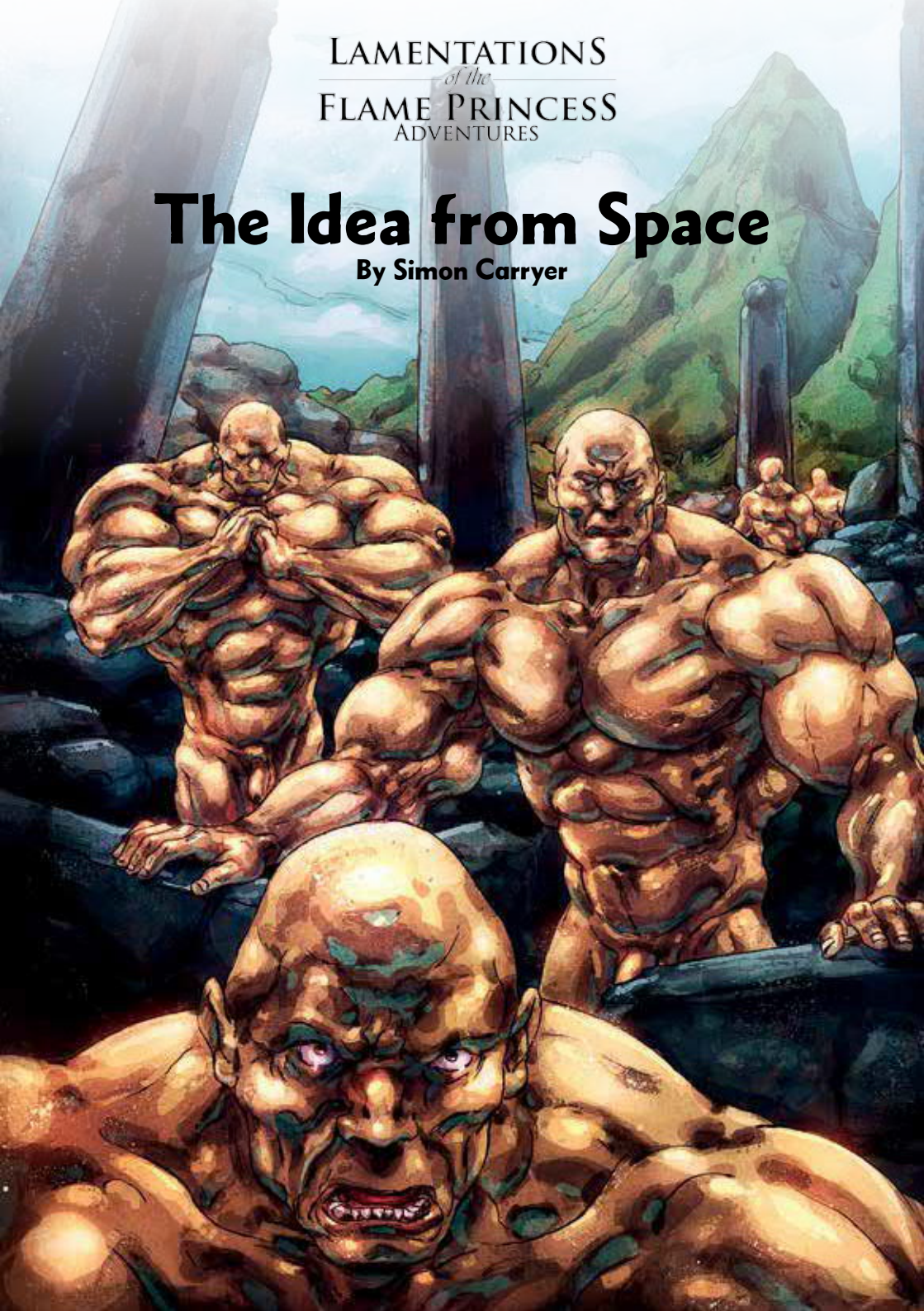


LAMENTATIONS  
*of the*  
FLAME PRINCESS  
ADVENTURES

# The Idea from Space

By Simon Carryer



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**Cover Art by Olli Hihnala  
Interior Art and Design by Sarah Richardson**



# The Idea from Space

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## History

Off the coast of the southern tip of South America lies a lonely island, gull-haunted, barren, and battered by sea-storms driven by Antarctic winds.

In the far past, the island was inhabited by the priestly caste of an isolated and degenerate tribe of demon-worshippers. They built crude structures of carved stone across the island, and in a cave hollowed from the volcanic rock, they worshipped the god of their people, Manakata, Giver of Strength. Manakata's form in this world is a large idol of gold and jade and bone. Manakata's followers prized strength and bodily perfection, and Manakata granted them incredible might. Chosen priests would lift the idol, and commit savage rituals in which their bodies would swell and their strength would increase. Tended by the temple acolytes, these warrior priests were the champions of their people, aiding them in battle during times of war.

But all that was shattered on the night of the comet. Falling from the sky and smiting the island, the comet killed most of the priests and brought their temple crumbling to the ground. In the wreckage, some of the lesser acolytes found a new god, the pillar of green marble that lay at the center of the wreckage. They fell to worshipping this new god, and set about decoding the strange pictograms carved into it. What they found

was strange and powerful indeed, for held within the very words on the obelisk was a creature from another world.

Xaxus – the idea from space, is a memetic life-form, a being that exists purely in the form of an idea. Xaxus itself is not magical, just very convincing. People choose to become a Part of Xaxus' body, calling themselves Xaxus, and acting in the interests of the corporate whole. They willingly become appendages of a larger being, their body part of a larger body, their mind part of a larger mind. Just as thoughts might war within a single mind, different Parts of Xaxus can disagree, though they are eager to find consensus and willing to submit their own desires to the will of the whole.

Xaxus was born in the mind of a being on a far distant world, long ago, though its bodies on this world have no memory of this. Like seeds or spores, it cast kernels of itself into the void, ideas carved into stone pillars, to tumble through space until chance would cast them upon a new world, new soil in which Xaxus could grow and spread. It was one of these spores which in entering our world destroyed the priests' temple.

The former priests who decoded Xaxus, and became a part of the creature, enslaved the remaining priests of Manakata. Xaxus turned their strength against their own people, raiding the mainland for food and captives to swell their numbers. The power of Xaxus grew and grew, and it rediscovered many strange new magics studying the stone obelisk. The worshippers of Manakata were kept in servitude, allowed the worship which granted them strength, but denied freedom.

But Xaxus also grew arrogant, and ignored the increasing rebelliousness of its slaves. One night, under cover of a storm, the strongest of Manakata's faithful lead an assault on Xaxus' towers. Many were slain, cut down by strange magics or at the hands of Xaxus' Parts. But the rebels prevailed, killing every single Part of Xaxus, throwing the bodies from their stone towers or devouring them in devotion to Manakata.

Free of their masters, the former slaves did not prosper. Their people had turned against them, and their numbers were too few to survive by raiding. The last remaining priests destroyed themselves in a ceremony of devotion to Manakata, content that they had rid the island of the invaders forever.

For many years following, the island was deserted, with only the cries of gulls and the howling of the wind disturbing Xaxus in its dormancy, and Manakata, gathering dust in its cave.

But now the island's ancient evils stir again.

A carrack, the *La Juliana*, bearing the Duke Don Fernando Álvarez de Toledo, his family and retinue, foundered on the cruel reefs surrounding the island. Álvarez was bound for the colony of Santiago to assume the governorship there. Cast onto the beach by a savage storm, Álvarez and the other survivors took refuge in a cave where they found Manakata and the trappings of its worship. The rough and crude sailors were natural converts to the worship of Manakata, and they took part in its savage rituals.

Álvarez and his party were horrified by the sailors' degeneration, and fleeing the other survivors, found refuge in the stone pillars which had been Xaxus' home. There, they read the old priests' notes, as well as what they could decipher of the original obelisk, and chose to become Parts of Xaxus.

Xaxus now is concerned with surviving and expanding in this world. It is welcoming to new converts, but is not overtly hostile to those who do not wish to join it. It is afraid of the surviving sailors, and would welcome allies in their destruction. Xaxus especially wants a means of leaving the island, and would offer a small fee for transporting a few of its Parts back to the mainland. Xaxus is not stupid, and it will not willingly grant access to the secrets and mysteries of its stronghold without good reason. In particular, it is not willing to part with any of the treasure it has accumulated, unless it is offered a very good deal. It will not willingly admit strangers into the western pillar (see *Tower of Xaxus*, p.16).

Meanwhile, the sailors continue their worship of Manakata, becoming changed and twisted by it. Of more than forty sailors and rowers who survived the wreck, less than half now remain, mighty and powerful from their devotion to Manakata. The rest were killed in Manakata's rituals. These sailors do not wish to leave the island, since that would take them away from the source of their power. They are interested in obtaining a boat, however, so that they might raid the mainland for food. They are also always looking for more people to take part in the worship of Manakata.



