

The background of the cover is a dark, moody illustration. A soldier in a trench, wearing a hat and holding a rifle, is looking towards the right. A large, multi-legged insect, resembling a mantis, is positioned in the center-right of the frame. The scene is framed by barbed wire at the top and bottom, with a red, fringed fabric strip running horizontally across the middle. The overall color palette is dominated by dark greens, browns, and reds.

MISSION [★]MANUAL

BRIDGE ACROSS TIME



LEG1101

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BRIDGE ACROSS TIME

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WEIRD WARS - BRIDGE ACROSS TIME

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Bridge Across Time, the first in Legion Publishing's mission manuals for Pinnacle Entertainment's WWII d20 roleplaying game. Each mission manual is a complete adventure for your Weird Wars heroes and provides new creatures, weapons, rules, and ideas for your campaign.

DUAL STATS

This Weird Wars book has been enhanced using advanced PDF design. You will now be able to view this book's rules and stats for both the D20 and Savage World systems at the click of a button. Using your mouse, choose your preferred game system by either selecting the D20 logo or 'Jack' for Savage Worlds. You can switch between either at any time by returning to this page.

BACKGROUND

This first book is set in Burma in 1943 and describes the everyday challenges faced by the British and Empire troops and provides the rules necessary to play a Tommy in the jungles of the Far East during the weird wars. Some of the material presented in Pinnacle's Land of the Rising Dead may be of use in this scenario, but it is not necessary. Also included are two new starting packages, particular to this setting, and

a number of new weird horrors. Finally, there is an adventure deep into the Burma jungles to stop the Japanese advance.

Central to the mission is an ancient bridge, survivor of countless years of conflict, and a stark reminder of the timelessness of war. This monument to the jungle's violent past could hold the key the British Army's future in this turbulent theater of the war.

TOMMY IN THE JUNGLE

In a mere five months, from December 1941 to May 1942, the British Empire suffered a series of humiliating and costly defeats in the Far East. By mid-1942, the Japanese were on the frontiers of the Raj itself, the crown of the Empire. These lost campaigns, and the subsequent ones to hold the Indian borders and retake lost territory, were largely fought in the jungle, a terrain that was terrifyingly alien to the British soldier.

LIFE IN THE JUNGLE

Life in the jungle had a depressing effect on the morale of British troops, the vast majority of whom had no practical experience in terrain that, only a few years before, was considered impenetrable for troops. The feeling of isolation, the limited vision, the difficulty of movement, the oppressive heat, and the host of dangerous diseases and wildlife all sapped the confidence of the average soldier.

Accurate maps of the jungle are difficult to

make and the British often make use of local guides. Traveling without a guide requires a Survival check (DC19) once per hour to avoid getting lost in the jungle. Fighting in the jungle is arduous work and often at close quarters as the maximum distance at which a Spot check for detecting the nearby presence of others can succeed in the dense terrain is $2d6 \times 10$ feet. Furthermore, the thick undergrowth provides ready concealment, so it is usually easy for a creature to use the Hide skill in the jungle. Logs and massive trees also offer cover, and additional hiding places. The background noise in the forest makes Listen checks more difficult, increasing the DC of the check by 2 per 10 feet, not 1 (but note that Move Silently is also more difficult in undergrowth). In addition to the disorienting terrain, soldiers must also learn to tolerate the pests that make the jungle their home.

LEECHES

Leeches of all kinds are omnipresent in the jungles of Burma. The common black leech thrives anywhere damp and moist, and the larger yellow leech proliferates in the pools from which the soldiers take their drinking water. Their bites are not painful, but they secrete a natural anti-coagulant that opens the wound to infection. Pulling leeches off is not a wise option, as there is a risk of detaching the head, leaving the jaws in the bite. In the humid jungle conditions, any such wound can quickly turn septic (DC16, Incubation: 8 hours, Damage: 1d4 Con).

Leech swarms, occurring when soldiers cross leech-infested water (or when summoned by

jungle shamans or Japanese onmyoji) are particularly dangerous, and must be dealt with immediately. A leech swarm inflicts 1 point of temporary Con damage each minute, and the chances of wounds turning septic increase for every minute they remain (it takes $1d4 + 1$ minutes to remove the leech swarm from a



victim). Soldiers soon learn to remove ordinary leeches with burning cigarettes, but such methods are useless against the monstrous elephant leech or the evasive shadow leech, both of which were not merely discomforting but deadly (see below).

MOSQUITO

The monsoon season means an exponential increase of the malaria-bearing mosquito. In 1942, the epidemic was of such proportions that entire divisions were laid up. As a result, new anti-mosquito measures have been introduced and are strictly adhered to; officers of units found lax in this regard are harshly reprimanded. All tents and shelters must be sprayed before morning parade and soldiers must apply anti-mosquito cream twice daily. Long trousers and long-sleeved shirts are standard issue in an effort to reduce the cases of bites. Each of these measures, if strictly adhered to, provides a +1 circumstance bonus to Fortitude checks when determining whether a soldier has contracted malaria (as detailed in *Land of the Rising Dead*).

However, mosquitoes are not merely feared for the disease they carry. Some grow to such size that they can drain a man entirely of blood, leaving him nothing more than a desiccated corpse (see below).

Ticks

With both leeches and mosquitoes associated with the monsoon season, one would assume the soldiers eagerly await the dry season, but even this relatively comfortable period brings with it dangers. Jungle ticks are an insidious evil, hard to ward against but deadly due to the scrub typhus they bear.

SLEEP

As a result of the many privations a soldier must endure while waging war in the jungle, and the constant necessity of staying alert, soldiers need more frequent rest than might

otherwise be the case in other theaters. After every week in the jungle a character must succeed at a Fortitude save (DC12+2 per previous check) or become fatigued. Even the most hardened soldier will eventually be worn down and their fighting ability undermined in these conditions. With that in mind, the army maintains rest areas a day's march to the rear, and units are intended to rotate through them for a total of two weeks out of every six. Here the troops can recuperate from their ordeals, enjoy extra rations, and receive medical examinations. Meanwhile, their unit can be reorganized as necessary. Of course, operational considerations or surprise attacks may prevent this rotation from happening, leaving fatigue a life-threatening danger for officers to consider.

