

# The Curse of Fire Mountain

An AD&D Living Jungle Adventure

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This is a standard RPGA Network tournament. A four-hour time block has been set aside for this event. It is a good idea to ask each player to put a name tag in front of him or her. The tag should have the player's name at the bottom, and the character's name at the top. This makes it easier for the players to keep track of who is playing which character.

The actual playing time will be about three hours. Make sure you use the last 20 to 30 minutes of the event time block to have the players capsule their characters and vote. The standard RPGA Network voting procedures will be used. Make sure you have finished voting before you collect the players' voting sheets. This way you will not be influenced by their votes and comments.

The players are free to use the game rules to learn about equipment and weapons their characters are carrying.

Please see the attached Living Jungle Campaign information: Hero Points and Character Creation Instructions.

## Hero Points

Hero Points are a game device for rewarding good-aligned characters for particularly selfless or heroic actions. They affect the outcome of die rolls, but promote role-playing rather than just number crunching.

All good-aligned heroes can earn Hero Points, but only human characters may have more than one Hero Point "saved up" at a time. Heroes earn Hero Points by acting bravely, selflessly, daringly, and dramatically. Normally, a tournament author will point out several instances in which the heroes can earn Hero Points during the adventure.

But sometimes, heroes may act heroically in unanticipated circumstances. In these cases, the judge determines whether a PC has earned a Hero Point; since defining these qualities is difficult, here are some general guidelines about what do not and what do constitute heroic actions:

Heroic actions are not hesitant or calculated. A warrior whose companions must persuade him to fight a local champion to save an NPC from death is not heroic. A wizard who pauses to consider whether his spells will be more effective than weapons against the champion before agreeing to fight him is clever and perhaps even brave, but he is not heroic. Heroism is impulsive, not scheming.

Heroic actions are not performed for personal gain. If two heroes elbow each other out of the way to be the one to earn a Hero Point, then neither receives

one: *"I will fight the champion."* *"No, the honor will be mine!"* Further, when a PC performs an act which has an obvious reward (fighting the champion to gain his magical spear) no Hero Point is awarded. If the PC expects a reward for his action, then it is not heroic. Heroism is selfless, not selfish.

Heroic actions are not safe and easy. A PC must face and realize she faces a serious threat for an action to be heroic. Thus, a warrior who leaps into a pit of vipers to save a fallen comrade is acting heroically—unless she thinks she is immune to the poison or that the vipers are no threat.

A rogue who rushes across a vine bridge to save a young boy from an imminent landslide is heroic only if he has a real chance to fall or be caught in the landslide—and knows it. Heroic actions are dangerous and difficult.

Heroic actions are not bland. If a PC says, *"Oh, I guess Kalida will face the champion,"* then the judge shouldn't award a Hero Point. On the other hand, a PC who accepts a challenge with panache is acting heroically: *"I, Kalida, son of Harusa the Wise Woman, accept your boastful challenge in defense of all the Nubari tribes!"* Heroism is grand and dramatic.

When a judge deems a PC's action worthy of a Hero Point, he or she fills out one of the six Hero Point certificates provided with each tournament and hands it to the player. The PC can use the Hero Point immediately.

Except in special circumstances (noted in tournaments), a PC can earn only one Hero Point per adventure, which is why only six Hero Point certificates are provided for each tournament. Once they are all awarded, no more are available during the session.

Human heroes can never have more Hero Points than levels of experience. For example, any heroic actions performed by a 3rd level character who already has three Hero Points are still heroic, but they do not earn Hero Points. Nonhuman heroes may never have more than one Hero Point at a time; thus, a Saru PC who has earned one Hero Point must spend that Hero Point before being eligible to find another. (Note: Some special items and situations may allow a PC to exceed these limits.)

### Spending Hero Points

Hero Points affect rolls which determine the results of a PC's actions, including passive actions like resisting a spell effect. Hero Points do not affect an opponent's rolls. So a PC can spend a Hero Point to raise his own chance to hit an opponent, but the PC can't spend a point to lower the opponent's saving throw or Ability

check. A player may use Hero Points in one of three ways: to modify a die before it is thrown, to modify a die after it is thrown, or to re-roll a failed die roll.

