

# Advanced Master Adventures

Game Adventure

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## The Divine Alligator

By Artemis Silversmith

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Two hundred years ago was the time of Raerciminar, a dragon furthering the agenda of Itzquizatl, a draconic deity of death and decay. His chief method was infusing as many creatures as possible with dragon blood...





# Advanced Master Adventures

Adventure Module for 4-5 Characters of Levels 6-7

## The Divine Alligator

By Artemis Silversmith



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## Introduction

*The Divine Alligator* is a OSRIC fantasy adventure suitable for four 7<sup>th</sup> level player characters. A ranger or druid is highly helpful, as is someone with good Charisma, plus the ability to speak Draconic. Characters of higher or lower levels can also take part in the adventure; see 'Scaling the Adventure' below. As the PCs face some quite dangerous opponents, referees may wish to change some encounters to give the characters a better chance of survival.

This adventure was designed to challenge both combat-lovers and in-depth roleplayers. It is a combination of site-based and event-driven adventure types. There are a lot of monsters to fight and trinkets to gain, but complete success in *The Divine Alligator* requires good diplomatic skills and a deal of good judgment. Every effort was made to make the adventure generic enough to be pasted into most fantasy campaign settings.

## Adapting the Adventure

The adventure text is written with a generic fantasy setting in mind. "Generic fantasy" means the standard for an average fantasy campaign: magic is real, potent and accessible, magic items can be made or bought, multiple gods and demons affect worldly affairs, and humans are just one of the many sentient races. *The Divine Alligator* can be staged in such a setting with minimal alterations. All you need is a suitable geographical location (a large swamp near a small mountain chain, fairly distant from the "civilized" world) and deities with agendas and interests similar to those presented in the adventure. If your campaign world deviates from the assumption, you may find the following advice useful:

*It Doesn't Have To Be a Swamp:* Although much of the adventure's flavor is evoked by a swampy setting, you could easily adapt the module to a different environment. For example, Great Bogs could be called Great Sands and situated on a fringe of a vast desert; and Tannin could be a half-Huge constrictor snake/half-blue dragon, worshipped by reptilian people in a remote pyramid-like temple as a manifestation of a long-dead serpent god...

*It Doesn't Have to Feature Lizard men:* If your campaign doesn't happen to feature lizard men, you could replace them with

a like-minded race, greatly conservative, patriarchal and resenting the encroachment of civilization. The Slitherers and The God's Tribe could be two groups of humans who haven't advanced past tribal/clan social structure or a breed of goblinoids that turned away from evil - or so it seems.

*It Doesn't Have to Be Fantasy:* Although it may seem pompous, the story told in *The Divine Alligator* transcends genre boundaries. The module could work quite well as a modern adventure set somewhere in Amazonian jungle or a horror story of weird, alien-minded races and a corrupting ancient evil.

## Background

Two hundred years ago was the time of Raerciminar, an ancient black dragon furthering the destructive agenda of Itzquizatl, a draconic deity of death and decay. The god wanted his servant to create loyal followers that can act as mediators for his unholy power. Raerciminar's chief method was infusing as many creatures as possible with dragon blood. Leaving numerous half-dragon children in his wake, Raerciminar retreated into his distant lair and slumbered into deep sleep, waiting for his children to reach maturity by themselves and instruct them later. One of his most beloved children was Tannin, an enormous half-dragon crocodile remarkable for his great strength, rapacious appetite and unmatched sense of ego.

Meanwhile, the lizard men of the Dread Swamp experienced hard times: human and halfling settlers moved closer to the marshes, mining peat, cutting down trees, and draining the swamp area. Several lizard men tribes decided to stay and negotiate with the newcomers; others moved deeper into the swamp. One such tribe settled in ancient ruins of a long-forgotten city which turned out to be the lair of Tannin. The monster used to prey on smaller game but later learned that lizard men are far more saturating...

The tribe lost a lot of its members to Tannin's hunger and grew dissatisfied with their leader, Tennilax the shaman, blaming him for being unable to protect his people. The shaman's disciple, a young and ambitious priest called Hatzli, ventured deeper into the swamp to find the reason behind his tribesmen's deaths. This reason was, of course, Tannin, a creature so mighty and powerful that Hatzli's superstitious mind became twisted. He groveled before the creature, begging

to spare his life and grant a small share of the innumerable might incarnate in the towering half-dragon. Tannin, being quite intelligent, understood that such devotion can yield much food for little trouble as well as please his divine patron and accepted Hatzli as his sycophant. Of course, Tannin could not grant spells to his preacher - but Itzquizatl provided the divine backing for the emerging cult.

Hatzli brought news of the "divine alligator" that dwelled in the ruins and demanded obedience and sacrifices. Many unscrupulous tribesmen supported his cause and, promptly, Hatzli emerged as the new leader of the tribe. Tennilax was thrown into a deep pit guarded by giant snakes, and all who resisted were sacrificed to Tannin. After gaining absolute power over the tribe, Hatzli began to receive prophetic visions. The "divine alligator" (Itzquizatl in Tannin's guise) told him to expand the tribe's territory, unite other lizard men tribes and then start a war of genocide against newcomers to the swamp. The evil god's voice was followed. The God's Tribe (as Hatzli's tribe started to call itself) subjugated its neighbors and started kidnapping and massacring human and halfling laborers, as well as any lizard man not supporting their cause. As a result, the settlers became much more suspicious of the lizard men in general; several overeager individuals started forming bands of "lizard-killers", attacking anything reptilian on sight. Denizens of the bogs became more aggressive and started preying on sentient creatures. These actions please Itzquizatl to no end, as death, decay and hatred spread in the Dread Swamp, which is slowly becoming a more sinister and deadly place, living up to its name. Enter the player characters.

## Adventure Summary

The first chapter of the adventure takes the PCs to Great Bogs, a settlement of human and halfling loggers and peat miners. The Chief Prospector asks them to settle growing tensions with a neighboring lizard men tribe, but most settlers have less peaceful inclinations. The characters might also get to know Beleera, an adventurer of local renown who hungers for lizard men blood, and fight two demonic lizards sent by Hatzli to spy on the town.

The second chapter covers the characters' perilous journey through the Dread Swamp, full of encounters with swamp denizens warped by Itzquizatl's foul presence as well as demonic creatures from the evil god's realm. Ultimately, their



travels lead the characters to the stading of the Slitherers, a lizard men tribe ruled by Kedaloss, a benign druid with only the best of intentions. Her tribe has nothing to do with the recent attacks, but the PC's journey is not completely futile. Kedaloss tells the characters about the Splintered Tribe, a group of lizard men that broke away from the rest of the Slitherers and withdrew deeper into the swamp. Recently, the Splintered began to ambush her tribesmen, and Kedaloss thinks they are also responsible for recent raids on Great Bogs. Until these incursions are stopped,

no treaty can maintain true peace between lizard men and humans. At this stage, the PCs may clash with Beleera, who seeks to slay Kedaloss and disperse her tribe.

The third chapter unrolls as the PCs arrive at the settlement of the Splintered. Although they live in the mountains, far from any significant cultural centers, the Splintered – or the God's Tribe, as they prefer to call themselves – look very civilized. They even have a "palace" complete with a High Theocrat – Hatzli the Hierarch, who is quite willing to share the

word of his god. However, he is not naïve enough to allow "scaleless" people to leave his dominion alive. If Hatzli is defeated at this stage, the characters have the chance to free Tennilax, the previous leader of the tribe, who eagerly tells them about Hatzli's devotion and volunteers to accompany them to the Temple.

The fourth and final chapter describes the ruins of a forgotten civilization which enclose a recently rebuilt temple, the residence of Tannin. The half-dragon enjoys regular sacrifices and adorations from Hatzli and his most zealous followers, who visit him once a week on average. He is quite willing to study new faces at his domain, and if they behave in a mischievous way, Tannin will not hesitate to punish them. However, the half-dragon has a soft spot for praise and flattery – one of the few weaknesses of the creature. If Hatzli is present, he does his best to lure the characters into a trap and feed them to Tannin. Otherwise, the PCs have a decent chance of destroying the "divine alligator" and put an end to the troubles at the swamp.

Of course, this summary describes only a handful of possible situations and outcomes. Unscrupulous PCs might exterminate Kedaloss' tribe or team up with Hatzli. Certainly, Itzquizatl would be most pleased...

### Note on Ability Checks

At certain times in the adventure, characters may have to make an Ability Check.

The player rolls a d20. If the result is equal to or less than the PC's ability score in the area called for in the check (Strength, Wisdom, Dexterity, etc.), the check succeeds. A check may have a modifier (-1, -2 etc), the modifier is applied to the ability score before the check is made.

### Character Hooks

No one knows your party's desires and motives better than you, the Referee. The hooks provided below are only suggestions that should be modified as fit for a particular adventuring party.

- The Dread Swamp is a lure not only for peat miners and loggers, but also for treasure hunters. The ancient ruins hidden deep in the swamp are rumored to house gold and magic from ancient times, and most thrill-seekers use Great



Bogs as a starting point for their treasure quests.

- A halfling PC may be visited by Coligar Brie, the Chief Prospector's cousin and a well-known merchant, and asked to help 'fellow *him* facing adversity at the hands of scaly monstrosities'.
- The potentate of the surrounding lands is deeply concerned with the trouble at Great Bogs, as this community plays a major role in the region's economics. He employs the PCs to rectify the situation "by any means possible", promising land grants and privileges.
- Legends tell of a great sea monster slumbering in the Dread Swamp, and a race of reptile-men guarding his sleep. Once he awakes, the entire region can be devastated. PCs with a knack for heroism may want to defeat the legendary ancient evil once and for all. Their journeys lead them to Great Bogs.
- Spirits of massacred creatures, lizard men and human alike, begin to haunt one of the PCs, crying for justice and vengeance and giving vague directions to the Dread Swamp.

## Chapter I

### The Great Bogs and Beyond

Great Bogs is a small town ruled by Chief Prospector Krindar Brie, (male halfling, town "mayor") and Waner the Venerable (male halfling, sheriff and umpire). Among the important characters we could find: Vaniiri Erkkano, female gnome thief 5, Geraldine Liolval, female half-elf fighter 5, Yval, male halfling cleric 4, Simgath, male human cleric 4 (priests and healers); Urbad, male dwarf fighter 2 (blacksmith); Gargrum, male half-orc fighter 6 (senior constable); Pauri the Stargazer, male gnome cleric 2 (fortune-teller and magic peddler). The city is populated by master miners and loggers and various craftsmen. A town guards and militia watch over the people as dozens of lizard-killers have appeared in the town recently.

The history of Great Bogs began only fifteen years ago, when Krindar Brie, a daring halfling explorer, discovered rich peat deposits, as well as rare species of especially durable trees. Since then, a small encampment grew to the size of a small town, inhabited by almost all major races and visited by merchants from all around the region. However, the community has

suffered a setback in recent months due to lizard men raids, and its population has shrunk by almost 400 souls. Most of the population is grim and cautious. As the PCs enter the town, they can see refugees packing up and leaving Great Bogs, warriors practicing their combat skills, guards repairing the stockade, and outlandish lizard-killers heading for local watering holes.

The entire town consists of one- or two-storey buildings built from rare timber found in the surrounding woods. It is surrounded by a stockade and boasts a small harbor once crowded with boats and rafts, but now almost deserted. Almost all buildings vital to community life are situated around the Marketplace Square. During the day, most citizens are away, doing their jobs outside the town, and return to Great Bogs in the evening to sell their goods and then relax.

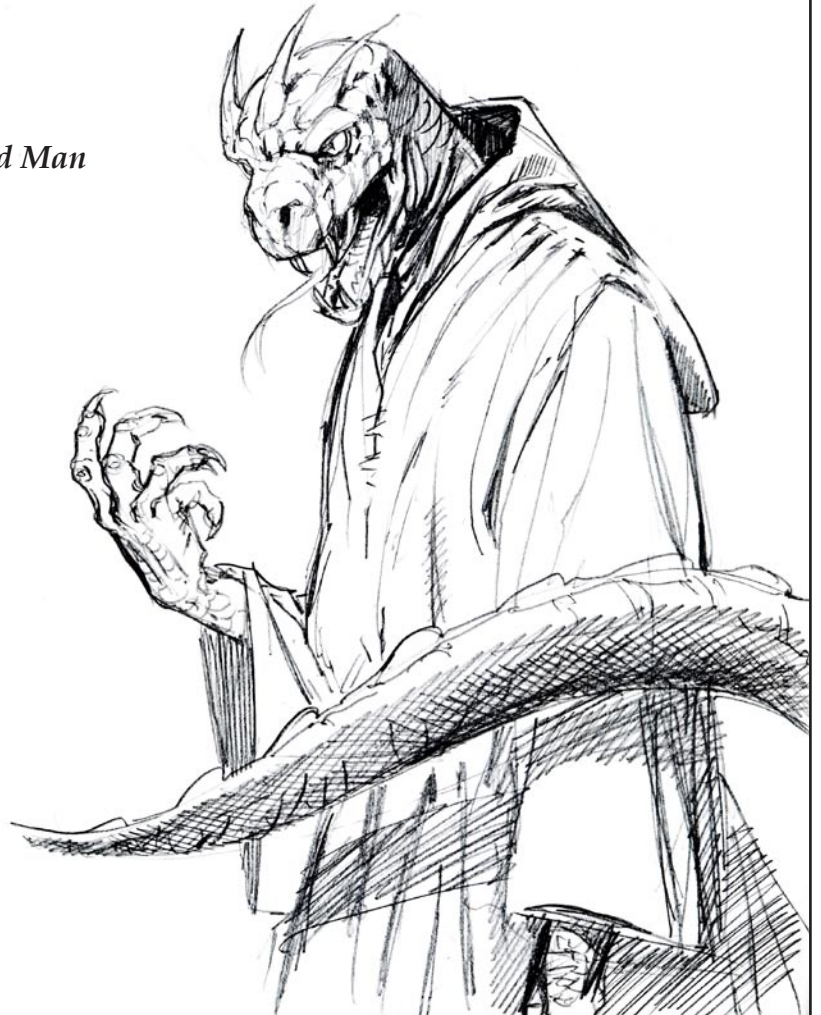
The supreme authority in the town is Krindar Brie, who does a remarkable job keeping crime level and interracial hatred to a minimum. However, he is becoming

less and less popular as lizard men raids threaten to destroy the town's economics.

*Looking for Gossip:* The PCs may want to learn what is up in Great Bogs. Here are some information they could gain:

- Lizard men raids started two months ago. The scaly horrors come from the west, ambush mining and logging camps, kill the workers and set fire to peat. Terrified citizens leave the town at an alarming rate.
- Lots of adventurers have appeared in the town recently. Most call themselves "lizard-killers" and hunt lizard men mercilessly. The biggest name among lizard-killers is Beleera; she can be found at the docks.
- The Chief Prospector used to keep contacts with lizard men in the past. He is dissatisfied with lizard-killers and is now looking for sensible adventurers that are willing to act as ambassadors.
- There is a lizard men settlement some

*a Lizard Man*



20 miles west from Great Bogs. As the raiders come from that side, it is highly likely that the settlement is the source of recent troubles.

## Places of Interest

### 1. Barracks

This unassuming building houses the town's guard and doubles up as a prison and an army HQ. The chief constable is Gargrum, a lawful neutral half-orc who isn't looking for any visitors at the moment. However, he is willing to give basic directions and tell the PCs about recent events. Gargrum does not tolerate long talks and, if pressed, tells the characters to 'consult Krindar for this matter. He is in charge of the town'. He expresses great intolerance for lizard men.

### 2. Horned Ogre Inn

One of the two inns in the town, The Horned Ogre is a favorite of local folk, as opposed to lizard-killers. However, its owner, an amiable gnome woman called Vaniiri Erkkano, is willing to greet any guest. She is a retired adventurer, and patrons enjoy stories of her exploits, particularly of her quest for an ogre mage's treasure. The ogre mage's severed head, the inn's namesake, is nailed above the counter. The Horned Ogre provides poor and common accommodation.

### 3. Magic Lyre Inn

Lizard-killers, merchants and other newcomers congregate in The Magic Lyre. The place is furnished much better than The Horned Ogre, and has a "respectable", high-life feel. The owner of The Magic Lyre is Geraldine Lionval, a somewhat aloof half-elf female. She considers herself a master musician and often plays her exquisitely crafted lyre. The Magic Lyre provides common and good accommodation.