JUNGLE DISEASES

Several diseases are prevalent in the warm and tropical climate of North East India. In addition to those already detailed in the *Land of the Rising Dead* sourcebook, War Masters should be aware of a few others.

SCRUB TYPHUS

Also known as mite fever, and occurring widely through Asia, this disease is carried by ticks whose larvae infest rodents. The ticks transmit the disease by biting, resulting in a sore developing in a few days. Severe headaches, shivering and fever develop within 10 days. Since infection is more likely in areas of thick dry vegetation, soldiers are taught to avoid such areas whenever possible and to sleep at least 1 foot from the ground.

Infection: Bite (ticks); **DC15;** **Incubation:** 10 days; **Damage:** 1d3 Strength

DENGUE FEVER

The disease is transmitted via mosquitoes as malaria and lasts for about a week, with headaches, pains in the joints, and a rash. Unlike malaria, one attack by this virus usually confers immunity.

HORRORS OF THE JUNGLE



BLOOD MUD

Medium-Size Ooze

Hit Dice: 3d10 + 10 (26 hp)

Initiative: -5 (Dex)

Speed: 10 ft.

AC: 5 (-5 Dex)

Attacks: Slam +3 melee

Damage: Slam 1d6 + 1

Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./ 5 ft.

Special Attacks: Improved Grab, Constrict 1d6 + 1, Blood Drain, Mire

Special Qualities: Blindsight, Cold and Fire Immunity, Ooze, Camouflage

Saves: Fort +1, Ref -4, Will -4

Abilities: Str 13, Dex 1, Con 12, Int -. Wis 1, Cha 1

Climate/Terrain: Tropical jungle or swamp

Organization: Solitary

Challenge Rating: 4

Treasure: Standard

Alignment: Always neutral

Advancement: 4-6 HD (Medium-Size), 7-9 (Large)

A blood mud is an amorphous creature that inhabits marshes, swamps, and water sources within jungles. Made entirely of dark mud, it

grows to about 8 feet in diameter and to a thickness of about 6 inches, and is indistinguishable from its earthen surroundings. Sometimes, fragments of bones can be seen jutting forth from their mass, evidence of their predatory habits.

COMBAT

Mindless but always ravenously hungry, blood mud lies in wait for its victims to approach. They employ their mire ability to ensure victims are unable to flee.

Improved Grab: To use this ability, the blood mud must hit with its slam attack. If it gets a hold, it can constrict its victim.

Constrict: A blood mud deals automatic slam damage with a successful grapple, and may attempt to drain blood.

Blood Drain: Constricted victims are drained of blood. This deals 1d4 points of temporary Constitution damage per round.

Mire: Once per hour, the creature can soften a patch of earth 10' in radius into a thick, engulfing mud. The range of effect is 30 feet. Any creature within this area of effect sink to a depth of 4 feet and must make a Reflex save (DC14) or be held fast, unable to move, attack, or cast spells. The only means of escape (short of being rescued) is to make an Escape Artist (DC20) check. Those that succeed at the save can move through the mud at half speed, though they can't run or charge, and make attacks at -3 to hit.

Blindsight: The creature can ascertain prey

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within 60 feet using scent and vibration

Ooze: Immune to mind-influencing effects, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, and polymorphing. Not subject to critical hits.

ELEPHANT LEECH

Large-Size Vermin (Aquatic)

Hit Dice: 4d8+12 (30 hp)

Initiative: +1 (Dex)

Speed: 20 ft., Swim 40 ft.

AC: 15 (-1 size, +1 Dex, +5 natural)

Attacks: Bite +6 melee

Damage: Bite 1d10+5

Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 10 ft./5 ft.

Special Attacks: Improved Grab, Blood Drain,

Special Qualities: Vermin, Fire Vulnerability

Saves: Fort +7, Ref +2, Will +1

Abilities: Str 17, Dex 12, Con 17, Int -, Wis 10, Cha 1

Skills: Hide +12, Move Silently +12, Swim +13

Feats: Weapon Finesse (Bite)

Climate/Terrain: Warm swamp or aquatic

Organization: Solitary or swarm (2-5)

Challenge Rating: 3

Treasure: None

Alignment: Always neutral

Advancement: 5-10 HD (Large)

An invertebrate with a voracious appetite for blood, an elephant leech is indistinguishable from its more mundane brethren save for its great size (generally 10' in length) and the pair of tusks that grow on either side of its gaping maw.

COMBAT

An elephant leech prefers to wait until a creature wades through its watery domain or comes to drink before revealing itself and attacking. It

will venture from the water under the cover of darkness, however, if necessary to feed. The leech bites its victim and drains it of blood, often killing the creature.

Improved Grab: If an elephant leech hits an opponent with its bite attack, it deals normal damage and begins a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity. If it gets a hold, it drains blood. The leech's tusks impale victims, providing a +5 circumstance bonus to grapple checks. Each successful grapple check made during successive rounds automatically deals bite damage.

Blood Drain: An elephant leech drains blood from grappled opponents, automatically dealing 1d8 temporary points of Constitution damage each round it maintains its grip. It is completely sated after drinking 12 Constitution points worth of blood, at which time it cannot drain any more and will seek to retreat from combat.

Vermin: An elephant leech is immune to all mind-influencing effects and has dark vision with a 60-foot range.

Fire Vulnerability: An elephant leech takes double damage from fire attacks unless the attack allows a saving throw, in which case it takes double damage on a failure and no damage on a success.

SHADOW LEECH

Tiny vermin

Hit Dice: ¼ d8 (1 hp)

Initiative: +3

Speed: 5 ft., 15 ft. swim

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AC: 17 (+2 size, +3 Dex, +2 natural)

Attacks: Bite +5 melee

Damage: Bite paralysis

Face/Reach: 2 ½ ft. by 2 ½ ft./0 ft.

Special Attacks: Paralysis, Improved Grab, Blood Drain

Special Qualities: Shadow Walk, Vermin, Light Vulnerability

Saves: Fort +2, Ref +5, Will +1

Abilities: Str 2, Dex 17, Con 11, Int 1, Wis 12, Cha 1

Skills: Climb +11, Hide +18, Listen +8, Spot +8, Swim +12

Feats: Weapon Finesse (bite)

Climate/Terrain: Warm land or aquatic

Organization: Solitary, or swarm (2-5)

Challenge Rating: ½

Treasure: None

Alignment: Always neutral

Advancement: ½ to 1 HD (Tiny), 2-3 HD (Small)

The shadow leech is significantly larger than most leeches, but still isn't much bigger than a small garden snake. They are as black as pitch and seem to blend with shadows and darkness, becoming all but invisible. Unlike other leeches they are not harmed by fire, but do shy away from any source of bright light.

