Dice more than normal.

**ARAQ:** The araq are invisible guardian spirits, usually family ghosts of powerful or notable ancestors. They have become angry as families are slaughtered and villages destroyed. In a ruined village, an araq can use any part of the village in eyeshot as a weapon (dart, spear, club, staff, mancatcher). After three rounds of combat, it can attack 2 times per round (depending on how angry it is). Roll 1d6; on a 1 or 2, the araq can **Cause Fear** on anyone in a 20' circle. (Number of castings and effective level equals its Hit Dice.)

**BEISAQ:** The beisaq are hungry ghosts, spirits of men or women killed by violence and unburied – lots of those around during wartime. They especially haunt desolate areas and eat the food stores of travelers. Eating food turns them visible, though not material. If disturbed while eating food (it takes them 1 turn to eat 1 day's supplies for 1 person), they will attack. Armor is ineffective against a beisaq; foes have -1 to their Armor per Hit Die of the beisaq. Depending on the beisaq's Hit Dice (1d4+1 or more), its attack varies:

**2HD** Ice-cold bite: 1d4 damage, doubled against paralyzed victims.

**3HD** Paralyzing touch; save versus Paralyzation or be frozen for 1d3 rounds per Hit Die of the beisaq.

**4HD+** Energy drain; drop CON to next-lowest modifier.

**DAEREQLAN:** These are the spirits of villagers forced to flee into the wilderness to die. Their spirits reincarnate or possess warm-blooded wild animals (deer, panthers, tigers, dholes, boars, apes, birds, bears, etc.). If their host animal is killed, the spirit possesses the next nearest animal of the same type. Add +2 Hit Dice to the animal's normal total, +1 to its damage, and +2 to its Armor. The animal has the Intelligence and Wisdom of the spirit; all Hunting rolls to track it are at half normal success. Add the animal's Hit Dice to the spirit's Hit Dice for purposes of Turn Undead.



**QMOC PRAJ:** These are the ghosts of women who died in childbirth. They can fly and hover. Their primary attack is throwing stones: use the Rock entry in the Missile Weapons table. They can throw one stone for each of their Hit Dice every round. Some qmoc praj are accompanied by qon praj, vampiric fetuses that act like familiars. A qon praj adds +2 Hit Dice to the qmoc praj, and adds +2 to all her saving throws against Magic or Magical Devices. It also grants three “free cast” spells (usually hateful, creepy ones) of the caster’s normal level (or of the qmoc praj’s Hit Dice); they must be selected when the qon praj is acquired, and can only change once the caster gains access to higher-level spells on her own. A human Magic-User who captures a qon praj can gain the same benefits by feeding the qon praj 1 hp of his blood per night.

## ARMOR-STEALERS

For some reason, the peasants of the Valley really resent warriors. Huh. Go figure. Anyhow, a small band of peasants some time ago decided to kill a warrior while he slept with their daughters and sell his armor and weapons to get money on which to live. And what do you know, it worked.

By now, the word of this revolutionary method of dealing with heavily armed strangers has filtered around the Valley, and every so often, the peasantry decides to give it a whirl. This might happen anywhere, especially if the player characters have been more than usually imperious and selfish, but when this entry shows up on an encounter chart it means that some peasants have a steady racket going, and have gotten good at it. They have powerful sleeping or emetic draughts (victims at -2 to save versus Paralyzation or Poison), they have figured out the weak spots in all kinds of armor (target loses -1 to his Armor if armored), they know how to get rid of a body in a hurry, and they have contacts down the River or over the mountains willing to buy their bundles of armor. At any given time, the armor-stealers have 2d4 sets of armor (mostly lacquer, Armor 16, worth 100-150sp if complete and depending

on workmanship) plus shields, horseshoe kits, etc. in a stash somewhere. An armor-stealers’ stash is a great place to stumble upon miscellaneous equipment.

If they must, they will ambush characters (roll 5 or 6 to avoid surprise) and actually attack them. The leader (2nd Level Fighter or 3rd Level Specialist) has chain, Armor 16; others (1st Level Fighters and Specialists) have leather armor, Armor 14; they use mancatchers, garrotes, slings, and daggers; Morale 10. Specialists always have at least 3 skill points in sneak attack (3x damage, minimum).

Of course, they would much rather get the characters feeling safe, then poison or drug them, or slit their tendons while they sleep. Armor-stealers have Stealth 5 in 6 versus sleeping characters, 4 in 6 versus awake characters at night on armor-stealer turf, 3 in 6 versus awake characters by day on armor-stealer turf.

Unless the characters have been truly odious, the armor-stealers tend to leave them alive and naked, to avoid making angry ghosts, but not all armor-stealers are so fastidious: some kill and bury their victims. Others split the difference by putting helpless characters at the mercy of some local monster to be devoured, leaving the armor (mostly) behind. One favorite trick is to let their guests sleep in a tent or hut made of tanned and waxed oxhide: in the night, they drop in twenty gallons or so of flesh-eating beetles (1d2 damage each round automatically) and sew up the flap behind them. One band has found a 30’ deep crypt now full of flesh-eating mist (save versus Breath Weapon at -3 or be disintegrated 1d8hp damage per turn); knock the fighter on the head by surprise and push him into the pit with a Grapple; watch the entry with a heavy crossbow until the screaming stops, then fish his armor out with a grappling hook.

## BANDITS

Bandits are a mix of local toughs, deserters, and the easily cowed. They rove about stealing whatever food someone manages to accumulate; they themselves are more often than not on the verge of starvation these days. Unless otherwise specified, bandits have Armor 13 (thick clothes and general toughness), carry medium weapons and daggers, and are lightly encumbered with miscellaneous gear and any loot that they carry (2d10sp in value), Morale 9.

20% of bandits are 1st Level Fighters (Armor 14, swords and short bows, 1d6x10sp value loot), 10% are 2nd Level (Armor 15 mixed leather and metal scale armor, swords and short bows, 1d100sp value loot). The bandit leader is a Level 1d4+2 Fighter (Armor 16 lacquer armor, sword and shield, 2d100sp value loot). A bandit gang of 10 or more will have one Specialist and one Cleric (a non-Lotus monk) of Level 1d4 each (both in leather armor, Armor 14, loot 1d6x10sp per Level).

A bandit camp will have 2d12 camp followers, women kidnapped and forced to cook for and otherwise service the bandits. The bandits have beaten and brutalized them into submission; the camp followers will not help outsiders against the bandits.

## CANNIBALS

Villagers turned to cannibalism following famine seek each the company of others instinctively. They may attempt to hide their habits at first, or convert the whole village to their ways. Once the fundamental human taboo is broken, though, they most often cannot live with men; they hide in burned-out villages, rocky caves, or dank forests and swamps. Their teeth are filed, and their breath is rank and rotting. They smell of dried blood. Unless otherwise specified, cannibals are Armor 12, Hit Dice 1, +1 to attack rolls (thanks to the cannibalistic bestial savagery of their attacks), damage 1d3 (biting and joint snapping being the most common attacks), Morale 11 until one-third their number are killed, then Morale 7.

10% of cannibals are 1st Level Specialists (3x damage in sneak attacks, +2 on sneak attacks, 2 in 6 Stealth) armed with daggers.

A lone cannibal encountered is a dangerous killer well on the way to becoming a wilderness demon of some sort: a Specialist of 1d6 Levels (6x damage in sneak attacks, +2 on sneak attacks; Level +1 in 6 Stealth); the dried monk's ear on a thong around his chest gives him +3 to Armor (ghost protection; only works if you ate the monk and dried his ear yourself), and carries dagger, garrote, and blowgun (poisoned darts, save versus Paralyzation or be paralyzed for 1d8 turns).

## CARRION BEASTS

With all the dead bodies lying around, carrion beasts flourish. The Referee should pick the one most appropriate to the specific encounter, or pick one that the characters have not encountered yet:

**DHOLES:** See p.25.

**GIANT BEETLES:** Normal burying beetles ingesting aakom-poisoned flesh for twenty years have by now grown to the size of large cats. 4d6 encountered; up to 6 can attack a man at once. Armor 16 chitin, 1 Hit Die, move as fast as a lightly encumbered man, 1d4 bite, unthinking insectile Morale 12.

**GIANT CATFISH:** Catfish on the bottoms of the various rivers, streams, lakes, flooded spellburst holes, etc. live by feeding on anything that falls to the bottom, be it vegetable, animal, or not quite dead yet. Giant catfish do not like waiting for things to fall. 1d3 encountered, Armor 12, 2 Hit Dice, swim 1.5 times faster than a man and walk on land half as fast as a heavily encumbered man; successful grapple with their feelers pulls victim underwater to begin drowning, 1d6 chew/strangle; Morale 9.

**VULTURES:** These avian scavengers grow excessively bold, swooping down on targets who have less than a quarter of their Hit Points left. 2d8 encountered. Armor 14 (constant wing buffets reduce foes' attack chances by -2), 2 Hit Dice, move 1.5 times faster than a man, bite 1d6 (on a natural 20, does 6 points and bites hard enough to break foe's arm), Morale 8. The vulture's first attack is always to vomit its aakom-tainted stomach acid onto a victim: 1d3 points in the first round and 1 point each round automatically thereafter for 1d6 rounds, target saves versus Breath Weapon for half damage (1 point every other round).



## CROCODILES

Encountered in the swamps and rivers of Sajavedra, especially the Qelong. 3d8 encountered, Armor 15, 3 Hit Dice, move as fast as a heavily encumbered man on land and swim twice as fast as an unencumbered man in water, 2d4 bite (front) or 1d10 tail sweep (rear), Morale 9.

## DHOLES

Not gigantic Lovecraftian worms. Those are bholes. Dholes are wild dogs, their numbers now very much increased by domestic dogs gone feral.

1d6-6d6 encountered, Armor 12; 1 Hit Die, move 1.5x the speed of an unencumbered human; 1d4 bite attack; if three dholes attack a single target simultaneously, the third gets +1 to attack.

## ELEPHANTS

In happier times, rich merchants carried cargo on elephants' backs. The royal guard of Sajavedra fought - and for all anyone knows may still fight, over the mountains - from elephant-back. If elephants attack, it is either because the adventurers did something loud or stupid, or because they have been driven into musth by the constant magical bombardment.

1d12 encountered, Armor 15, 10 Hit Dice, move as fast as a heavily encumbered human; 2d8 trample (a single elephant can trample the same target twice) or 1d10 gore or 1d8 grapple with trunk (as garrote, does 1d8 damage thereafter automatically, applies -4 to defender's save versus Paralyzation); Morale 9. A charging elephant imposes an automatic Morale check at -2 on any humanoid or equine foe. No wound doing less than 4 hp harms an elephant, although it sure does annoy it.

Only male elephants (1 in 3 chance) have tusks; a tusk is worth 1d6x1000sp and counts as 1d3 oversized items.

## FOREST FOLK

These are more primitive tribes, driven into the forest by the Sajavedrans when they settled the region centuries ago. Some of them once willingly traded and worked with the villagers, now they wish only to keep strangers out of their forest. They live in the boughs of enormous trees deep in the forest, and will defend their forests to the death. Barring extremely unlikely circumstances, outsiders like the player characters will never see the forest folk's women, elders, or children. They will only encounter 2d10 braves, hunting for wild game and keeping the forest safe. And they almost certainly will not encounter them first: surprising forest folk in their forest requires a 1 in 12 chance for non-Specialists. (Specialist Stealth chances against forest folk in their forest are rolled on 1d12 instead of 1d6.) By contrast, forest folk have Stealth scores of 5 in 6 in their own forest (11 in 12 at night). Forest folk ambushes not only gain the normal one round free action, but also gain the equivalent of Aiming (+4 to hit) for their first missile attacks. Finally, all forest folk do double damage for their first attack from ambush (as Sneak Attack).

Half of all forest folk braves are Level 0 Fighters (Armor 12, blowguns and bamboo javelins (d6-1, 15'/30'/90')), the other half are Fighters of Levels 1-6 (agility gives Armor 14, spears and short bows). Roll 1d10 and subtract 4, results of 1 or less are considered 1; the result is the each Fighter's Level. For each party of braves, roll 1d6 and add a shaman (Level 1d6 Cleric; Armor 12+Level from magical tattoos) on a result of 1-4.