### 4. Sheriff's Office

The sheriff's office is painted white and guarded by two weary soldiers. Waner the Venerable, the present sheriff, is a senior but very jovial halfling. He acts as an arbiter in local disputes and advisor to Krindar. Waner enjoys welcoming guests and cordially greets the PCs, should they want to visit him. He eagerly tells them the latest gossip, but also expresses a deep concern for recent troubles. The sheriff believes the argument with lizard men should be settled by peaceful methods.

### 5. Pauri's Curio Shop

This funky, multicolored building is hard to miss. It is the house-cum-shop of Pauri, a diviner of local fame. Pauri is a strange sort of gnome who is as full of humor as the rest of his kin, but fatally serious when it comes to omens, superstitions and mysticism. His forbidden school is Necromancy, and the gnome openly despises all who dabble into what he brands as "dark arts". Most of his wares are outright weird, like a broken music box that plays the melody backward or fake magic items with colorful histories but no real power, usually sold to gullible commoners. Nevertheless, Pauri is able to provide potions and scrolls of most arcane spells, as well as certain alchemical items (e.g., alchemist's fire and tindertwigs). Also, he is willing to identify unfamiliar items, as well as provide cryptic prophecies (which have nothing to do with the real situation).

### 6. Marketplace

The marketplace has definitely seen better days. Once bustling, it now houses a very modest number of vendors. Still, the PCs can obtain some basic supplies: food, typical adventuring gear, and alchemical items designed to help endure the environment (see Appendix II for details). The traders complain about the incursions of "scaly horrors" and wait for really hard times to come.

### 7. Twin Temples

Near the marketplace are two simple wooden chapels that look very much alike, but serve different needs. The left is dedicated to a deity of wealth and commerce appropriate to your campaign, the other is a holy site of halfling gods. The halfling temple is designed to be easily deconstructed should the halflings move elsewhere. Both chapels are very modestly decorated and look very utilitarian from the inside.

Simgath and Yval are the head priests of their respective temples, aided by several 1<sup>st</sup> level clerics (acolytes). Both welcome newcomers to their temples, but avoid talking about recent events, in order to 'maintain fragile peace in the community'. Divine magic assistance, as well as holy water and potion or scrolls of divine spells can be obtained in either chapel.

### 8. Urbad's Smithy

Urbad's Smithy is popular among lizard-killers, as Urbad has recently shifted from producing tools to forging weapons.

He is quite grim even for a dwarf, and talks only on direct business matters; in addition, he openly hates lizard men – although their raids bring great profit to him. Most kinds of simple and martial weapons, as well as metal armor, can be bought from him.

### 9. Chief Prospector's House

Krindar Brie, the Chief Prospector and the undisputed leader of Great Bogs, resides in a building of a sophisticated architecture, surrounded by flowerbeds and alleys of trees. His residence is guarded by a handful of dour soldiers. However, Krindar's house is modestly furnished, and the halfling seems to be more concerned with urgent matters than with personal luxury. Krindar seems to be extremely busy when the PCs are admitted to his presence, but he gladly puts his papers aside to converse with the characters.

The Chief Prospector is worried about recent events, which may collapse the community he worked so hard to create and maintain. He wants to keep good relations with lizard men, but this goal is hard to achieve, as Krindar rapidly loses favor of his own people. The Chief Prospector doesn't think much of Beleera and other lizard-killers, calling them "irresponsible opportunists looking for quick money". It is quite obvious that the halfling is looking for more sensible and less belligerent freelancers, and the PCs are the prime candidates.

Krindar is not above reading a lengthy sermon on interracial harmony and sense of community, but he stops his utopist rattle as soon as he notices the characters' lack of interest.

Krindar wants the adventurers to negotiate with the Slitherers and talk them into signing a treaty of mutual protection and cooperation. The reward for this feat of diplomacy is 20 one-pound gold ingots (almost 2000 gp in monetary value). Krindar explicitly states that eliminating lizard men is not an option; he strives to cooperate with these creatures, not to attack or destroy them. The Chief prospector suggests that the PCs act as quickly as possible, because the matter is extremely urgent.

### 10. Docks

From here, lumber and peat are exported to the outside world, and different commodities (mainly foodstuff, luxury items, and tools) are delivered to Great



Bogs. The harbor used to be very busy; however, the scope of shipments has fallen dramatically in recent months. In addition, the harbor has become a meeting point for lizard-killers planning to strike on real and would-be enemies of Great Bogs. A raft can be rented here for 2 gp.

The biggest name among lizard-killers is Beleera, a female adventurer of significant repute. During the day, the PCs can meet her near the docks; Beleera spends most of her time agitating for immediate “action” against “scaly horrors”. She is accompanied by an enormous wolf-hound named Giant. (See Beleera’s and her pet’s statistics in Chapter II.)

Beleera is not truly evil at heart (although little separates her from shifting to evil), but she is obsessed with glory and wealth, cares little for people she doesn’t know well, and harbors a long-standing hatred of lizard men, which she deems as a hateful alien race worthy only of complete destruction. She has traveled widely, and killed dozens of reptilian humanoids during her adventuring career. Now, Beleera is propagandizing an immediate crusade against “scaly horrors”, but very few lizard-killers have the courage to venture that far into the Dread Swamp. The ranger understands she isn’t able to exterminate the entire tribe single-handed, but this doesn’t stop her from plotting to murder the tribe’s leader. Selfish, severe, and self-conscious, Beleera hates to leave a promise unfulfilled – and she happened to make a promise of scattering an entire lizard men tribe.

If the PCs come to listen to Beleera (or argue with her), she instantly recognizes them as her greatest competitors, and acts accordingly. Beleera isn’t in the mood for discussion, and leaves in frustration if the characters question the wisdom of attacking lizard men. If the PCs want to join her, Beleera politely declines, stating that it is wiser to act in separate parties. Anyway, Beleera targets the PCs and follows them into the swamp. She knows the shortest route to the settlement, and anticipates the Slitherer’s (and her enemies’) demise.

### 11. Garbage Dump

Citizens dispose of their rubbish at a dump near the water. In addition to the unpleasant smell it produces, the dump also pollutes the town’s precious few fresh water reserves.

If the PCs decide to inspect the place, they may catch a glimpse of large lizards eating some kitchen garbage. Ironically, blood-

craving lizard-killers have overlooked a much more imminent threat to the town, as these creatures are in fact demon lizards, hailing from Itzquizatl’s home plane and serving Hatzli. Their mission is to keep an eye on townsfolk, then report to the Dragon Devotee.

The lizards’ fiendish nature (eyes glowing red, elongated claws, small horns, etc.) is evident if at close range. If the characters attack those creatures, they run towards water, dive and do their best to get away. If they make their escape, Hatzli gets his hands on some information on the PCs (the lizards can speak Abyssal well enough to describe their enemies) and is much more likely to attack them on sight or prepare a more devious trap (see Chapter III).

**Demon Lizards:** AL LE; MV 6”/12”; hp 10; AC 5; HD 2+1; #AT 3; Dmg 1d2/1d2/1d8; SA +2 attack and damage vs good-aligned creatures; SD half damage from fire; MR 5%.

### 12. Camps

The town is surrounded by more than a dozen mining and logging camps, where laborers do their daily jobs. Most are situated two or three miles away from Great Bogs. Miners and loggers used to go much deeper into the swamp, but now they are afraid to stray too far away from the town. However, the laborers’ cautious behavior does not stop lizard men incursions, for Hatzli’s minions view looting and murdering as a sort of sport, the more dangerous, the more exciting.

A typical mining/logging camp is just several tents or straw cabins grouped around a lucrative site. The guards are few, as the Chief Prospector keeps most men-at-arms inside the town, fearing a major incursion.

Generally, camps have little interesting to adventuring PCs. Camp leaders can tell them about recent raids (nothing new, actually). Or the adventurers might want to engage the raiders. In this case, they can confront a lizard men raiding party (see Chapter II), which comes to attack at night.

## Chapter II

### The Swamp and Its Denizens

The settlement of the Slitherers is located 20 miles away from Great Bogs. There are no true paths leading there, but the Chief Prospector describes one of the safest and most reliable routes. Straying from the

route may cause the PCs to lose their way. The Dread Swamp is a watery swamp. The soil is solid enough to allow landbound travel, but it is also possible to navigate the swamp on a raft or a boat.

The Dread Swamp is a huge body of stagnant water that borders the Lizard Ridges, a chain of low mountains to the northwest. It has always been a rather unfriendly place, and most intelligent creatures settled on the fringes of the swamp. Now, the Dread Swamp is slowly but surely succumbing to Itzquizatl’s corruption. Thanks to Tannin’s influence and Hatzli’s fanatical devotion, The Lord of Decay is transforming the swamp into a huge pool of slime and unlife, much like the horrid marshes of his native plane. The area takes on a sinister aspect, as noxious fogs cover the stagnant waters, unknown monsters make terrifying sounds in pitch darkness and supernatural horrors come to the Material Plane from the netherworld. The dragon god’s corrupting influence has already twisted many of the swamp’s inhabitants and, given sufficient time, will blanket Great Bogs and spread to the outside world.

The swamp is inhabited by dozens of different lizard men tribes (bearing such names as Slitherers, Dragonborn, Brightscales, and Eaters of Venom), very few of which boast more than sixty members. In recent years, much of them migrated either to the core or to the far fringes of the swamp, moving away from human advancement. Feuds between the tribes are even more common than before, and the fatality rate among the lizard people is as high as ever. The shamans of the more territorial tribes have proclaimed the end of days, and the warriors are preparing for a final battle with anyone they deem as an enemy.

The majority of the tribes are very primitive by human standards, but their knowledge of the area and surviving talents are considerable. Several tribes have acquired enough technology to consider themselves “advanced”; alas, their technological superiority has fueled their supremacist sentiments. The best example of such a tribe is, of course, The God’s Tribe ruled by Hatzli.

Traditional swamp fauna is abundant, giving food both to humanoids and the many natural predators of the area. The giant crocodile is perhaps the quintessential hunter of these lands, a symbol of all the danger and treachery of the swamp. Thanks to Itzquizatl’s divine intervention, the predators have



incorporated sentient beings in their menu, and attack humanoids in preference to all other prey. This perversion of natural order is a major concern of all lizard men druids.

In addition to regular, natural life, the swamp is now populated by all manner of weird, supernatural creatures, before known only in legends, but freely roaming the marshes at present. Trolls, ooze mephits and assorted undead beings are just few examples of monstrosities animated by Itzquizatl. No natural creature can consider itself safe in the deep zones of the swamp.

While describing the environment to your players, add more disturbing details as the PCs move farther and farther from Great Bogs, to hint at the supernatural source of the danger.

At present, the Dread Swamp is an extremely dangerous place. The climate is very unhealthy, and insects of all sorts plague travelers foolish enough to venture into the swamp unprotected. You should stress the harsh, inhospitable nature of the environment and other unpleasant aspects of traveling through a swampy area. Below are some guidelines for handling environmental hazards – and possibly irritating your players.

- Characters traveling on foot are in constant risk of stepping into a patch of quicksand.

- Finding edible food and potable water in the Dread Swamp is more difficult than usual. Drinking swamp water is hazardous, for the drinker may contract sickness.

- Lots of insects wait for their chance to prey on unwary travelers, especially at night. Each night, every character must make a successful Con check to ignore the effects of biting and crawling insects or suffer a -1 on all physical skills the next day. In addition, mosquitoes can spread various diseases.

## Random Encounters

Itzquizatl uses the offspring of his draconic servant as a channel for his unholy power, and Tannin is spreading the deity's corrupting influence in the marshes. This influence causes evil outsiders to appear in the swamp and renders its native inhabitants unusually aggressive. The following random encounter table lists creatures that can typically be encountered during the journey. You should not follow the table to the letter; feel free to skip repetitive encounters or alter encounter probabilities as you see fit. Roll d% three times during the day (encounter probability 15%) during the day and once (encounter probability 20%) at night. If the roll indicates an encounter, roll 1d6 and consult the following table:

## Daytime Encounters

During the day, the PCs have an opportunity to encounter some of the swamp's fauna, native as well as emigrant from the plane of The Lord of Decay.

*1-Gray Ooze:* Itzquizatl's influence has animated the swamp's muck, and now it awaits its chance to latch onto something living.

**Gray Ooze:** AL N; MV 1"; hp 17; AC 8; HD 3+3; #AT 1; Dmg 2d8; SA corrodes metals; SD immune to spells except lightning-based, heat and cold.

*2-Scrag:* The monster used to prey on loggers and prospectors, but, as very few people dare to travel this far nowadays, he is always hungry and aggressive. He attacks potential prey with great ferocity. The scrag is not above retreating if the battle turns out bad for him.

**Scrag** (fresh water): AL CE; MV 3" / 15"; hp 28; AC 3; HD 5+1; #AT 3; Dmg 1d4+1 / 1d4+1 / 1d10+2; SA attack up to 3 different opponents; SD regenerates 3hp / round only in water; SIZE M.

*3-Mephits:* Water mephits have always lived in the swamp, but now they are slowly being corrupted by the evil of Itzquizatl. These creatures use their abilities to harm and annoy enemies, then dive into the muck to recover.

**Water Mephit:** AL NE; MV 12" / 24"; hp 12; AC 6; HD 3; #AT 2; Dmg 1d3 / 1d3; SA breath weapon 1d8+1 caustic liquid; SD regenerates 1hp / round in water.

*4-Giant Crocodiles:* These enormous reptiles lie submerged, waiting for unwary travelers to pass by. They are more violent than usual, driven mad by the unnatural powers of The Swamp Wyrms. Once the prey approaches, the crocodiles attack, trying to drag their victims underwater. The encounter with the crocodiles can be used to foreshadow the clash with Tannin.

**Crocodile, Giant:** AL N; MV 6" / 12"; hp 31; AC 4; HD 7; #AT 2; Dmg 3d6 / 2d10; SIZE L.

*5-Lizard men Raiding Party:* A raiding party from The God's Tribe is advancing through the swamp to wreak havoc upon Great Bogs. It consists of 5 armed lizard men, plus a "sergeant" – one of Hatzli's elite minions, serving as the priest's bodyguards, elite scouts and military commanders. If they notice the PCs before being noticed themselves, the lizard men try to prepare an ambush, and the sergeant

envenoms his arrows. Otherwise, they attack: common warriors advance into melee while the commander puts his longbow to good use. The raiding party retreats if suffers heavy losses and reports their encounter to Hatzli. Questioning captured lizard men is of no avail: the captives refuse to reveal any information even if threatened or tortured. Note that these lizard men are of chaotic evil alignment, as opposed to the normally neutral plurality of the race.

**God's Tribe Sergeant:** AL CE; MV 6" / 12"; hp 17; AC 3; HD 2+1; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8+1 (longsword) or 1d6 (shortbow); SA poison arrows (save vs poison or 1d8 damage)

**Lizard men (5):** AL CE; MV 6" / 12"; hp 9; AC 4; HD 2+1; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8 (longsword).

*6-Water Elemental:* Itzquizatl has dominion over water, and often manifests his power in the (un)natural fury of the elementals. Although not evil, the elemental obeys the will of the dark god and often attempts to drown intruders.

**Water Elemental:** AL N; MV 6" / 18"; hp 34; AC 2; HD 8; #AT 1; Dmg 5d6; SA -1 to damage if combat outside water; SD +2 or better weapon to hit; SIZE L.

## Nighttime Encounters

Many creatures come out to hunt at night, most of them weird, supernatural, and thoroughly evil, but some just driven mad by the dark deity's influence. Setting out watchmen is sensible, because most potential enemies excel in stealth and cunning.

*1-Will o'Wisp:* The aberration revels in the negative emotions that abound in the swamp: Hatred, fear, jealousy and superstition nurture it. Still, it craves for more. The will o'wisp tries to trick the PCs by emulating horrified cries ("Help! We're under attack by scary horrors! The lizard people have beset us! Help!"), lure them into quicksand and feed on their fears. If confronted, the aberration flees.

**Will-o-(the)-Wisp:** AL CE; MV 18"; hp 40; AC -8; HD 9; #AT 1; Dmg 2d8; SA bright or dim to confuse; SD immune to spells except *protection from evil*, *magic missile* and *maze*.