COMBAT

Despite their small size, shadow leeches are frighteningly deadly. Their poison can leave a grown man paralyzed or even in a coma, and several working in tandem can completely drain a human of blood. After drinking its fill, the creature shadow walks to safety.

Shadow Walk: Shadow leeches can use

shadow walk at will as per the spell cast at 15th level of ability.

Paralysis: Bite, Fortitude save DC12, initial damage paralysis for 1 minute; secondary damage coma for 1d4 days.

Improved Grab: If a shadow leech hits an opponent with its bite attack, it begins a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity. If it gets a hold, it drains blood. Each successful grapple check made during successive rounds automatically deals bite damage.

Blood Drain: A shadow leech drains blood from grappled opponents, automatically dealing 1 temporary point of Constitution damage each round it maintains its grip. It is completely sated after drinking 5 Constitution points worth of blood, at which time it is completely bloated and cannot drain any more.

Vermin: A shadow leech is immune to all mind-influencing effects and has darkvision with a 60-foot range.

Light Vulnerability: A shadow leech is instantly destroyed if exposed to sunlight, and will flee immediately by shadow walking if exposed to bright artificial light, such as that of a torch (that's a flashlight, to you Yanks).

Skills: A shadow leech gets a +12 racial bonus to Hide when in shadows.

CHITTAGONG MOZZIE

Tiny Vermin

HD: ¼ d8 (1 hp)

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Initiative: +2 (Dex)
Speed: 5 ft., 40 ft. fly (good)
AC: 16 (+2 size, +4 Dex)
Attacks: Bite +4 melee
Damage: 1d3-1 +poison
Face/Reach: 2 ½ ft. by 2 ½ ft./0 ft.
Special Attacks: Attach, Blood Drain, Disease, Swarm
Special Qualities: Fire Vulnerability.
Saves: Fort +2, Ref +6, Will +1
Abilities: Str 2, Dex 19, Con 10, Int 1, Wis 12, Cha 1
Skills: Climb +6, Hide +18, Move Silently +10
Feats: Weapon Finesse (Bite)
Climate/Terrain: Any tropical land or marsh
Organization: Swarm (10-100)
Challenge rating: ½
Treasure: None
Alignment: Always neutral
Advancement: ½-1 HD (Tiny), 2-3 HD (Small), 4-5 HD (Medium-size).

Chittagong mozzies are essentially monstrous mosquitoes, growing to an average of a foot in length, though some have been reported growing to twice that size and the Naga hill-people claim some are as large as a man. The British first encountered them half a century ago when conducting operations in the North East frontier of India, but despite their name they are not limited to merely the Chittagong Hills. Indeed, if anything they are more prevalent throughout the swamps of Burma.

COMBAT

Like the mundane mosquito, the Chittagong mozzie is most active after dark when it can stealthily approach its prey. Unless swarming, a single individual mozzie blood draining rarely

kills healthy humans outright, but the malaria it bears very often proves fatal.

Attach: If a mozzie hits with its bite attack it uses its legs to grab hold of the victim and sinks its proboscis into the skin. The only way to detach a feeding mozzie is to kill it or allow it to drink its fill. When attached, the insect's AC drops to 12.

Blood Drain: Once a mozzie sinks its proboscis into a victim it begins to drain blood at the rate of 1 point of temporary Constitution damage each round. It has its fill after draining 6 points, so while a single mozzie is rarely deadly a swarm is clearly a very real threat to a human.

Disease: The insects' bite carries with it a virulent form of malaria, far deadlier than that carried by normal mosquitoes. Symptoms: fever, chills, headache, tiredness, vomiting of blood, nausea; Infection: Bite; DC18; Incubation: 5 days; Damage: 2d8 Con.

Fire Vulnerability: A Chittagong mozzie takes double damage from fire attacks unless the attack allows a saving throw, in which case it takes double damage on a failure and no damage on a success. The creatures dislike fire and smoke, and take great pains to avoid either.

Swarm: A swarm of Chittagong mozzies is a frightening thing to behold. All creatures with 2 or fewer HD flee from the swarm at their fastest possible speed and do not stop until they are a minimum of 100 feet from the insects. Any creature with 3-5 HD flees as well unless it makes a successful Will save (DC10+ 1 per 10 insects in the swarm). Within a swarm, vision is limited to 10 feet.

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Infection: Bite (Mosquito); DC15; Incubation: 1 week; Damage: 1d4 Con

CHARACTERS



PCs created for adventures in Burma should be British if they are grunts or officers (or of those character types are presented in Land of the Rising Dead). Players can choose other character types with the War Master's approval. This mission is best played with a squad made up of British soldiers, but two new starting packages are presented below for later missions in this theater. There is also a selection of new feats particular to the British experience in the Far East.

NEW STARTING PACKAGES

While most Weird Wars campaigns focus on the fighting men who won victory for the Allied cause, this overlooks the invaluable role played by "rear-echelon" types, military and civilian alike, who supported the men in the field in various ways. Below are two new starting packages for players in a Far East setting, characters from either of which could be recruited by OSI.

BESA BELLE (EXPERT)

You feel for the boys fighting in the jungles, so far from any civilization and without even the slightest of comforts. With the Japanese on the borders of the Raj and bombs raining down on India's cities, the threat to your home suddenly became very real. It was therefore an easy decision to join the Bengal Entertainment for the Services Association (BESA), a locally-raised

touring troupe that visits with the army camps in the field to offer the soldiers a brief respite from the war. Its very rewarding work, and you find the warmth of the reception increases with every mile you go towards the front lines. The soldiers nicknamed you all "besa belles", a sobriquet you proudly wear as a badge of distinction.

You spend as much time near the front as possible, convinced that's where you're needed most. You've seen some terrible things in the jungle, but it hasn't shaken your resolve. In fact, it's only made you want to contribute more to the war effort.

Weapons: None

Skill Selection: Choose a number of skills equal to 6 + your character's Intelligence modifier.