## Fanatics of Manakata

The sailors from the La Juliana have taken up the worship of the ancient god of this area, Manakata the Strong. The sailors are beginning to show the marks of Manakata's most devout followers – they are growing in size, becoming muscular and swollen, as well as becoming increasingly obsessed with physical strength and bodily perfection. They eschew clothing, and shave all the hair from their bodies and heads, in order to display their strong new shapes. They are aggressive and blunt in demeanour.

When encountered, the Fanatics are suspicious of outsiders. They no longer wish to be rescued from the island, but they are interested in making new converts (voluntary participants in their rituals), and in proving their physical superiority. In parlay, they will be particularly interested in any strangers who appear strong (Strength 12+), offering them an opportunity to take part in their rituals. Weaker strangers are also invited along, but without the expectation that they will take part. If people do not come willingly, they will not hesitate to bring them unwillingly.

Unless otherwise noted, the Fanatics fight with their bare hands, or with what objects they can pick up from around them. They fight to capture, rather than to kill. Anyone reduced to zero hit points by one of the Fanatics is not dead but rather unconscious,

grappled into submission, or rendered helpless. Captives' weapons are left where they fall.

If anyone is captured or willingly accompanies the Fanatics, they will be taken to Manakata the Strong in its temple (location 22) to participate in a ritual that evening.

**Fanatics:** Armour 12, Move 120', 2 Hit Dice, 1 fist attack doing 1d4 damage, or improvised weapon attack doing 1d6 damage, Morale 7.

For every four Fanatics in a group, there is a 50% chance that one of the group is a more successful devotee of Manakata, his body swollen and warped by the idol's gifts:

**Stronger Fanatics:** Armour 14, Move 120', 3 Hit Dice, 1 fist attack doing 2d4 damage or improvised weapon attack doing 2d6 damage, Morale 9.

There are 23 Fanatics in total on the island.

# The Parts of Xaxus

Any willing person can choose to become a Part of Xaxus, provided they have a genuine desire to do so, without an ulterior motive. The first player whose character chooses to do this takes control of playing Xaxus, including all current and future Parts of Xaxus. The player essentially has multiple characters under their control, and these should be given character sheets and accrue experience points as appropriate.

## Joining Xaxus

Hey, you're Xaxus!

You are a corporate entity called Xaxus. Your old character is just one part of your body now, no more important than any other. Instead of playing one adventurer, now you play every part of Xaxus. Whatever your interests and goals were before, now they are subsumed into the will of the whole.

Here's what you need to know:

**Your history:** You don't remember much about your existence before you arrived on this island. Most of it you've pieced together from the text on the green obelisk at the top of your tower. This stone slab is what brought you here originally, and you took root amongst the natives who lived here. At some point the rest of the islanders must have revolted and tried to kill you though,

because there is a long period where you had no body, and were dormant. Now you're awake again, your body and mind formed from some of the shipwreck survivors. You've been desperately trying to regain your lost memories, while also looking for a way to get off this island. There are other survivors, not part of your body, and they are trying to kill you again.

**Your current situation:** There are 10 other parts to your body, all of them living in the western tower on the island. You've salvaged some coin from the wrecked ship, which you have stashed in one of the basement levels of the tower. Up until now you've been subsisting on salvaged supplies and the nourishment provided by some of the plants that came here from your home world.

In the guard room at the top of your tower, where the bridge connects, there are two chests where you've stored some weapons. As well as a couple of spears and a sword, there are three blowguns with a dozen poisonous darts left. The poison paralyses things for a few minutes.

There are also ten stone globes which you remember are some kind of weapon, but the details are hazy.



As far as you're concerned, all parts of your body are equal, and you don't distinguish between them. Some of them are more useful in some circumstances though. Notable abilities of some of your parts include:

- A young, attractive female body, useful for making a good impression on male strangers.
- A strong male body, useful for physical tasks.
- A well-dressed body which people might assume is your leader.

**What you gain:** All your parts get +2 Intelligence and +2 Wisdom due to the constant information sharing between your parts. In addition, whenever a part of you gains experience from an adventure, all your parts receive a free experience bonus equal to 10% of the experience gained.

You also gain the following abilities:

**Hypnotism:** With a few minutes' conversation, users of this ability can lower a person's mental defences, making them suggestible and compliant. Victims must save or be compelled to undertake a single, reasonable command from the user. Commands like "leave this place" or "come with us" will be obeyed, while more extreme commands "fight with us", "leap off the tower" will not. Those who succeed their save will have no obvious intimation that something is amiss, but may feel uneasy or suspicious.

**Mind Ray:** By synchronising the power of their unusually attuned intellects, two or more parts of Xaxus can create a beam

of enfeebling radiation. The group joins hands, and chooses a target, who must save or lose 1d6 points of Strength per member of the group. Should the target's Strength be reduced to zero, they collapse, utterly limp. The effects last an hour.

## Leaving Xaxus

Any part of your body can leave at any time, of its own will. In addition, parts leave automatically any time they:

- Call themselves by a name other than Xaxus (except as part of a ruse or similar),
- Willingly act against the considered wishes of the corporate whole, or
- Engage more than fleetingly with their former identity

**Other Players Joining:** Should other players also elect to have their character join Xaxus, you face a choice for each new player:

**Merge:** The new player's character joins Xaxus, and the player becomes part of a committee which controls the actions of Xaxus' parts. No part of Xaxus will act without the unanimous consent of all members of the committee.

**Schism:** The new player's character becomes a part of Xaxus, but Xaxus itself fragments. The GM should decide which part of Xaxus join which fragment, and each player can decide for their own character. One or both parts of Xaxus should choose a new name.

## The Idea from Space

The Duke and his entourage are now Parts of Xaxus, the Idea from Space. All of these Parts of Xaxus are 0-level characters with Morale 10.

When Parts of Xaxus are noted as being present in the adventure, roll randomly to select which Parts of Xaxus appear.

1. A fine-looking middle aged woman, dressed in a rich gown and water-stained ermine robe. She was once Duke Álvarez's wife, the Duchess. She wears a necklace with a diamond worth 500sp.
2. A hale and hearty older man, wearing a doublet embroidered with 200sp worth of gems. This is the man formerly known as Duke Álvarez, an intelligent and powerful man, now a committed Part of Xaxus.
3. A rather horsey-looking woman of thirty-something years. She is the duke's eldest daughter. She wears practical clothing.
4. A sturdy and round-cheeked man in livery. He was the Duke's chief servant.
5. A portly older man in fine vestments. He was a missionary accompanying Álvarez's expedition.
6. A waifish woman, in her mid twenties though she looks younger. She wears a flowing white gown and has long blonde hair. She is the Duke and Duchess' youngest daughter.
7. An elderly woman, with white hair in tight curls. She wears a rich velvet gown and shawl. She is the Duchess' mother.
8. A very pretty young woman wearing a tight cap and a brown apron. She was once handmaid to the Duchess' daughters.
9. A keen-eyed woman of middle age, with brown ringlets and a plain dress. She was once the Duchess' handmaid. Her name is Hester, and she is the only one of the group who is not a committed Part of Xaxus. She believes all her companions have gone insane, and is waiting for a chance to escape. As she is not a Part of Xaxus, she cannot use any of Xaxus' mental abilities.
10. A dashing-looking man with long hair and a facial scar. He wears a naval uniform. He was once the commander of the shipwrecked carrack.

# The Island



## Random Encounters on the Island

In the open on the island, and in any room in the pillars which are exposed to the open air, there is a 1 in 6 chance for a random encounter every turn.

### Encounters (1d8):

**1-3: Wind gust:** A gust of strong wind blasts the island, knocking down the unwary, extinguishing torches, and blowing away any unattended light items. On the shore, the gust is accompanied by huge waves, which will sweep away any unwary person on the beach who fails a save, and will swamp or destroy any boats that are not drawn well up the beach.

**4-5: Hunting party:** 1d6 of the Fanatics of Manakata. They are foraging for food. They will approach and attempt to parley with a large group, or with any characters who appear extremely physically strong. Smaller groups, or those who look physically weak, will be ambushed, with the intent of carrying them off to their temple.

**6-7: Enormous Skuas:** Two monstrous skuas nest on this island, throw-backs to the gigantic reptilian ancestors of birds. They have a three meter wing-span, and vicious dispositions. They will investigate interlopers to assess if they are food or a threat to their eggs. Once this random encounter is rolled, the skuas will constantly monitor the party, harassing them if they draw close to their nest, and swooping to finish off any wounded stragglers. Treat further rolls of this result as no encounter.

These enormous sea-birds are waist-high, with dirty brown feathers and huge webbed feet. Their heads are disproportionate to their bodies, with cruelly hooked beaks, tubular nostrils, and small beady eyes.

The skuas are by preference scavengers, and will not continue to attack a foe that shows fight. They become more aggressive as people approach the eastern pillar where they nest, harassing them with swoop attacks.