*2-Shambling Mound:* This creature was brought to life by Itzquizatl's corruption and now mindlessly roams the swamp, looking for potential prey. It is hungry enough to attack any living creature it encounters. The shambling mound fights until killed.

**Shambling Mound:** AL N; MV 6"; hp 40; AC 0; HD 8; #AT 2; Dmg 2d8/2d8; SA suffocation; SD immune to fire, lightning causes it grow (add 1 HD), half damage from cold and weapons, vulnerable to plant-based spells;.

**3-Rat Swarm:** A throng of swamp rats, numbering almost a thousand, maddened by the corruption inflicted upon them swamp, are trying to make way to safety. They overrun everything in their path and engulf those who try to block them. If not attacked, the rats simply run away, possibly despoiling the PCs' camp in the process.

**Rat:** AL N; MV 12" / 6"; hp 1; AC 7; HD 1-4hp; #AT 1; Dmg 1d3; SA disease.

**4-Catoblepas:** A sleeping catoblepas doesn't like to be disturbed.

**Catoblepas:** AL N; MV 6"; hp 29; AC 7; HD 6+2; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6+stun; SA gaze causes death; SIZE L.

**5-Wraiths:** Malevolent spirits born of darkness and evil that permeate the swamp, wraiths seek to destroy all life they encounter. Making full use of their silent movement, they can deliver quick death to sleeping (or just unwary) opponents unless quickly detected and defeated.

**Wraiths:** AL LE; MV 12" / 24"; hp 25; AC 4; HD 5+3; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6; SA energy drain; SD silver or magic weapons to hit.

**Shadow Mastiff:** Another alien creature from Itzquizat'l's plane, this shadow mastiff serves in the deity's hunting retinue and was sent to the Material plane to find and destroy dangerous enemies. The mastiff fights fearlessly and flees into the darkness only if seriously threatened.

**Shadow Mastiff:** AL NE; MV 18"; hp 18 (-1 hp/HD in bright light); AC 6; HD 4; #AT 1; Dmg 2d4; SA baying causes panic; SD hide in shadows.

## Slitherers' Settlement

Ultimately, the PCs should reach the tribe's settlement. The area around the thorp shows signs of sentient life (tracks, clearings, etc.), so it should be easily located by skilled outdoorsmen.

The Slitherers' Settlement, a thorp, is ruled by Kedraloss the Priestess of Calm Waters and by Rasposh, (military leader and sub-chief).

The lifestyle of the Slitherers is unsophisticated, if not downright primitive. They have few possessions and do not use gold as currency – actually, they despise precious metals and value ferrous metals for their utility. Thus, the assets and buying power of the settlement are negligible, unless the PCs are willing to barter.

Until recently, the tribe of the Slitherers used to be one of the largest and most developed in the swamp, numbering more than 300 members. The tribesmen developed good metalworking and engineering skills, and its priests were known far and wide around the swamp for their incredible piety and loyalty to Cuetzpali. They built elaborate wooden structures and invented fine artistic techniques. The Slitherers even cherished dreams of uniting all disparate lizard men communities into a large tribal league – an act, which, they thought, would lead all their kin to incredible development and prosperity. But the power of the tribe waned as tribal feuds raged across the Dread Swamp. Then came miners, loggers, and hunters from Great Bogs, and the Slitherers had to abandon much of their land to new settlers. All these events greatly reduced the population and forced the tribe to adopt a more primitive lifestyle as their goals shifted from prosperity to survival.

Today, the settlement numbers only 45 adults and about 15 hatchlings. It consists of little more than three dozen huts built of mud and straw (many of them abandoned years ago) and a large wooden building proudly referred to as The Goddess' House. The structure is a center of community life, a temple, a ruler's residence and a reminder of better days at the same time.

The settlement's environs are constantly patrolled by a regiment of six lizard men (armed with clubs and bearing shields) led by Rasposh, a fierce battlerager and Kedraloss' aide. Rasposh is a capable warrior, but he can seldom contain his rage and resents his leader's orders. His brother Pirush was killed in a recent raid, and now he is more suspicious and warlike than ever before, obsessed with keeping his people in relative safety at all costs. However, Kedraloss instructs him to keep his emotions to a minimum and save his fury for more obvious enemies.

The following encounters occur in the Slitherers' settlement. They can take place at any time you wish, but the description assumes daytime for the first two encounters and nighttime for the last one.

## 1. Say 'Friend' And Enter

The settlement is situated before a fairly large open area, so, unless the PCs take pains to conceal themselves, spotting them should be rather easy. However, creative use of illusion spells can confuse or fool the lizard men, giving the adventurers enough time to bypass the guards. When the lizard men spot the intruders, they advance towards the characters and Rasposh asks in Common, 'Did the chief of the short people send you?' The "chief" is Krindar Brie. If the PCs' answer is affirmative, Rasposh invites them to see 'the Priestess of Calm Waters that resides in The Goddess' House'. Denying any connection with Krindar causes Rasposh to demand that they come to Kedraloss' residence under his surveillance, or leave at once. If the characters are openly aggressive, the battlerager wastes no time and orders his warriors to attack. The entire settlement (including Kedraloss and her disciple) joins the fray should Rasposh be defeated or severely wounded. If the characters somehow succeed in wiping out the entire tribe, they unknowingly further Itzquizat'l's goal (see Concluding the Adventure).

**Rasposh** (male lizard man): AL CE; MV 6" / 12"; hp 36; AC 3; HD 4+1; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4+5 (*warhammer* +1); STR 18/50

**Lizard men (6):** AL CE; MV 6" / 12"; hp 9; AC 4; HD 2+1; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8 (longsword)

## 2. A Cold-Blooded Welcome

As the character approach The Goddess' House, they can easily notice its superior construction and workmanship. It was built during the tribe's heyday by the most skilled of lizard men artificers, although it looks somewhat primitive from a civilized person's standpoint. The building has no doors, only archways, as it was meant to be open to everyone.

Inside, the structure consists of a large hall and two lesser rooms. The hall houses a wooden statue representing a large lizard that has just shed its tail and a smooth slate, covered with fresh flowers and used as an altar; the walls are covered with carvings depicting scenes of everyday lizard men life – hunting, fishing, worshipping, etc. The hall serves as a place of devotion; on festive occasions, all tribesmen gather here to worship Cuetzpali (see Appendix II).

The lesser rooms originally served to house guests and messengers from other tribes, but haven't been used for a long time. They



contain little more than crude furniture and straw mats. The entire area is dimly lit by phosphorescent embers (treat as torchlight).

Kedaloss, the tribe's leader, spends the entire day in the shrine praying to her goddess, begging to relieve the hardships of her people. She believes that this goal can be achieved by resolving the differences between her tribe and "the tribe of the smooth-skinned" (that is, Great Bogs). Certainly, Kedaloss is most pleased to welcome foreign ambassadors, and Ontzi, her constrictor snake companion, slithers forward to greet the newcomers.

The aging, but wise and sensible druid states that her people sympathize with Great Bogs' dwellers in their hardships, as they are hunted both by "the bloodthirsty Splintered Ones" and lizard-killers, but are guilty of nothing deserving such hatred. Kedaloss reveals that Cuetzpali discourages aggressive behavior towards outsiders, but the Splintered "broke away from my tribe and perverted the Matriarch's ideals". Then Kedaloss tells the history of the Splintered as she knows it. The leader, naturally, has no notion of Tannin and his impact on the tribe, although she does mention Tennilax and his disciple Hatzli as the "greatest among Those Who Splintered" and the main initiators of the tribal schism. She adds that the Splintered may be as well responsible for the town's troubles.

Kedaloss is not against the treaty, but she feels that it is nigh useless until the Splintered are stopped; then the human perception of lizard men will change for good, and both races can live in true peace. The druid can describe the route to the Splintered One's settlement (which lie 26 miles northwest), but she strongly advises against reckless attacks; in her opinion, trying to talk the hostile tribe into stopping their incursions is much more viable – besides, she doesn't want to harm her ex-tribesmen.

If the PCs agree to her conditions, Kedaloss invites them to a feast held in their honor. The characters are given water rat meat and bog ale, both of which are surprisingly delicious. As venturing out in nighttime is hardly reasonable, Kedaloss offers the adventurers to use one of the guest rooms to recover their strength.

**Kedaloss** (female lizard man druid 6): AL NG; MV 6" / 12"; hp 27; AC 6; HD 6; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6+1 (*quarterstaff* +1); SA Spells; SQ druid's cant, +2 save vs lightning and fire, druid knowledge, wilderness movement.

*Spells Prepared (4/3/2/1):* 1- *Animal friendship*, *detect magic*, *entangle*, *speak with animals*. 2- *Barkskin*, *cure light wounds*, *warp wood*. 3- *Call lightning*, *hold animal*. 4- *dispel magic*  
*Possessions:* *quarterstaff* +1, *bag of tricks*, *potion of cure serious wounds*, samples of swamp flora (holly and mistletoe).

**Ontzi**, constrictor snake: AL N MV 12"; hp 18; AC 5; HD 4; #AT 1; Dmg 1d3 + constriction; SA constriction.

### 3. Unwanted Guests

Late at night, when most PCs are asleep, Kedaloss is paid a visit by no one other

than Beleera, the lizard-hating ranger. She has the resources to actually reach the settlement, unlike most lizard-killers, who usually target lizard men hunting and scouting parties that venture too far from home. No one of them dared to undertake such a dangerous quest, so Beleera had to brave the dangers of the swamp unaided.

Certainly, Beleera is very proud of her journey, as the elimination of what she deems as a problem is a matter of several hours. She humbly asks for "lodging for a tired traveler off her course", appealing to Kedaloss' good nature. The druid willingly lets Beleera inside the unoccupied guest

*Kedaloss and Ontzi*





room, but says nothing about her guests.

If some PCs stay on guard, they have little chance of hearing the initial conversation unless they are outside the temple (as it takes place on the outskirts of the settlement, where Kedaloss typically walks before going to bed), but can certainly see Beleera entering the hall together with the druid. At this moment, the PCs have the chance to expose their competitor as a murderous bigot; if this is done, Beleera attack in frustration, focusing their efforts on slaying Kedaloss. If not, the lizard-killer goes to her room, Kedaloss starts slumbering near the altar, while her companion is away hunting.

Beleera tries to kill Kedaloss when she is asleep. Have the characters make a WIS check, if succeed they can hear someone creeping towards the idol. If her murder attempt is successful, the ranger and her pet move to check the other guestroom; they ruthlessly kill any PCs that might remain asleep, but avoid prolonged combat with those who are awake.

If the ranger is interrupted, she urges her animal companion to attack "scaly horrors and the traitors who serve them". Of course, the sounds of the battle awaken Kedaloss, and she calls for help; Rasposh and his warriors, as well as Ontzi, arrive in 6 rounds.

**Beleera** (female human, ranger 8):  
AL CN; AC 5; MV 12"; AT 3/2; DMG 1d8+1 (longsword +1); SA +8 damage vs humanoids or giants; HP 52; STR 15; INT 14; WIS 14; DEX 16; CON 16; CHA 10.  
*Spells Prepared (1):* 1- *Pass without trace*  
*Possessions:* Longsword, dagger, studded leather.

**Giant:** AL N; MV 12"; hp 11; AC 6; HD 2+2; #AT 1; Dmg 2d4.

If she is detected (and Kedaloss is still alive), Beleera concentrates her efforts on slaying the druid and orders Giant to distract her enemies. Once the druid is dead, Beleera runs away, hoping to hide in the nearby woods. However, although in an advantageous position, Beleera doesn't succeed automatically. She retreats if seriously wounded (brought below 15 hp) or greatly outnumbered, but doesn't surrender. Kedaloss uses her array of spells to inhibit or harm her attacker and then to aid the PCs (if they are on her side) and Rasposh (if he arrives on time). If she desperately needs help, Kedaloss uses her *bag of tricks*.

The characters have a good chance of defeating Beleera and rescuing Kedaloss.

## Beleera and Giant





However, the tribe's leader might perish and her murderer might escape. In this case, Rasposh demands explanations from the PCs (unless he witnesses the murder himself). If he is not satisfied, the entire settlement engulfs the adventurers, craving revenge. Regardless of the outcome, the triumphant side is Itzquizatl (see Concluding the Adventure). Otherwise, he thanks the PCs for their efforts, orders a funeral (Kedaloss' body will be collectively devoured by the tribe in a rather gruesome ceremony) and assumes leadership of the Slitherers, urging the adventurers to fulfill the druid's last will. If both Kedaloss and Rasposh are dead, the lizard men abandon the settlement, but also demand to avenge the murdered.

If Kedaloss survives, she is extremely grateful ("you even fought your fellow tribesmen to save us!"), and the entire settlement hails the PCs as heroes. The tribe insists on executing Beleera if she is alive and on consuming her body if she is dead – this is prescribed by lizard men customs. However, they aren't disappointed if the party refuses. After a grand festival, Kedaloss humbly asks them not to forget about the Splintered and continue their quest. She can aid the adventurers with magical assistance and can even give them her potion if they appear badly wounded. However, neither she nor any of her tribesmen shall accompany the PCs under any circumstances, reluctant to leave their tribe beset by enemies.

## Chapter III

### The City of The God's Tribe

The once-proud Lost City that acts as a dwelling for a lizard men tribe commonly referred to as The Splintered is located 22 miles away from the Slitherers' settlement, in the Lizard Ridges. Use the encounter table from Chapter II to simulate the dangers of the journey, ignoring repetitive or inappropriate encounters as you see fit.

Ultimately, the PCs should reach the natural tunnel that separates the valley of The Lost City from the outside world. The signs of civilizations are obvious: a large stone tablet covered with Draconic writings is placed near the entrance. The description can be easily read by anyone who knows the language. It says: *Here, the tribe chosen by the Divine Alligator resides by the decree of his beloved devotee. Woe to those who wish to insult or harm The God's Tribe. So says Hatzli the High Theocrat.* The valley has been inhabited for many centuries. Millennia ago, it was settled

by a people known only as the Ancients and incorporated into their empire which spanned many miles beyond the Lizard Ridges. The city quickly expanded, and ultimately became the nation's capital. Alas, the civilization declined, and soon The Lost City was the only territory the empire could protect from its greedy neighbors. The position of The Lost City and the magical powers of the Ancient priest-kings ensured that no army could conquer the empire. What couldn't be done by people was done by nature. A tremendous earthquake leveled the city and caused an underground river to pour into the valley and almost completely flood it. The Lost City lay abandoned for many generations; the major part of the valley became a lake, dotted by small islands. The empire of the Ancients, until recent times, completely faded from history and from memory.

Several years ago, Tennilax, a rebellious shaman opposed to Kedaloss' leadership, led a group of lizard men to the far fringe of the swamp and made the valley their home, surviving by hunting and fishing in the underground lake and living in the few structures of The Lost City that remained intact. This was of no avail, for Tannin started preying on newcomers, and Hatzli used the monster as a trump card in his quest for power. After the rebellion, which was supported by the most strong, robust and ruthless lizard man of the tribe, Tennilax wound up in the prison, and The Splintered suffered an even worse fate. Hatzli granted the most comfortable houses to his zealots and confined the majority of the tribe to a single corral, exploiting them mercilessly. The High Theocrat, as Hatzli named himself, proceeded with a campaign of reconstruction. Hatzli turned the ruined city into a well-organized settlement, strengthened its defenses, built several new structures and started preparing for warfare against Great Bogs and, ultimately, all non-reptilian life in the swamp. Presently, he rarely leaves his palace (except in order to honor Tannin), conducting endless negotiations with like-minded tribal leaders.

The encampment is circled by a 10-foot high wall, built with large chunks of rock found in the ruins. The walls enclose several dozens partially or completely restored buildings dating from Ancient times, some of which are vital to community life.

The major part of the tribe's population (which numbers almost a hundred) is mercilessly bullied by the Theocrat's underlings. Most tribesmen are forced

into manual labor and constant military drillings. Several rebellions have already been raised, but Hatzli's sergeants subjugated the rebels, and rebel leaders were fed to Tannin. The population lives in abject fear of the enigmatic "divine alligator", stuffed into a corral, and obeys the priest's orders. Watchtowers have been placed near the corral, and the guards fire their crossbows at will if they detect anything similar to a riot.