Skill	Ranks	Ability
Diplomacy	4	Cha
Driving	4	Dex
Gather Information	4	Cha
Knowledge (local)	4	Int
Listen	4	Wis
Perform	4	Cha
Search	4	Int
Sense Motive	4	Wis
Spot	4	Wis

Feats: Honest Face (+2 to Diplomacy and Gather Information), Skill Focus (Perform).

Gear: Several changes of clothes, touring truck, mess kit.

MFTU Doc (MEDIC)

You are assigned to a Malarial Forward Treatment Unit located just behind the front lines. Being so far forward means you can save a lot of lives that might otherwise have been

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lost to disease, but it also means you've had your share of close calls with regards to the enemy and seen some strange illnesses. Your CO quickly discounts these cases as malaria before hurriedly shipping the patients off under armed guard to God knows where (and you know better than to ask), but you don't subscribe to his prognosis. If there are new diseases out there, perhaps even mutant strains of malaria, you want to help protect the troops from it. But it looks like you'll have to do it on your own.

Weapons: None

Skill Selection: Choose a number of skills equal to 6 + your character's Intelligence modifier.

Skill	Ranks	Ability
Combat Medicine	4	Wis
Concentration	2	Con
Diplomacy	2	Cha
Driving	4	Dex
Knowledge (Disease)	2	Int
Search	4	Int
Spot	4	Wis

Feats: Great Fortitude, Skill Focus (Knowledge: Disease)

Gear: Helmet with red cross, arm band with red cross, medical kit, mess kit, canteen, anti-mosquito spray, 4 tubes of anti-mosquito cream, 4 doses of meprazine (+2 to Combat Medicine checks against malaria).

NEW FEATS



AIR SUPPLY

You have contacts with someone in the RAF and can get supplies dropped to you from the air.

Prerequisite: Officer class, Cha 13+

Benefits: Air supply is vital in the jungle due to the long and tenuous lines of supply, and aircraft are equally important for the speedy evacuation of wounded soldiers. Luckily for the men under your command you have a contact with the RAF and can request airdrops or evacs with a successful Diplomacy roll (DC15; though the Warmaster is free to modify the difficulty depending upon the circumstances). Only a single request can be made per adventure and it must be feasible—the target must be within range of transport aircraft, evacuation requires a landing strip, and so forth. Finally, since large transports are in extremely short supply in theatre, the plane is likely a small aircraft—a Westland Lysander or WACO (both detailed in Afrika Korpse)—and therefore can only carry a few hundred pounds of re-supply or a single wounded soldier.

HAD IT!

You previously contracted dengue fever and are no longer susceptible to the disease

Prerequisites: None

Benefit: At some point in the past you contracted dengue fever, which means you can't catch it ever again. You are completely immune to the disease.

MOSQUITO REPELLANT

It seems the mozzies can't stand the taste of your blood and don't bother with you much.

Prerequisite: Weird Circumstance

Benefit: While your mates are covered in repellant cream and still swatting away hordes of mosquitoes, you're walking past in your skivvies with nary a bite. Whether it's your odor or some-

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thing in your blood you don't know, but the little buggers don't seem to pay you much mind. As a result, you need not fear contracting malaria or dengue fever.

STAG

You actually like sentry duty (or stag, as the blokes call it), and what's more you're good at it.

Prerequisite: Wis 13+

Benefits: When alone and standing sentry, your senses become attuned to the jungle around you. You gain +2 to Spot and Listen checks when operating by yourself, and concealment for opponents is reduced by one degree (total concealment becomes nine-tenths, and so on). In addition, you can tell the difference between natural and unnatural sounds, even differentiating the footfall of an English Tommy and a Japanese soldier.

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WAR MASTERS BRIEF

This adventure takes place in Burma in the autumn 1943, during the Second Arakan campaign. The "squad" can either consist of regular troops thrown together in an ad hoc task force if this is the PCs first adventure together, or be a team of OSI veterans already hardened by experiences with the strange and supernatural.

The action begins with a briefing at 14th Army Headquarters, where the squad has assembled for a mission of some importance, well behind enemy lines on the Arakan Peninsula. British Intelligence has grown concerned because an

entire Japanese division has seemingly disappeared and decrypted messages indicate that a team of surveyors is searching for a ford in the region.

Putting two and two together, the British fear that the Japanese have located a ford by which to filter troops across the swollen Teknaf River and thereby affect a flanking attack. The squad is to determine the veracity of these reports, and do such as they might to undermine the Japanese efforts.

The PCs are to be delivered by sampan, crewed by four Indians intimate with the local waterways, to a location near to the point where the radio transmissions were triangulated. From there, they will be on foot while the boat retreats a safe distance downstream to await the squad's return. Any reasonable requests for equipment can be granted, but War Masters should bear in mind that the 14th Army wasn't called the "Forgotten Army" for nothing. It is relatively low on the priority list, so many modern items will be in extremely short supply.

IN NEED OF REPELLANT!

The boat journey is largely uneventful as, over several days, the sampan works its way up the rain-swollen Teknaf River, always moving under the cover of darkness and holing up during the day to avoid detection. The days are spent camouflaged and silently, the nights long and filled with fears of discovery. In this way, the first two days go off without undue difficulty. As the final evening approaches the spirits of the crew are buoyed by the belief that they might just make the trip successfully.

Without warning, however, a maddening din rises from the jungle canopy. It's a rapidly approaching buzzing, like a cloud of angry bees. A swarm of Chittagong Mozzies swoops down to attack the squad and the sampan's crew. The PCs must ward off the vermin without resorting to firearms. Should they fail to do so, the first Japanese squads arrive in 4d4 rounds. In addition to protecting themselves, the squad must keep the 3-man sampan crew alive to avoid having to man the craft and navigate the unknown waters.

Chittagong Mozzie (10): CR 1/2; *Tiny vermin*; HD ¼ d8; Hp 1; Init +2; Spd 5 ft, 40 ft. fly (good); AC 16; Atk +4 *melee* (1d3-1 plus poison); SA *Attach, Blood Drain, Disease, Swarm*; SQ *Fire Vulnerability* (double damage, and seek to avoid fire or smoke); AL N; SV Fort +2, Ref +6, Will +1; Str 2, Dex 19, Con 10, Int 1, Wis 12, Cha 1

If the party alerts the Japanese to its presence, the squad must succeed at Move Silently checks every hour on the move and Hide checks every hour spent stationary. Any failures indicate a squad of 4d4 Japanese soldiers (see stats on page 17) has discovered the PCs' whereabouts. Any further fighting summons an additional squad of enemy soldiers, which arrives in 4d4 rounds.