Before a die is thrown, a PC may spend a Hero Point to gain a +2/d20 (or +10%/d100) bonus for combat rolls, saving throws, Ability checks, system shock, resurrection survival, or virtually any other d20 or d100 roll during the game. A Nubari PC may spend up to two Hero Points at a time in this manner, gaining a maximum bonus of +4/d20 (+20%/ d100) on a roll before the die is thrown.

After a die is thrown, a PC may spend a Hero Point to gain a +1/d20 (or +5%/d100) bonus on those same sorts of rolls. Again, a PC may spend up to two Hero Points in this manner, gaining a maximum bonus of +2/d20 (+10%/d100) on a roll after the die is thrown.

A PC may spend two Hero Points to re-roll any failed d20 or d100 die roll.

Whenever a PC spends a Hero Point, the judge must collect the player's Hero Point certificate and tear it in half.

heroes may use Hero Points to benefit the rolls of other good-aligned characters. Using a Hero Point in this manner is generous, but it is not in itself a heroic action (so the PC doesn't earn another Hero Point for using his own Hero Points to benefit another character).

### **Hero Points and Judge Rolls**

Occasionally, judges may—and should—roll dice secretly to determine the result of an action. For instance, an NPC wizard casts a *charm person* spell upon a PC, but the DM makes the saving throw secretly so that the players aren't sure of the spell's effects. Any time the judge makes a secret roll based on a PC's action, the PC may elect to spend a Hero Point to affect that roll, but the judge still rolls the dice secretly.

## **DM INTRODUCTION**

Many, many generations ago a group of Korobokuru who lived on the Rayanna savanna were driven from their homeland by a series of firestorms. There were five in one season, thus was born the legend of the Season of Five Fires. The korobokuru tribe, called the Morta, took the fires as a call from the god of fire mountain. So the tribe journeyed to the top of fire mountain to see the great god, not just the leaders, as is tradition, but the entire tribe.

The tribe wandered on the flanks of the mountain for several months until they stumbled on shafts

venting warm moist air. The Morta took this as the breath of the gods and as a sign of a blessed place, so they settled. The area around them was inhospitable, made up of steep cliffs and rocky plateaus, but the place of warm air was flat and well suited for settling. They learned quickly to adapt to the area. They built rock-based huts with thatched roofs, they hunted on the mountain and in the jungle, a half days journey below. The Morta also farmed small plateaus in the ashen soil.

The attached photos from National Geographic, March, 1969, show a little what the village looks like.

A number of years after the move a young brave warrior named Ronnk came upon a small pool of cooling lava. He did not know what it was, but curiously he thrust his pointed stick into it. When he pulled it out it was burning. At first Ronnk was terrified; the Morta had not used fire before this, because they feared it. Ronnk realized that he held the fire and controlled it (or thought he did). He proudly carried it back to the village. The Morta people were distrustful, but Ronnk soon had a fire going in the center of the village.

Ronnk then began to brag, boasting of his bravery in capturing the fire. The story grew bigger and bigger until he claimed he had stolen the fire from the god of fire mountain. In anger, god of the mountain sent to Ronnk a small stone carved figure. It walked out of Ronnk's fire and lay on his chest as he slept. In the morning Ronnk interpreted the figure as another gift from the gods, a reward for his bravery.

The gift was, however, cursed with bad luck. Within weeks the tribe was plagued with illnesses, accidents, loss of food sources, and attacks by beasts. Then the air vents, the breath of the gods, stopped. The Morta realized the source of their grief and abandoned the village one night, leaving Ronnk alone with his roaring fire and cursed statue.

Three years before this story opens, the grandfather of the great chief Bagoomba, Noburra, went on an extended walking tour called a walk-about. During his long journeys, he happened upon the Morta tribe in the Rayanna Savanna, and learned their story. He went to the Wise Ones searching for more information, and they sent him to the great elephants. From them he learned where the village site on the mountain was (for the Morta wisely did not tell him). He went there and found the stone figure. Despite attempts by the restless spirit of Ronnk to stop him, he took the figure.