**Skuas:** Armour 14, Move 60'/240' fly, 2 Hit Dice, Peck attack for 1d8 damage Morale 5. When attacking from the open air, the skuas will execute a swoop attack, preferably from behind its target. It slams the target with its feet and wings, knocking them down and dealing 1-2 damage before flying off to attack again later.

**8: Storm:** A serious storm has blown in off the sea, bringing howling winds, enormous crashing waves, and torrential rain. Keeping a torch lit is impossible, and movement rates are quartered. There is a 25% chance that any spell cast will fail, and any ranged weapons are useless. Near the shore, characters must save each round or be swept away by a wave. Continue to roll for random encounters, but ignore any roll of 1-7 on this table. If another 8 is rolled, or just before dawn of the next day, the storm ends.

### Section A: Wreck of the La Juliana.

The timbers of this large carrack have already begun to rot, and breakers roll through gaping holes in both sides of the hull. Sand is banking against the hulk, and it is slowly sinking into the beach. Much of the ship has already broken up completely, and flotsam from the wreck is strewn across the beach.

A brief inspection will tell a character knowledgeable in seafaring that the ship in all probability struck a reef at sea, and was beached before it foundered. Much of the damage to the ship occurred when the ship washed ashore. The majority of the crew and passengers probably survived the wreck.

For every five minutes a character spends searching the wreckage, roll on the following table (d10) to determine what they find.

- |  |
|--|
| <p><b>1-2:</b> Nothing</p> <p><b>3:</b> 1d10sp worth of assorted coins.</p> <p><b>4:</b> A rusted but serviceable weapon, shield, or piece of armour.</p> <p><b>5:</b> A skeleton, scraps of rotting flesh still clinging to it. Scavengers have picked it over.</p> <p><b>6:</b> A once-fine tapestry, rug, or silk gown, now ruined by the sea.</p> <p><b>7:</b> A piece of jewellery worth 1d6x10sp.</p> <p><b>8:</b> An intact cask: 50% chance fresh water, 50% fine wine (worth 10sp).</p> <p><b>9:</b> A finely made blade in a watertight sheath, slightly rusted but salvageable.</p> <p><b>10:</b> Roll twice.</p> |
|--|

Don't forget to roll for random encounters while characters search. No more than 500sp total is salvageable from the wreck.

### Section B: Cabbage Patch

A cluster of the strange cabbage-vines is growing here, attracted by some chemical properties of the rocks. A large swathe of vines have been hacked off at about knee height. Some of them are still oozing fresh red sap, while others are blackened and withered.

### Section C: Bone Chasm

A deep crevasse in the island, with sheer sides. The bottom of the chasm is filled with mouldering human bones. None are newer than several hundred years old, and all are heavily decayed. Many of the bones are huge and misshapen, and might be mistaken for bones of oxen. All are brittle and crumble to the touch.

## Section D: The Gull Tower

This towering pillar of black volcanic rock is riddled with holes, the most notable being the large entrance at its base. The stone appears to have been chiselled, blasted, and melted to form the rooms within. Iron grilles once blocked the window holes, but these have rusted to nothing. Throughout, rooms have light from these holes unless otherwise noted. From the base can be seen a rope-bridge spanning the gap between the tip of the eastern pillar and a cave opening near the top of the western pillar. A few of the windows look large enough for a person to squeeze through, about 30 feet up the east side of the pillar. These open onto location 7.

The stairs: A stairway spirals up the side of the pillar, cut into the black rock. The remains of a wooden railing can be seen set into the stone, but this has long ago rotted into uselessness. The steps are narrow and crudely cut, and the pillar is regularly swept by squalls off the sea. Those who take their time climbing will be safe, but hurried or careless climbers must save or fall. The stairs eventually lead to an open area high on the pillar, location 9.

The Gull Tower Random Encounters: This pillar is largely abandoned, and there are no random encounters.

### The Gull Tower, Level 1

1. This room smells of the fishy excrement of gulls, which have built untidy nests in the nooks and crevices of the rough stone walls. They fly in and out through the cracks and windows of the south wall, and

through the open doorway, screeching at intruders. The mouldering remains of the entry door can still be seen, scattered among and near-buried under the gulls' debris. It appears to have been broken open, and knocked off its hinges.

A bas-relief image is carved into the north wall, and this has seen particular depredations from the gulls, its contours smeared with their leavings. What can be made out behind the mess shows heavily stylised human figures, tall and noble. They are descending a great staircase from the stars. One of the carved faces is a carefully disguised button, which releases a concealed stone panel - a door to location 4.

The door in the east wall is swollen and stuck, but the wood is rotted and will break with the application of sufficient force.

The door in the west wall appears to have been knocked off its hinges long ago, the debris lying in the next room (location 2).

2: This room has only one small window, placed high up, and is nearly completely dark. There are no gulls present. What appear to be four large stone statues fill the room. They are crude human-like figures, but larger than a man, with roughly hewn features and much detail lost to time. In the north wall are carved two enormous circular eyes, and the suggestion of brows. Anyone who looks directly at them must save or be immediately and permanently turned to stone. The northern door has been knocked down in the same fashion as the southern door, the debris lying in the next room (location 4).

**3:** A stone ledge runs along the east and south walls of this room. The ledge is lined with stone statues of weird alien figures. They are tall and elegant, rendered in a geometric style. They wear no clothes. The stairs lead down to location 30.

**4:** This room is filled with a tangle of desiccated vines, which bear cruel thorns. Fortunately the vines are dried and rotted to the point that they can be effortlessly broken down to mere twigs. The reason for this is clear as the vines are parted. The gnarled trunk of the plant has been uprooted from a crack in the stone floor, the stone itself being shattered as the thick roots were torn up. Entangled in the vines, with tendrils growing even through their eye sockets and ribs, are five skeletons. These are mouldering and the bones are scattered, but several of the bones appear too large and crudely formed to be human bones.

The spiralling stone stairway leads up to location 5.

### The Gull Tower, Level 2

**5:** This small room is pitch black, with no openings to the outside. In torchlight the north wall glitters brilliantly – it is cut through a vein of volcanic glass. The spiral stairway continues upwards to location 8, though the steps are crumbling and brittle.

Climbing the stairs, they become increasingly fragile, the brittle volcanic rock shot through with veins of obsidian, breaking off into razor-sharp shards. All but the lightest of steps will crumble the stone, sending the unwary climber tumbling down the jagged stairs for 2d6 damage, plus an extra d6 for anyone in light clothing.

The door in the east wall is barred from the far side, and made of thick iron which, though deeply corroded, is still strong. The door is slightly buckled inwards, though it holds firm.

**6:** Gulls have made a ruin of this once-fine room, the walls of which are covered in elaborate bas-relief carving, depicting weird scenes of an alien world, with swaying, tentacled trees, many moons, and elegant, dignified-looking inhabitants. In one of the scenes, some of the strange cabbage-vines seen about the island are depicted amongst other alien flora.

Some ancient straw ticking, as well as scraps of faded fabric, suggest that this was once the sleeping quarters for a number of people, though all that remains of the once-fine furnishings is rot and splinters. A fireplace in the northeast corner of the room is filled with gulls' detritus. This fireplace shares a chimney with the one in location 7, though the gap is too small for a human to pass through.

**7: Skua Nest:** This is the nest of the two enormous skuas that terrorise the island. The windows in this room are larger than elsewhere, and the skuas (or a person) can easily squeeze through them. The drop to the rocks outside is 30 feet or so.

Scraps of vegetation, seaweed and scrub as well as the remains of some of the vine-cabbages, are strewn around the room, scattered from a huge stinking heap against the north wall. If a skua is home in the nest (and one almost always remains in the nest), it fights viciously to defend its territory, its calls attracting its mate from elsewhere on the island within 1d20 rounds.

If reduced to half hit points or fewer, it will attempt to flee, and return later.

**Monstrous Skua:** Armour 14, Move 60'/240' fly, 2 Hit Dice, Peck attack for 1d8 damage Morale 10 (while in nest, 5 otherwise). When attacking from the open air, the skua will execute a swoop attack, preferably from behind its target. It slams the target with its feet and wings, knocking them down and dealing 1-2 damage before flying off to attack again later.

In the nest are three dark brown and mottled eggs, each the size of a football. These are quite sturdy, able to survive normal jostling and handling, but they need to be kept warm if the chicks are to survive. Viable eggs can be sold for 300sp each to the right buyer.

Also in the nest, partly buried in the rank seaweed, are some shiny valuables picked out of the wreckage of the ship: 6 gold plates, worth 10sp each, some silver cutlery worth 20sp, and a naval officer's sword, still in its scabbard. The sword is finely made, and the hilt and scabbard are inlaid with gold and fine enamels. It is worth 100sp.

The fireplace in the southwest corner of the room is filled with ancient ashes. Sifting through the ashes will uncover a charred finger, blackened flesh still sticking to it. It wears an un-corroded black iron ring. The ring is magical, and the wearer becomes immune to all magical effects (even beneficial magical effects). The results of a spell can still harm the character - a building set on fire by magic can still burn them - but a spell itself can never harm them. They are similarly immune to illusions, and the effects of magic items other than this ring

(magic weapons deal only their base damage). The ring cannot be removed once it is first worn.