Should the squad take cover from the patrols in any available pools or in the river itself (hidden among the foliage on the banks perhaps) there is a good chance that they are afflicted by leeches of some variety. Again, they have the dilemma of dealing with these horrible creatures silently.

After either avoiding or evading the Japanese patrols, the squad reaches the point at which it must leave the boat. If the sampan crew is still alive, they drop the soldiers and retreat along the river to await the mission's end. If not, the squad must make arrangements to hide the boat and continue on foot.

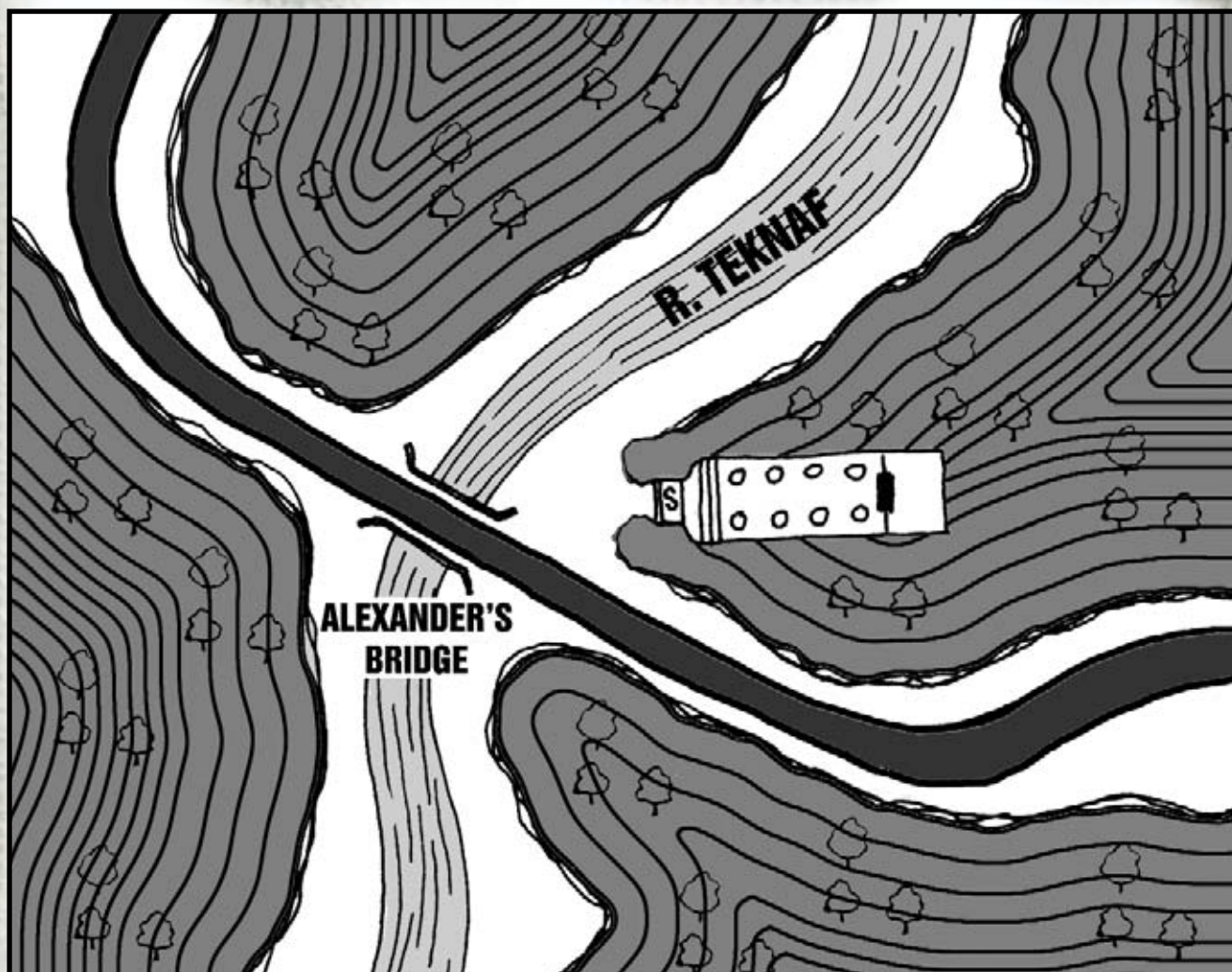
If the squad already alerted the Japanese, the area swarms with patrols and progress is slow this evening. If the squad is yet undiscovered, there are fewer patrols and the PCs penetrate deep into the jungle before nightfall.

A BRIDGE TOO FAR?



Making camp for the night allows the soldiers a brief rest, though sentries should be posted around the clock to keep watch. In the dead of night, however, the squad is alerted by a rumbling sensation that vibrates through the ground and a sound, not unlike that of a heavily laden train struggling along its tracks, which causes birds take to the air in a panic. Investigating the source of the sound brings them to a stretch of river broiling and muddled by some unseen, underwater force. Though the origin of the noise is difficult to ascertain precisely, the raging waters of the river seem to be the source.

A rough path leads from the water's edge into the jungle. Wide enough for trucks and light tanks to navigate, the path is clearly freshly cut and disappears into the thick jungle on both sides of the river. A Spot check (DC12) also reveals a cave entrance in the hills nearby (see map below).



A Blood Mud lies hidden within the brackish water, revealing itself only when potential prey comes close enough to attack.

Blood Mud: CR 4; Medium Ooze; HD 3d10+10; Hp 26; Init -5; Spd 10 ft; AC 5; Atk +3 melee (1d6+1); SA improved grab, constrict; SQ blindsight (60 ft), cold and fire immunity, ooze, camouflage (Spot DC15); AL N; SV Fort +1, Ref -4, Will -4; Str 13, Dex 1, Con 12, Int -, Wis 1, Cha 1

Tactics: The blood mud remains concealed and motionless below the pool of brackish water

(which provides half-concealment), waiting for creatures to approach the waters edge. Once a creature is within 5 feet the blood mud lashes out, trying to grab a victim and pull it into the water to drown. It uses its mire ability to trap the creature if its initial grapple attempt isn't successful, or to prevent others from coming to its defense.