The leader and his cronies reside in well-restored palace, a building with a long history and many secrets. Its many secret and illusory walls, once used to confuse and bewilder the priest-kings' guests, are now used by Hatzli and his bodyguards to organize quick and efficient defenses. Hatzli's personal life guards number twenty and are commanded by five sergeants. As the entire tribe has received sufficient military training and can be aided by allies and mercenaries, the Theocrat can lead an army of three hundred warriors – something beyond Great Bogs' defensive capabilities.

The information on the culture that built the city is somewhat hard to come by. However, a INT check will reveal the following facts:

- The Ancients were a people of builders and artificers; they were also famous for their military prowess, but didn't excel in offense.
- They worshipped The Water Dragon, a powerful deity that was believed to protect the city from foreign invasions.
- Their rulers were priests at the same time, and constructed magnificent temples that are still full of divine power.
- The city of the Ancients was destroyed by a natural cataclysm several millennia ago. It was partly ruined and partly flooded.

The PCs have a chance to free several captives from the prison, corral and other areas. As a rule of the thumb, award a small XP amount for each "common" prisoner freed and returned to safety. However, there are exceptions: liberating Tennilax is worth an award in line with his status, and starting an uprising is a requirement for another story reward and doesn't bring XP on its own.

The following description assumes a number of actions: the PCs talk to the tunnel patrol, are escorted to the palace, fight Hatzli and set his slaves free. It does

not have to be that way, although this order of events seemed to be the most viable to the adventure's author. The PCs might try different approaches, some of which are summarized below:

*The "Kick in the Door" Approach:* The party starts attacking everything in their sight. In this case, be fair and let the lizard men organize a good resistance. Hatzli's minions aren't a mindless mob of cannon fodder, although they are numerous: They are an organized force led by ruthless commanders. The PCs aren't doomed if they try to defeat several dozen lizard men, but their chances of success aren't very high.

*The "Sneak behind the Door" Approach:* Alternatively, the PCs might attempt to trick the tunnel patrol and secretly get inside the city. Although reasonable, this approach is flawed because of the sheer number of guards and patrols. Unless the PCs are extremely adept at stealth and sneaking, they are very likely to be noticed. In this case, they will be questioned and taken to Hatzli, who will be quite suspicious of the infiltrators and quite determined to kill them.

*The Deceptive Approach:* Silver-tongued characters may want to feign allegiance to Hatzli (and then strike him in the back). However, Hatzli is unlikely to believe that such talk is sincere; such a lie is definitely "almost incredible to consider", and this grants him a +2 bonus on his WIS check. Trying to achieve this through diplomacy should be beyond players' capabilities. The characters should understand that Hatzli is more cunning than they might suppose – a calculating, suspicious, and simply dangerous enemy.

## The City

### 1. Mountain Tunnel

The construction of this 100-foot long and 20-foot wide tunnel has definitely taken place in Ancient times, and few things have changed since then – only the occupants are different. The tunnel is well lit by *everburning* torches, two of which are positioned every 20 feet of length.

The tunnel and its environs are constantly monitored by two patrols of 7 lizard men soldiers led by a sergeant, who transposition at regular intervals. A party going through the tunnel is very likely to be detected by one of the lizard man. In this case, the sergeant politely asks the adventurers (in the Common language) to

state their names and business, adding that all foreign guests are routinely taken to the Theocrat, for "he is a lover of visitors". If the PCs comply and agree to be escorted, they are quickly led to the palace. As the characters hustle through the city, they can notice a large enclosed section (the corral), the watchtowers, and the absence of city dwellers in the street. The sergeant refuses to give any explanation to these facts, hastening his pace instead.

**God's Tribe Sergeant:** AL CE; MV 6"/12"; hp 17; AC 3; HD 2+1; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8+1 (longsword) or 1d6 (shortbow); SA poison arrows (save vs poison or 1d8 damage)

**Lizard men (7):** AL CE; MV 6"/12"; hp 9; AC 4; HD 2+1; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8 (longsword).

### 2. Palace

An imposing building rises above the Lost City's ruins. Once the residence of the city's priest-king, it now belongs to Hatzli and his most zealous minions. The palace doubles up as army barracks and treasury.

The palace doors are wrought from steel, kept tightly shut, and constantly monitored by two lizard men guards. These doors lead to the throne room; the palace's wings have no obvious entrances. In fact, all lizard men enter and leave the palace through carefully masked secret doors.

#### 2a. Throne Room

The throne room is Hatzli's pride and joy, a perfect seat of power for any fanatical and despotic overlord. It demonstrates skilled workmanship – the labor of captives and slaves was not in vain, and the room now stands in its former glory. The floor is smooth and covered with a strip of carpet made from reptilian scales, which leads to the throne. The walls are decorated with carvings and mural paintings, with a predominant draconic motif. The largest mural depicts an enormous creature that resembles both a dragon and crocodile, breathing acid at several armed humans; the Draconic inscription above the painting reads, *Do not fear The Swamp Wyrms, for he shall protect us from all harm and crush our hated foes.* The Swamp Wyrms is one of Itzquizatli's titles; Hatzli applies it to Tannin, considering the alligator a direct manifestation of his god's power. A INT check reveals some information on Itzquizatli (see Appendix II). Banners and flags with unsettling symbols (such as a clawed scaly hand clutching a sword or a large alligator head) hang all over the place.

The area is dominated by a large, intricately carved bones throne, originally used by an ancient priest-king, but now belonging to The High Theocrat. It weighs about 2000 pounds, and could be sold for 10,000 gp if brought intact. It is surrounded by two smaller seats occupied by Hatzli's guests.

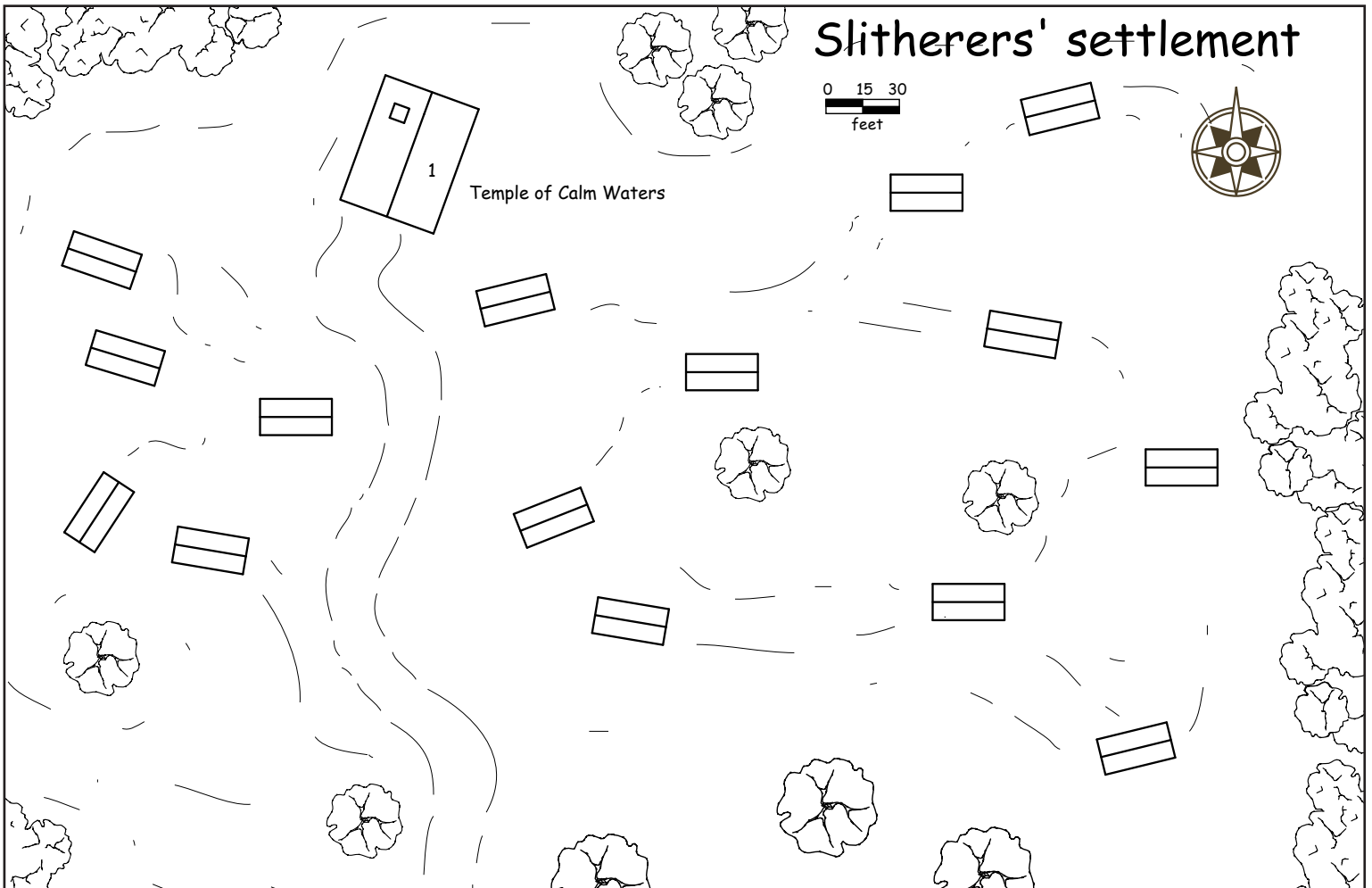
Two metal doors (both kept closed) lead to the banquet hall and the treasury, respectively. In addition, the chamber has three hidden passageways. Two of them are secret doors disguised as murals depicting some idyllic landscapes (dwarven stone knowledge applies); the doors lead to the barracks and are used by Hatzli's soldiers if they urgently need to access the palace and defend their leader. The third appears as a large green banner hanging on the wall right behind the bones throne. In fact, it is an illusory wall, set up long ago by a sorcerer from The Lost City, but put to good use by present inhabitants. Through the opening masked by the illusion, Hatzli can enter the tunnel and easily escape to the docks (see below).

During the last few weeks, Hatzli has been conducting lengthy negotiations with nearby lizard men settlements. His goal is to forge a coalition of united, civilized, and ruthless tribes that can overrun Great Bogs and destroy everything that doesn't suit his divine master. In the not-so-far future, The High Theocrat aspires to rule the entire Dread Swamp as an obedient vassal of his dark god.

The negotiations proved to be below Hatzli's expectations, but still he managed to put up a sizable alliance of lizard men tribes, numbering about three hundred capable warriors. Now, he is trying to complete the coalition by joining with Tapunui, a like-minded lizard men leader, and Szabolcs, a bugbear mercenary. He invited both to his palace and spends most of the day coercing them into becoming his allies. At the same time, Hatzli keeps most of his army inside the settlement, allowing only a few raiding parties to roam freely. This is one of the few reasons why the Slitherers' settlement still lives – a concentrated assault would have wiped it out.

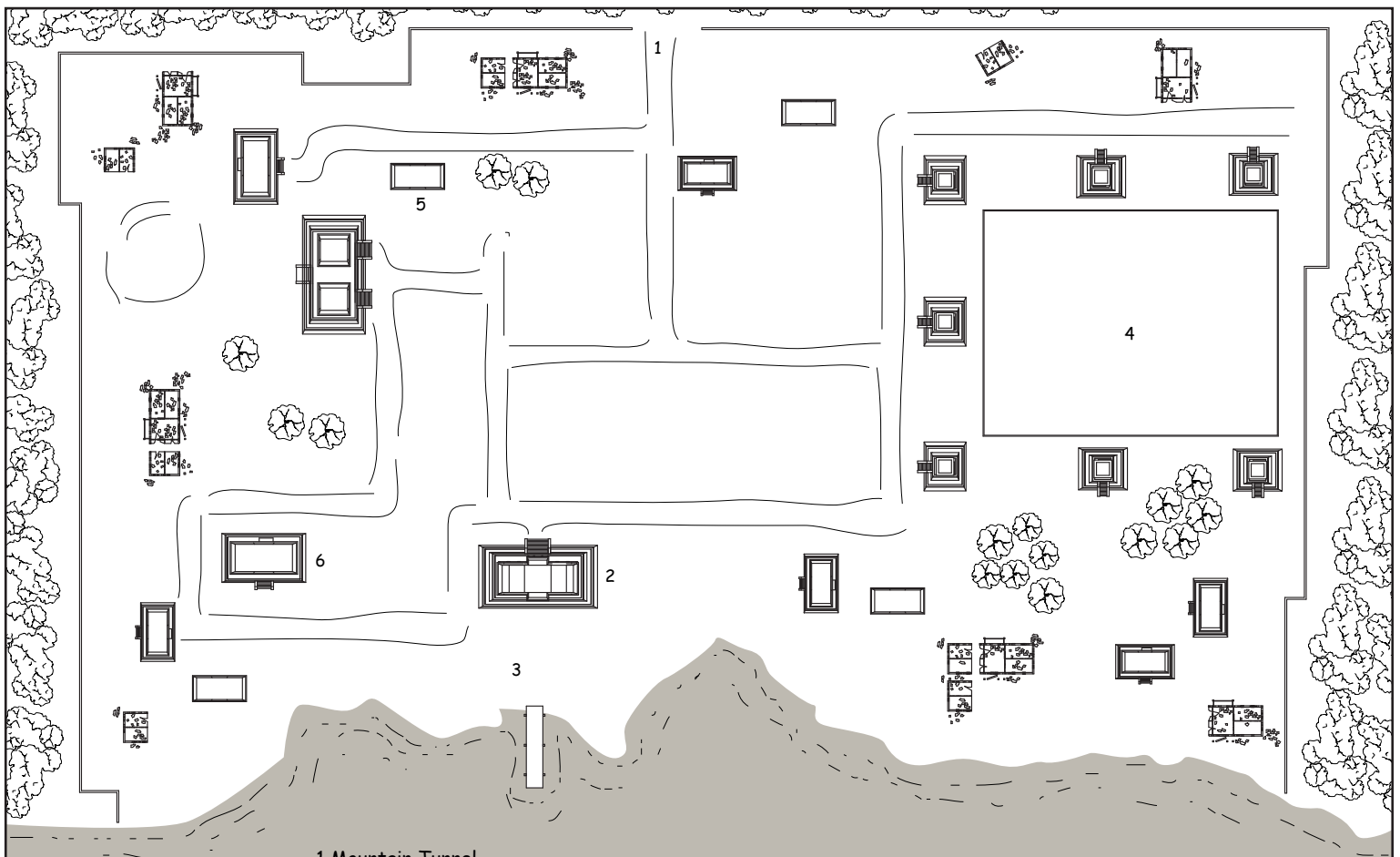
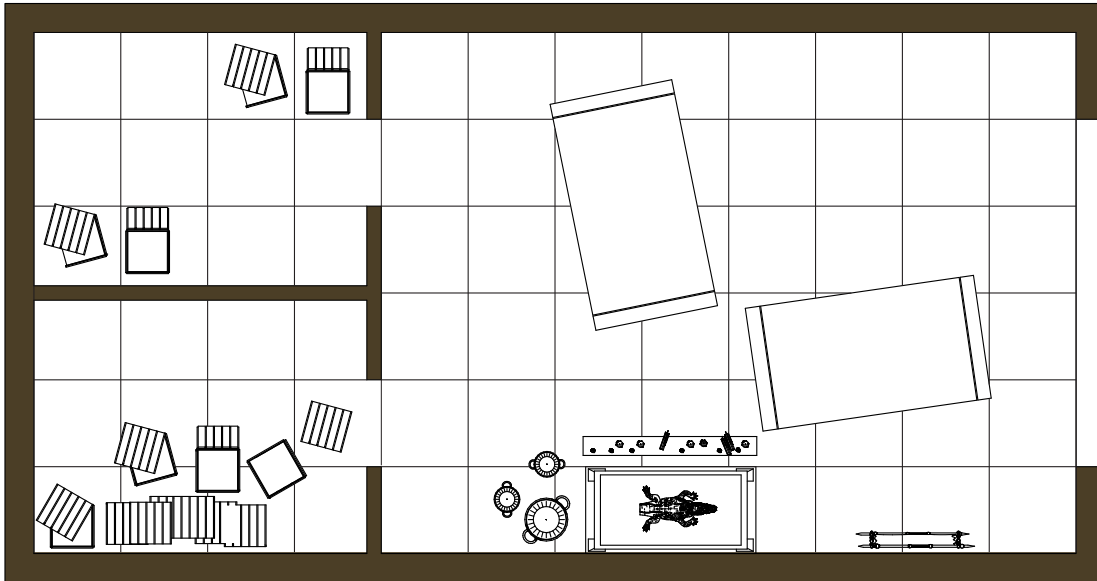
Hatzli's guests and probable allies have much in common with him. Tapunui [tah-poo-noo-yee] used to be the underdog of his tribe, a weakling with little aptitude for hunting or fishing. However, he was gifted with magical ability – a talent he attributes to his mythical draconic ancestor. Tapunui ran away from the tribe and honed his skills while traveling with adventuring