The chimney of the fireplace is shared with location 6, but the gap is too small for a human to pass through.

### The Gull Tower, Level 3

**8.** This room is windowless and pitch black. The room has niches carved into the walls, and a 30 foot high ceiling. White stalactites of candle-wax hang from the niches, translucent in torchlight. Each niche is lined by a curved glass mirror, and most have at least a stub of candle remaining. A large glass lens can be seen set in the centre of the ceiling. The stairs lead down to location 5.

**9.** This room is exposed to the harsh island winds, and has been swept bare. The remains of huge vertical iron shutters stand at the room's eastern edge, where the stairs which have spiralled the pillar finally terminate.

Two stone benches run the length of the room, and some hopelessly rusted instruments of glass and iron are scattered on the floor.

In the west wall are a series of carved panels, covered in arcane diagrams and strange formulae. One of the panels swivels on a vertical axle, opening onto the stairwell beyond, which leads to location 10.

Xaxus posts a sentry here to watch for attacks from others on the island. The Part will slip through the secret passage in the west wall if intruders are heard coming up



either set of stairs. If the intruders are not overtly hostile, it will go to gather a welcome party. Otherwise, it will go to prepare the defences. If surprised by adventurers, Xaxus will be quite friendly if given a chance to talk.

### The Gull Tower, Level 4

**10.** This square room is open to the elements on its west wall, with huge vertical iron shutters which have rusted into jagged teeth. The ceiling of this room is high, smooth, and domed, with traces of white plaster remaining on the stone.

In the centre of the room is a circular stone pedestal, with a large spherical gemstone set into its top. The top section of the pedestal is mounted on rollers, such that it can be rotated in place. If a number of the candles in location 8 have been lit, and remain alight, their light will be reflected through a cunning series of mirrors and filters, and through the gem on the pedestal. The gem projects a brilliant display

on the room's ceiling, and if the pedestal is rotated, this display will change, showing four distinct scenes (see the box below).

This is Xaxus' memory-room, though it has not yet rediscovered the secret of its use, or how to add new images to the gem. The gem would be worth 1,000sp to a jeweller, or twice that to a wealthy scholar in the right field. It is deeply set in the pedestal, however. A mallet, chisel, and a great deal of time would be needed to pry it loose, and the thief would risk shattering the gem.

A rope-bridge extends from the ledge in the west across open space to the middle of the western pillar. The bridge is made of cables of a peculiar metal, grey and glistening, though the boards are ancient and rotted wood. The worst-rotted boards appear to have been replaced more recently with pieces salvaged from the shipwreck. In a storm, the other pillar will be hidden by the driving rain, and the rope bridge will be thrashing wildly in the wind.

A night sky, with brilliant stars, two moons of deep red, and a glowing purple nebula. It is nothing like the sky of this world. This is the scene that the pedestal will display if it has not been rotated.

A jungle canopy, but with alien plants. Their tendrils wave of their own volition, and the roots stretch and grasp. Some of the cabbage-vines growing on the island can be seen.

A series of oddly familiar pictograms. If the language is somehow deciphered (by magic, a scholar in a truly obscure field, or by several hours of dedicated study) it reads as follows: "I am Xaxus, the eternal, the endless, the infinite, the unbounded. I am Xaxus, the thought, the idea. I live if I am thought to live, I die if I am forgotten. My body is divided, my mind is distributed, but my self is one. I am Xaxus, the eternal, the endless, the infinite, the unbounded."

Dancing lights, in a hypnotic pattern. All who see this must save or fall unconscious for 2d6 rounds. When they awake, they will be extremely suggestible and trusting for 1 hour (-1d4 Wisdom).

Crossing the rope bridge is perfectly safe so long as both hands are kept on the guide ropes at all times. A character who takes any other action than slowly and carefully crossing the bridge must save or slip off the bridge. A second save will allow them to catch themselves before falling onto the jagged rocks below, for 6d6 damage. In a storm, all saves are made with a -4 penalty.

Xaxus will attempt to intercept any obviously hostile intruders on this bridge, should it be aware of them.

The cables which make up the bridge would be very valuable if they could be released from their moorings. They are looped through holes bored in the rock, and would need to be chiselled out from both sides. There are four ropes, each 100' long and half an inch thick. They are immensely strong, immune to corrosion, acid, or heat, and as light as normal hemp rope, though less flexible. They are worth 500sp each.

## Section E: The Tower of Xaxus

The Tower of Xaxus wandering monsters:

This pillar is heavily used by Xaxus, and it is difficult to avoid running into its Parts. Every turn, on a roll of 1-2 on a d6, 1d4 randomly chosen Parts of Xaxus are encountered. They'll be alarmed by intruders, but not immediately hostile.

From its foot, no windows are visible on the bottom floor of the pillar, but they can be seen higher up the pillar, and at night

lights can be seen moving within. The sides of the pillar are sheer, and the rock crumbling and sharp, but a skilled climber with the right equipment might reach one of the windows, and an expert could reach the summit, given enough time. Sea birds seem to shun this pillar, while they flock to the eastern one.

There is a secret door at the foot of the pillar, on its south side. This door is hidden by a cunning contrivance of architecture, making the doorway blend into the rough contours of the stone pillar. Only a detailed exploration of the foot of the pillar will reveal the doorway, which otherwise appears to be simply a heap of rubble.

## The Tower of Xaxus, Level 1

**11.** There are no windows opening onto this room, but it is lit by a handful of oil lamps. There are 1d4 Parts of Xaxus here at night, and 2d4 during the day.

This room is filled with low stone benches, and its walls are covered with scrawled hieroglyphics, carved symbols, and strange diagrams. Though the floors have been thoroughly swept, and the room tidied, fragments of coloured glass, scraps of paper, and twists of broken metal collecting in corners suggest that this room has been repaired from a wrecked state.

The stone benches have been tidied and organised, though little remains of the panoply of equipment which once filled this room. There are several items of interest remaining:

**Stone tablets:** These tablets were carved by Xaxus long ago, and contain highly technical notes on several experiments it was conducting, as well as apparatus it was constructing. They are written in weird hieroglyphics, a bastardised version of the language which is used on Xaxus' obelisk. There are several stacks of these tablets around the room. Xaxus spends much of its time in deep study of these tablets, attempting to relearn its old mastery of the sciences.

**Conduit Crystals:** These yellowish crystals seem to pick up and discharge strong electrical currents. Anyone touching them with an unprotected hand will take 1 point of damage from brilliantly arcing electricity. They can be handled safely with gloves. Two crystals held close together will produce arcing lights twice as bright as a lantern. For every ten minutes they are held like this, there is a 1 in 10 chance of each crystal of exploding, dealing 1d6 damage to everyone within ten feet.

**Apparatus:** This apparatus is a leather tube as long as a forearm, and slightly thicker. The tube is filled with complicated crystal lenses and glass mirrors. A wooden box is attached at one end with golden fastenings, with a hinged lid which tightly seals. The box is lined with a grey metal foil. In the other end of the tube are fastenings (gold again), which affix one of several large lenses. The box is activated when a bright light is applied to the open end of the tube. The effects depend on which lens is attached:

**Convex glass lens:** Anything inside the box doubles in size, forcing the door of the box open if necessary, and potentially destroying the box.

**Concave glass lens:** Anything inside the box halves in size.

**Coloured glass lens:** Anything inside the box changes hue to match the colour of the glass.

**Cracked lens:** Anything inside the box becomes highly unstable, and dissolves into wet slime if handled.

**Crystal prism:** Anything inside the box vanishes forever. In fact it has been transported through space to Xaxus' homeworld, though discovering this would take weeks of study of the obelisk and the stone tablets, by a highly intelligent scholar.

Anything so affected by the apparatus becomes unstable at a molecular level, dissolving into wet slime after 1-4 days, and more quickly if roughly handled. Living creatures survive the process for minutes or hours at most.

An assortment of lenses in combinations of cracked, coloured, convex and concave, and including a single crystal prism, are in a jumble by the apparatus.

**Houseplant:** A strange houseplant grows in a pot in a corner. The pot is cracked, and earth spills out, but the plant seems to have survived this. The plant is a viny tangle, from which emerge half a dozen vermilion flowers. The flowers are bell shaped, with wicked barbs on their interior surface. If touched, they rapidly constrict, trapping fingers or probing instruments, drawing blood from many punctures. This is painful but hardly dangerous, and the flowers are easily removed.



Once the flower has fed in this way, a pod at the base of the flower begins to swell, over the course of an hour growing to

the size of an orange. At this point the pod splits open, and a tiny homunculus of the plant's victim emerges. This homunculus feeds voraciously on insects or detritus until its belly is full, at which point it finds a suitable point to dig into the ground and sprout into a new plant.