Forest folk poison their weapons with a neurotoxin derived from the deadly purple lotus. Save versus Poison at -1 per Level of the accompanying shaman or lose consciousness. (If the braves have no shaman along, save versus Poison at -1)

Forest folk Morale is 9 unless they are defending their tree homes directly, in which case it is 12. If forest folk lose a Morale check, the survivors withdraw deeper into the forest and, using bird and monkey calls, bring another band of 2d10 braves as reinforcements to ambush the player characters again. This will continue for two more ambushes; only after three Morale losses will the forest folk flee completely. On the third ambush, the poison is drawn from the black lotus; failure to save versus Poison means death, not unconsciousness.

## GAJA SIMHA

The Gaja Simha is a terrifying creature whose appearance presages disaster. Needless to say, it has been seen all over Sajavedra over the last twenty years. It resembles a very large lion with enormous fangs and the trunk of an elephant; its body glitters with black, green, gold, and purple scales. Only one is ever seen; it may even be the same one each time, traveling through the spirit realm torn open by magical warfare and mass deaths.

Armor 18, 8 Hit Dice, runs twice as fast as a lightly encumbered man, it can claw twice (1d8) or grapple with its trunk (as garrote, does 1d8 damage thereafter automatically, applies -4 to defender's save versus Paralyzation). If it succeeds in two hits in a row (of either kind) against the same foe, it can attempt to bite him for 2d6 damage. It can cast the following spells once per day, as an 8th Level Magic-User: ***Magic Missile*** (six times per day), ***Change Self*** (disguised as a monk), ***Invisibility***, ***Wall of Fog***, ***Gust of Wind***, ***Dimension Door***, and ***Shadow Monsters***.

Its Morale is 10; if forced to flee, it will return when the player characters are next at half of their Hit Points or lower. It will not return in sight of the Varangians or the Myrmidons, or near the Cylinder.

The Gaja Simha makes saving throws as a Dwarf of 8th Level.

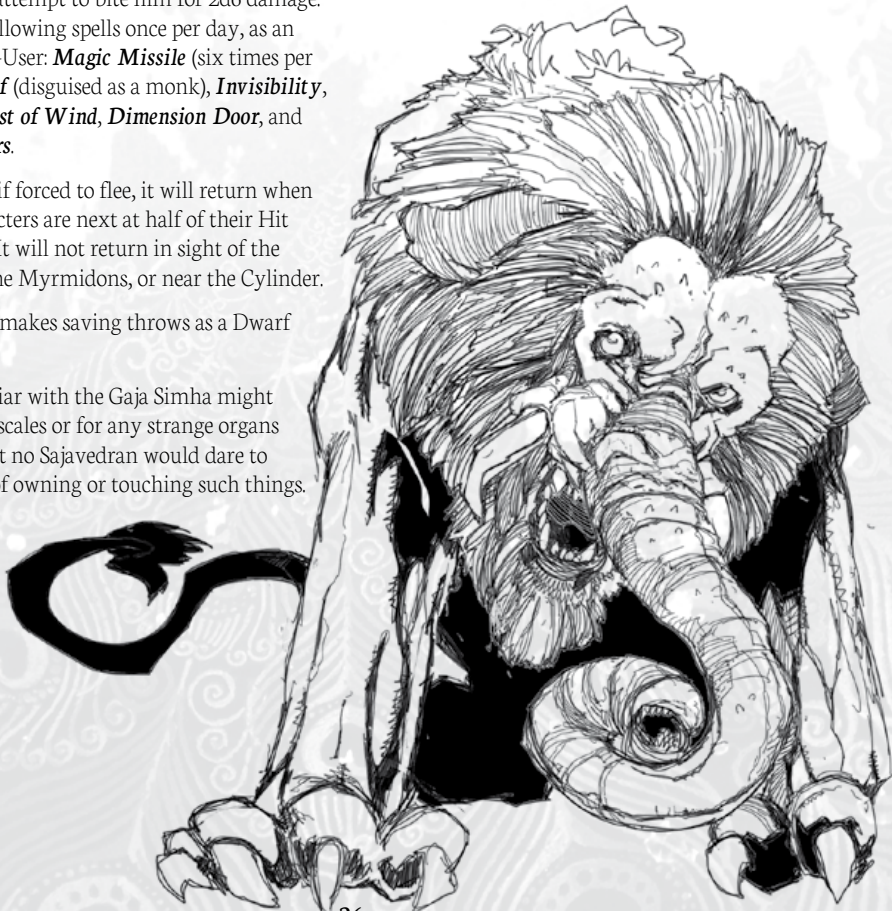
Magicians familiar with the Gaja Simha might pay well for the scales or for any strange organs in the corpse, but no Sajavedran would dare to incur the curse of owning or touching such things.

## INSECT CLOUD

A cloud of biting flies, mosquitoes, or locusts does 1 hp of damage per turn automatically and subtracts -2 from all attempts to hit, use skills, or concentrate. Since the insects have likely swallowed plenty of aakom-laced blood, they also interfere with spellcasting: casters must roll 1d6 before casting a spell, and are too distracted to cast that round on a 1.

The cloud usually sits on the river or body of water that the player characters are moving along, or hovers all across the path or plain. In short, detouring around the cloud drops movement to half normal.

An insect cloud can be dissipated by a monsoon, or with the spells ***Gust of Wind*** and ***Stinking Cloud***, or by burning certain plants (found on a Foraging test at -2 for non-Sajavedrans).





## LOTUS MONKS

The eldritch war shreds the power of the land, twisted by aakom's corruption. The Naga awakens and the very hills and valleys warp under her coils. Civilization bleeds from a thousand wounds. In their desperation, the lotus monks have turned to the most ancient ways, from before the bodhisattvas and devas taught man to tame the world. They have turned to the Lotus, which some say fell to earth before the first plants were made from chaos, and others say was planted by the god of dreams so that the world would never be closed to him. The Lotus plans to "hard reboot" the Valley, using high-level geomantic sorceries. This major re-consecration of the Valley to Law will, ideally, return the Naga to somnolence as the land's fundamental polarity reverses. It will, admittedly, drain the life-energies of every living thing in the Qelong Valley. Or possibly, in Sajavedra.

All Sajavedran monks wear robes colored like lotus petals, a rich saffron-gold. They shave their heads and carry only staves and begging bowls. Lotus monks have deep golden eyes, but it can be difficult to determine whether a monk is of the Lotus or not from a distance. A **Detect Law** spell will, however, identify a lotus monk as such.

The Lotus prefers symmetry; lotus monks encountered follow the following pattern:

No. of MONKS	LEVEL	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th
4	3	1	--	--	--	--	--	--
6	3	2	1	--	--	--	--	--
8	4	2	1	1	--	--	--	--
10	4	2	2	1	1	--	--	--
12	4	3	2	1	1	1	--	--
20	8	4	2	2	2	1	1	1

For bands between those values, mix and match: 16 monks could be one 12th Level monk and one 4th Level monk, for example, or one 10th Level monk and one 6th Level monk, or two 8th Level monks. Except solitary monks, monks will not appear in odd numbers. For solitary monks or pairs of monks roll 2d4-1 for their Level.

If the Referee rolls 8 monks exactly on the encounter, the encounter takes place at a small stupa which the Lotus has reoccupied after killing or converting all resistance.

While normal people who ingest golden lotus suffer the effects listed on p13 until becoming a slave of the Lotus, the monks of Sajavedra knew certain ante-diluvian arts that would allow the lotus to awaken their most mighty potential for the war against the Naga.

## Lotus Monk Powers

Lotus monks do open hand unarmed damage like melee weapons: 1d4 at Levels 1-2, 1d6 at Levels 3-4, 1d8 at Levels 5-6, and 1d10 at Levels 7+. Their attack bonus is that of a Fighter of half their Level, rounded down. Lotus monks may also use staves in combat, doing 1d4+half their Level in damage.

Lotus monks have terrifying speed over short distances: 60' in a round unencumbered; 160' running per round. They get two attacks per round at Levels 1-4, three attacks per round at Levels 5+.

Lotus monks can evade blows using superhuman reflexes and situational awareness. A lotus monk's Armor equals 12+Level.

Lotus monks can ignore damage from 10' of falling per Level, climb and cling to sheer surfaces (as **Spider Climb**, 1 turn+1 turn/Level), and standing jump farther than most people: 10' per Level.

Lotus monks can use the following spells: **Light** (Level 1+; any time), **Breaking Blow** (opens barriers as **Knock**, Level 2+; number of times per day equal to Level), **Confusion** (1d4 creatures per Level, Level 2+; once per day), **Blink** (Level 3+; twice per day), **Clairvoyance** (only to places lotus is growing or through another lotus monk's eyes, Level 4+; once per day), **Telekinesis** (Level 4+; number of times per day equal to Level). Subtract the lotus monk's Level from the target's saving throw versus Magic, if any.

Lotus monks make saving throws as elves of their Level. Hit Points and all other values are as Clerics of their Level.

This is not a character class. This is a passel of evocative game effects, restricted to slaves of the Lotus with Sajavedran monastic training. Which is to say, to NPCs.

## MIST

Between the burning villages, the decaying bodies, the omnipresent swamps and paddies, the monsoon rains, and the ongoing sorcerous derangement of the atmosphere, the Valley has plenty of mists.

Unless the Referee derives the mist from a specific feature or otherwise delimits it, a mist covers a 5d10x100' radius. A mist is opaque to vision past 2d10'; it makes a superb place for armor-stealers, naga-kin, forest folk, fear-manifesting spirits, or other unwelcoming sorts to ambush travelers. Anyone traveling through the mist automatically becomes lost and moves in a random direction. Inhaling the mist adds 1 point of aakom per hour spent traveling through it.

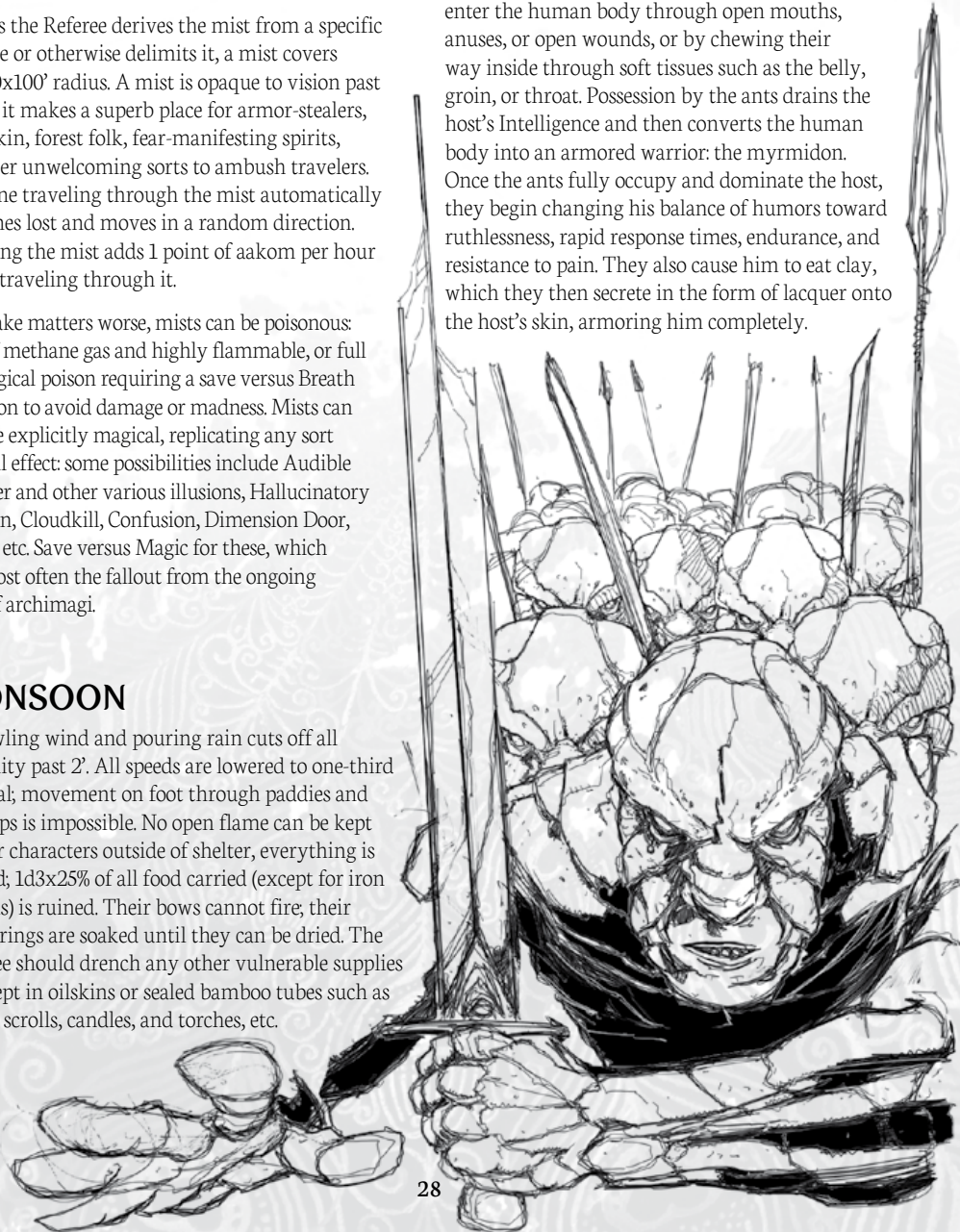
To make matters worse, mists can be poisonous: full of methane gas and highly flammable, or full of magical poison requiring a save versus Breath Weapon to avoid damage or madness. Mists can also be explicitly magical, replicating any sort of spell effect: some possibilities include Audible Glamer and other various illusions, Hallucinatory Terrain, Cloudkill, Confusion, Dimension Door, Maze, etc. Save versus Magic for these, which are most often the fallout from the ongoing war of archimagi.