As he continued his travels, he brought the curse of the God of Fire Mountain on the tribes he visited. The Wise Ones, the Simbara, the Rudra, and the Katimaya all suffered while he was present. Eventually the curse fell on him and he began to sicken. The

Koshiva found him fevered and delirious, and returned him to the Tribe of Big Chief Bagoomba. There he died, but before doing so he passed on the figure to Bagoomba, telling him to "burn this in the fires of revenge."

Bagoomba buried his grandfather Noburra, but did not understand the message regarding the figure so he kept it. Bad luck came upon the tribe and the chief, and after much suffering the witch doctor Bengoukee discovered the cause of the affliction and suggested that Bagoomba rid himself of the statue as soon as possible.

Bagoomba, cowed, tried to get rid of the figure by many means: throwing it in the river, burying it, even trying to smash it. It was all to no avail; every night it returned to him whole. In desperation, Bagoomba decided to give it away to a non-tribal member. This is where the story begins.

The upcoming Council of Tribes, the annual meeting of all tribes at the village of Big Chief Bagoomba, provides the perfect opportunity to get rid of the figurine. Bagoomba announces a contest of skills to find the bravest best warrior in the Jungle. To this person he plans to award the figure.

## Player Introduction

*The Council of Tribes, the annual meeting of Nubari and others hosted by the tribe of Big Chief Bagoomba, began two days ago. You have come to share stories, see relatives and loved ones from your home tribes, and to hear the news of the jungle. You might even be looking to trade some of your treasures with travelers from far off. Whatever the reason, you have come and enjoyed the celebrations. You are greatly anticipating the upcoming Challenge of the Warriors, this year's contest of skills and bravery. Chief Bagoomba promises great honor and prizes to the winners, who will be named the greatest warriors in all Malatra. Whether you have come to compete, to wager, or just to watch, the Challenge is the high point of the gathering.*

*This year's rainy season has been good, except for the tribe of Chief Bagoomba. Recent unexplained breaks in the rain have made conditions very dry and bad for growing this year. Animal attacks have also become more frequent in the area of Chief Bagoomba's tribe, and a whole herd of garuda fleeing a large Thunder Lizard flattened a small village near the Koshiva lands 12 days ago. The people of Chief Bagoomba's tribe were nervous when the Council meetings began, especially since the worst rains of the year pelted the village just as the*

*Council meetings opened, but they have relaxed as more and more people have come and nothing else unfortunate has happened.*

*Much excitement is in the air as the great drums sound, indicating that the Challenge of Warriors is soon to begin. In the center of the village, you can see a giant boar is being slowly roasted over a pit of coals, no doubt for the Feast of Warriors which will be held after dark.*

It is now the third day of the ten-day celebrations. This is a good time to allow the characters to introduce and describe themselves. They just happened to end up together at some point in the early afternoon, just before the Challenge of Warriors is to begin. Suggest that they tell each other what they have been doing for the past two days.

There are many others around, from different tribes. Korobokuru, shu, tam'hi, katanga, Nubari, and even a few lizardmen mill through the village. Some are eating fruit, some sitting and talking, some conducting trade (displaying ornamental objects and obviously describing their worth and workmanship), and others are testing their skills in mock combats, wrestling matches, or trials of strength and dexterity. Children play amongst the elders, or carry trays of food or clay jars of water to the feasting tables.

The PCs can talk to some of the people around. Portray the atmosphere as festive in a manic sort of way, as if the people of Bagoomba's tribe are trying too hard to make sure the people have a good time, and introduce the following as appropriate.

- A young girl, **Karon**, is slathering the boar from a bucket of herbs and berry juice. The smell is enticing. She does not know the recipe but says Grandma Mara does. She is very proud of her position as pig watcher. She is about 9, and will be a fine weaver of baskets and hats and such one day.
- **Grandma Mara** sits nearby dozing under a tree. She is a little angered if awoken but will be consoled if the person waking her offers her sweets or berry liquors. She proudly talks of her granddaughter, Karon, and her recipe for the baste pig. She will trade the recipe for one of equal quality and secrecy, provided the one who receives it agrees to keep it secret.
- **Chief Bagoomba** strolls through the crowd, greeting warriors and those who claim his attention. He does not spend more than a minute chatting with anyone. If a hero makes an Intelligence check with a -4 penalty, he notes that Bagoomba looks a little stressed, and is

trying to hide some nervousness about something. He will not talk about his worries, moving on if the PC mentions that he looks tense.