Characters who watch the water for five minutes or more see an ancient stone bridge slowly rising from the depths accompanied by the great rumbling sound. Though covered in weeds

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and mud, its clear the bridge is very solid and likely capable of supporting mechanized units.

The edifice is a masterpiece of engineering, left by Alexander the Great in anticipation of completing his conquest of the world. At either end of the massive stone structure is a slime-covered plinth on which stand worn and cracked statues of Greek warriors. Between the two end plinths, a number of stepped stone blocks rumble and grate upward into a gentle arc. Forcing the upward motion of the bridge are two great Corinthian columns, stained with water and damaged by wear. Weeds and mud clings to the structure and slide from the stony surfaces.

If the squad continues to watch the unfolding of events, after five more minutes of painstakingly slow movement, the bridge finishes its emergence from the waters. With a thundering boom, Alexander's secret bridge shudders into its fully raised position, allowing passage across the river Teknaf.

CAVE

The cave extends only a short way into the hill-

side and ends in an apparently solid rock wall. The walls show worn Greek carving and a successful Spot check (DC10) detects on the dirt floor signs of significant recent activity.

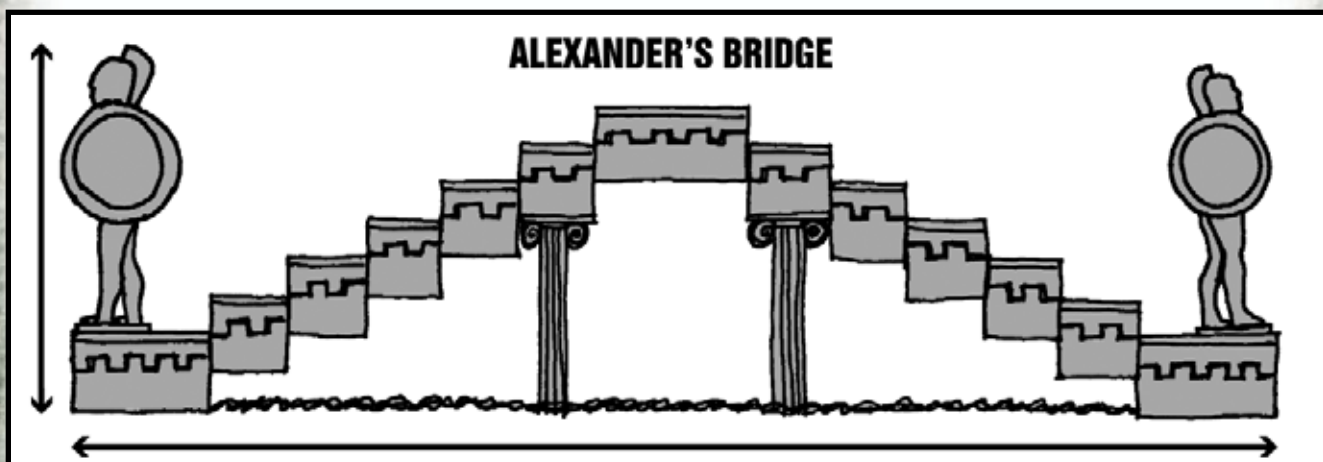
SECRET DOOR

The solid rock door has been carefully crafted to emulate the surrounding cave walls, making it difficult to notice (Spot check DC20; Search DC15). Characters may notice the concealed stone pressure plate nearby (Search check DC15) that causes the door to swing inwards.

Heavy Stone Door: 3 ft. thick; Hardness 8; Hp 280; Break (DC25)

A shironingyo has set up an ambush (Spot check DC22) near the door by scraping a shallow into the cave floor and covering itself with earth. It has been ordered to remain here and guard the secret door against non-Japanese intruders. Tireless and without need of sustenance, it never abandons its vigil.

Shironingyo: CR 4; Large Undead; HD 4d12; Hp 26; Init +1, Spd 30 ft.; AC 13; Atk +7 melee (1d8+5, slam); SA Poison Gas (10 foot cone, Fortitude save DC17, damage



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3d6. Use once/four rounds); SQ Undead; AL NE, SV Fort +0, Ref +2, Will +4; Str 20, Dex 13, Con -, Int 8, Wis 10, Cha 1

Skills: Climb +11, Hide +7, Move Silently +7, Search +5, Spot +6. Feats: Improved Bull Rush, Power Attack

Tactics: The shironingyo hides in its concealed position by the door. As soon as the door opens, it releases its poison gas attack and bursts from cover with an improved bull rush attack. It has no fear, no remorse, and fights until destroyed.

HALLWAY

The cave opens into an expansive hallway decorated with crumbling tile mosaics. Mighty pillars, carved with the likeness of Greek gods and legendary monsters, support the ceiling 60-feet above. The bodies of two monstrosly large men, their flesh so horribly burned that bones and musculature pierce through blackened skin, lie in twisted positions upon the floor. Observant characters (Spot DC14) also notice burn marks upon the pillars around the bodies. The corpses are of shironingyo, sent before their Japanese masters to clear the way of danger. They fell prey to an ancient flamethrower trap, triggered by weight being placed upon a 5' strip of floor stretching across the hall.

Flamethrower Trap: CR 4; nozzles in the mouths of cockatrices on the pillars fire jets of Greek fire (4d6 damage), Reflex save (DC18) for half damage; Search (DC22); Disable Device (DC24).

One of the shironingyo yet has a sliver of life in it. If its body is disturbed, the monster jerks awake and fights with the last fiber of its exis-

tence. The damage to its body is so severe that the undead is no longer able to walk, and can only move with great difficulty by dragging itself along with the ragged remains of his arms.

Shironingyo: CR 4; Large Undead; HD 4d12; Hp 4; Init +0, Spd 10 ft. (crawl); AC 13; Atk +5 melee (1d8+3, slam); SA Poison Gas (10 foot cone, Fortitude save DC17, damage 3d6. Use once/four rounds); SQ Undead; AL NE, SV Fort +0, Ref +0, Will +4; Str 17, Dex 10, Con -, Int 8, Wis 10, Cha 1

Skills: Climb +11, Hide +7, Move Silently +7, Search +5, Spot +6. Feats: Improved Bull Rush, Power Attack

Tactics: The shironingyo only attacks if its body is disturbed, attempting to grapple and strangle the offending creature. Otherwise, it's harmless. Anyone who sees the corpse come to life should make a Will saving throw (DC10, or DC15 for the subject of the attack) or become shaken (-2 to attacks, saves, and Skill checks until the end of the encounter).