## MONSOON

A howling wind and pouring rain cuts off all visibility past 2'. All speeds are lowered to one-third normal; movement on foot through paddies and swamps is impossible. No open flame can be kept lit. For characters outside of shelter, everything is soaked; 1d3x25% of all food carried (except for iron rations) is ruined. Their bows cannot fire; their bowstrings are soaked until they can be dried. The Referee should drench any other vulnerable supplies not kept in oilskins or sealed bamboo tubes such as maps, scrolls, candles, and torches, etc.

## MYRMIDONS

Myrmidons are human males possessed by a swarm of large (finger-sized), pinkish ants. The myrmidon-ants create a hive mind linked to all other myrmidons in their range, and direct their human hosts on the battlefield. The ants enter the human body through open mouths, anuses, or open wounds, or by chewing their way inside through soft tissues such as the belly, groin, or throat. Possession by the ants drains the host's Intelligence and then converts the human body into an armored warrior: the myrmidon. Once the ants fully occupy and dominate the host, they begin changing his balance of humors toward ruthlessness, rapid response times, endurance, and resistance to pain. They also cause him to eat clay, which they then secrete in the form of lacquer onto the host's skin, armoring him completely.





Myrmidons on the march eat every organic substance that they come across, especially human females and children; they are immune to poisons and diseases. They salvage obvious weapons, and leave behind everything else: myrmidons do not loot, and do not carry treasure. If they encounter a particularly rich feeding spot (a large village, say) they will halt their march for days to gorge themselves. At such times they often make more warriors by disgorging eggs into male captives (see Egg-Hosts, below); they bring these egg-hosts along on the march or, occasionally, leave them by the side of their march route to hatch.

One of the warring archmagi created the myrmidons for the battlefields of Sajavedra. At some point, one particular clutch of myrmidon eggs went astray and wound up on the west side of the mountains. Without direction from their creator, the myrmidons began just chewing their way across the Valley in a straight line.

Myrmidons encountered off this main line of march are either patrols looking for weapons, scouting parties, or newly created warriors moving toward the main body. They have lacquer armor (Armor 16); attack bonuses and Hit Dice as 4th Level Fighters; same speed as a lightly encumbered man despite their own encumbrance, Morale 11. They use warhammers and sickles (with a smattering of hooks, tridents, and swords; all medium weapons) mostly repurposed from overrun villages' smithies and farms. 20% of the force has bamboo javelins (d6-1, 15'/30'/90'). The Referee who enjoys tailoring a challenge can set the myrmidons' combat level at one below the average Level of the party's Fighters.

For every two myrmidons attacking the same target, they get one extra attack per round: for example, 4 myrmidons (the practical maximum) attacking one target would get a total of 6 attacks in the round. They are immune to illusions, Cause Fear, Confusion, Sleep, Geas, or any spell affecting a human mind; myrmidons have their hive-mind to make those decisions. Feeblemind cast on any single myrmidon always grants the nearest 1d6 myrmidons Haste. Myrmidons get +2 on any attack against a target threatening an egg-host.

## Egg-Hosts

When it is time to make more myrmidons, they regurgitate (or otherwise expel from their bodies) thousands of fibrous eggs into a few human male egg-hosts. The egg-host's body bloats, and then swells and distends still further as the larvae liquefy the host's body to feed. Cure Disease destroys the eggs, but the hosts will still die from blood loss and internal organ damage without a Cure Critical Wounds in addition to the Cure Disease spell. At some point, the eggs hatch and the myrmidon-ants climb into the new hosts that the myrmidon horde has captured for them.

If an egg-host is stabbed or chopped open before hatching, the myrmidon-ants pour out of the wound and move toward a new host - most likely the player characters. Save versus Paralyzation prevents them from crawling onto the character's flesh, biting for 1 hp, and then burrowing into his body. If no host is immediately perceptible (the ants can smell any living male humans within 5') the myrmidon-ants burrow into rotting organic material to eat and wait for human hosts to happen along. Spotting a clutch of myrmidon-ants is akin to spotting a trap, but uses the better of the character's Search or Bushcraft skills. Save versus Paralyzation allows a character to avoid the ants long enough to burn them out with torches or stomp them to death with hard boots. (They will chew through soft-soled shoes, though!) Myrmidon-ants will possess elves, but not dwarves or halflings. They crawl faster than a heavily encumbered man can run.

Once the insects are inside the character, the victim must save versus Poison every day, at an additional -1 penalty each day, or be subsumed into the myrmidon hive, at which point he begins losing Intelligence at -1 point per day. Until his Intelligence drops to 0, the host remains self-aware, if helpless. Cure Disease kills the insects; if the host's Intelligence is still above 0, he survives the process; if not, he suffers immediate brain death.

## NAGA QELONG

The Naga Qelong is the genius locus of the land, a demigoddess both embodying and transcending the River that takes her name. For thousands of years she slept, her whispers the thunder and her shivers earthquakes, her dreams drove women to kill and men to self-mutilation. Awakened by the Cylinder and its aakom leakage, the Naga now strains against the threadbare, rusting network of sacred-geometry prison laid down by the stupas and canals millennia ago. Her Children breed among the river-folk, drowning villages to strengthen the Naga.

She appears as a gigantic snake with four heads wearing the faces of humanoid women. (In fact, her faces seem more elven than human, in a serpentine sort of fashion.) Her faces are unthinkably beautiful and bone-freezingly terrifying, alternately concealed and revealed by her long, flowing hair of blue, green, white, and black. When the Naga appears in material form, this is but an avatar built by her thoughts and directed by her will. The true Naga is over a hundred miles long, her four heads each the size of a small island. Fortunately, she remains chained in the spirit realm – although her avatars can uncoil into the astral and other planes as well as into the earthly world. As the stupa ley network weakens, and as the aakom pours its eldritch energies into her mystical veins, she becomes capable of ever greater manifestations. Which is to say, the Referee can always make the next Naga encounter even tougher.

For now, the Naga has Armor 17, 12 Hit Dice, moves 1.5 times as fast as a man on land and 3 times as fast in the water, can attack four times per round, and has Morale 10. Each of her heads can bite for 1d6+3 points; those bitten must save versus Poison or die. The Naga can also smash targets to her side or in her rear with her body or tail for 2d8+2 points.

Each of the Naga's heads has a separate distance attack that she can make three times per day. All attacks only apply to characters in the front arc of that Naga head's vision:

**GREEN-HAIRED HEAD:** Can breathe out a cloud of poison or spit it in a stream at a specific target. The cloud stretches in a 40' wide x 20' deep x 20' ragged oval across the front arc of the Naga's face; those inside save versus Breath Weapon or die. The stream spatters one specific target, who must save versus Poison at -4 or die. Treat the stream as an aimed missile attack; range 20'/30'/40'.

**BLACK-HAIRED HEAD:** Can howl and drive all who can hear her (within 40') mad; treat as either a *Symbol of Fear*, a *Symbol of Insanity*, or a *Symbol of Despair*. All effects only apply to hearers who fail to save versus Magic.

**BLUE-HAIRED HEAD:** Can extend her hair and entangle foes up to 40' away. She can entangle up to four foes, but only at up to 10' distance; she can entangle three foes at up to 20' distance; she can entangle two foes at 30' or one foe at 40'. Treat as a grapple attack, at -1 per additional foe she seeks to entangle at once. Foes entangled are charmed, as *Charm Person*; they only get a save versus Magic if ordered to do something clearly suicidal. Note: "Kiss me" is not clearly suicidal in such a state, although it will (probably) result in an automatic bite.

**WHITE-HAIRED HEAD:** Can shoot lightning from her eyes at a specific target, as per the *Magic Missile* spell. She can shoot at up to two foes simultaneously.

If the heroes attack her heads individually, each has Armor 20 (it is more difficult to hit a specific head) and 24hp. When a head takes its full Hit Points' worth of damage, it "dies" for the rest of the combat. This reduces the Naga's effective casting level and attack bonus by three levels, and removing one of the Naga's attacks. The Referee can split damage done to the naga by non-targeted attacks among her four heads, either randomly or pro-rata, whichever she prefers.



## NAGA-KIN

Naga-kin are humans (or their offspring) who have mated with the Naga or one of her avatars, or otherwise become contaminated with her life essence. They can take any number of shapes, depending on the circumstances of their melding: scaled and web-fingered humanoids, flipper-handed humans with the face and feelers of catfish, bloated froglike goblins, human bodies with four tiny wriggling heads growing from the neck, or good old drowned corpses.

Whatever they look like, their basic combat values do not change: Armor 12, 2 Hit Dice, move as fast as a heavily encumbered man on land and twice as fast as a man in the water, attack with either a natural weapon (claw, flipper, bite, etc.) for 1d4 or a trident, axe, or other medium weapon (1d8). Some naga-kin (20% of any large raiding group) will carry weighted nets (treat like a thrown mancatcher, 10'/20'/30') or hooked spears. All naga-kin can Sneak Attack while underwater (4 in 6 chance) with a multiplier equal to their Hit Dice. Anyone drowned by a naga-kin must save versus Magic to avoid coming back as a naga-kin.

In each 8 naga-kin encountered, there will be one Magic-User (Level 1d6+2). In each 10 naga-kin encountered, there will be one leader with 1d6 extra Hit Dice.

## NEEDLEFISH

A much larger, more aggressive breed of needlefish now swarms in the rivers and coastal waters of Sajavedra. While swimming rapidly in schools, if they encounter an obstacle (a floating log, a corpse, a boat, a sandbar, a rock, etc.), they jump over it. If someone is standing on or near that obstacle, the razor-sharp bony noses of the needlefish carve through them like a storm of knife blades. Needlefish always strike from "ambush" (4 in 6 chance for surprise); treat surprised characters as having -4 to their Armor. Unsurprised characters are still attacked, but at their full Armor. The needlefish school (5d10 fish) attacks all characters in its path with one attack roll, and inflicts 1d4 damage for each 5 fish in the school; divide the damage among all the characters in the school's path.

Striking back at a school of needlefish is pointless, as the school will have swum far away (240' in one round!) long before any possible reaction, but if you must: Armor 14 (unarmored, but fast!), 1 Hit Die, Morale 4.

## PLAGUE

This hex has an outbreak of plague (incubation period one day, interval of three hours, infection time two days, -2 to Constitution). Add a ruined building of some sort, or burned-out village, or even a small village as in Villagers (p.35). Then fill it with rats and fleas. Characters stopping here, fighting here, or exploring the ruin risk infection.

## REFUGEES

These refugees are fleeing some horrible crisis for imagined safety elsewhere on the map. They might be fleeing toward or away from the Varangians or the Lotus monks, for example! They can, if given food, tell the characters what they are fleeing from. They will also beg for food, protection, etc. and generally make a nuisance of themselves. They have a 2 in 6 chance of carrying typhus (see p.9), and 1 in 12 of them carries an aakom curse (see p.11). They may also be carrying family heirlooms, bags of silver, and other goods to try and make a living elsewhere; a total of 1d20sp per refugee.