# The Goddess House

1 square = 5 ft



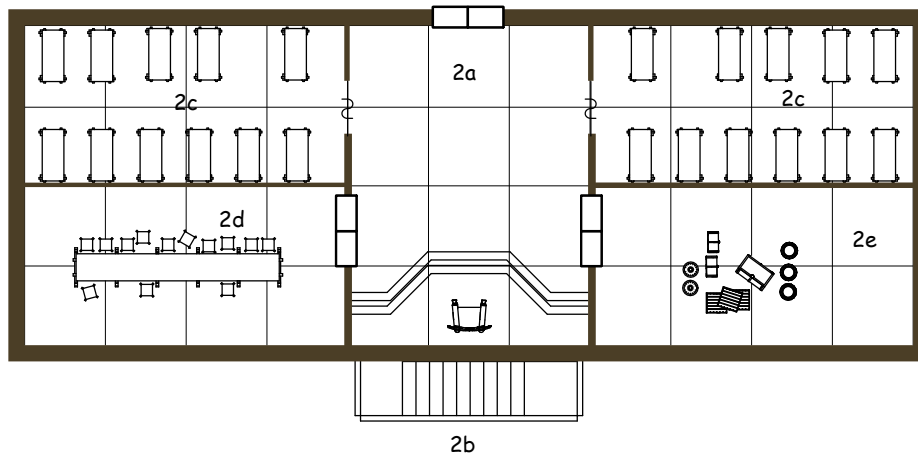
- 1 Mountain Tunnel
- 2 Palace
- 3 Docks
- 4 Corral
- 5 Forge
- 6 Hatchery



0 15 30  
feet

The City of the God

## 2. Palace

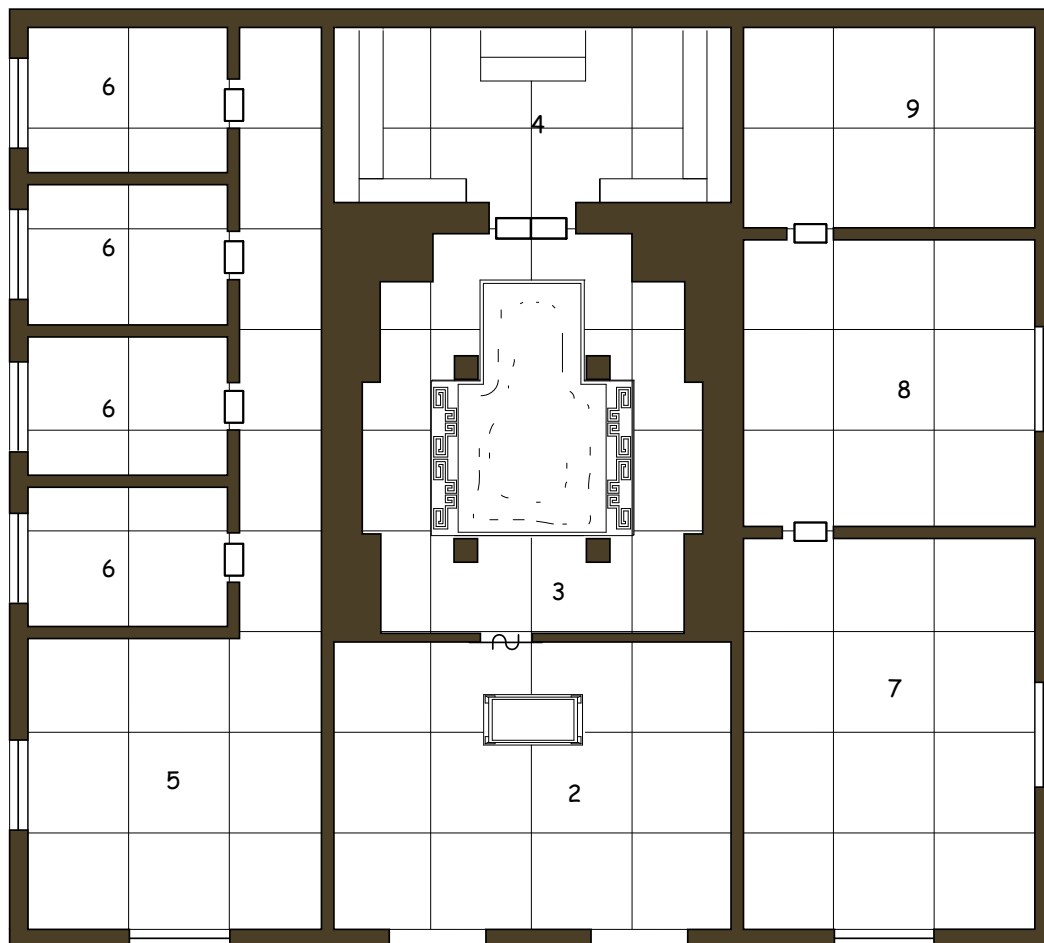


2a Throne Room  
2b Hidden Passage  
2c Barracks  
2d Banquet Hall  
2e Treasury



one square = 10ft

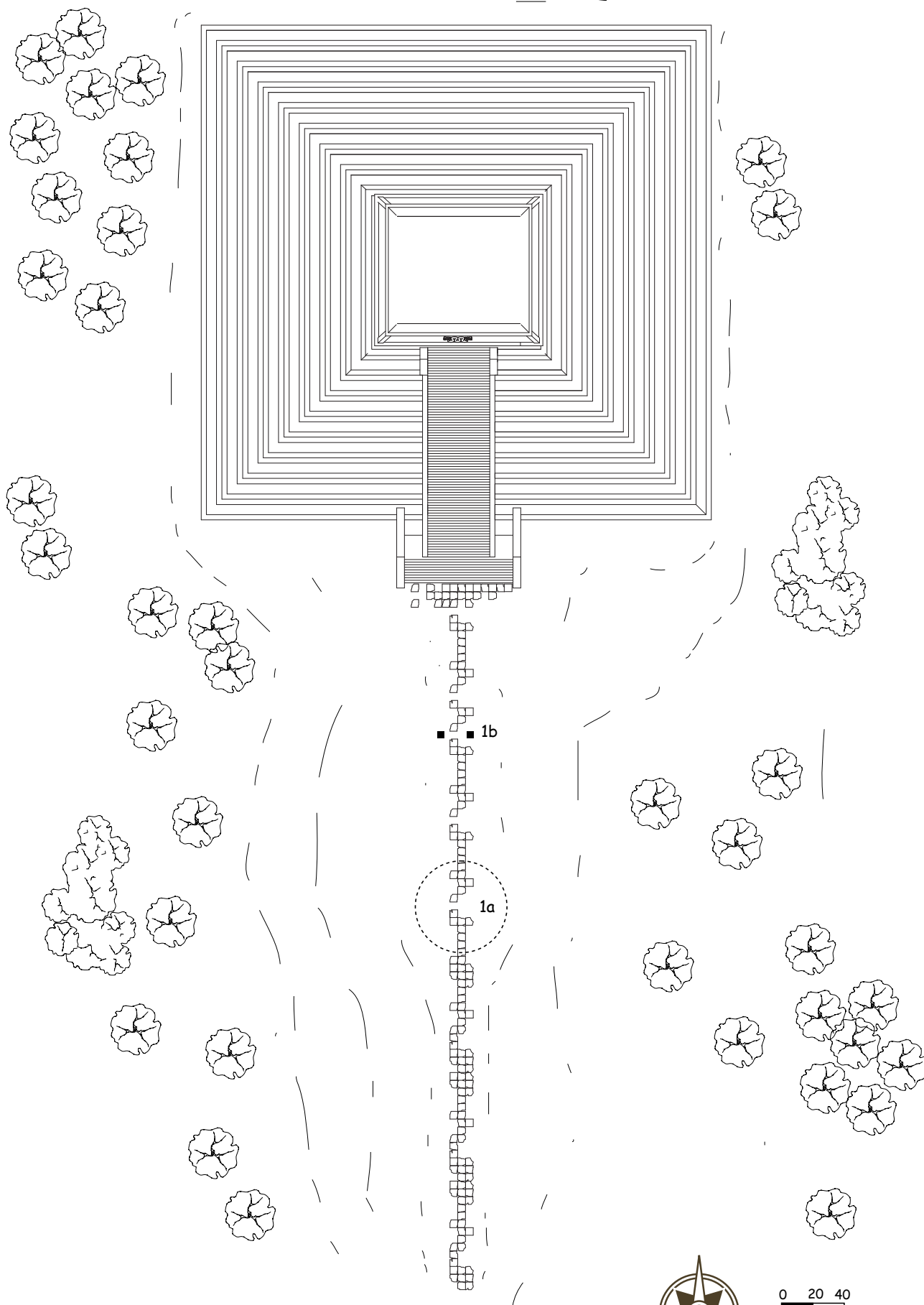
## The Divine Alligator's Temple



one square = 10ft

2 Chamber of Worship  
3 Sancta Sanctorum  
4 Treasure Room  
5 Priests' Quarters (common)  
6 Priests' Quarters  
7 Dining Hall  
8 Kitchen  
9 Store Room





# The Divine Den



0 20 40  
feet

1a Circle of Reptiles  
1b Obelisks

bands. After several years, the sorcerer returned and challenged the chief of his tribe to “a battle of miracles”. Tapunui was victorious, and assumed leadership of the tribe. He outlawed the worship of Cuetzpali as a “worthless superstition” and led his people into constant struggle for territory and slaves. When he heard that a new, ambitious leader came to power in the Splintered Tribe, the sorcerer decided to team up with him – until it is no longer convenient.

Szabolcs [shah-bolch], by contrast, used to be the strongest member of a fairly large bugbear tribe. When one of the chief’s underlings decided to overthrow his master, Szabolcs gladly supported him, hoping to gain chieftom himself. Unfortunately, he proved to be a good warrior and an awful leader; he lacked the personality to unite his tribesmen, and soon the bugbear was banished from the tribe. Szabolcs traveled to human lands and became a freelancer, offering his martial skills to the highest bidder. Some time later, he joined a mercenary company called The Voracious Lions and lived by raiding and pillaging. Eventually, Szabolcs left the company, and the only remaining connection with it is a magic shield shaped like a stylized lion’s head. Soon after leaving The Voracious Lions, Szabolcs moved to the vicinity of Dread Swamp, where he, for some time, served as a lizard-killer until words of a strong chieftain uttered by dying lizard man captured his mind. He decided to offer his combat talents to that enigmatic leader and made his way to The God’s Tribe. Surprised by Hatzli’s civilized demeanor, Szabolcs is inclined to aid him – for a decent payment.

**Hatzli** (male lizard man cleric 5): AL CE; MV 6” / 12”; hp 29; AC 4; HD 5+5; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6+2 (*heavy mace* +1); SA Spells; SQ turning undead.

*Spells Prepared* (3/3/1): 1- *Inflict light wounds, protection from good, sanctuary*. 2-*Hold person, silence 15’, spiritual weapon*. 3- *Prayer*.

*Possessions*: chain shirt +1, *potion of invisibility*, aspis unholy symbol (worth 50 gp), lavish plumage (worth 100 gp).

**Tapunui** (male lizard man magic user 4): AL CE; MV 6” / 12”; hp 9; AC 8; HD 4; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4-1 (*dagger*); SA Spells.

*Spells Prepared* (3/2): 1- *Charm person, enlarge, shocking grasp*. 2-*Mirror image, web*. *Possessions*: plumage of shielding (as brooch of shielding; 32 points remaining).

**Szabolcs**: AL CE; MV 9”; hp 24; AC 3; HD 3+1; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8+2 (*longsword*); SA Surprise on 1-3. STR 18. *Possessions*: shield +1.

Honoring the lizard men etiquette, Hatzli’s guests remain silent while he speaks, and politely decline to answer any questions, redirecting them to the priest.

At first, Hatzli welcomes the PCs with a florid and lengthy speech, inviting them to enjoy his hospitality, and then answers their questions. He speaks in a very elusive manner, weaving big lies and little truths together. In addition, he firmly believes in his statements about such subjects as Tannin’s divine nature and his former tribe’s perspectives. Thus, some his replies might not register as lying if probed by a *detect lie* spell. Hatzli’s speech reveals his fanaticism, madness and unfounded messianism: he is obsessed with shoving his “civilization” down everyone’s throat and spreading his bizarre faith.

Hatzli says the following if asked about specific topics:

-Relations with other races.

We are a peaceful people and have no prejudice against those who don’t have scales, plow fields and live in big cities. I understand the halfling chief’s concern, but we shun all forms of bigotry and unnecessary hostility. Unfortunately, some people are unwise enough to hunt us just because we are different. They are arrogant and close-minded, and our deity severely punishes such behavior. I sincerely hope that you have nothing in common with those ruffians and have a more...civilized demeanor.

-Raids on Great Bogs.

The Slitherers have nothing else to do but steal food from others. Pitiful folk, they truly shall die in savagery and misery, inhibited by their outdated beliefs. As for our people, we are beyond that. Look at our home! We are more civilized than all other tribes combined! We have everything we want, why should we raid or steal? The Slitherers are just jealous of our prosperity and do their best to slander and belittle us.

-The Slitherers.

Their people are weak; their leaders are close-minded. We have made the right choice by separating from those miscreants. Now the Slitherers are slowly dying due to their fanaticism

and stupidity. You have seen their poverty with your own eyes; there is nothing to admire about this doomed tribe.

-But Where Is Tennilax?

He used to be a capable leader, but his goddess failed him. Tennilax could not cope with the problems we faced after settling here. He conducted meaningless rites and mumbled incomprehensible prayers while the situation called for immediate action. The tribe was threatened by starvation, and the priest did nothing to help his people. He was overthrown by his tribe and exiled; then I rose to be the leader, enlightened and guided by the divine alligator.

-Splintered Tribe vs. God’s Tribe.

Ah, those Slitherers are prone to give shameful monikers to those who can see beyond them. Yes, for some time we grudgingly bore this name, but now we have a higher aim in life than mere separation from barbarism. We seek unity and peace with our god, who guides and protects us, hence our new name.

-Gods of the Lizard men.

The Slitherers follow Cuetzpali, who has failed them on numerous occasions. This goddess is powerless, slow and indifferent, and their prayers and sacrifices are in vain. We have found a better source of devotion, a true deity that cares about us and protects us from harm, and completely abandoned the Lizard. I hope that Kedaloss, this misguided zealot, finally abandons her useless rituals and bows before the might of the divine alligator. Then we could finally reunite with the Slitherers and advance to new heights.

-The New God.

So, you wish to know about our deity! Alas, I feel I am not eloquent enough to reveal his might and splendor in full detail. How can a lowly creature like me describe the



divine alligator, the might of his limbs, the magnificence of his soul, the awe produced by his visage? There is nobody in the world that can be compared to him, even the gods! The deities of other peoples are distant, uncaring and featureless; the divine alligator is as real, as flesh-and-blood as you and me...Indeed, he is the most fascinating creature ever to grace this world with its presence. Contemplating the divine alligator is the utmost joy, and serving him is a pleasure beyond description.

Hatzli is interested in potential allies, but he must be completely confident of the party's cooperative intentions. If the priest has even a slightest doubt, he decides to kill his guests. Even if Hatzli is well-informed about the party, he does not attack until he gains a proper momentum.

As the logic of the conversation dictates, Hatzli suggests either proceeding into his banquet hall and continue the discussion here (see 'Banquet Hall' below) or visiting the "divine alligator". Should the adventurers choose the latter options, Hatzli exclaims:

So be it! You shall meet the divine alligator – in the netherworld! Guards, tear them to bits!