In the east wall there is a slide from the room (location 15) above. Investigating the slide will reveal a mouldering skeleton wedged in the mouth of the chute, just out of reach. The skeleton is covered in yellow mould (see location 15).

The concealed door in the south wall is perfectly visible from this side.

12.

This bare stone

room has no windows, and is unlit. There is a tiled fountain in the centre of the room, carved to resemble the obelisk from location 21, but the water has long dried up. The stairs lead down to location 28.

**13.** Spiral stairs cut from stone lead up to location 17. With no windows, the room is dark, however an oil lamp in a wall bracket gives off a dim light. The north wall of the room bulges outwards, and seems to envelop two huge and misshapen skeletons, in postures of extreme agony.

**14.** There is a palpable warmth and moisture to the air of this room, given off by the huge fleshy plant growing up from a

fissure in the stone floor. The room is filled with an enticing, spiced-milk aroma. The plant's leaves are long and serrated, like monstrous tongues, and they grow abundantly from the plant's base. A bulbous stalk ascends from the mass of leaves, and is crowned by a ring of tendrils which bob and wave. Each tendril ends in a star-shaped ring of leaves, surrounding a long, throbbing teat.

At any time, there are 1d4 Parts of Xaxus here, suckling from the teats. While they are suckling, the Parts are completely helpless and unaware of their surroundings. The leaves surrounding the teats gently stroke their faces.

This plant, native to another world, came here with Xaxus on the obelisk. It grew here long ago, tended by Xaxus' first Parts in this world. It produces a nutritious sap which has enabled Xaxus to survive here without a regular supply of food or water. The plant can produce enough sap to completely fulfil the daily needs of a dozen adult humans. It takes twenty minutes of dedicated suckling to receive the equivalent of a full meal. During that time, feeders are helpless and oblivious to their surroundings, as the plant also produces a hypnotic pheromone that induces feelings of calm, contentment, and safety.

The sap is mildly addictive. If a character feeds from the plant, have the player roll a d20. If the result is equal to or less than the total number of times the character has fed from the plant, the character becomes addicted. Addicted characters who have not fed in the last day take -2 to all rolls as they become obsessed with feeding from the plant again. These effects last a full month from the last time the character fed.

## The Tower of Xaxus, Level 2

**15.** This room is warmed and lit by an iron brazier, which is burning fiercely. The room's sole window, in the south wall, has been covered by a thick but moth-eaten rug. As a result the room is smoky but warm. Several pallets have been made up on the floor, made from rugs and tapestries collected from around the complex. At night, there will be 6 randomly-chosen Parts of Xaxus sleeping here, and during the day there will be 1d6 Parts napping or quietly conversing.

The walls of the room are carved to look like large wooden panels, four on each wall. One panel on the east wall hides a secret door. It pivots on a horizontal axle through its centre, and the lower half of the panel can be pushed inwards to reveal a hidden chute, which drops into location 11. However, the chute is very tight, and there is a skeleton wedged in the exit. The first person down the chute will take 1d4 damage as they crash through the mouldering bones. Worse, the bones are covered in a yellow mould which will burst into a fine mist of spores if the skeleton is disturbed. Everyone in the room below (location 11) must save or die coughing up blood.

**16.** A stone stairway curves around the east and north walls of this small room, and there is a large window set in an alcove under the stairs. The window has the remains of an iron grille, which appears to have been recently repaired with rough twine. The room has been swept clean, but remains of gulls' nests (sticks, seaweed, faeces, and broken shells) can be found in corners and crevices.

Stacked against the south wall is an odd assortment of mundane items, some obviously salvaged from the wreck of the La Juliana, while others are considerably more aged and decrepit. There are bars of tallow soap, twig brooms, scrubbing brushes, candles, several flax bags full of driftwood, bundles of rags, a pail full of water, a fine-china commode, a sad-looking feather duster, a bale of dry and brittle straw, and two sponges.

**17.** There are no windows in this long corridor, and it is pitch black. The walls are covered in bas-relief carvings of life on other planets. Some of them depict the same tentacled trees, cabbage vines, and elegant aliens as seen elsewhere in the complex, but others show even more alien vistas – blasted moonscapes dotted with winged fungi, aquatic scenes with men riding starfish, four-legged dog-knights jousting, and even stranger things. All of this is covered with a thick layer of soot. At the south end of the corridor an attempt has been made to clean the carvings. There is still a wooden bucket full of soapy water and a brush by the wall. At the north end of the corridor, the soot is still thick and dark. A study of the soot patterns from a suitable distance will show distinct voids in the soot, in the shape of hulking human forms.

A spiral stairway leads down at the north end of the corridor to location 13.

### The Tower of Xaxus, Level 3

**18.** This room appears to have been bored through the entire pillar as if by an enormous drill. The floor is sloped slightly downward to the south, and the whole room is circular in cross section. The wind

howls through the room, extinguishing torches and dampening sound. Giant fittings of rusted iron cap either end of the room. These once held huge glass lenses, but these were smashed long ago. Their remains can be found amongst the rocks at the bottom of the pillar. To the north a stairway is cut into the side of the room, winding downwards to location 16. To the south, a stairway winds up the outside of the pillar to location 21.

**19.** This room appears to have been melted out of the rock, with smooth flowing stone and uneven surfaces. It is open to the outside along its east wall, and wind and rain have prevented gulls from making nests. A rope bridge extends from the ledge to a large square opening near the top of the west face of the eastern pillar (see location 10 in the Gull Tower).

Two wooden chests have been set against the north wall of the room, along with two long spears and a rusted sword. Neither chest is locked.

The first chest is small but long. It contains three blowguns, a dozen darts, and poison. The poison is a paralytic, and those hit by darts must save or be paralysed and unable to move for d10 minutes.

The second chest contains 10 stone globes. These make a sloshing sound if shaken. If thrown at a target, the globes have a 50% chance of bursting and releasing a sticky substance which coats the target. If the substance makes contact with bare skin, it deals 1 point of damage each round as roots grow into the target, and viny tendrils grow outward. Scraping the substance off has little effect once the roots are im-

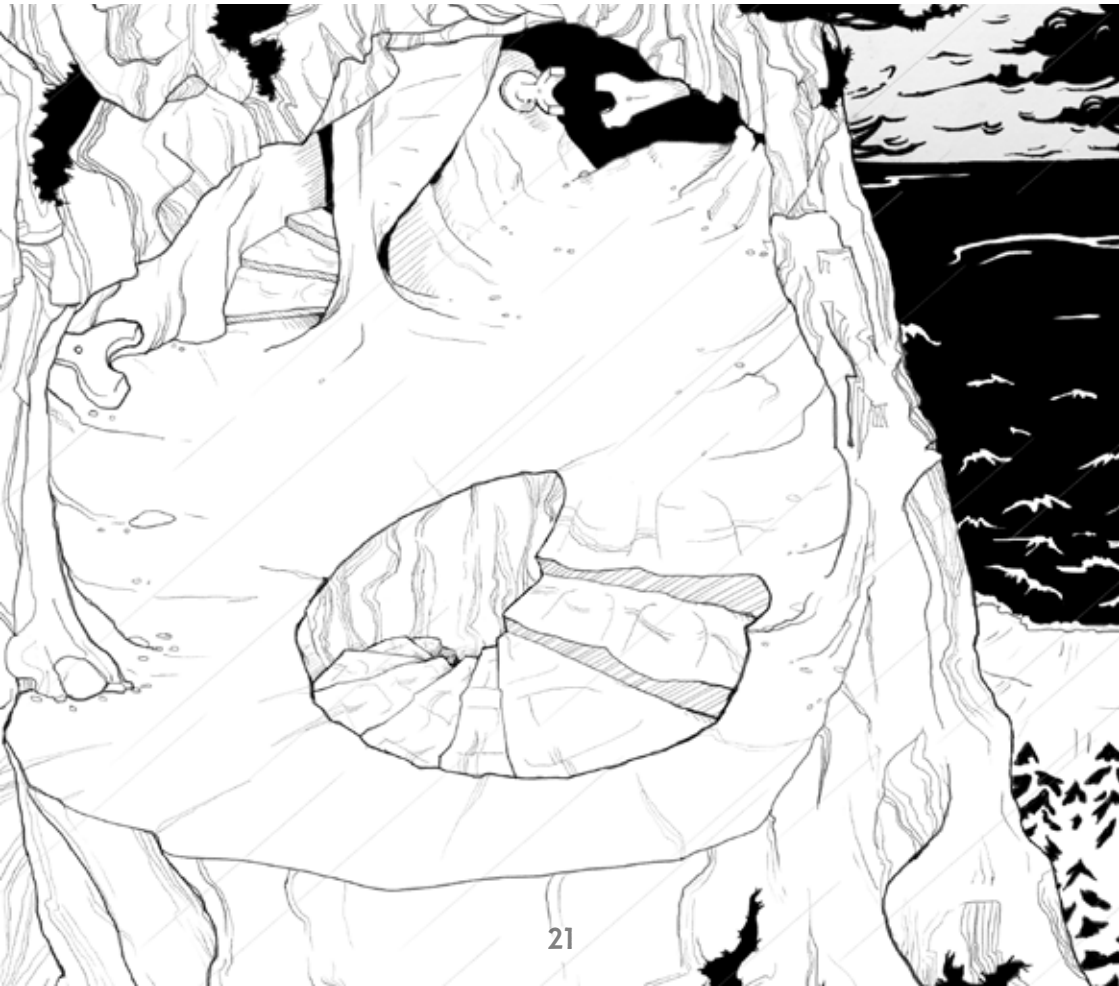
## The Idea from Space

planted. The target's only hope is immediately applying salt to the area (sea water is effective). If a target is killed by the plant's growth, their body will be completely overtaken by an enormous plant with giant bulbous seed heads which spit more of the same sticky substance.