Refugees are Level 0, 1 or 2 hp each, and never do maximum damage. 10% of them have minor weapons. They are most likely to try grappling and overwhelming characters to steal all their food than attack with weapons, but can be broken easily (Morale 6). A cruel Referee could hide a higher-level Specialist or spell-caster (in addition to the aakom-cursed) among their ranks, planning to strike from the protective coloration of a filthy, stinking mob of peasants.

## RUINS

If a location table gives a result of “Ruins,” roll on this table to see if anything lurks within. If the Referee would like to offer a possibility of minor treasure, roll twice.

2d10	RUIN ENCOUNTER
2-3	Angry Ghost (any)
4	1d6 Cannibals
5-7	2d4 Dholes
8-14	Nothing
15-16	Snake (either)
17-18	Plague
19	Severed aakom zombie hand (p.11)
20	Spellburst

2d10	RUIN TREASURE
2-3	Buried coin hoard 4xd100sp
4-16	Nothing
17-19	Salvageable medium weapon or polearm
20	Minor ivory or jade worth 1d12x10sp

## SNAKES

Why did it have to be snakes? Snakes in Sajavedra mostly come in one of two varieties: cobras and pythons. Pick one, or roll randomly. Some of them have grown extra heads as the Naga-energies awaken, but despite the extra head, will still only attack once.

**COBRA:** Armor 14, 1 Hit Die, poison bite (1 hp) or spit (10'), save versus Poison or take 1d4 automatic extra damage each round for 3 rounds; Morale 9. There is a 1 in 8 chance that any encounter with a cobra is actually with a nest of 2d4 cobras, tangled and entwined. Cobras ambush on a 4 in 6 chance.

**PYTHON:** Armor 13, 2 Hit Dice, crush as garrote, 1d6; Morale 8. Pythons ambush on a 3 in 6 chance.

## SOLDIERS

These are actual soldiers, drafted or signed on to fight in the war behind the mountains. They are likely leading a coffle of “recruits” or escorting a convoy of supplies looted from the Valley. They will get bonuses for “recruiting” able-bodied strangers, depending on how formidable the characters look, the soldiers may just attack them (to subdue, chain up, and shanghai through the mountains) or greet them and lull them into a false sense of security (at which point, they do the whole subdue-chain-shanghai thing).

Soldiers are Fighters. 60% of them are Level 0; 30% are 1st Level: both have Armor 14 bamboo armor, with shield; spear (1d6), dagger (1d4), and medium weapon (1d8). 10% are higher-level, usually officers or NCOs (Level 1d4+1): Armor 16 lacquer armor with shield; medium weapon (1d6) and dagger (1d4). Each 20 soldiers will also have a medic: a Cleric of Level 1d4+1 wielding a metal-shod staff (1d6). A detachment of 50 soldiers will have 6 archers accompanying it: five 1st Level and one 3rd Level, all armed with short bows.

Soldiers may be accompanied by prisoners, as above. They will have a pack train of mules (1 per 3 soldiers) and teamsters (1 per 4 mules), and camp followers (as Bandits, p.24; 1d12 per 20 soldiers). They may also be in the market for buying armor from armor-stealers, or from those who stole from armor-stealers.

The emblem of Levh is the golden lion; the emblem of Tilia is the brazen tree. Both are worked in filigree on their banners, of scarlet and crimson respectively. Given the amount of dust, mud, and fading on those banners, it can be difficult to determine in a timely ashion which side the player characters will have just met. That information is not always volunteered: “Whose banner do you fight under?” “Why, stranger, which archmage do you support?”





## SPELLBURST

A spellburst or spell crater is a place where some great magic fell and detonated during the war. Treat it as a trap for purposes of spotting and triggering it; Magic-Users have a 2 in 6 chance of spotting a still-active spellburst. It might have any effect that the Referee desires: the archmagi are not restricted to rulebook effects. Or roll 1d10 on the random table below:

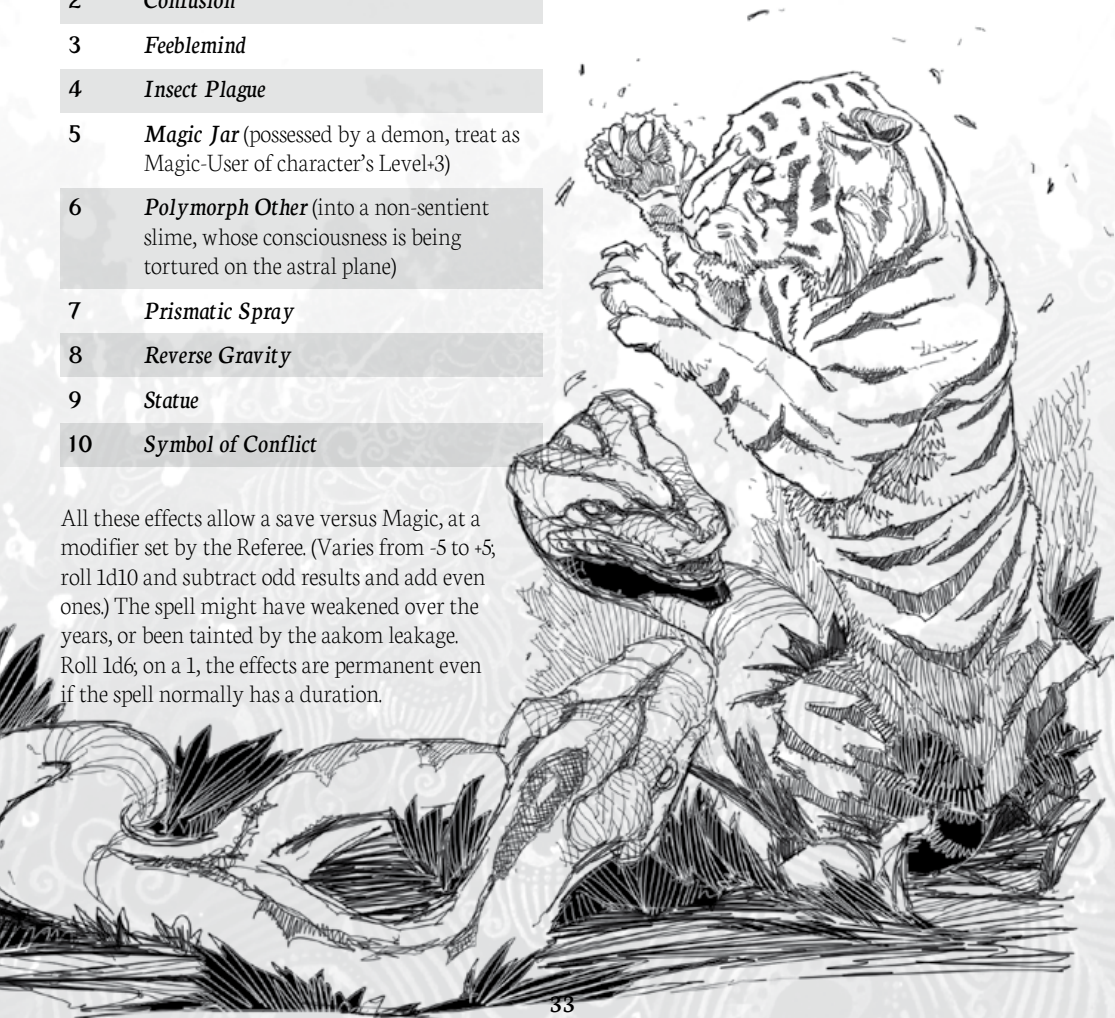
1d10	SPELLBURST EFFECT
1	<i>Cloudkill</i>
2	<i>Confusion</i>
3	<i>Feeblemind</i>
4	<i>Insect Plague</i>
5	<i>Magic Jar</i> (possessed by a demon, treat as Magic-User of character's Level+3)
6	<i>Polymorph Other</i> (into a non-sentient slime, whose consciousness is being tortured on the astral plane)
7	<i>Prismatic Spray</i>
8	<i>Reverse Gravity</i>
9	<i>Statue</i>
10	<i>Symbol of Conflict</i>

All these effects allow a save versus Magic, at a modifier set by the Referee. (Varies from -5 to +5; roll 1d10 and subtract odd results and add even ones.) The spell might have weakened over the years, or been tainted by the aakom leakage. Roll 1d6; on a 1, the effects are permanent even if the spell normally has a duration.

## TIGER

If the tigers of Sajavedra ever had any natural fear of man, these beasts have lost it forever. With all the corpses lying around, they now crave human flesh.

Armor 14, 6 Hit Dice, twice as fast as an unencumbered man, 1d6 claw and 1d10 bite, three attacks per round plus a bonus raking attack (d8) if both claws hit, Morale 9. On a really bad day, there will be an ambush of hunting tigers: 1d4+1 encountered, Morale 10.



## VARANGIANS

Marching under a hawk banner, the Varangians are elite mercenaries from a far-off land, one perhaps closer to the characters' homeland than Sajavedra is. They wisely decided that this war was a mug's game and withdrew over the mountains. While they accumulate all of the aakom that they can, they keep patrolling the area around their base to avoid surprises. There is a good chance by now (1 in 3) that a given patrol is just killing peasants and harvesting their organs for the aakom under Hagen's orders (see p.40); if so, one of the Varangians has a rose-stone eyepiece that detects the level of aakom contamination in a body.

Every Varangian is at least 2nd Level. Of each 10 Varangians encountered in the field, five are 2nd Level Fighters, three are 3rd Level Fighters, and one is a Fighter of Level 1d3+3. The tenth is either a Specialist (optimized for Stealth and Sneak Attack) or a Cleric (Level 1d4+2). Varangians are all armed with swords and daggers, and wear chain mail (Armor 16) and shield. One-third also carry halberds (1d8 polearms); one-third also carry heavy crossbows (1d8). They have drilled in crossbow use, and can reload and fire their dwarven-made heavy crossbows every other round. Their Morale is equal to 6 plus the Level of the highest-level Varangian present. Even if their Morale breaks, they will make a fighting retreat if at all possible.

If the encounter roll results in 6 or fewer Varangians, the encounter is with a mounted cavalry patrol on horseback (half 2nd Level, one Level 1d3+3, the remainder 3rd Level; all Fighters). The horses wear chain barding (Armor 16); all of the horsemen carry lances, shields, swords, and heavy crossbows. They are trained mounted archers; they only take a -2 penalty to hit with their crossbows from horseback, but cannot reload while mounted. The horses are trained war mounts; they can strike a foe with their hooves for 1d8 damage.

Given the decades of war that they have been fighting, it is understandable that the Varangians may have undergone some wear and tear, to be repaired as best he can by Hagen, their dwarven necromancer-alchemist. (For example, all the Varangians carry pastilles of anti-aakom tincture; one pastille removes 1d6 points of aakom and stops further aakom corruption for 1d6 days.) Here are some example modifications that Hagen has installed; the Referee should apply them to encountered Varangians as desired, and feel free to invent more along these lines.

**COOL HAND:** One of the mercenary's hands is undead. It has a +1 chance to disarm traps. If it or a weapon it wields drops a foe to 1 hp, that foe takes 4 additional points of damage and drops to -3 hp and death. The hand is cold to the touch and clearly dead in appearance.

**DEAD EYE:** One of the mercenary's eyes is undead. It can see ghosts, see at night and in darkness, and gives him a +2 to all missile weapon attacks. (It also lowers his Charisma by 3 when exposed.)

**ICY VEINS:** The mercenary's veins flow with an alchemical syrup instead of blood. He does not drop unconscious at 0 hp, but continues to fight to -3 hp. He also saves versus Poison and Paralyzation at +2, and versus any fear effect at +4. His Morale is always 12.

**LEATHERY SKIN:** The mercenary's skin has been tanned and toughened to the consistency of leather, most likely after exposure to a breath weapon, spellburst, or dangerous mist. His unarmored Armor rating is 14, and he ignores damage of 1 hp or less. His Charisma is permanently lowered by -6; he is at half chance to disarm traps or perform any other action requiring the delicacy of touch.