If the PCs are unwilling to go to the banquet hall, Hatzli attacks them in his throne room. Tapunui and Szabolcs gladly aid him, eager to prove their worth, and so the Theocrat's sergeants. Hatzli relies on bolstering his allies and himself with such spells as *prayer* and *protection from good*; he also uses his *spiritual weapon* spell. Tapunui uses offensive spells casting *web* to entangle as many foes as possible. Szabolcs wades into melee, using his strength and above-average wits to bring down opponents; he

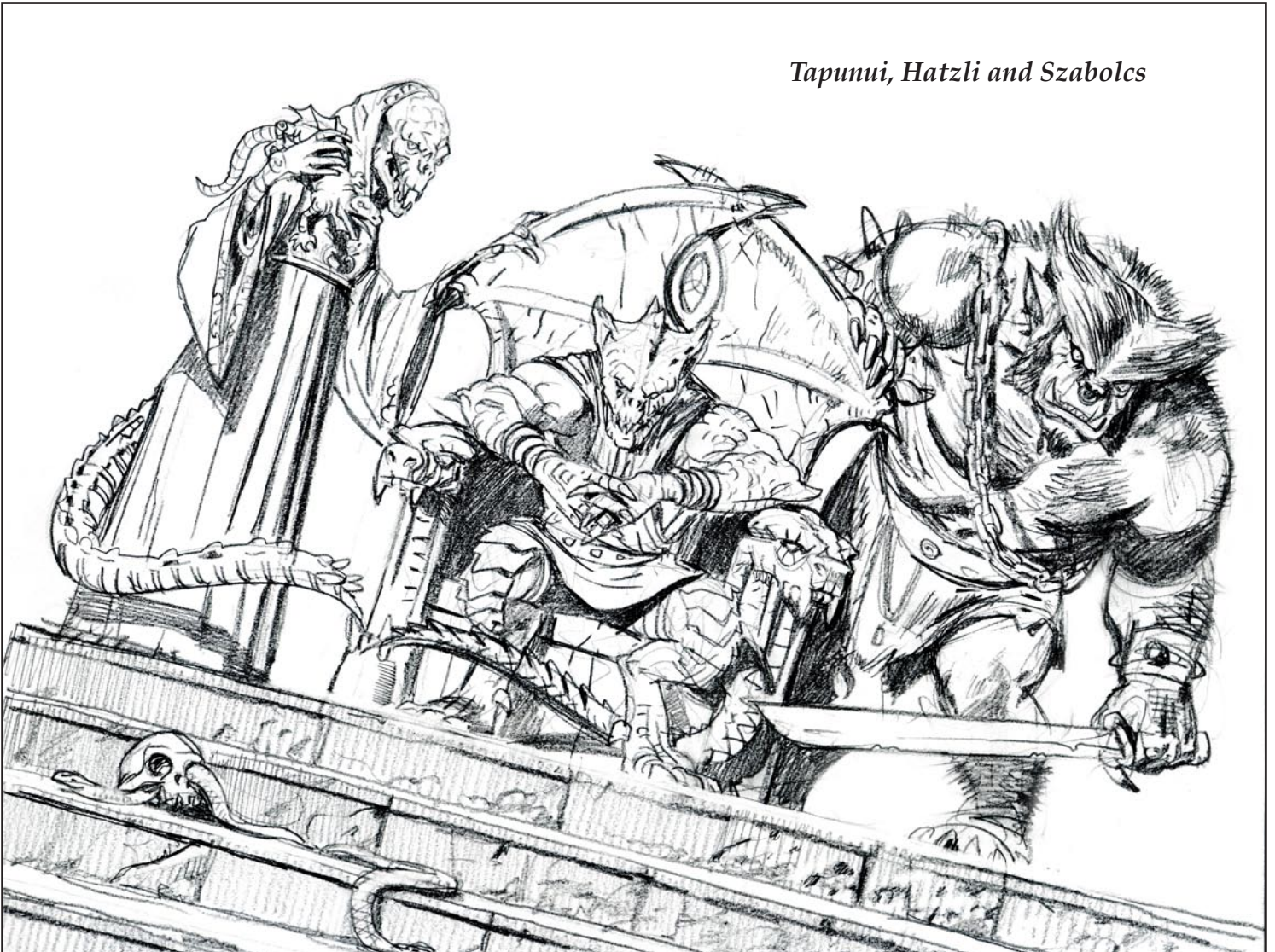
attacks dwarves in preference to all other foes.

In addition, two lizard men enter the fray every round after the first one, streaming from the secret doors which lead to barracks (see below). Once all 20 warriors have joined the combat, it is the time for the sergeants to strike.

The opponents faced by the PCs are rather weak on their own, but are fatal in large numbers. A constant stream of reinforcements ensures that the PCs will have a lot of work to do. A nice strategy in concentrating all efforts on slaying Hatzli – a task made more difficult by Hatzli's prepared route of escape. If severely taxed, the Theocrat casts *sanctuary*, hides behind his throne, drinks his *potion of invisibility* and disappears into the tunnel beyond the illusory wall.

If Hatzli is slain, his minions and/or guests, astonished by their overlord's demise, drop their weapons and run. Their panic triggers a major uprising – see the 'Corral' description.

Tapunui, Hatzli and Szabolcs





## 2b. Hidden Passage

Hatzli takes his safety very seriously, and has devised this passage to ensure safe escape from pursuers. The passage is straight, 15 feet wide, lit by *everburning torches*, and almost completely featureless. Should the Theocrat try to retreat, he traverses the passage that leads to the docks as quickly as possible.

The Theocrat can be intercepted while en route to the temple. PCs have many ways to pursue him: rafting, and even flying are all applicable methods. If the PCs' speed is higher, then they have a chance to get close to their enemy if they react quickly. If the speed of both parties is equal (i.e., the PCs pursue Hatzli on a raft), Constitution is the factor.

The default assumption in chapter IV is that Hatzli was defeated and never reached the temple and warned Tannin. If that is not the case in your game, then you should make some alterations to the chapter. The "divine alligator" shall never parley with the PCs, and Hatzli will fight by his side, using his spells and other abilities to aid his "deity".

## 2c. Barracks

Hatzli's guards are stationed in these quarters with no visible entrances. The furnishings are somewhat Spartan, consisting of crude bunk beds for the soldiers and a couch for the officer, but offer much more comfort than the corral where most of the people live. Both barracks are completely identical, nondescript, and certainly weren't built to be seen by outsiders' eyes.

The lizard men (20 run-of-the-mill warriors led by two sergeants, ten soldiers and one sergeant in each barracks) are always on guard, and stream into the throne room from the secret doors. If their quarters are somehow discovered beforehand, they attack on sight and raise an alarm.

## 2d. Banquet Hall

Hatzli and his guests carouse in the banquet hall while not discussing worldly matters. The hall is decorated with multicolored banners and ribbons. A long, rectangular table stands in its centre, flanked by two benches. On most occasions, the banquet hall is completely empty, but if the PCs agree to discuss their issues during a banquet, the Theocrat invites the adventurers and his guests into the hall.

The PCs are served poisoned (with black lizard poison, save vs poison or knocked down unconscious) food and drink unless Hatzli is particularly inclined

towards them and completely sure that they are willing to cooperate. If all PCs are immobilized by the poison, the priest orders to slay them and feed their bodies to the "divine alligator". If his attempt is revealed, the party is attacked by Hatzli, Tapunui, Szabolcs and the guards that come through another secret door. The combat goes on as described under 'Throne Room', but as the underground passage is too far away, Hatzli first escapes into the barracks, then finds his way to the throne room and finally runs through the passage. The table is laid with exquisite silverware, stolen from a stray merchant caravan. The quality of the silverware ensures that it can be sold for a good price. The entire set weighs 25 pounds and is worth 500 gp.

## 2e. Treasury

Long ago, this chamber concealed the personal wealth of the city's priest-kings. One of them ordered the creation of an undying, completely obedient servant to guard his wealth, and thus was crafted one of the first flesh golems. The construct was charged with protecting the treasury, allowing only men with reptilian heads to enter (the priest-kings wore reptilian-shaped helmets or masks as a part of their ceremonial garb). The golem continued his mission even after the few survivors relocated much of the wealth elsewhere after the palace had been nearly destroyed by the cataclysm. When lizard men settled in the palace, he did not attack the newcomers, as they matched the description given to him. Hatzli found the golem to be an excellent guardian for his wealth. The Theocrat keeps the largest share of his treasures in the High Temple, but a portion was left here to be watched by the eternally vigilant guardian.

**Flesh Golem:** AL N; MV 8"; hp 40; AC 9; HD -; #AT 2; Dmg 2d8/2d8; SA 1% chance cumulative per round to go berserk; SD immune to spells; cold and fire slow the golem by 50% for 2d6 rounds; electricity heals the golem by 1hp per die of damage.

The golem carries out his orders precisely as they were given and mindlessly throws himself at the intruders. If he goes berserk, he just crushes everything in his path and runs out of the palace towards the mountains, because his creator is long-dead and unable to placate him. Resourceful PCs may disguise themselves as lizard men and trick the golem into letting them take the treasure.

The wealth contained by the treasury is paltry by Ancient standards, but quite decent from today's point of view. The golem defends 3000 sp, 2000 gp and a *ring*

*of acid resistance* made of aspis stone (see Appendix I).

## 3. Docks

The passage from the palace leads to the docks, used by Hatzli and his minion to transport victims and treasures to Tannin's temple. Three rafts can usually be found here. If Hatzli escapes, he uses one of the rafts to travel to the island and warn the alligator of incoming danger.

## 4. Corral

The "corral", as this camp is commonly referred to in the tribe, is where dozens of lizard men and enslaved humans and halflings have to live in constant humiliation and misery. Hatzli bullies his tribesmen into obeying him and overworking for little reward. Seven watchtowers surround the corral; each is 10 feet high, has a removable ladder and houses one lizard man soldier, supplied with several cases of crossbow bolts to ensure constant fire.

The corral's dwellers live in tiny tents made from straw or just in the open, in horrible conditions. Every morning, Hatzli's cronies toss food into the corral, open the gate and then issue an order to go out and start a day of constant labors. Although lizard men have good natural weaponry and can always use it, common tribesmen are terribly afraid of being fed to the "divine alligator". Prior rebellions have failed because watchtower guards peppered the mob with arrows while Hatzli summoned supernatural monsters to play upon the tribesmen's superstitions. The place is kept away from outside eyes; the rest of the tribe is officially "away hunting" or just "busy". If the PCs are quite eager to see what is beyond the gate, they are discouraged from doing so and attacked if they openly defy the authorities.

If Hatzli's guards are turned to flight, this act triggers another rebellion. The corral's inhabitants break the gates and pour outside, attacking anyone they deem an enemy. They even try to climb watchtowers and throw down the crossbowmen. The mob's anger is terrible, but can be harnessed by the PCs. A Charisma check allows the adventurers to direct the rebels' fury against guards near all the major buildings. However, the mob never attacks the guardian serpent near the prison – they are still afraid of all things unnatural and serpentine. You can safely assume that a throng of almost seven dozen lizard men, driven by feelings of revenge, can crush the guards with minimal casualties. Putting

the rebellious mob under control should yield a story XP award, and using it against the guards brings an appropriate XP award, as if the PCs had defeated them by themselves.

After the mob's fury is sated, the lizard men can tell the story of their oppression in colorful detail and urge the PCs to free Tennilax, the tribe's previous leader, from the prison pit.

## 5. Forge

In ancient times this building used to be a center of metalworking: The city's greatest blacksmiths congregated to manufacture tools and weapons of unmatched quality. Now it serves Hatzli as his main means of producing new equipment for his swelling army.

Ten captives from Great Bogs, chained to the anvils, labor here all day, creating weapons which shall be used to destroy their town and kill their families. Six lizard men overseers control constantly monitor them in case the slaves rebel or exhaust themselves. The attrition rate among the workforce is high, but raiding parties provide a never-ending stream of replacements.

Outsiders are not allowed inside the forge and forced to leave.

If the characters attack the lizard men guards, they yell for help and fight zealously. The slaves aren't able to help the PCs (their chains give them enough freedom to pound the anvil, not their overseers), but will pick up a weapon and fight if somehow unchained.

If the guards are dispatched, the slaves will ask to be freed. If given freedom, they will tell that they were attacked by a raiding party while looking for mineral deposits, taken prisoner, and brought to the forge to work in miserable conditions. The prisoners know that more people from Great Bogs are kept in the corral with a sizeable number of enslaved lizard men. They are eager to fight, but their usefulness in combat is rather limited. The most sensible solution is to escort them to safety.

If the characters need some weaponry, a lot is to be found here. 10 tridents, 5 crossbows and hundreds of arrows and bolts were crafted by the captives and not yet transported to the warehouse.

## 6. Hatchery

This wooden building is unusually warm and humid due to a strange geothermal effect caused by the earthquake. The lizard men use the location as a hatchery for their eggs. At present, the hatchery contains 12

eggs as large as a human child waiting to hatch. They are placed into small holes in the floor, to get more warmth and hatch more quickly. The walls are covered with carvings depicting newborn dragons, and various inscriptions in Draconic, the most notable being *Blessed is the one born in the divine alligator's den*. Few tribesmen other than guards enter the structure, because disturbing unborn children is considered to be a sin before the "divine alligator". Even future parents aren't allowed inside the chamber.

The location is heavily guarded. A regiment of 7 armed lizard men led by a sergeant is constantly on duty here. The guards allow no visitors and fight valiantly should anyone try to break into the hatchery. Additional patrols may appear near the hatchery in case of dire emergency.

Note that these guards are especially loyal and organized and will not leave their post even if panic ensues after the Theocrat's fall.

**God's Tribe Sergeant:** AL CE; MV 6"/12"; hp 17; AC 3; HD 2+1; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8+1 (longsword) or 1d6 (shortbow); SA poison arrows (save vs poison or 1d8 damage)

**Lizard men (7):** AL CE; MV 6"/12"; hp 9; AC 4; HD 2+1; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8 (longsword).

Hatzli cherishes the yet-unborn lizard men and orders to give away a small part of battle spoils as birthday gifts. The hatchery contains 320 gp, 1020 sp and 10 semiprecious stones (value 50 gp each), as well as three masterwork longswords and a *cold iron dagger* (a gift for the largest baby). Note that squashing lizard men eggs is an act akin to killing innocents, and is a serious offense of a good alignment.

## 7. Prison

This area is one of the most dreaded in the entire complex, an earth-bound counterpart to hell for the common members of The God's Tribe. Once it used to serve as a dump, the chamber became the place of punishment for anyone who is brave enough to defy Hatzli but not fit to be sacrificed to the "divine alligator". Guarded by untiring extraplanar serpents, the prisoners can only dream of survival, and freedom is even beyond dreams. The prison pit is 20 feet deep and about 15 feet in diameter. At present, nine prisoners are kept there – 4 halflings, 2 humans (rebellious slaves from Great Bogs), 2 lizard men (Slitherers), and, most importantly, Tennilax, the tribe's ex-leader. All of them have to endure great hardships: their limbs are shackled, they are fed only once a day,

and the pit is too narrow and filthy to allow any chance of prolonged survival. Each prisoner has damage equal to 90% of his hit points.

An enormous boa, spawned in the fetid swamps of Itzquizatli's realm and brought to serve Hatzli by the god's minions, guards the pit. The serpent makes an excellent guardian, as he almost never sleeps and can easily climb down in the pit to punish a particularly restless prisoner. His guard post is a column, a remnant of an ancient building that once stood here; it grants the serpent one-quarter cover if he is coiled around it. The boa attacks any non-reptilian creature that comes too close to the pit, hissing loudly before doing so. He has little to fear and fights to the death.

**Guardian Serpent:** AL CE; MV 12"; hp 35 AC 5; HD 8; #AT 2; Dmg 1d6/3d6; SA constriction; +2 attack and damage vs good-aligned creatures; SD half damage from fire MR 5%.

If the guardian serpent is defeated, the PCs have the opportunity to set the prisoners free. It takes a DC 15 climb check to get to the bottom of the pit. Needless to say, the prisoners are extremely grateful for being rescued. If brought to safety and given good treatment (fed, healed, etc.), they tell about their hardships and Hatzli's cruelty. The most relevant information is provided by Tennilax.

Tennilax is old and wise, exhausted from his months-long imprisonment, but driven by his faith – although Cuetzpali has abandoned him to test his devotion. He is willing to talk, but the priest is definitely in the wrong condition to be questioned. If given enough time to recover his failing strength, Tennilax will be eager to help the characters. He feels compelled to thank them for freeing him, but can do little without his divine abilities. Nevertheless, Tennilax is extremely grateful and willing to cooperate – if the PCs can stand his somewhat bombastic and preachy tone.