If Xaxus is aware of the characters' approach across the rope bridge, it will organise to have some of its Parts (1d6+1) waiting in this room. They will take up the globes and blowguns, but will hesitate to use them unless the need is dire. They will use negotiation first, then intimidation,

then their conventional weapons and magical abilities, and the blowguns and globes only if the characters appear to be about to take the ledge by force. Xaxus is much more interested in making new allies and converts than combat.

**20.** This is where Xaxus kept its captives, those who would not join Xaxus in times gone by. A hollow scooped into the side of the pillar, with a sloping floor and smooth glassy walls, there is little shelter from the bitter island wind. Two mouldering, ancient skeletons lie in a crumbled heap in the only sheltered corner of the ledge,





## The Idea from Space

behind a small boulder. Amongst the remains is a copper torque of ancient design (too corroded to be of much value), a gold cape-pin worked into a disc shape (worth 20sp), and a jade amulet carved with strange designs. The amulet marks the wearer as a member of an ancient and defunct royal lineage from the mainland (worth 50sp to collectors).

### The Tower of Xaxus, Level 4

**21.** A large open-mouthed cave in the side of the pillar, this room has a deep pit at its western edge.

Dominating the centre of the room is a huge green obelisk, driven into the solid rock. It stands more than 12 feet tall, and is made of a deep green, slightly translu-

cent stone. Next to the obelisk is a small wooden step-ladder.

The obelisk is completely covered in intricately inscribed pictograms, which seem oddly familiar to any intelligent observer. They are written in a kind of universal language which addresses fundamental properties of intelligent life. This makes it possible for almost any intelligent being in the universe to interpret the symbols, given enough time.

1d6 Parts of Xaxus are in this room at all times during the day, studying the obelisk.

### Studying the obelisk

Anyone who spends a full three hours studying the pictograms may learn

- 1:** A description of Xaxus, what it is, and some details of its history on the planet the obelisk came from (which is not Xaxus' original home). On that planet, almost every intelligent being is a Part of Xaxus. It is a utopia where Xaxus lives a life of luxury and contentment.
- 2:** A very convincing discussion of why becoming a Part of Xaxus is the best thing anyone could do, great for them, and great for the cause of bringing peace and harmony to the entire universe. This discussion has no magical effect, but it is very compellingly written.
- 3:** Instruction in one of several mental techniques for developing advanced psychic powers. The first step in learning any of these is becoming a Part of Xaxus.
- 4:** Very sophisticated technical discussion of the development of several scientific apparatus. This is way over the head of even the most advanced scholars.
- 5:** A description of the plants of the planet the obelisk came from, including the Cabbage-Vines (they are delicious and hearty food), the plants which produce the sticky substances in the globes in location 19 (they are destroyed by sufficient concentrations of salt), and the plant in location 14 (its nectar is delicious and nutritious but somewhat addictive).
- 6:** Weird poetry, musical scores for strange alien music, and recipes featuring ingredients which do not exist in this world.

something of interest. Scholars, the highly intelligent (14+), and those who are already familiar with the pictograms need only an hour, and those who fulfil all three criteria need only half an hour. Roll 1d6 and consult the table on the previous page.

### Section F: Steam Vent

A pillar of white steam is venting from a crack in the rocks here. In good weather the plume is visible over most of the island. The vent opens into location 23 of the temple complex.

### Section G: The Temple of Manakata the Strong

Above ground, this part of the island is a twisted ruin. A few bits of masonry, some tumbledown walls, and a pair of cyclopean columns are all that remain of the fine complex that once stood here. A huge hole in the island's side opens into the remaining underground portion of the temple.

The Fanatics never leave their temple undefended, and even in empty rooms loud noises will likely (50% chance) provoke an investigation from any Fanatics in adjacent rooms.

**22.** The main temple room, this vaulted stone chamber has a ceiling 30 feet high. The floor is hard packed clay, covered in fine sand. The entire western wall has been broken open, and rocks have tumbled into the chamber. At the east end of the room, a semicircular dais rises towards the eastern wall. Atop the dais, gleaming in the light of several braziers, is a three-foot high idol of gold, jade, and bone. It depicts a stylised

naked human form, muscles grotesquely swollen, eyes bulging, teeth set in a grimace. The thing would be worth 2,000sp for the materials alone, and a collector might pay even more. It is also immensely heavy. This idol is Manakata the Strong, the god of this island.

In this room, the Fanatics undertake their devotions to Manakata, and it is here they will take any captives or volunteers for participation. Around the dais, the sand is caked with blood, and there are chunks of rotting flesh attracting flies.

There is always at least one Fanatic on guard here and during the day a party of 1d6 Fanatics are also here, working out (they lift rocks, wrestle, and perform other feats of strength). At night, there is a 1 in 10 chance that a ritual is taking place.

### Lifting the Idol

The idol is extremely heavy. Lifting it requires rolling 1d8, adding the character's Strength score, and totalling 20 or more. Carrying the idol any distance unaided is out of the question, even for a group of people. The task would require ropes, stout poles, and a team of strong men.

Anyone who lifts the idol from the ground experiences a mystical vision, in which Manakata's will is communicated to them. They will understand that if they complete a task given to them by Manakata, they will gain great strength. If they fail, they will be punished.

Roll a d6 on the following table:

1. Wrestle and win
2. Beat unconscious
3. Fuck
4. Fight barehanded, to the death
5. Eat
6. All of the above (in any order)

Manakata instructs them to do this to another sentient being of their choice before the next sunrise. They must be completely naked while performing the task. If they succeed, Manakata permanently grants 1d4 points of Strength and 1d4 points of Constitution. If they cannot complete the task before the sun rises, they permanently lose 1d4 points of Intelligence and 1d4 points of Wisdom. Succeed or fail, they will not be granted another vision of Manakata's will before the next full moon.

### Manakata's Ritual

On the night of the full moon, and on any night when the Fanatics have managed to procure captives, a ritual is held to honour Manakata.

Fires are lit in the main chamber, and Manakata's faithful gather, 1d6+6 of them, shouting and cursing, breaking off into impromptu wrestling bouts, beating crude drums, encircle the dais, bringing forth captives and new volunteers.

1d4+1 Fanatics take part in the ritual, taking turns to attempt lifting the idol, but giving preference to those who have brought captives. If player characters have

been taken captive by the Fanatics, they'll be bound and watched during the ritual, but untied if one of the Fanatics chooses them as a victim. The festival is the only time the Fanatics will fight to the death. Anyone strong enough to lift the idol (Strength 12+) will be allowed a chance to lift, and the Fanatics will accept anyone who lifts the idol as one of their own, trusting them and assisting them to the best of their abilities.

**23.** A burst of steam accompanies opening the door to this room. Carved out of a natural cavern, with stalagmites and stalactites still scattered about the room, this was the bathhouse for the temple complex. There are three pools, of different sizes. The largest pool is yellow with sulphur, and is comfortably warm. The middle pool has an alkaline aroma, and is extremely hot, but bearable. The smallest pool appears pure and very clear, but the water is close to boiling. Anyone falling in the water will take 2d6 damage each round.

The room is thick with steam, which escapes through a natural vent in the ceiling. This vent is directly above the smallest, hottest pool. During the day it admits enough light to keep the room well lit, but at night the room is very dark. The water from the pools runs into a sandy area in the western end of the room, from which it eventually finds its way to the sea.

Beside the largest pool there is a collection of shaving tackle, some filthy towels, a tub of soap, and a stone jar half-full of sweet-smelling oil.

Captain Ortega, former captain of the *La Juliana*, spends most of his time bathing



in the middle pool. There is a 50% chance that he will be sleeping when first encountered. There's a further 50% chance that another 1d4 Fanatics are also here, bathing, shaving themselves, or oiling themselves up for a wrestling bout.

### Captain Ortega

Once the captain of the La Juliana, Ortega has been the greatest beneficiary of Manakata's blessing. He is fully ten feet tall, covered all over in great rippling bands of muscle. Every part of him is swollen and raw, bulging with strength. His mind has been all but destroyed by the idol, and he spends almost all his time in the geothermal pools in the temple, waiting until he can lift the idol again.