## VILLAGERS

A result of Villagers on a table outside a Village hex means a small hamlet: three houses or so: roll 6d6 for its population, broken down as in Village encounters, above (p.20). If the rhythm of the game needs a tension break, they can be eking out a subsistence living but willing to host the characters for silver or other help. They may have a local monster that needs killing, or a warlord to be driven off, or they may just be a way stop on the road.

In some cases (1 in 12, if you want to determine it randomly), an aakom-cursed villager has taken over, using his power (see p.11) to rule by terror.

Roll to see the general nature of the village:

2d10	VILLAGER ENCOUNTER
2-3	One villager living alone in ruins of his life (no population roll)
4-6	Armor-Stealers
7-11	Normal, mostly; roll on Reaction Table for attitude toward heavily armed strangers
12	Village-wide weird cult worships a demon or local monster
13-14	Plague or typhus epidemic raging; villagers all dying
15-17	Naga-kin
18-20	Cannibals; either the whole village or terrorizing the village

On a die result divisible by 3, the village has a shaman (1st Level Magic-User or Cleric). On a die result divisible by 8, the village has a stupa and a 2nd Level Cleric.

## WILD BOAR

The wild boar is one of the most dangerous beasts in the Sajavedran forest. As with many wild animals, boars have become more aggressive under the unnatural conditions of the war. Boars are, however, good eating: one roasted-smoked boar will feed one character for six days.

Armor 14, 3 Hit Dice, one-third again as fast as a lightly encumbered man, 1d8 gore with tusks (+2 to hit a heavily encumbered or worse target), Morale 9. Either one or 2d4 are encountered.

## WIZARD

This is an NPC wizard on his (or her) way to the Cylinder, just like the player characters. It is up to the Referee whether he shares their agenda broadly; if so, he might be less likely to trade information, of course! Also up to the Referee: is he from the characters' neck of the woods, or from one of the other kingdoms around Sajavedra? He is scholar enough to speak their language, regardless of where he is from originally.

He (or she) is 1d3 Levels higher than the highest-level spellcaster in the party. Roll 1d6-2 for the number of companions he has, treating results of 0 or lower as none. If he has one companion, it is a Fighter one Level lower than he is; if he has two companions, it is a pair of Fighters whose Levels total his; if he has three companions, he has a Specialist one Level lower than he is and two Fighters as above.

He has four healing potions (**Cure Serious Wounds**) for each person in his party, his spell book, 3 scrolls, and any other handy treasure that the Referee wishes to plant on him.

## YIIQ

The yiiq is an underground-dwelling ogre of repellent aspect and worse habits. The yiiq have slowly burrowed their way up toward the surface, now that the ley networks are broken and the Naga's thrashings have opened up new crevasses and subterranean tunnels. Armor 15, 4 Hit Dice, as fast as a lightly encumbered man; fist (1d8) or great axe (1d10), thrown rock (twice range and damage); Morale 9. A yiiq can fly or shapeshift (usually into human form) four times a day.

Yiiq can see perfectly in darkness; they make saving throws as dwarves. Yiiq are either solitary or live in a band of 2d3 yiiq. If encountered alone, a yiiq has 5 Hit Dice; in a group, only the leader has 5 Hit Dice.

## RANDOM NAME TABLES

Sajavedran names take the family name first, then the given name: Agoume Arun (male) or Agoume Aujong (female), to use the first line of the table as an example. Roll percentile dice twice, for family name and given name. Or just pick something that sounds good.

D100	FAMILY NAME	MALE	FEMALE
01-03	Agoume	Arun	Aujong
04-06	Biiv	Bourej	Baen
05-09	Bintong	Buenranj	Beja
10-12	Chae	Chae	Boupha
13-15	Davharman	Dai	Channari
16-18	Diit	Jiunxiu	Choutna
19-21	Im	Maqara	Dara
22-24	Jien	Meng	Deui
25-27	Juen	Munej	Iiren
28-30	Lon	Nath	Jan
31-33	Mian	Nauradam	Jantou
34-36	Moniraq	Ngour	Jantriiij
37-39	Nheq	Niin	Liilan
40-42	Pan	Phirun	Mei
43-45	Praq	Pran	Mliss
46-48	Qen	Qiiri	Pheaqllej
49-51	Qeo	Qiman	Qalijan
52-54	Qiim	Ranarij	Qaniitha
55-57	Rous	Ritiisaq	Qulab
58-60	Sat	Rongsej	Qunthiiij
61-63	Siijanouq	Samren	Radren
64-66	Siin	Saqngej	Rasouna
67-69	Som	Sophiira	Sijila
70-72	Son	Sovan	Soevarsi
73-75	Soq	Sudxaqan	Sophiiri
76-78	Sotpeaq	Uth	Soportevej
79-81	Subadeo	Varin	Teva
82-84	Toan	Vhad	Tevii
85-87	Uq	Xan	Thirit
88-90	Vhaing	Xen	Vanna
91-93	Xae	Xim	Veatha
94-96	Xour	Yoqxeng	Xea
97-100	Zour	Zarot	Xue



# ENCOUNTER AREAS

These are the encounter areas indicated on the master map. Be aware that because the map hexes are six miles wide, the adventurers may miss the encounters listed here. However, many of the encounters involve aggressive, active factions who will bring themselves to the characters' notice one way or another.

## 1. QAMPONG

This port town is the way that the outside world gets to Sajavedra now; the war has closed off all the other routes. Refugees from deeper inland flood Qamong, packing every inch of space along the wide mud flats at the mouth of the Qelong. They riot for food regularly, and are as regularly dragged off to ships in chains as slaves. Gangs of thieves, body snatchers, and slave-takers roam the

feculent streets of the town, killing anyone for a glint of silver or a hope of escape. The only safe buildings are inside the walled "factory" (garrisoned by mercenary soldiers) where merchants from the west trade for jade and pepper (when it can be had in these doleful times) and sell arms to would-be warlords.

And of course, sell goods to "your excellencies," the player characters. The factors here are most likely from kingdoms well known to the characters; they charge fellow-countryman rates equal to only twice the "city" rates in the core LotFP rulebook. Iron rations, animals, and lodging are quadruple their normal price.

If the characters have not yet heard of the Cylinder, or been fed exposition about the mages' war deeper inland, Qamong is the place to do that. Old man in a tavern, drunken pirate in a brawl, mystic vision, all are applicable means, however the Referee deliver story hooks.

## WATERCRAFT OF SAJAVEDRA

Vessel	Required Crew	Sailing miles/day	Rowing miles/day	Cargo (tons)	Ship Hit Points
Sampan	1	24	18	0.75	4
Small Riverboat	4	24	18	5	5
Tiger Ship	28*	24	30	40	20

\*plus at least 16 slaves to walk the paddlewheels; two shifts of four slaves per wheel

If the characters decide to take a boat up the Qelong to the Cylinder, they find that the boats for sale include the following:

**SAMPAN:** A sampan is a small (15' to 25' long) craft, usually with a 5'x 6' cabin amidships and one or two sails. It can be steered using one long oar at the stern, and must be poled or sculled upstream against the current. Prices vary from between 2000 and 6000sp, roughly equaling 1000sp per ship of the sampan.

**SMALL RIVERBOAT:** Smaller and shallower-draft than the riverboat in the core LotFP rulebook, this craft can be had for a mere 10,000sp.

**TIGER SHIP:** In addition to its sails, the Tiger Ship is powered by four paddlewheels, two on each side, which are in turn powered by slaves walking on treadmills inside the wheels. It also boasts four catapults. It is designed for coastal and river navigation, not open sea travel, as high waves would threaten to swamp the wheels and drown the slaves. The Tiger Ship is not officially for sale, being a ship of the royal Sajavedran navy. That said, make an offer - the captain of the Tiger Ship might well accept a bribe of 8,000sp to appoint one character his successor!



## 2. XAM

**X**am was once the capital of Qelong province, a city of delicate domes and mighty battlements. It sat at the heart of the Valley's geomantic canal network; its astronomers, bell-makers, and seers providing crucial guidance to monks and sorcerers all across Sajavedra. So of course, it was one of the first targets obliterated in the war. An immense katagram descended from the Upper Planes and ripped Xam from the earth, replacing it with a beetling, jungle-choked plateau edged by a cliff 1500' high.

The rock on the side of the cliff is a lurid maroon, striated with veins of eye-popping chartreuse and indigo. The vegetation visible atop the plateau is strangely fronded, dropping spores that drift down to the plain below, where they sprout magenta kudzu and blue-gray ferns. In the last twenty years, ambulatory cycads and vampire cacti have grown up around the base of the cliff, and uncanny birds with butterfly wings and monkey faces have been seen nesting in its walls.

Getting up to the top of the plateau poses something of a challenge, although as long as no monsters attack, it is not an impossible climb for a determined adventuring party. What is up there? That is up to the Referee, but whatever it is should be weirdly surrealistic in design and coloration; the plateau is a piece of a completely alien landscape. Around the base of the plateau, meanwhile, the survivors of Xam - farmers and nobles who lived far enough away to escape their city's doom - have embraced mad cults of vivisection, heated metal, and stimulant abuse. (Use Cannibal stats if things come to such a pass, p.24).

*I don't want to tell anyone how to run their game, of course, but some of the creatures and dangers from Carcosa would go really well up there in Xam. Just saying.*



### 3. SAJRA AMVOEL

The Varangians make their main base here, the largest town left in the Qelong Valley. It has a population of 1500 villagers, about two-thirds of whom live in semi-fortified houses outside the 7' high bamboo palisade (1 shp to break completely through) that the Varangians have built around the main village. Of those villagers, the Varangians have drafted the 65 able-bodied men (Level 0 Fighters) into a work detail to keep canals and drainage ditches dug, bury the dead (after Gerwik finishes with them), further fortify the position, harvest the occasional crop, and other heavy labor intended to keep them too tired to revolt.

Any villager or stranger showing definitive signs of plague, typhus, or severe aakom poisoning is arrested by the Varangians and taken to Father Corvo or Hagen to be cured.

Sajra Amvoel has a shrine outside the palisade, tended by 4 Clerics (one 3rd Level; three 1st Level). They also cultivate the town's lotus crop in many ceremonial pools; they are not Lotus monks, however. They generally support the Varangians as the only thing between the village and utter chaos; proof of Gerwik's activities (or of the Varangians' plan to bug out) would turn them against the mercenaries.

A deep, newly dug canal runs from Sajra Amvoel to just downstream of Jamqar Long; 1d10 sampans are moored in it at this end at any given time.

The Varangians need craftsmen to maintain their equipment: thus, almost any sort of repair work from bronze-smithing to arrow-fletching can be gotten here. Although artificially created by the presence of the mercenaries, this is the closest thing to a flourishing economy left in the Valley. Prices for goods are four times the rural price in the main LotFP rulebook; wages for retainers are one-quarter the regular price.

### ACCIPITER CASTRUM

The Varangians call their base Accipiter Castrum: "Fort Hawk."

On a small height of land at the northern edge of the village, surrounded by a canal-moat, the Varangians have put up their Castrum: a wooden stockade (3 shp to break completely through), this one 10' high (50% cover on the parapets), with two 30' guard towers (75% cover) on the SE and NW corners, each with two dwarf-made double-arbalests (super-heavy crossbows firing two bolts at once, 2d6 each, 200'/700'/1200'). The arbalests can also fire ceramic jars of flaming naphtha (1d6 shp or 5d6 hp damage; if hit, save versus Breath Weapon or take 2d6 more damage automatically for the next three rounds).

The stockade surrounds what were once the finest houses in the village, now occupied by the Varangian officers, the mercenaries' own bakery and smithy, and stores of food and weapons as well as the stable for the Varangians' horses. The Varangian payroll and company treasury is here in a locked iron chest containing 21,000sp in mixed gold and silver. The Varangian soldiers have a barracks inside this stockade, but mostly quarter themselves in houses throughout the village.

There are 500 Varangians in the company, although 50 of them are based on the river at Jamqar Long (p.42) and between 50 and 100 others are out on patrol under normal circumstances. Thus the garrison at Sajra Amvoel usually ranges between 350 and 400 men, half of whom are on duty at any given hour. The Castrum normally holds half of those men, for a complement of 90-100 active-duty mercenaries, and 100-200 camp followers of various sorts (who come and go on errands like marketing and laundry). See p.34 for a breakdown of the Varangian company by Level and specialty.