- A group of seven old men are gathered under a tree watching the young dancers. Both men and women dance in a complex pattern. The old men are retired warriors or shamans, happy to discuss which of the dancers is the best.

They will mention that the Council of Tribes comes at an unfortunate time, as Chief Bagoomba's grandfather, Noburra, died only a moon ago. Noburra, as he was called, became sick while traveling and was brought home to die. They really don't know anything more.

- Discussions with members of tribes from far away will reveal that the strange misfortunes which plague Bagoomba's people do not extend throughout the jungle. No one knows why there is bad luck here, but some speculate that Chief Bagoomba may again have brought down the wrath of ancient spirits.

- Many are speculating on the Challenge of Warriors, which is rumored to be unlike the usual contests which occur at the Council of Tribes. Some claim to have heard that contestants must fight great wart hogs without aid, run to the top of Fire Mountain and back, and even jump off of cliffs. No one is sure what is going to happen, and the few who know are working on the final preparations so they are not available.

When the characters are done talking to other people, or the game starts to slow down, move to the next encounter.

## The Challenge of Warriors

Chief Bagoomba is somewhat prejudiced towards warriors, it is true. He does not see people of the other "classes" as making a valuable contribution to tribal life, with few individual exceptions. However, every PC can find something in the Challenge of Warriors. Those who do not wish to participate can place wagers, watch, root for their favorites, or do other things in the meantime.

The mechanics of the Challenge, which is a race, are designed to flow quickly and easily, so that it can be played in an exciting and fast manner (thereby keeping everyone interested).

When you or the PCs are ready, read the following:

*The excitement reaches a peak as Chief Bagoomba mounts the large platform in the center of the village, near the roasting wart hog. His dignity suffers when he trips and falls onto the platform, but he rises as though his fall mattered not and turns to face the people. Nubari, saru, shu, and lizardmen surround the huge platform, and the chief begins to speak in his loud, booming voice.*

*"Warriors and friends, travelers, the Challenge of Warriors shall soon begin. This test, unique in all the jungle, shall determine the bravest and best among you. The warriors will first prove their strength and stamina by running from the village to the river. Then they will enter canoes and navigate the rapids past the large twin-trunked tree. There they will beach below the great cliff, and climb to its top. For the final test, the bravest will leap from the cliff to catch the rings which indicate victory. All who wish to prove their worth to all Nubari should gather at the south end of the village, where warriors of my tribe wait for you. May the spirits and the ancients smile upon you in this great test of skill, strength, agility, and bravery."*

The people mutter among themselves as they move to the starting area, and the PCs can overhear some comments on the contests:

- The River of Laughing Idols is at least half an hour's walk from the village, and the Chief must not mean the stream that the village uses for water which flows only five minutes' walk from the Chief's hut.

- The rapids are difficult to traverse by canoe, but the Koshiva deal with more difficult dangers on the River daily. Most feel that the rapids will not prove difficult.

- The cliff jump is something that is new, though some Nubari believe that this test is like the trial of the rings from the Huroola tribe. In that test, the jumper has a vine tied to his ankle, and his goal is to leap off and grab a ring mounted on a stick close to the ground. The lower one is willing to risk falling, the greater the honor. The men of the Huroola use this test to demonstrate their bravery and agility, since they do not hunt.

When the group reaches the starting place, read the following:

*"Brave warriors," begins Chief Bagoomba, "the Challenge begins here. You must reach the river, navigate your canoe through the rapids, climb to the*

*cliff top, and leap off to grab the ring. The warrior who is first to grab the stone ring and return it to the cliff top shall be declared the winner. You may use all your skills, and indeed you will have to, but anyone who interferes purposefully with the progress of another warrior will not be allowed to finish the Challenge. Now stand ready."*

Eager competitors crowd to where Chief Bagoomba has a vine stretched across the path. The vine drops and at the same time the Chief shouts, "Begin." With a loud cry the contestants rush onto the path and the Challenge begins.