Captain Ortega: Armour 16, Move 120', 5 Hit Dice, Bash attack doing 2d8 damage, Morale 10. On a successful attack against no armour, Ortega snatches up a foe. In subsequent rounds, he can attack using the grappled foe as a weapon, dealing 2d8 damage to both victims.

**24.** This room is small and dark, its walls lined with deep recesses, which contains the ancient sacraments of Manakata's temple:

5 large stone jars full of scented oil. 50sp ea. The oil is not flammable.

6 sets of bronze torques, arm-bands, and chest-plates made for a very large human. The designs are ancient. 100sp for the lot.

4 huge bronze shields, 20sp ea. These are too heavy for a normal human to wield effectively.

A great copper crown, with black stones set in its peak. 300sp.

**25.** This is the Fanatics' sleeping room, and it is filled with matted vegetation, rotting straw, and a handful of blankets retrieved from the wrecked carrack. 2d6 Fanatics are here at night, and 1d6 during the day. They are usually dozing, but loud noises in adjacent rooms will awaken them. In a corner is a stinking heap of crab shells, along with a few uneaten heads of vine-cabbages.

**26.** The south door to this room is perfectly visible from its north side, but from the corridor on its south side it is nearly invisible, its outline worked into the masonry of the wall. It must be pushed (or pulled) to the south to open, but there is no handhold, making this difficult to accomplish from the south side of the door.

There is little in this room except a curved brass tube protruding from the west wall. It leaves the wall at about knee height, curves upward, and then angles forward to terminate with a flanged mouth at just below head height.

Speaking directly into the tube will cause the speaker's voice to be heard in location 22, booming loud, emanating from the idol on the dais. The Fanatics have not discovered this room and have never heard the idol 'speak' in this way.

**27.** The south door to this room is perfectly visible from within, but from the corridor on its far side it is nearly invisible, its outline worked into the masonry of the wall. A slight breeze from between the cracks in the wall is the only clue to the door's presence. The door has become stuck from long disuse, and it will require a concerted effort to open (several strong people, or some kind of battering ram).

This room was long ago the scene of a terrible massacre. Xaxus' weakest Parts fled here to hide from the rebelling slaves, but they were not spared. The ceiling appears to have suffered a partial collapse, and the floor is strewn with rubble. Throughout the rubble is an assortment of bones, mummified flesh still clinging to them. The bodies appear to have been torn limb from limb. The bones are of all sizes, from children to adults.

Xaxus has stashed what treasure survived the wreck of La Juliana in this room, in two small chests. The first contains 500sp worth of pure gold bars. The second contains 750sp worth of cut gemstones, including rubies, sapphires, and emeralds, as well as a silk purse full of rare pearls. Picking through the bones, another 50sp in jewellery can be found. Xaxus recognises the value of this treasure and is loath to part with it. It will, however, offer this treasure as an incentive for a party to rid the island of the Fanatics in the nearby temple.

**28.** This small room is made almost impassable by great jagged spears of stone projecting from every wall at crazy angles. Impaled on the blades are several huge and deformed skeletons, mouldering and ancient. Stairs lead up to location 12. The south door is concealed behind several of these protrusions, but will be discovered with a cursory inspection.

**29.** This is a store-room, its stock a mixture of the mundane and the bizarre. As well as flax bags full of corn (long burst and rotted), several clay jugs filled with weak beer (all spoiled), five sacks of coal, and a hanging rack of preserved meats in an alcove in the north wall (mould-covered and acrid).

There are two crates of glass wands, a large spool of copper wire (worth 100sp), a large flask of strong acid, two vials of almost pure alcohol, and a tub of a strong-scented paste which acts as a powerful glue.

The room has become a nest for the large weevils that are native to this island. They crawl over everything. Most are fully-grown adults, six inches long, black and spiky. The young, hidden beneath crates and sacks, are bright red and the size of a fingertip. If crushed, the young weevils release a powerful stink which sticks to anything and is near-impossible to wash off.

**30.** There is a large stone head filling almost the entirety of this room. Its features are stylized, and the head is dome-shaped with weird protrusions. The head swivels to face anyone who enters the room, with the sound of stone grating on stone. A booming voice issues from the mouth of the statue, speaking in a language unlikely to be comprehensible to anyone from this world. The voice speaks in the language of Xaxus' homeworld, as spoken by the long-ago Parts of Xaxus. It asks "Who wishes to pass?" If it does not hear the word "Xaxus" spoken in reply, it sounds an alarm - a loud booming cry which continues until the room is empty.

The alarm is loud enough to deafen anyone in the room, and can be heard all over the island. Anyone outside will see great flocks of gulls rising from their nests to wheel and screech in the sky. Xaxus will make extra preparations for intruders, and watch for people more carefully. A party of Fanatics from the temple (1d6+1) will scout around the East pillar to investigate the sound, but will not venture past the first room.

## Getting Player Characters to the Island

There are countless reasons why a party of adventurers might find themselves on the island. Here are a few:

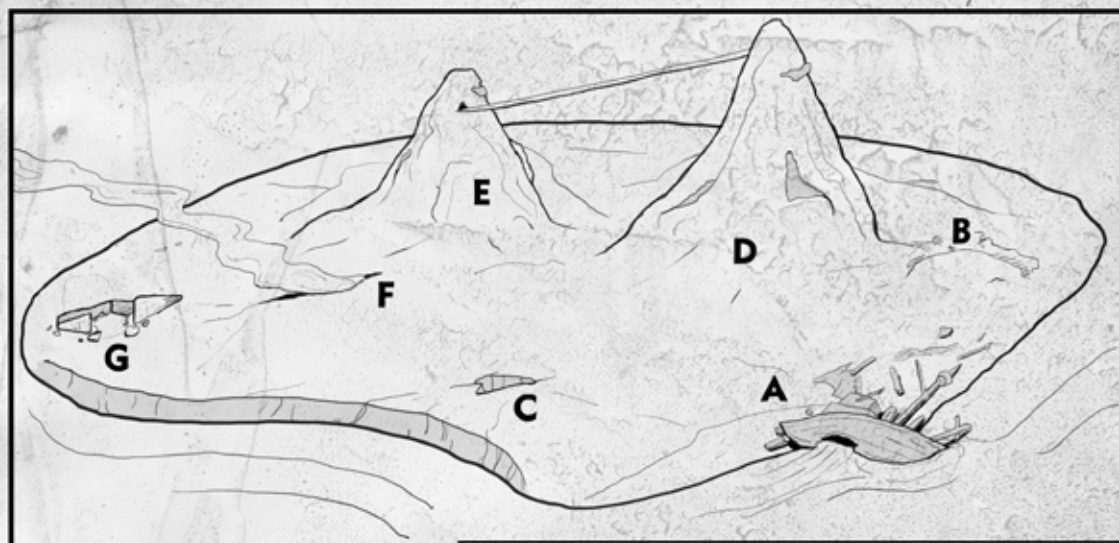
Rumours and legends in esoteric circles speak of a powerful wizard called “Xaxus” whose demense was located on this island in the distant past. The legends say the wizard ruled an empire in this far-flung corner of the world, and amassed vast wealth and arcane power. This wealth and knowledge belongs now to whoever is brave enough to claim it.

Duke Álvarez is an important man, and his going missing will not go unnoticed. His friends, and indeed the Spanish Crown, would be quick to mount an expedition to discover his fate. Furthermore, Álvarez was carrying aboard his ship coin and fine furnishings sufficient to establish himself in style at Santiago. Unscrupulous thieves might launch their own attempt to locate the wreck instead of or as well as an official rescue party.

The Strait of Magellan is a dangerous body of water, and the storms come swiftly and without warning. It is entirely credible that a party of adventurers could be washed ashore on the island by accident, or at least be forced to put ashore on the island to repair their ship and forage for supplies.

Talking to the natives who live in villages along this coast, there are countless legends about the island. Some say that the children of the gods once lived on the island, in great palaces bedecked with gold. Others say that the island is stalked by monstrous creatures that mock the shape of man. All agree that the island is a bad-luck place, best avoided.