There are three key personnel in the Varangian command structure:

**CAPTAIN DAMON “DIAMOND” GEARY:**

10th Level Fighter, 75 hp, plate armor and shield (Armor 19), Damascus sword steeped in a wylm’s blood (unbreakable, damage 1d8+2), silver dagger (Blessed, x2 damage against shapeshifters and undead). He has treasure on his person (signet ring, chased silver arm ring, silver dagger, gold chain of office, go-bag full of diamonds) worth 18,000sp.

He commands the Varangians. He led them into this miserable shit-hole, and he intends to lead them back out. He has a decade of experience in jungle warfare and counter-insurgency (only surprised on snake-eyes) and the absolute respect and loyalty of his men. He cares absolutely nothing for anyone who is not a Varangian; they are tools to be used for his company’s benefit, or enemies to be killed. The only reason that he might object to Hagen’s policy of slaughter is its impact on the local strategic situation.

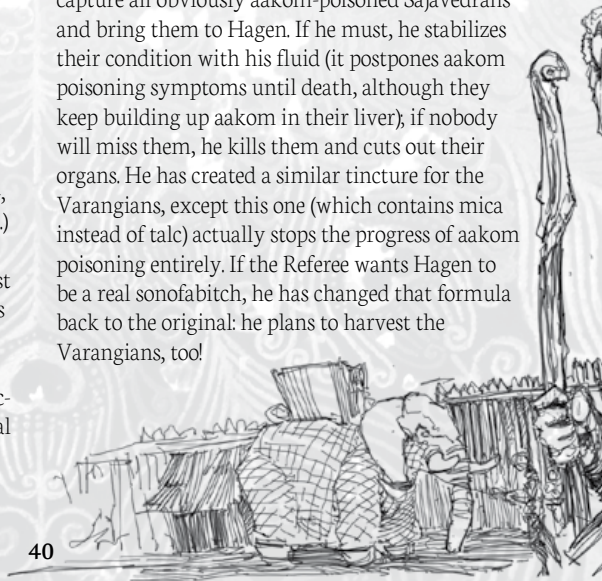
**FATHER CORVO:** 8th Level Cleric, 41 hp, lacquer armor (Armor 16), great hawk-billed warhammer (1d10), silver dagger (Blessed, x2 damage against shapeshifters and undead). He carries no treasure on his person save for a ruby pendant bearing the image of a diving hawk within it (1,000sp).

A priest of the hawk-god, Father Corvo sees the world from a great distance above it. He is loyal to Geary and dubious of Hagen, but knows that all men must eventually die and feed the hawks. This philosophical detachment does not do much for his sermons, but the men appreciate his open-minded attitude toward curing their venereal diseases.

**HAGEN:** 8th Level dwarf, 89hp, dwarven chain armor (Armor 18), alchemically hardened war axe (1d8+2 or break a foe’s weapon), mithril stiletto (1d4, treats all armor as Armor 14). He carries a tiny (2oz.) fragment of the Philosopher’s Stone concealed in a topaz ring; its worth is incalculable to any alchemist or Magic-User who knows what it is. He also carries a number of flasks containing alchemical powders or elixirs; they can replicate any Magic-User spell of 4th level or below, as if cast by a 6th Level Magic-User. Their labels are written in a private alchemical shorthand. Dwarven shorthand.

Hagen is a devotee of the dwarvish arts of alchemy, now mostly neglected, as well as the more common dwarvish arts of clocks, cogs, and cams. His house is the only stone building in the village: it was an old temple before he moved in. It holds amazingly sophisticated alchemical equipment, including an athanor furnace. (The machinery and vessels are worth at least 10,000sp in a city with an alchemical college; Hagen’s stores of ingredients are worth another 2d6x10,000sp.) He created the blend of naphtha that the company’s arbalest uses, for example. He can reanimate some dead tissue, which he uses to heal crippled Varangians – and to further his experiments. Unlike the rest of the Varangians, Hagen loves Sajavedra, or rather he loves the magical hell that wartime Sajavedra has become: his research has progressed amazingly! He wants to bring lots of aakom back west with him when Geary pulls the company out, so he can continue his experiments. He has talked Geary into delaying his plans to allow time to harvest more aakom, saying that even a quart of aakom will be worth a fortune to magi in the west.

Hagen harvests the aakom by concentrating it as much as possible in the liver and kidneys of aakom-poisoned sufferers. Then when they die, he removes those parts and stores them in a stabilizing fluid he has distilled from lotus, talc, sage, and wine. By standing order, the Varangians capture all obviously aakom-poisoned Sajavedrans and bring them to Hagen. If he must, he stabilizes their condition with his fluid (it postpones aakom poisoning symptoms until death, although they keep building up aakom in their liver); if nobody will miss them, he kills them and cuts out their organs. He has created a similar tincture for the Varangians, except this one (which contains mica instead of talc) actually stops the progress of aakom poisoning entirely. If the Referee wants Hagen to be a real sonofabitch, he has changed that formula back to the original: he plans to harvest the Varangians, too!





With the evacuation stepped up, the process is stepped up: Hagen's men are going out and killing anybody suffering from aakom-poisoning, cutting out their liver and lights, and bringing them back to him in jugs of wine. It is messy and dangerous, but it gets the job done fast.

Hagen has also created some undead servant animals to help him and the company, reanimated by tiny brazen gears and pistons, and by the power of alchemy:

**HOUND-LICH:** Armor 14, 4 Hit Dice, as fast as an unencumbered man, 1d8 bite, Morale 12. If the hound-lich does full damage (8 hp) with its bite, victim must save versus Paralyzation or be frozen in icy terror for 2d6 rounds. If any hound-lich bite drops a foe to 1 hp, that foe takes 4 additional points of damage and drops to -3hp and death. Its undead shell sheds the "bottom half" of any damage die: i.e., a sword doing 1d6 does no damage on a damage roll of 1-3.

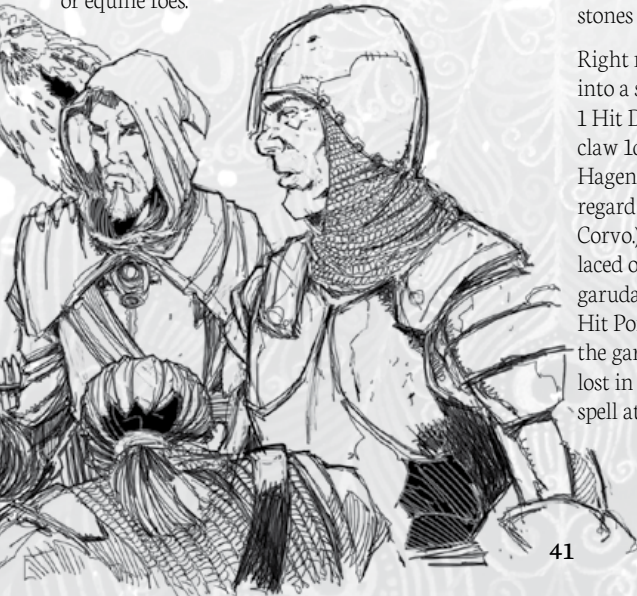
**ELEPHANT-LICH:** Armor 18 (plate barding sewn to the flesh), 12 Hit Dice, move as fast as a heavily encumbered human; 2d10 hobnailed trample (a single elephant can trample the same target twice) or 1d12 gore or 2d6 great morningstar chained to trunk; Morale 12. No wound doing less than 6 hp of damage harms it. Its charge forces an immediate Morale check at -4 on any humanoid or equine foes.

This is the Varangians' armored behemoth, a war elephant acquired some years ago on the other side of the mountains. Hagen has kept it alive through his alchemies, turning it into a mighty war machine. It holds two arbalesters, three crossbowmen or lancers, one observer, and the mahout or driver (usually Hagen). It has one double-arbalest mounted on each flank with a bronze firing cage (50% cover) to hold the arbalesters, and a plate-armored howdah (75% cover) on top. The howdah is a totally stable firing platform: missile fire takes no minuses for being mounted. Lancers in the howdah still gain the +1 to hit ground-level foes and a +8 Armor bonus (howdah plus mounted bonus) against them.

**GARUDA-LICH:** Armor 14, 18 shp (saves and fights as 18 Hit Die monster), flies 2.5 times faster than a man moves; grapple with claws 3d6 shp, foes smaller than a man+warhorse save versus Paralyzation or be crushed to death; Morale 12. Cannot be encumbered; has hardpoints for 8 arbalests.

This gigantic bird (210' long, 600' wingspan) is Geary's escape plan. When the balloon goes up, all the Varangians, with their horses, elephant, and loot, will climb aboard the garuda-lich (Hagen has built a large chamber into it for this purpose) and fly out of Sajavedra forever. The garuda-lich stores the aakom in its croup, to be tumbled against sapphires and other stones specific against its malign influence.

Right now, the garuda-lich is currently shapeshifted into a slightly larger than normal hawk (Armor 14, 1 Hit Die, flies three times faster than a man moves, claw 1d4 or beak 1d6, Morale 12), which rides on Hagen or Geary's shoulder, and which the men regard as a treasured mascot. (It does not land on Corvo.) Hagen is always feeding it gobbets of aakom-laced organs, to be swallowed into the null-space the garuda currently occupies. If the hawk loses half its Hit Points, the spell breaks and it transforms into the garuda-lich (losing three times the points already lost in the process). Hagen or Geary can break the spell at any time.



## 4. JAMQAR LONG

The Varangians blockade the river at this village, in order to prevent any attempt to flank their main base. They have a spiked chain that they can stretch across the river with a windlass; it does 3d6 shp to any watercraft that tries to pass it. They also have two sampans, each armed with a single-shot arbalest, for patrol work.

To occupy themselves in the absence of an obvious threat, the Varangians loot all refugee convoys or other attempts to go down the river past them. In the large, fortified dock house (mounted with two single-shot arbalests, both bolts and naphtha charges) where the Varangian guards are bunked (a 50-man post, 20+3d10 present at any given time and half of those are off watch, the rest are out patrolling) there are 30 sea chests, each holding random loot (silks, jade, silver, bells, books, gems, spices, etc.) worth 1d100x10sp. One of the chests holds an orchid-cloak from Thip Qelay (see p.43), neglected as its looter does not know its true worth of 1,000sp. The Referee can place any useful treasure here, too.

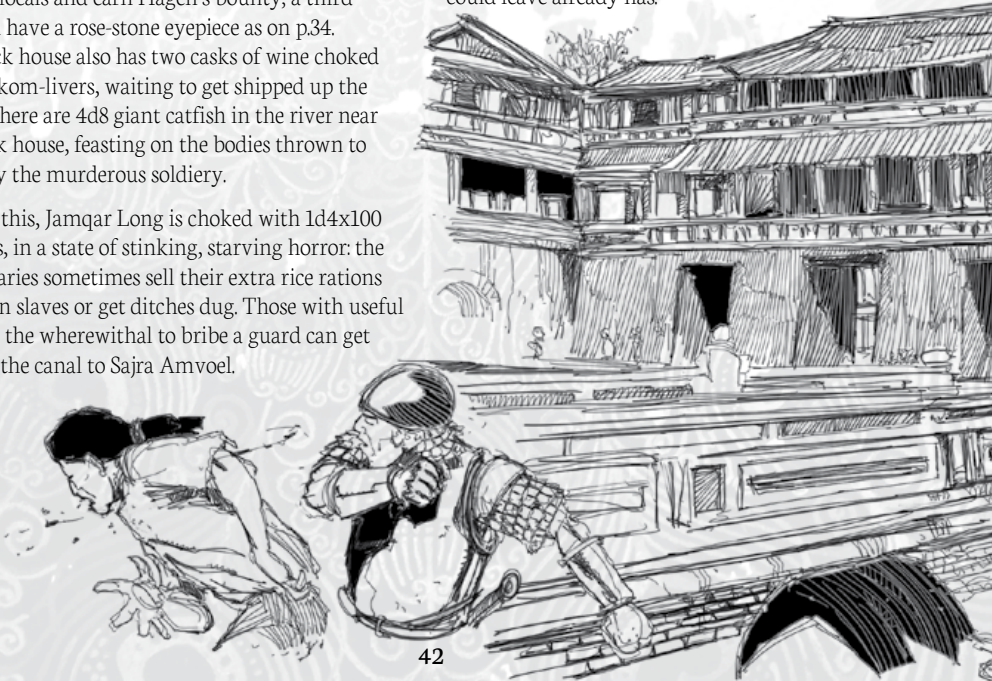
These Varangians are also eager to kill aakom-tainted locals and earn Hagen's bounty; a third of them have a rose-stone eyepiece as on p.34. The dock house also has two casks of wine choked with aakom-livers, waiting to get shipped up the canal. There are 4d8 giant catfish in the river near the dock house, feasting on the bodies thrown to them by the murderous soldiery.