Once both the flamethrower trap and the shironingyo have been dealt with, the PCs are free to examine the rest of the chamber.

CONTROL ROOM

As they fight the monsters or cross the impressive hall, the squad is thrown suddenly to the floor as the sound of an explosion reverberates through the ruins. Having heard the PCs approach, the Japanese have collapsed part of the ceiling in the control room to jam the door. They intend to delay the PCs long enough for the bridge to complete its ascent, while urgently calling for reinforcements by radio, then hold the

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control room until those reinforcements arrive. Therefore, when the squad reaches the control room, they find the stone door secured in place.

Heavy Stone Door: 3 ft. thick; Hardness 8; Hp 280; Break (DC25)



If the squad has moved quickly, they reach the control room as the Japanese commander, Lt. Hiroe, very nearly has the bridge in position. The squad can attempt to stop her, but even if they manage to gun her down immediately the grinding sound of the gears slowly raising the edifice into position continues unabated.

As a young woman, Hiroe had studied in archeology in western universities, intent on researching and preserving the knowledge of the Orient. As war clouds loomed over Asia, she joined the military to serve the Empire in an official capacity, using her knowledge to uncover relics and ancient secrets of value to the Japanese war effort. One such mission went terribly awry, leaving her permanently scarred. Her body was badly blistered and a red-hot coal impaled in the skin at the base of her neck. Now, whatever the weather, she sweats uncontrollably, but wears the heavy army garments at all times to hide her shame at her damaged body.

Hiroe discovered veiled references to the bridge in the course of her studies and volunteered to lead the team searching for the vanishing relic. Having found the ancient structure, Hiroe considers it her own – a means to promotion and glory. She is also very aware of the importance of the crossing point and is ferocious in her defense of the controls.

Lt. Hiroe: Officer 4th; CR 4; SZ Medium-size Human; HD 4d10; Hp 22; Init +1, Spd 30 ft.; AC 12; Atk +5 melee (1d8, katana), +4 ranged (2d6, Nambu); SA Steam Breath (once/four rounds breath a cone of scalding mist cloud; 4d6 fire damage; 40 foot range; cloud dissipates immediately); SQ: Devotion (+4 to Will saves in combat); AL LN, SV Fort +1, Ref +2, Will +5; Str 11, Dex 13, Con 11, Int 14, Wis 12, Cha 12

Skills: Disable Device +2, First Aid +5, Intimidate +5, Knowledge (Archeology) +5, Leadership +6, Move Silently +5, Search +6, Spot +7. **Feats:** Automatic Weapons Proficiency, Command Voice, Firearms Proficiency, Martial Weapons

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Proficiency, Point Blank Shot.

Tactics: Hiroe uses her steam breath attack initially, then pulls her pistol and engages the PCs, hoping to take as many with her as possible. She fights to the death, buying time for reinforcements to arrive and secure in the knowledge that before dawn an entire division will have crossed and a great victory will be at hand.

Protecting Hiroe, and willing to lay down their lives in her defense, are four Japanese soldiers. Use these stats also for the other Japanese soldiers the squad might encounter as they approach and escape from their objective.

Japanese Soldiers (4): Grunt 1st; CR 1; Medium-size Human; HD 1d10; Hp 10; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 12; Atk: +3 ranged (2d8, Arisaka Model 38), +1 melee (1d4, bayonet); AL LN; SV Fort +2, Ref +1, Will +0; Str 11, Dex 12, Con 11, Int 10, Wis 11, Cha 10.

Skills: Artillery +2, Heal +2, Hide +3, Move Silently +4, Search +2, Spot +3, Swim +2.
Feats: Automatic Weapons Proficiency, Firearms Proficiency, Point Blank Shot,
Weapon Focus: Arisaka Model 38.

Tactics: The soldiers exchange gunfire with the squad, hoping to wipe them out or at least hold them off until reinforcements arrive. They are wary of throwing grenades around, for fear of damaging the bridge mechanism before the structure is fully useable. When either half of the soldiers are dead or Hiroe has been killed, whichever comes sooner, those remaining mount a suicide banzai charge.

As soon as the din from the firefight dissolves, the squad hears over the Japanese radio urgent

orders sending reinforcements to the cave and beginning the movement of troops towards the bridge. It should be made clear that they have very little time before a lot of Japanese begin swarming the area.

ALEXANDER'S LEGACY

There are several methods by which the characters might seek to disable the bridge. The first thing they are likely to try is simply to destroy its pilings, though the characters should not have enough explosives to do so. They may be able to weaken one of the great columns, but this still requires at least one character climbing under the bridge – a time consuming and risky prospect when the area is about to be swarming with the enemy.

More inventive characters may elect to jam the controls in the raised position (allowing the RAF to bomb it come daylight) with a simple Disable Device check, but they run the risk of Japanese engineers repairing it before dawn. A more thorough solution would be to destroy the controls.

Characters making a Search check (DC15) find a stone trapdoor accessing a crawlspace located below the chamber crowded with gears and pulleys. Destroying this equipment ensures the bridge remains inoperable for several days, as the Japanese are forced to repair the ancient workings.

Finally Characters making an Engineering roll (DC20) are able to identify a self-destruct mechanism left by the Greeks to disable the bridge if ever they felt the need to do so. Essentially, underwater hydraulics “kick the feet out” from

WEIRD WARS - BRIDGE ACROSS TIME

under the bridge and topple the pillars, causing the bridge to collapse. If the squad chooses this last method and opts to escape by racing across the bridge (see below), stage the destruction to coincide with their crossing and the ensuing battle, increasing the tension immeasurably.