Tennilax says the following if questioned about a particular topic:  
-How did you wind up here?

Trouble times began for my people when we came to settle here – an ill-considered action I regret. My tribesmen perished one by one in the lake, food became scarce as no one went fishing, and the source of danger was unknown. The people started to grumble and demand that

something should be done. Then Hatzli, my disciple, stepped forward and boastfully claimed he could solve all our problems. He made a raft and set off into the lake, only to return a week later with burning eyes, singing hymns dedicated to a creature he called “divine alligator”. Hatzli clamored that we should abandon Cuetzpali and bow to his god. And the most ambitious of my tribesmen joined his cause. I was outnumbered, stripped of my power, and The Matriarch decided to punish me for losing hold of my people. Hatzli’s cronies brought those who resisted into the lake and sacrificed them; others, like me and my companions, were thrown into this stinking pit, guarded by a fiendish watchman, to wait for our doom.

-What happened to Hatzli?

I don’t know. Perhaps he was so obsessed with power that he stroke a deal with some monster to achieve his ungodly goal. Hatzli thought he was paragon of civilization: He forced everyone to restore stone buildings, craft iron weapons and prepare for an endless battle against all other tribes – including yours. Ambition and pride drove Hatzli insane – and who can say that he is bold enough to resist the temptation?

-Who is that “divine alligator”?

Another unsolved mystery, I suppose. Giant alligators are native to our swamp, and the creature Hatzli found must have been remarkable indeed to be labeled as “divine”. The thing that troubles me most is that the alligator gave him magical powers – and mere superstition won’t make you a true priest! I think some sort of demon lurks in this lake, a dangerous and bloodthirsty one. It must be destroyed, lest another Hatzli should arise and worship him. I’ve heard that the victims are delivered to a large island where an ancient temple stands. Hatzli’s “deity” might dwell there.

Tennilax is almost useless as an ally in combat, as he is unable to cast any spells, but his advice and guidance are more than worthy. He can take care of the tribe

(or even lead them back to the Slitherers’ Settlement) while the PCs are away fighting the alligator.

## Chapter IV

### The Divine Den

The Alligator Lake dominates the valley which, many years ago, was home to many thousand souls – an industrious, pious and highly magical society called the Ancients (see their history in the beginning of Chapter III). It extends for almost 15 square miles. The lake seems very calm and peaceful, although the water is less than transparent, and no birds or mammals can be seen on its shores – the “divine alligator” has scared almost all animals away. In its depth lie the remains of the Lost City – however, underwater expeditions are of little use, as the submerged parts of the city turned to rubble, and all treasures and marvels within were lost. The lake has many relatively large and small islands, but one island is doubtlessly the most remarkable – the island of the “divine alligator”, which houses an ancient temple. This structure survived the deluge that engulfed a major part of the Lost City. The High Temple was dedicated to the city’s patron deity, The Water Dragon (now forgotten and dormant). It was decorated with numerous idols and depictions of the deity made from various materials – from stone to bronze. Most of them, although damaged by the earthquake, endured with the temple. Several years ago, Tannin, spawned in the murky waters of Dread Swamp, decided to find himself a safe and calm den. (The creature’s draconic ancestry gave him an unnaturally long life as well as cunning much higher than that of an average crocodile, so Tannin completely exhausted his hunting grounds). Through the tunnel, he wandered into the valley (devoid of sentient life at that time), made his way to the lake and finally to the temple, lured by the divine energy which is still active there. The half-dragon lived on the fish, birds and large crustaceans found in the lake but later turned to hunting lizard men from the Splintered Tribe, who built rafts and went fishing too close to his den. Some time later, Hatzli arrived to the temple, looking for the source of trouble, and fell under the dark influence of Tannin and Itzquizatl. The priest immediately recognized the bond between the terrifying monster that he saw and some otherworldly, sinister being craving obedience and sacrifices. Such a being, he thought, can grant much greater power than the lizard goddess, which has always been docile and indifferent to

her own people... And thus was born the myth of the “divine alligator”, and Hatzli’s career soared.

After achieving dominion over his tribe, Hatzli ordered to renovate and decorate the temple as well as the statues surrounding it. The Theocrat sincerely believed that the temple used to be dedicated to the “divine alligator” and all the statues, idols and inscriptions were created to illustrate his dogma. The priest also ordered to build wooden docks and multiple rafts to transport offerings and victims to the temple. Hatzli enacted a tradition of regular sacrifices made to placate the “divine alligator” and purge the tribe of “weaklings” and “traitors”. Since then, Tannin hasn’t left his den, as food was brought to him in large numbers and on a regular basis.

The temple is situated on a hill in the centre of the island. It is easy to locate, as a paved road leads from the docks and the island is almost completely devoid of trees or tall plants, making the temple clearly visible. The road leads to a vast courtyard, once reduced to rubble, but now restored to its former splendor by Hatzli’s slaves. The courtyard is decorated with numerous statues, columns and other works of arts, some of which are nothing more than traps dreamed up by the Theocrat’s twisted mind.

The temple itself was built on top of a ziggurat with large blocks of a reddish rock variety abundant in the surrounding mountains. Its walls are 30 feet high and look very sturdy. It didn’t require much work to be restored, as it survived the cataclysms almost intact. The temple is rectangular in shape, and clearly divided into several areas: the chamber of worship, open to all, the holy of holies, a secret part of the temple accessible only by the highest hierarch and other areas which serve as lodging for the clergy. Of course, the entrance to the holy of holies is skillfully disguised.

### 1. Temple Courtyard

The courtyard is well-maintained: its statues and the road are in good condition, and an alley of trees has been planted around it. The atmosphere here is calm, serene and calling for meditation. The statues in the courtyard are very important, as they testify the corruption brought by the supernatural entity that holds dominion over The God’s Tribe.

#### 1a. Circle of Reptiles

A circle of nine sculptures depicting



grotesque, misshapen, vaguely reptilian creatures surrounds the courtyard. The symbolism of the sculptures has changed over the years. The artificers of The Lost City created them to remind their people of nine vices considered abominable by the society of yore: greed, fury, gluttony, perversion, deceit, ignorance, irreverence, idleness, and, ultimately, pride. When Hatzli ordered to renovate the statues, he proclaimed them “icons of the divine alligator’s virtues”, completely distorting their original meaning. The largest and most skillfully crafted statue is that of Pride. It is almost 20 feet high, shaped like an enormous man-serpent coiled into countless circles, with its head imperiously raised, quietly contemplating the courtyard. The Draconic inscription at the Pride’s pedestal reads:

Here are the nine testaments of the divine alligator:

Covet wealth, for it leads to success and prosperity,

Set your rage free, for otherwise you are chaining your mighty spirit,

Enjoy fine meals and liquors, for otherwise you are chaining your mighty body,

Lust, for in lust you show your true self,

Lie, for others are not prepared to handle the truth,

Cast away knowledge, for the divine alligator is the only thing you should know,

Give your neighbor no respect, for the divine alligator is the only true authority,

Be idle, for labor is only for the slaves,

And rise above the rest, and be proud, for this virtue encompasses all others,

And this is good in the eyes of the divine alligator.

If a character capable of casting cleric spells reads the inscription aloud, a ghostly voice from somewhere inside the statue says:

“Praised be the divine alligator!”

However, nothing else happens. If any character handles the statue for more than a few moments, the ghostly voice utters:

“You are caressing my soul. You shall be rewarded”.

Then the character receives the effects of a *stoneskin* spell. This effect occurs only once a day.

## 1b. Obelisks

Two segmented, 10-foot high obelisks, carved many years ago, stand before the temple entrance. They were erected in the past by the city’s foremost engineer as a reminder of a major victory. Now these obelisks serve a much more practical purpose – they bear *glyphs of warding* inscribed by Hatzli himself to ward off intruders. The *glyphs* are triggered once someone who does not worship Tannin/ Itzquizatl passes between the obelisks. If several characters pass at once, roll randomly to determine the target. The first Glyph casts *hold person*, the second one *monster summoning III*.

The *glyph* on the left obelisk is meant to paralyze the passer-by; the other one summons a devilish crocodile who gleefully tears the helpless victim to bits – or simply attacks if the target makes its save. This malicious trap has a certain religious symbolism, for it simulates a sacrifice to the “divine alligator”.

Two carvings, shaped like humanoids with a reptilian head holding a staff, are chiseled from the temple walls. They were designed as monuments honoring the city’s greatest priest-kings; the reptilian head is in fact a mask worn by the priesthood of The Water Dragon. Of course, Hatzli had his own interpretation of these impressive works of art: he believed them to be symbol of lizard men’s everlasting devotion to his deity. The carvings conceal no traps. However, whenever anyone mentions the “divine alligator” or prays to him, a voice from inside the statues repeats those words like a distant echo.

## 2. Chamber of Worship

Two large archways 20 feet high lead into the chamber of worship. Here devout Itzquizatl’s worshippers gather to give homage to the “divine alligator”. They are not normally allowed inside Tannin’s very residence, as only the Theocrat and his most trusted servants are considered

to be worthy of seeing the “deity”. Solemn rituals are held there every week or so, when Hatzli and his cronies arrive to the temple with a fresh victim and gifts for Tannin. After conducting a ceremony involving ecstatic dancing and chanting, Hatzli ventures into the *sancta sanctorum* (“holy of holies”) through a secret entrance and offers the victim and gifts to the “divine alligator”, praising and glorifying his patron.

The chamber is decorated with multiple tapestries that depict dragons and battle scenes, bronze, silver and golden statuettes of various reptilian creatures, candelabras, burning with *continual flame* and finely wrought from silver and platinum alloys. The objects of art found in the chamber do not date from Ancient times, but are of great quality and rarity nonetheless. The art collection in its entirety is worth 4000 gp and weighs some 600 pounds. In addition several baskets of exotic incense, used in religious ceremonies, are positioned near the candelabras. Any temple would gladly part with 700 gp to get the incense.

The chamber is dominated by a large, 10-feet tall idol of a horned and winged reptile created by the artisans of the Lost City. It used to depict The Water Dragon, the city’s patron deity, but has been altered by Hatzli’s slaves to match the divine alligator’s appearance. In addition, the priest imbued the idol with unholy power. It radiates a strong aura of evil, and bestows a horrible affliction on any good-aligned creature touching it. The toucher must succeed at a spell save or begin to transform over the next 1d4+1 minutes, his skin gradually becoming a clear, slimy membrane. An afflicted creature must remain moistened with cool, fresh water or take 1d6 points of damage every 10 minutes. The slime heighten the creature’s armor by 1. This affliction is a curse, not a natural disease; it is equal to a *bestow curse* spell.

The idol is mounted on a rectangular pedestal bearing a Draconic inscription – in fact, a hymn to The Water Dragon, a mythical entity that served as the city’s patron deity. The now-forgotten god had nothing to do with Itzquizatl, but Hatzli interpreted the words as a litany to the “divine alligator” and ordered to renew the inscription. It reads:

All hail The Water Dragon, the paragon of true might!

He coils around our city, sheltering it  
with his armor of scales,

He turns water into fire, scathing  
unholy invaders,

His visage sows fear in the hearts of  
the boldest fighters;

His limbs clash with unearthly  
clamor,

With a glance he causes entire armies  
to run.

No weapon can breach his skin, no  
injury can he suffer,

The Water Dragon, the winner of  
countless battles,

The joy, pride, and glory of our  
people.

All hail The Water Dragon,

For he is the master of our souls.

Behind the idol is a well-camouflaged  
secret door leading to the sancta  
sanctorum.

### 3. Sancta Sanctorum

The holy of holies, the dwelling of Tannin,  
the source of all troubles that have fallen  
upon The Dread Swamp is a huge hall  
shrouded in awe and mystery.

The central feature of the hall is a pool,  
surrounded by columns, filled with  
somewhat murky water drawn from the  
lake. It seems large enough to be fit for a  
whale – or a giant crocodile. Sometimes,  
large chunks of red meat float in the water:  
Tannin, true to his draconic heritage,  
prefers to “pickle” his food in stagnant  
water before consuming it. To the left and  
right of the pool are piles of skulls and  
bones, grisly remains of Tannin’s victims,  
left to lie in the temple to remind of the  
alligator’s power. In a side room, clearly  
visible through an archway, there is an  
oversized heap of gold pieces, jewelry and  
other treasures. Hatzli diligently gathered  
this fortune by searching for the Ancients’  
treasures, looting, plundering, and trading.  
The entire area commands a feeling of  
death, decay, and futility of all labors.

Tannin, the “divine alligator”, spends most  
of his time in the pool, enjoying being  
idolized and adored and contemplating

his impressive treasure hoard through the  
archway. Nevertheless, the half-dragon  
is quite vigilant, and if he hears some  
unfamiliar sounds, he conceals himself in  
murky water, waiting for things to come.  
He can remain submerged for more than 8  
minutes, so Tannin doesn’t leave his hiding  
without a great necessity.

**Tannin:** AL CE; MV 12” / 24”; hp 50; AC  
2; HD 10; #AT 3; Dmg 1d6 / 1d6 / 3d6; SA  
breath weapon (stream of acid extending  
6” in a straight line); SD aura of fear\*; SQ  
Corrupt water\*\*.

\* Treat tannin as an adult black dragon

\*\*Once per day Tannin can stagnate 10  
cubic feet of water, making it become still,  
foul, and unable to support animal life. The  
ability spoils liquids containing water.

Tannin’s appearance is a mixture of  
draconic and crocodilian traits. He has  
the scales, wings and the horned, skull-  
like head of a black dragon, but his  
crocodile mother’s ancestry is visible in his  
elongated jaws, yellow eyes, and ridges.  
His visage embodies the primordial fear of  
reptiles known to most sentient species, so  
there is little wonder that his appearance  
can frighten even the boldest adventurer.  
Tannin’s body is decorated with large





bracelets, golden chains and a large crown he wears even when underwater. His most treasured possession, the *aspis stone medallion*, rests on his neck. See Appendix I for this important item's description.

Tannin is the paragon of the virtues written on the Pride's pedestal. His arrogance, selfishness, and haughtiness know no bounds. The alligator enjoys his role as a mediator between fanatical lizard men and the deity that gave him his powers. Tannin considers himself to be infinitely superior to all living things, regarding only Itzquizatl as his overlord and Hatzli as roughly equal to him. The half-dragon is convinced that all creatures must bow before him and sate his appetite for food, praise, and treasure. He believes that every sentient creature coming to his domain is either a potential worshipper or potential prey – and that makes him curious about everyone who dares to come to his face. Tannin is used to being treated and never goes hunting anymore. He is pleased with his present life, as he delights in epicurean pleasures and fulfills his divine mission – spread Itzquizatl's corruption. If he notices any hostile intentions in the PCs, he leaves his hiding and rushes upon them. But if the adventurers behave in a pious way, bringing gold and victims and glorifying Tannin's virtues, the "divine alligator" gets out of the water to greet them and enjoy displays of obedience and sacrifices. Tannin can be cajoled into parleying if the PCs have good charisma scores; offerings of treasure and living victims improve their chances. For every 100 gp value of treasure and/or one creature offered as a sacrifice, add a +1 bonus to the Charisma check. Remember that sacrificing sentient creatures (as opposed to animals) is an act hardly in line with good alignment.

The initial attitude of Tannin towards the PCs is of superior indifference, unless they are openly aggressive. If the pc manage to get him friendly, the alligator will become more talkative and much more likely to answer questions. He speaks in short but impressive phrases. Tannin says the following when asked about a particular topic:

-Who are you?

Behold, I am the crocodile-god who dwells amid terrors. I seize my prey like a ravening beast. I am the Lord to whom bowings and prostrations are made in The Lost City. That's what they call me, anyway. In fact, I am no

more divine than you are. I am just a vessel of holy energy, a link to the trackless swamp of my divine patron. Fear and respect me if you want to serve my god.

-Divine patron?

My father is called Raerciminar, The Divine Breeder, a mighty dragon and the most dedicated servant of The Swamp Wyrms. He spawned me and gave me a connection to his deity as an heirloom. Itzquizatl is the entity that gives me power and elevates me to adoration. Every sacrifice made to me is made to Itzquizatl. When I savor the taste of fresh meat, Itzquizatl grows stronger.