Despite this, Jamqar Long is choked with 1d4x100 refugees, in a state of stinking, starving horror: the mercenaries sometimes sell their extra rice rations to obtain slaves or get ditches dug. Those with useful skills or the wherewithal to bribe a guard can get sent up the canal to Sajra Amvoel.

## 5. PRALAJ AND THE BROKEN BRIDGE

At Pralaj, the Royal Road once crossed the River between the mountain passes and Xam. The Varangians (or someone) broke that bridge long ago; its fallen remnants stick up through the swirling waters. The half of Pralaj on the west side of the River is relatively normal, containing about 240 villagers and a stupa shrine. The half of Pralaj on the east side appears more decrepit, with many fewer villagers visible and a neglected smithy. Indeed, the naga-kin have moved in, living in flooded and drowned cellars and basins dug under the eastern village site. There are 40 naga-kin in Pralaj and about 200 villagers and revived corpses held prisoner while slowly being raped, tortured, and drowned into a susceptible state for transformation into naga-kindred.

The naga-kin are just about done with the first part of their plan; they have begun stealing into western Pralaj at night (patrol groups of 1d10 naga-kin) and kidnapping villagers or drowning them. An araq in western Pralaj is so outraged by this that it will even speak to outlanders about it, if need be; the locals are too terrified to do anything, and everyone who could leave already has.





## 6. HEAD OF THE MYRMIDON COLUMN

This arbitrary spot marks where the myrmidons are right now; the Referee is of course free to change that. The myrmidons are moving at 3 miles per day directly toward the stupa at Mandul Xiem. This will take them just past the Varangian main base at Sajra Amvoel.

Wherever the myrmidons stop for the night, they keep watch: 25 in each quadrant. By day, the myrmidon army marches some 6,000 strong. Right now, though, the myrmidons have stopped to round up more human flesh homes. They have another 1,000 or so humans worth of ants breeding in their current crop of 20 egg-hosts, and their patrols are fanning across the land looking for villages or caravans of refugees to capture and then possess or devour.



## 7. THIP QELAY

Thip Qelay was a town built on pilings and rafts, platforms and suspension catwalks. It stood in the center of a great swamp, built around a giant fallen baetyl-stone of meteoritic iron. Its people made compasses and amulets from the iron, harvested cypress and mahogany from the swamp, and grew beautiful and strange orchids of lavender, heliotrope, and fuschia, from which they wove wondrous garments. Supplemented by fish, tree-born spices and fruits, rice traded from downstream, and the occasional sage come to study their baetyl, it was a good life.

The town still stands, its thatched roofs decayed and caved in by monsoons; its baetyl-stone now painted in green, blue, black, and white stripes betraying its new status. This is the center of the new Naga cult, and the prime spawning ground for the naga-kin. From here, they prepare the coming of the Naga into her kingdom, and send naga-kin down the River to rape and drown the people into following her. The whole town is given over to the naga-kin, led by Hon Hun, a 10th Level Magic-User.

**HON HUN:** Armor 16 (ingrown scales), 38 hp, hollow crystal phurba-dagger (1d4+2, save versus Poison or become a naga-kin), chaplet of pearls (16 pearls, each worth 1,600sp)

His four burly underlings (Armor 16, 6 Hit Dice) hurl barbed harpoon-spears (1d8, allows melee attacks on opponents 10' away and like a whip, can be drawn back and hurled again, can Grapple foe with barb; save versus Magical Device or suffer agonizing pain causing -4 to attack rolls and -2 on Dexterity for 1d10 turns)

There are 400 naga-kin in Thip Qelay at any given time; the rest are out seeding her greatness into the flesh of the puny mortals.

In one longhouse, unregarded since the drowning of the village, lie 4d20 orchid-ropes, each worth 1,600sp to a collector.

## 8. MINES OF THE ELEPHANT

**T**he Mines of the Elephant are legendary, so named, the story goes, because their discoverer needed an elephant to remove all of the sapphires, emeralds, opals, and diamonds found within them.

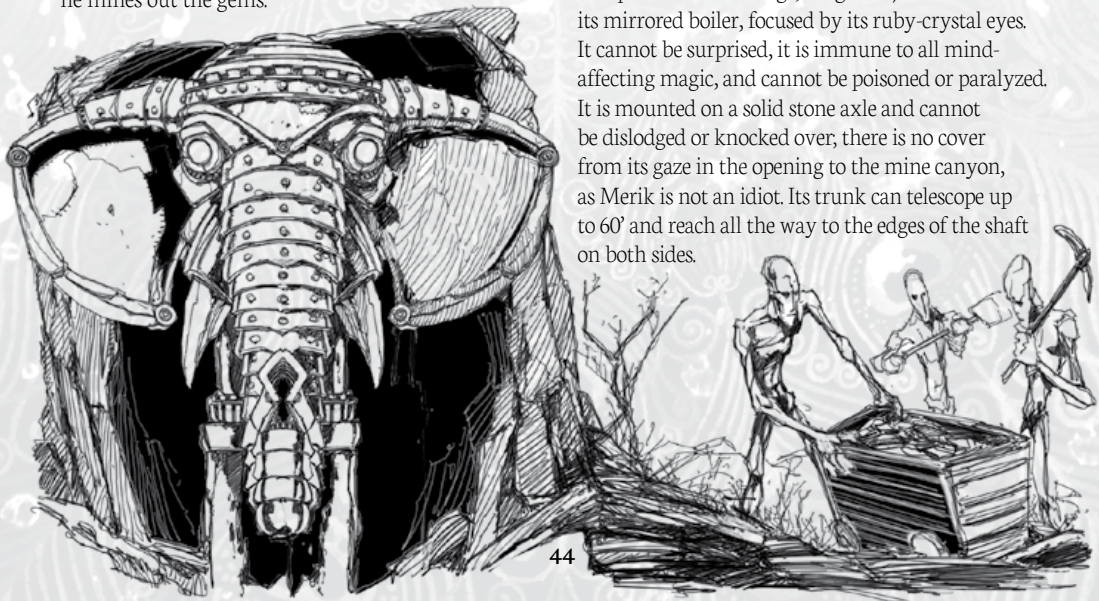
The warring archmagi smashed all the mine works and killed everyone within miles trying to get at the gems of puissant power stored within; the land all around shrieks with the ghosts of miners, blasphemously buried in the ensuing cave-ins. On their way to the mine entrance, the player characters will encounter 2d8 outraged beisaq, who convey the previous story in between vampiric assaults and hurled shards of corundum (+1 to normal damage). Smashed buildings, abandoned mining equipment, and rusting tools likewise testify to the ruination of the Mines.

The mine has been opened, however, from below. A mad dwarf named Merik tunneled up into the alluvial fill and, using 20 stone-bound gnome workers, cleared out a whole shaft from his underground lair to the surface, bracing it with bamboo and the bones of the buried miners. At the entrance, he placed a large, clockwork elephant head to discourage trespassers while he mines out the gems.

**MERIK:** Armor 18 (dwarven chain), 6th Level dwarf, 39 hp, 1d8 hammer, tiny explosive sulfur-stones (as thrown rocks, explode for 2d6); Morale 8. Merik, although a pathological loner, is a gadgeteering genius; he can make constructs of living stone or metal and clockwork into the equivalent of any creature of 6 or fewer Hit Dice. He has something like 40,000sp worth of gems already stashed in his crypt, but will not stop until his gnomes have bored through the whole mine.

**GNOMES:** Armor 17 (solid stone), 2 Hit Dice, 1d6+4 smash, Morale 8 (same as Merik, they break only if he does); can only be harmed by magic or by hammers, picks, or other weapons designed to cut stone. Gnomes are elemental beings of earth, built in this case in the shape of weirdly elongated humanoid figures - like Modigliani statues sent to cart gravel. Merik has their stony hearts (resembling small, reddish pebbles of irregular shape) in a pouch on his belt, and can thus command their obedience.

**CLOCKWORK ELEPHANT HEAD:** Armor 18 (metal plates), 6 Hit Dice, two attacks per round, can smash with its trunk (1d10) or grapple with it (as garrote, does 1d8 damage thereafter automatically, applies a -4 penalty to defender's save versus Paralysis); its gaze can **Slow** foes (as spell), and once per day it can unleash a proper Heat Ray (6d6 damage in a 45 degree cone, save versus Breath Weapon for half damage, range 180') from inside its mirrored boiler, focused by its ruby-crystal eyes. It cannot be surprised, it is immune to all mind-affecting magic, and cannot be poisoned or paralyzed. It is mounted on a solid stone axle and cannot be dislodged or knocked over; there is no cover from its gaze in the opening to the mine canyon, as Merik is not an idiot. Its trunk can telescope up to 60' and reach all the way to the edges of the shaft on both sides.





## 9. MANDUL XIEM

The 440-structure stupa and wat complex at Mandul Xiem covers several square miles of canals, intricate statuary, towers, Aeolian wind-flutes, bell chapels, lotus gardens, and reflecting pools, all centered on one eight-lobed stupa, gilded to look like a great golden lotus flower. Alone in all of the Valley, it shimmers perfectly, untouched by war or even sorcerous bombardment. The land around it though, especially the canals leading out of Mandul Xiem, is terribly torn up by spellbursts - the barrage was not so much blocked as diverted. Travel through those hexes is at one-sixth normal speed, and every hex contains a Spellburst encounter (see p.33) in addition to any other.

The desperation of the Mandul Xiem monastery under that bombardment led a monk named Prem to turn to the antediluvian way of the Lotus. He converted some of his fellows, and then killed the rest. Now, Mandul Xiem is the center of the reawakened Lotus cult, and Prem is the Center of the Lotus.

**PREM:** Armor 22, 76 hp, 60', three attacks per round, 1d10 open hand damage and 1d4+5 staff damage, Morale 12. Can fall 100' without damage, **Spider Climb** for 11 turns, and jump 100' from a standing start. He has mastered the art of bilocation: appearing in two places at once, which he can do indefinitely as long as one of him is in the stupa.

His seven Petal disciples (one 7th Level, two 5th Level, four 3rd Level) aid him in guarding and preparing the Mandul Xiem stupa for the final ritual. All of them (and Prem) can cast **Cure Light Wounds** at will while in the complex. Prem and the 7th Level monk can also cast **Cure Serious Wounds** at will while in the complex.

There are 256 monks in Mandul Xiem, including the 8 mentioned above; twelve 20-monk groups and another conventional 8-monk grouping. The complex is so large, however, that unless the player characters make a lot of noise, or their foes survive long enough to summon help by ringing the alarm bells all over the wat, only 4 or 8 monks are in sight at any given time. After three successive alarms, Center Prem bilocates to the problem area.

In addition to the gilding on the domes and cupolas of the stupa, other buildings hold stores of gold, often worked into filigree wire for easier spending or cast into statues of the saints and devas of the ancient Sajavedran faith. Any given building (of the 256 herein) has 4x4d8sp worth of treasure in it, consisting of gold, amber, topaz, yellow silk, saffron, or yellow jade. Apparently, the Lotus had its followers get rid of all the silver, green jade, ebony, and other colors of treasure - possibly some lake or canal nearby holds a treasure hoard of sumptuous value and of almost every other color.



## 10. THE CYLINDER

Player characters accumulate aakom at triple the normal rate in the hexes surrounding hex; while in this hex, they accumulate aakom at nine times the normal rate.

When the player characters arrive at the Cylinder, perhaps their first impression is one of dismal mundanity. It resembles nothing so much as a large (15' long) pistol shell, lying canted on one side and slowly sinking into the muck of the Valley. Certainly, the water nearby glistens with the unnatural sheen of aakom, and the algae and lichens grow on the water and rocks around the site in spiraling patterns bent as if by magnetic force toward the Cylinder. No insect noises are audible; in fact, the player characters must shout to be heard at all. The light around seems flatter and slightly reddish, making the Cylinder itself seem to bulge a bit, and shine with a bluish tint. It is impossible to describe just how the Cylinder seems marred or deformed, but everyone agrees that it is not quite whole or wholesome. It cannot be moved or shifted by any physical force anyone in this country can apply, with the possible exception of the garuda-lich picking it up. Even an **Earthquake** spell would collapse and liquefy the ground around it – the Cylinder might sink into the mire, but its relative orientation to the mountains and the stars would remain the same.