ESCAPE

The characters can then either race to meet the sampan at the rendezvous (the crew make it clear they will not attempt to bring the boat any closer, for fear of drawing enemy fire) or escape across the bridge. In the former event, characters must make a series of Move Silently and Hide rolls to slip past enemy forces scouring the forest for them. If they fail in any of these rolls, or dawdle in the cave, they are engaged by a squad of 6 Japanese soldiers (stats as above) who attempt to keep them at bay for 4d4 rounds, at which time another squad arrives to outflank them. Every 4d4 rounds of contact, another squad of 6 Japanese soldiers arrives until the PCs flee.

If characters elect to cross the bridge instead, they arrive just before a Model 94 Tankette does. The Tankette chases the squad across the 120-foot span, leading to an exciting running fight, possibly as the bridge begins to crumble around them (depending on the squad's earlier attempts to sabotage it). In 5 rounds a second Model 94 Tankette, this one with three soldiers hitchhiking a ride on top, arrives at the bridge as well.

Model 94 Tankette: *Armour Class: 11; Damage Points: 30; Size: Large; Weapons: 6.5mm machinegun (turret); Ammo: 50 bursts; Crew: 2; Armour-Turret 9/5/4, Upper Hull 24/10/4, Lower Hull 24/12/4, Deck 4, Suspension 25.*

THE PRICE OF FAILURE

The exact repercussions of any failure to destroy the bridge depend upon whether the WM chooses to maintain the historical events or allow for radical divergences. In the former case, the direct results of the squad's failure to is likely minor in the grand scheme of things: the Japanese counter attack diverts the 7th Indian Division from its planned offensive, a delay that inevitably costs more lives but doesn't ultimately undermine the success of the campaign.

If the WM elects to make the actions of the PCs play a much more central role in the unfolding events, then the Japanese spoiler attack succeeds in derailing the planned Arakan offensive. The Japanese units cut the fragile supply lines feeding the 7th and 5th Indian Divisions, drawing allied reinforcements into the region that weakens other sectors. The effects are felt in January when Japan launches Operation HA-GO towards the Imphal Plain, which sends the British reeling. While the Japanese are ultimately halted before making any significant advances into the Raj, the Allied invasion of Burma is thereby postponed by several vital months.

War Masters with a taste for the apocalyptic may decide that failure to destroy the bridge leads to a series of co-ordinated attacks and a massive Japanese advance across Asia. This could serve as the start of a campaign in which the heroes find themselves cut-off and struggling to make it back to the rapidly shifting allied lines. As fatigue and disease take their toll on the heroes, this could be a tense, danger-packed campaign.

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WE WANT TO TAKE YOU O

The funeral cortege shimmered in the deepwater glow of the luminescent coral.

A circle of beautiful blue-green swimmers formed a living halo around the clamshell casket bound for the afterlife. The death of their king forced hundreds of the people of the sea to gather at the seabed. Thord's family had ruled Sadia, the seabed realm for two thousand years. Now full of sorrow the new king mourned at the passing of his father. The wars with the Zoonoans, and the Kua Toans had taken their toll on the highest echelons of his society and now they all suffered.

Finally the cask was placed into the newest, and highest chamber adjacent to the shrine containing the sleeping servants of the dead kings.



ILLUS. JIM BRANCH

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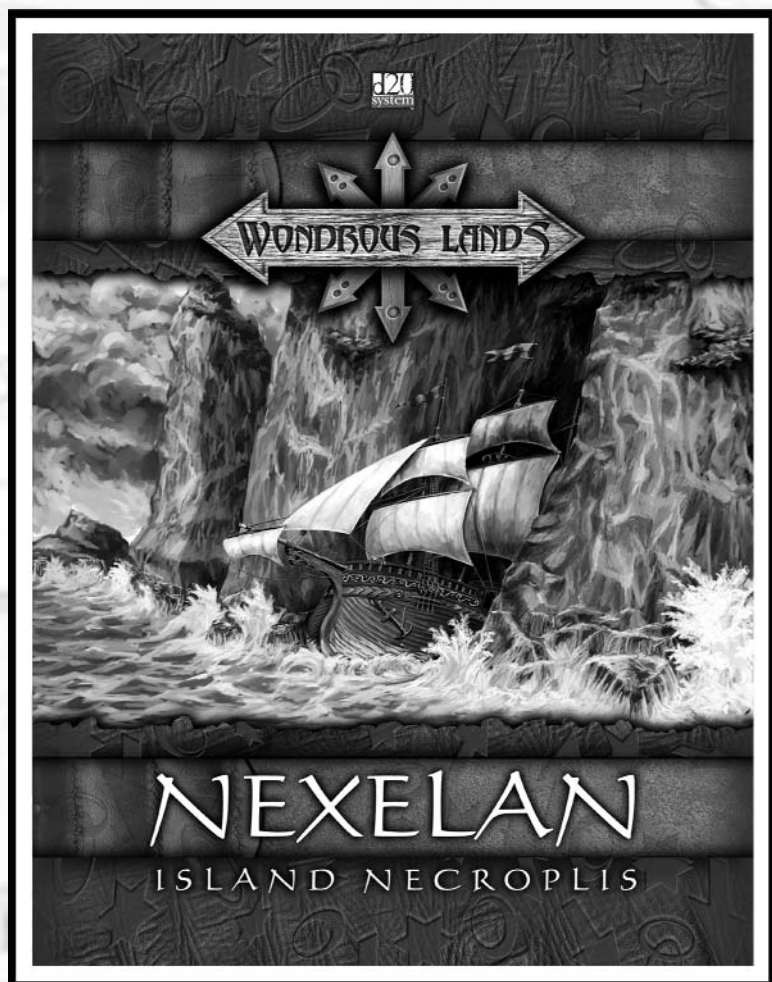
N A JOURNEY...

As the chambers were eventually sealed, all stopped in silent prayer.

Then it came.

The Anger of their goddess was fierce and unrelenting. In a single doom-filled moment, Soonoa spewed forth hot lava and the tower collapsed. Many died bravely protecting their kin, few escaped only to be swallowed by Soonoa's fury. All of Sadia began to rise and the mountain pierced the surface of the sea, newly born to the world of men and elves.

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In the depths of the jungle, something moves for the first time in centuries. Long forgotten, the bridge has remained buried at the bottom of the water for countless years. But it has been discovered again and, where once it bore the invading armies of Alexander across the raging river, now it will move again in the service of the imperial Japanese army. Unless, that is, your band of heroes can put a stop to the enemy's plans. The armies may have changed but the importance of the crossing has not diminished over time.

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