-Divine alligator vs. Itzquizatl.

Hatzli is not stupid enough to think that I am a god. He understands that I am just a minion of Itzquizatl's. But he has no other way of reaching the deity than worshipping me. In his eyes, I am the same as Itzquizatl. And his tribesmen would rather believe in a deity bound by flesh and blood than some uncaring entity in the heavens.

-Worshipping Itzquizatl.

Read the testaments on the snake statue. Follow them. Then you shall be rewarded by The Swamp Wyrms. He brooks no insolence and despises those who don't have the strength to live in swamps.

-The Medallion.

It's a gift from my father's friends, who are also loyal vassals of Itzquizatl. Never touch it, as it shall bring doom upon those who are not sired by The Divine Breeder.

-The temple.

Ancient people built it as a tribute to their god they called The Water Dragon. But their deity died, and so did their city. Now a new divine creature dwells in the temple, and the city flourishes once more. Hatzli

remade all the city's decorations in my image. A trusty servant.

Tannin isn't very loquacious if he isn't speaking about himself, but the information he reveals should be enough to understand that Hatzli's devotion is not mere superstition. Although not a true deity, Tannin is divine indeed, and the supernatural force that is behind him hates all life and will use all means to despoil it. The Dread Swamp is a staging ground, a rehearsal of a sinister plan – and the fate of Great Bogs seems much more important from this perspective. Ultimately, Tannin grows tired of talking and orders the PCs to fetch more food and victims. That moment could be a good opportunity to strike at the alligator, as his vigilance is lowered and selfishness bolstered.

Tannin relies on his fear aura to scare off foes and on his powerful natural weapons to rend them apart. He prefers to fight on land or in the pool, as his wings carry his enormous bulk with great difficulty. The alligator particularly enjoys snatching small opponents and throwing them against a wall, along with corrupting water if his enemies are dependant on potions. His most feared attack, the acidic breath, is saved until his foes stand in a line. Overall, Tannin makes full use of his capabilities, and is a fearsome opponent. However, he can be outsmarted, as his great size makes him easy to flank. In addition, Tannin prefers to down the toughest-looking opponents first, so a powerful fighter-type can distract him while the others do their job. The battle with Tannin can be described as a battle of the alligator's godlike strength with the player's wits. Mindless frontal assault is futile and potentially suicidal. Once the killing blow is landed upon Tannin's body, the characters can witness the alligator's black soul leaving the body and slowly drifting away from his body. Nothing in the mortal realm can prevent it from reaching the Outer Planes, but the PCs can rest assured that Tannin is defeated once and forever.

## 4. Treasure Room

The dragons' lust for treasure is legendary, and Tannin holds this ideal of dragonkind in very high esteem. His hoard includes coins and jewels left from Ancient times, recovered either by himself or Hatzli from the ruins, as well as more recent loot and a few magic items. The half-dragon's wealth

amounts to 9,000 sp, 5,000 gp, several objects of art (a platinum coronet incrustured with gems, worth 4,000 gp; golden chains and bracelets, total worth 3750 gp; all worn by Tannin), assorted gems (amber (70 gp), coral (80 gp), deep blue spinel (600 gp), star ruby (1000 gp)), a block of *incense of meditation*, and a *tower shield +1*, stylized to look like a snarling dragon face.

### 5. Priests' Quarters (common)

A complete set of room was built by Hatzli and his minions. The evil priest dreams about a large clergy dwelling in the retau-rated temple. At present time all of these room are unoccupied.

### 6. Priests' Quarters

These are small bedrooms for higher level clerics.

### 7. Dining Hall

Large wooden tables have been arranged here. The tables are now empty.

### 8. Kitchen

Two fireplaces for cooking have been built in this room, some clean pottery is found all around.

### 9. Store Room

Supply and households are kept in this small room.

## Concluding the Adventure

Depending on the PCs' actions (and the infamous "dumb luck"), the adventure may have several different outcomes. Some of the more common are discussed below.

*We Failed:* Definite actions taken by the PCs can lead to certain failure in this adventure. The most common mistake is attacking (and scattering or destroying) Kedraloss' tribe. By doing this, the PCs accomplish the objective that has eluded Hatzli and his cronies for entire months. Needless to say, Krindar is most displeased, if not outright furious. More important, the army of The God's Tribe and its allies can finally assemble and begin the campaign. It assaults Great Bogs in a couple of days. Despite its militia's bravery and advanced characters' assistance, the town is doomed to be wiped off the map. Itzquizatl takes his first step towards his goal – transforming the entire region in a boundless fetid swamp where nothing natural can exist – and the PCs are to be blamed for this

calamity. A mindless frontal assault on The God's Tribe leads to almost the same – Hatzli loses no time in assembling his army and starting a campaign of destruction. An even worse folly is making a deal with the Theocrat. Hatzli loves treachery, but detests traitors, and will definitely get rid of tools that are no longer useful to him soon after conquering Great Bogs. The main theme of *The Divine Alligator*, as you may have noted, is xenophobia, bigotry, and superstition. If the PCs have succumbed to these vices, let them face the consequences.

*We Gave Our Best Shot:* This outcome is possible when the PCs overcome most obstacles in the adventure, but, for some reason, be it death or other complications, fail to achieve the main goal – defeating Tannin and stopping the furthering of Itzquizatl's vile agenda. Nothing is lost – other adventurers (perhaps the players' new characters) may arrive just in time to save the day, the PCs' bodies can be whisked away by allied lizard men, and Hatzli may delay his attack on Great Bogs. If your players managed to develop a good strategy that was foiled by freakish dice rolls or an untimely random encounter, do not hesitate to give them a second chance.

*We Did It:* If both Hatzli and his would-be deity are put to the sword (or otherwise defeated), the inhabitants of the Dread Swamp can consider themselves free from danger. Tennilax reassumes leadership of the tribe and leads his tribesmen away from the ruins and back to their brethren, the Slitherers. Kedraloss' tribe, reunited with the Splintered, and Great Bogs can now sign the treaty and settle their differences – much to the joy of Krindar Brie. Lizard-killers leave the town in frustration, looking for a better place to earn quick and dirty money. Itzquizatl's unholy emanations come to an end, and the Dread Swamp slowly becomes more hospitable and less sinister. All is well that ends well.

Of course, the PCs are not forgotten. Krindar Brie gives them their due, and their reputation in Great Bogs skyrockets. A holiday is established in their honor, and several of the town's streets are renamed after the adventurers. The characters can enjoy great fame and fortune until they follow the path of adventure once again... Certainly, this idyllic outcome can be marred by collateral damage to lizard men communities, deaths among the PCs (or major NPCs), etc. Nevertheless, "the gods never leave people unrewarded", as Plato put it, so the adventurers may bask in the glory of a well-done job if they deserve it.

## Further Adventures

True evil is reluctant to die. Hatzli and Tannin are just two examples of the foul creatures plotting the return of Itzquizatl and destruction of everyone who opposes them. Even within the borders of Dread Swamp, the PCs can find a lot of work to do. Hatzli is no longer dangerous, but what about his allies? Surely they aren't going to leave the town in peace... Confrontations with aggressive lizard men tribes can be a theme of many adventures, and Krindar will pay dearly to root out every last vestige of Hatzli's power in the vicinity. Tannin is just one of the many children of Raerciminar the Divine Breeder. His extended lifespan allowed him to couple with many various creatures and spawn a sizable progeny of evil half-dragons. A lot of them ignore the calling of the blood, but many have become devout followers of Itzquizatl and haters of life. Hunting down all Raerciminar's children is a quest of epic proportions, and an entire campaign can be built around this feat of heroism. The Breeder preferred rare and powerful creatures as mates, so the character's journeys can take them to the far corners of the world and many exotic locations. Within time, Raerciminar himself may rise from his slumber and exact revenge for his slain children!

## Appendix I

### New Equipment

#### Snakebloom Extract

The extract of a very rare swamp flower, carefully prepared by alchemists, is a remedy highly prized by the victims of snake bites. It grants a +2 bonus on all saving throws against snake poison; the bonus is active for 4 hours and has no effect on other types of poisons.

#### Vermin Repellent

A herbal mixture concocted by the natives of Dread Swamp to keep insects away. One dose is active for 8 hours and let the character ignore the effects of insect bites.

#### Aspis Stone

Aspis stone is a black, smooth rock found on certain evil-aligned Outer Planes. It is virtually unknown anywhere on the Material Plane. Aspis stone, rumored to be the petrified body of a dead snake-god, is used by demonic craftsmen to create items infused with chaotic and evil energies. It is most commonly used by servants of deities that count dragons, serpents, or reptilian creatures among their followers. The exact

properties of the mineral are known to just a handful of scholars, but it can be surely said that items made from aspis stone are almost completely indestructible. Aspis stone is never used to craft weapons or armor; all known items are amulets, rings, or medallions. All attempts by this world's craftsmen to put this mineral to use have failed. Aspis stone still remains much of an enigma, and most people refuse to even try to uncover its mysteries.

### Aspis Stone Medallions

The *aspis stone medallions* appear as pieces of neckwear carved from some dark, smooth rock, and shaped as a dragon head. They were created in hellish forges of Itzquizatl's home plane as a gift for Raerciminar's children. Each of the dragon's offspring was given a *medallion* once the creature reached maturity; in most cases, the gift was brought by The Swamp Wyrms's demonic servant. The exact number of these items is unknown. If an *aspis medallion* is worn by spawn of Raerciminar, it grants its owner a +3 bonus to his Charisma score, enveloping him into an aura of magnitude and imperiousness. In addition, the medallion serves as a link between the wearer and Itzquizatl; the god can freely monitor the character's activities, dictate his will to him, and project his divine power through the *medallion*. The *medallion* can be worn by creatures other than Raerciminar's children. However, the item grants only a +1 bonus while keeping the direct link with Itzquizatl. When first put on, the *aspis medallion* causes the creature to make a spell save or become subject to *geas* spell. The nature of the demand varies, but it is always in the best interests of Itzquizatl. The exact means of destroying the *aspis stone medallions* can only be guessed at. The DM is encouraged to devise a method that is in line with his campaign's flavor.

and demons; the first lizard man sprung from the tail. Cuetzpali teaches the race she created to maintain their way of life, increase their numbers, guard their territory and keep harmony within lizard men society. However, the exact implementation of these ideals varies from tribe to tribe. Cuetzpali's symbol is a lizard tail curved into a spiral. The domains she is associated with are Animal, Protection, and Water. Her favored weapon is the quarterstaff, representing the goddess' shed tail.

### Itzquizatl

Itzquizatl [its-kee-*that*-al], a revolting deity revered by black dragons as well as certain lizard men and troglodyte tribes, is chaotic evil. Itzquizatl's titles include The Lord of Decay, The Dragon of Corruption, The Swamp Wyrms and Governor of Slimy Death. He rules over decay, decomposition, fear and poison. Itzquizatl urges his followers to bring disgust, misery, and death to those who oppose him. Itzquizatl's symbol is an acid-breathing black dragon head. Millennia ago, he faded into obscurity, banished from his plane by some other dark deity, but recently (by cosmic standards, of course) Itzquizatl has returned, looking for retribution. He resides on one of the Outer Planes, plotting revenge. The domains he is associated with are Chaos, Destruction, Evil, and Water. Itzquizatl's favored weapon is his toothy maw (unarmed strike or natural weapon).

## Appendix II

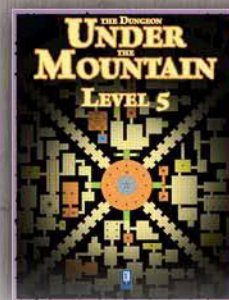
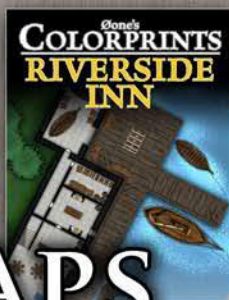
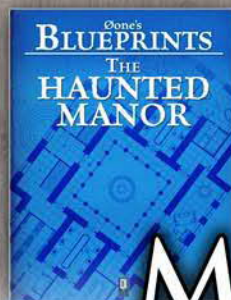
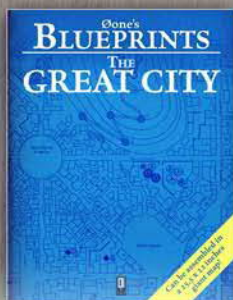
### Deities of The Divine Alligator

Here is a brief description of the gods mentioned in *The Divine Alligator*. These deities may become a worthy addition to your campaign setting or be easily replaced with gods of similar thematic and portfolio.

#### Cuetzpali

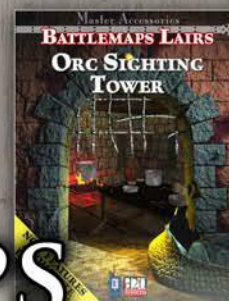
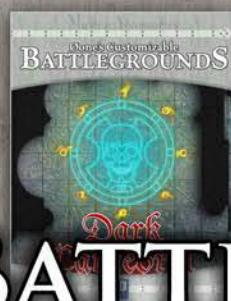
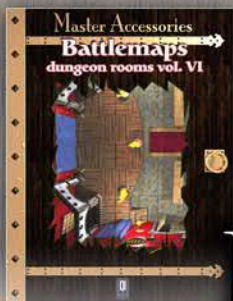
Cuetzpali [koo-its-*pah*-lee], the goddess of lizard men, is neutral. Her titles are The Matriarch, The Swamp Mother, The Lady of Calm Waters and The Elusive Lizard. According to lizard men tradition, the goddess shed her tail while escaping from the clutches of a horde of evil gods





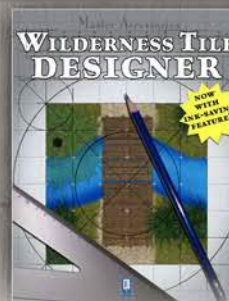
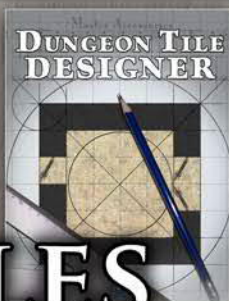
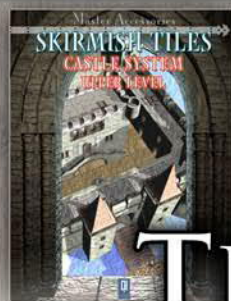
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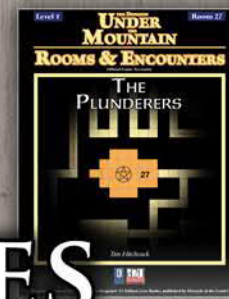
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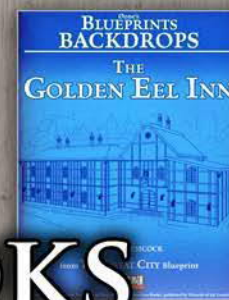
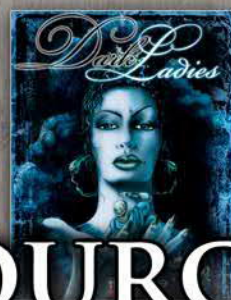
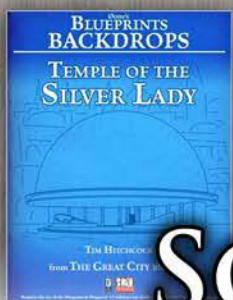
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# Advanced Master Adventures

## Game Adventure

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### The Divine Alligator

By Artemis Silversmith

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Two hundred years ago was the time of Raerciminar, an ancient black dragon furthering the destructive agenda of Itzquizatl, a dra-conic deity of death and decay. The god wanted his servant to create loyal followers that can act as mediators for his unholy power. Raerciminar's chief method was infusing as many creatures as possible with dragon blood. Leaving numerous half-dragon children in his wake, Raerciminar retreated into his distant lair and slumbered into deep sleep, waiting for his children to reach maturity by themselves and instruct them later.

One of his most beloved children was Tannin, an enormous half-dragon crocodile remarkable for his great strength, rapacious appetite and unmatched sense of ego.

The Divine Alligator is a OSRIC fantasy adventure suitable for four 7th level player characters. A ranger or druid is highly helpful, as is someone with good Charisma, plus the ability to speak Draconic. Characters of higher or lower levels can also take part in the adventure; see 'Scaling the Adventure' below. As the PCs face some quite dangerous opponents, referees may wish to change some encounters to give the characters a better chance of survival.

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