The Referee might wish to introduce one or more of the various Monolith effects from **Monolith Beyond Space and Time**, if more weirdness is the desideratum here.

A **Prismatic Sheen** (similar to the **Prismatic Sphere** in effect) surrounds the Cylinder itself, preventing any attempt to touch it or indeed get within a foot of it. The Philosopher's Stone that Hagen carries can penetrate the effect, but nothing else except the proper sequence of spells (the Referee can use those from the **Prismatic Sphere** or decide on more available options) can switch the Prismatic Sheen off. (Kindly Referees can plant the proper sequence in the pack of the traveling wizard from p.35, if the characters have obtained such.) Touching or otherwise messing with the Cylinder also attracts dangerous creatures such as

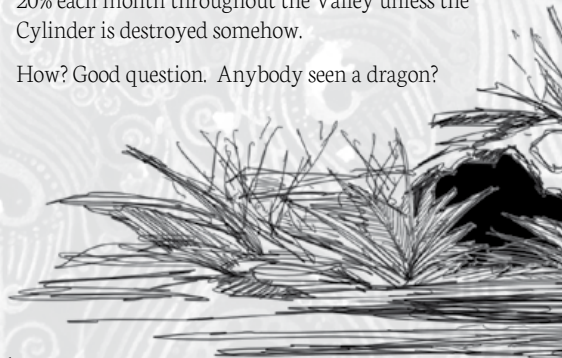
- 1 1d3+3 Yiiq, who sneak up and only charge if it looks like progress is being made.
- 2 Prem, who bilocates there with his seven disciples (or three; enough to make a good fight of it).
- 3 Qmoc Praj (Hit Dice equal to highest character level) plus two qon praj; she bargains for access to the Cylinder with the knowledge of the dead.
- 4 Naga and 2d4+4 naga-kin
- 5 Wizard (as p.35), interested in getting the Cylinder for herself.
- 6 Gaja Simha

Through the distortion, the rune plate on the Cylinder is visible, up on the elevated end of the Cylinder about 9' above the ground. Reading it will require some sort of elevated platform; there are pieces of burned, splintered, and gnawed bamboo under the mud and water indicating that at least one other magus has attempted the feat.

If one or more of the characters can read the rune plate clearly, they can cast **Activate Cylinder** (see p.47) to activate it and send the Cylinder back over the mountains; it lifts out, stuttering and dragging ultraviolet after-images in its wake. Save versus Magic or be dragged along with it.

If the characters can get any leverage (platform, **Spider Climb**, **Levitate**, etc.) and actually touch the rune plate, removing it is a relatively simple Tinkering test (-1 to chance) given Specialist's tools. However, removing the plate inevitably releases a blast of 2d12 points of aakom; save versus Breath Weapon for half-aakom. Once the rune plate is removed, aakom contamination rates increase by 20% each month throughout the Valley unless the Cylinder is destroyed somehow.

How? Good question. Anybody seen a dragon?





# NEW SPELLS

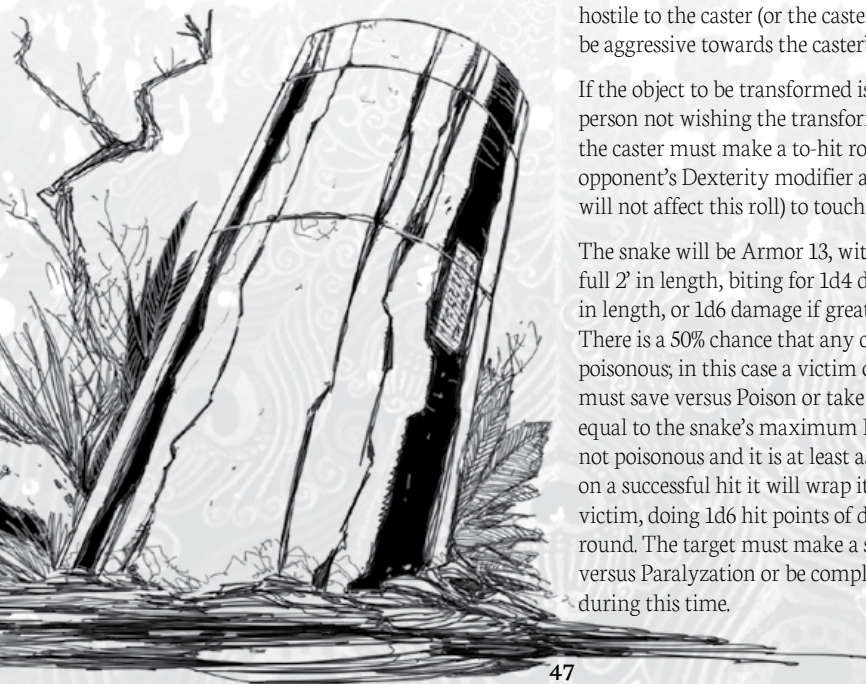
## ACTIVATE CYLINDER

Magic-User Level 7

**Range:** 10'

**Duration:** Instantaneous

This spell is very specific in purpose. It activates the runes on a Cylinder (a mystic weapon used in the Sajavedran war) propelling it towards its imprinted target. The runes must be visible to the caster.



## THE SERPENT TOUCH

Magic-User Level 2

**Range:** Touch

**Duration:** Instantaneous

This spell transforms a single non-magical wooden object such as a torch, pole, shaft, staff, stick, branch, or the like into a snake of equal size. The spell will not enable the caster to control or otherwise communicate with the snake, but it will not be hostile to the caster (or the caster's allies) and will be aggressive towards the caster's enemies.

If the object to be transformed is being held by a person not wishing the transformation to take place, the caster must make a to-hit roll (counting only the opponent's Dexterity modifier against the roll, armor will not affect this roll) to touch the object.

The snake will be Armor 13, with one Hit Die per full 2' in length, biting for 1d4 damage if under 6' in length, or 1d6 damage if greater than 6' in length. There is a 50% chance that any created snake is poisonous; in this case a victim of the snake's bite must save versus Poison or take additional damage equal to the snake's maximum Hit Points. If it is not poisonous and it is at least as long as its target, on a successful hit it will wrap itself around its victim, doing 1d6 hit points of damage every round. The target must make a saving throw versus Paralyzation or be completely pinned during this time.

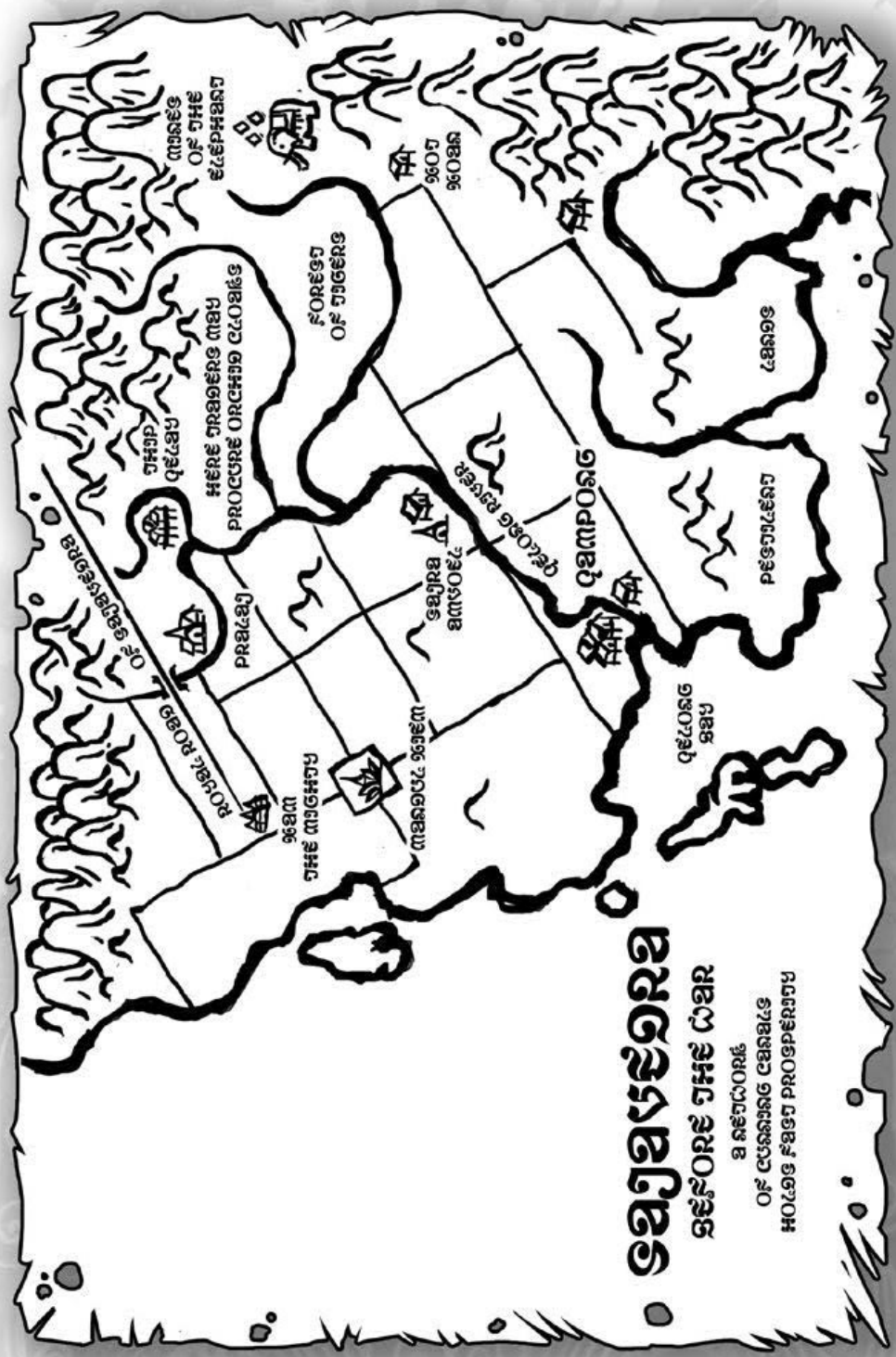
# ខេត្តបាត់ដំបង

ក្រសួងកសិកម្ម រុក្ខាប្រមាញ់ និងនេសាទ

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អគ្គនាយកដ្ឋានកសិកម្ម

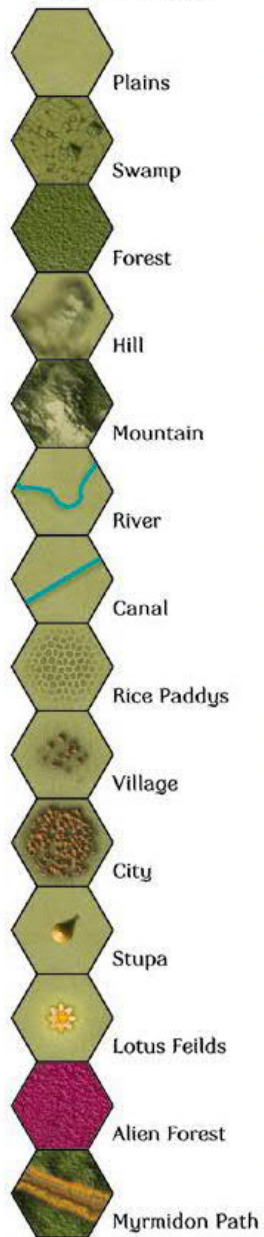




# ព្រះរាជ



1 Hex = 6 miles









Two barely conceivable beings have fought a war for a generation over Sajavedra, a barely legendary land far to the southeast. They wish to claim its rich harvests of souls and fields, its intricate networks of ley lines and temples, for their own.

They have devastated it utterly.

A forgotten weapon in their war, a neglected sorcery fallen from a distracted archon's attention, lies in the Qelong River valley at the edge of this near-cosmic battlefield.



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ISBN 78-952-5904-43-7