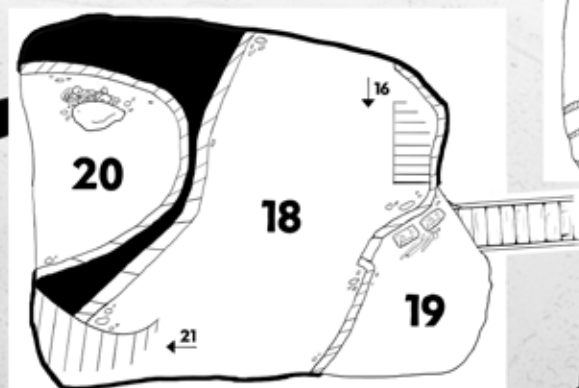




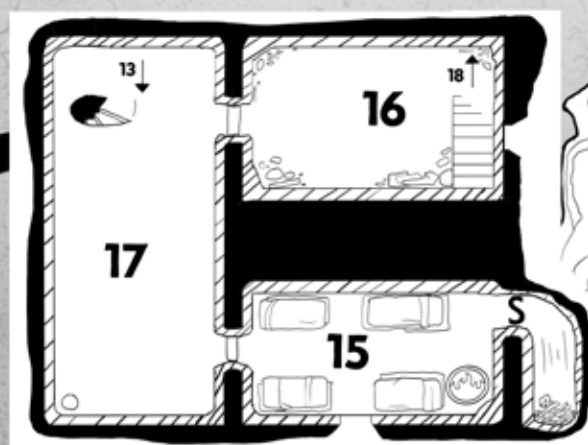
### The Island

- |                            |                       |
|----------------------------|-----------------------|
| A. Wreck of the La Juliana | E. The Tower of Xaxus |
| B. Cabbage Patch           | F. Steam Vent         |
| C. Bone Chasm              | G. The Temple of      |
| D. The Gull Tower          | Manakata the Strong   |

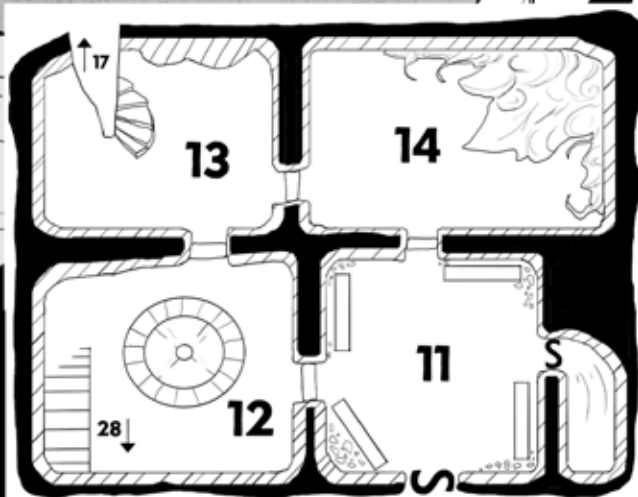
# E: The Tower of Xaxus



**Level 3**



**Level 2**



**Level 1**



**Level 4**

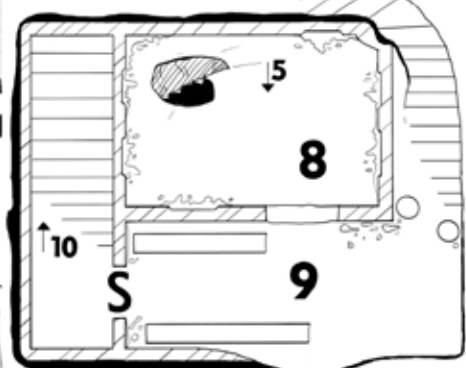


# D: The Gull Tower

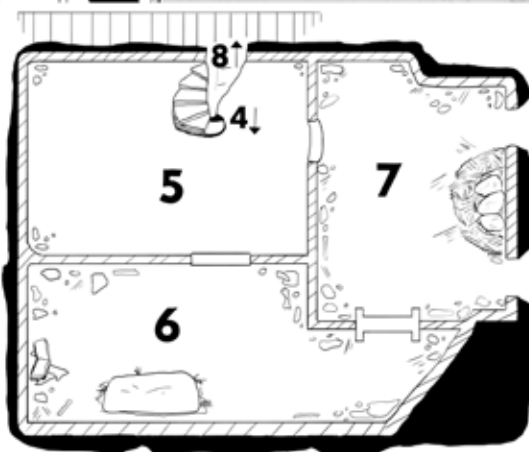
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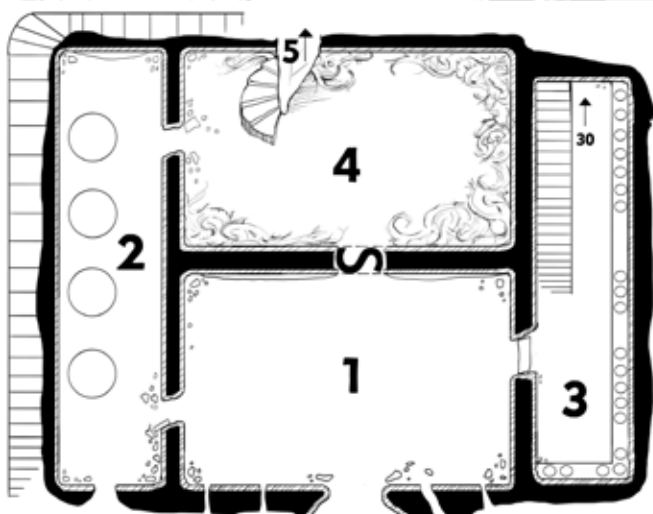
**Level 4**



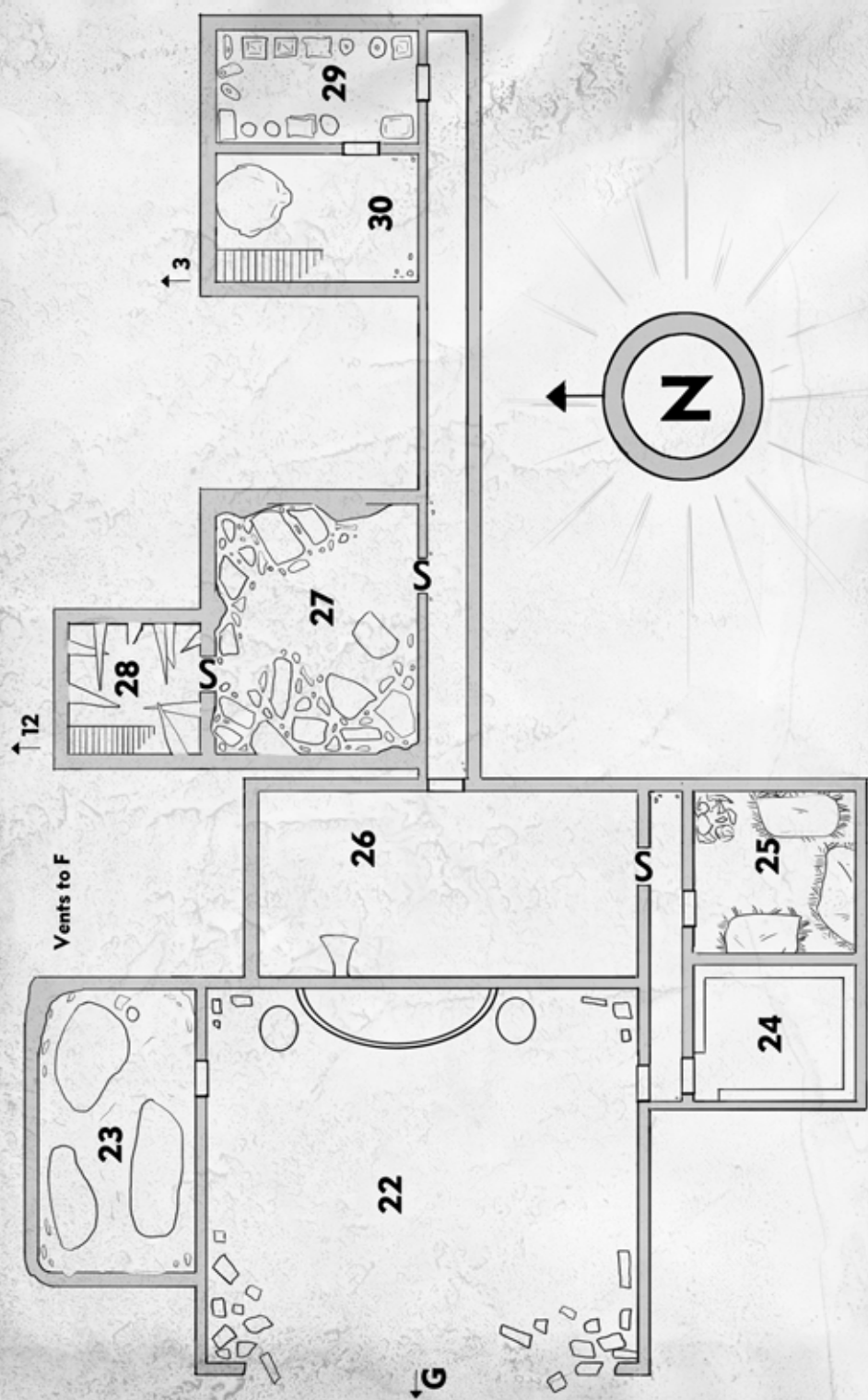
**Level 3**



**Level 2**



**Level 1**



# MIND vs. MUSCLE

**Xaxus is a creature of pure thought. Manakata is a being of raw power. On an island at the edge of the world, they transform human proxies to act on their behalf. And they war.**

**Now it's you on this island, caught in this battle. Will you remain who you are? Can you?**

***The Idea from Space* is an adventure suitable for low-level characters for use with *Lamentations of the Flame Princess Weird Fantasy Role-Playing* and other traditional role-playing games.**

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