### **NPC Competitors**

The main competition for any heroes who enter the Challenge are listed below. They should be described at some point during the early part of the contests. Their progress on all events is tracked throughout the descriptions of the contest parts.

**Hasshuna, male snake katanga F2:** Int Very; AL N; AC 7; MV 9, climb 6; hp 12; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 (spear); SA change shape 2x day to snake or biped form; SD running proficiency; MR nil; Str 17; Dex 16; SZ M (5' 3" in human form); ML 16.

Hasshuna is a brave snake katanga who lives near the Rudra villages down the River of Laughing Idols. He is experienced as a protector of the local wildlife, but has not adventured like the PC heroes have.

**Agoomma, female saru F1:** Int Average; AL LG; AC 7; MV 9, swing 15; hp 7; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 (club); SA nil; SD nil; MR nil; Str 14, Dex 15, Con 17; SZ M (6' tall); ML 13.

Agoomma is an up-and-coming saru warrior from a village far to the south. She was sent by her village to trade information and goods at the Council of Tribes and finds the Challenge of Warriors stimulating.

**Inhoc, male Nubari (huroola) P1:** Int Average; AL NG; AC 9; MV 12; hp 5; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg nil; SA spells; SD nil; MR nil; Str 15, Dex 13, Wis 14; SZ M (5' 10"); ML 14.

Inhoc is a typical male Huroola, but experienced in the jumping part of the Challenge (+1 bonus to hit the rings).

### **The Challenge of Warriors**

The mechanics of all the contests are easy and designed to minimize rules and dice rolling, and emphasize excitement and fun. Each contest uses one

basic attribute and appropriate non-weapon proficiencies, and only one dice roll for each part.

Try to make the races as exiting as possible. Describe the relative positions of the racers, when they pass each other, and such as that. There are many other contestants besides the PCs; describe their progress but do not calculate anything for them. The principal NPC results are given below.

Also, keep this moving. It is a race and should have the feel of one.

If no PC heroes entered the contests, then run through the whole description fairly quickly and determine a winner from amongst the key NPCs.

### **Running**

To figure the scores in the running part, take the base move of the hero involved and add modifiers from the table below plus 1d6:

#### Base Move:

Vine-swinging heroes	15
Nubari, tam'hi, lizardman, monkey katanga, pangolin katanga, tiger katanga	12
Caimen katanga, snake katanga, saru	9
Korobokuru, shu	6

#### Modifiers:

Running non-weapon proficiency	+2
Endurance non-weapon proficiency	+1
Strength 17 or better	+1

Movement in the running part is not restricted to the ground. Those who can swing through the trees may do so, with a base move of 15. Heroes with the vine-swinging non-weapon proficiency should make a check to see if they succeed or fall to the ground. falling results in a penalty of -5 to the hero's running score.

The runners reach the river from high to low score, with the difference between scores representing the rounds ahead (or behind). For example, a warrior with a 19 score arrives at the river two rounds ahead of one with a 17 score.

#### Key NPC Results:

Hasshuna	16
Agoomma	18
Inhoc	15

*Your lungs ache and sweat covers your body when you at last see the river at the end of the path. (describe relative positions). You see that the river bank is lined with several dozen small canoes. A*

*ranking warrior of the tribe of Chief Bagoomba guides you to the closest and pushes the craft into the stream. Paddle in hand you begin to slip down stream.*

### **Boating**

Base moves on the water are the same, so add up the modifiers on the table below plus 1d6 for each participant. Note that swimmers fall behind and are out of the race, since the boats move twice as fast as anyone can swim.

#### Modifiers

Boating non-weapon proficiency	+2
Koshiva tribe member	+1
Strength 17 or better	+1
Intelligence 7 or less	-1

Add the score from this event to the running score for overall placement and leads at the end of the canoe section.

At this point, if there are any members of Big Chief Bagoomba's tribe among the heroes, roll 1d10. On a 1-3, the ranking warrior guided the hero to a canoe with a hole in it. It is a small hole, but the canoe slowly fills with water. This hero suffers a penalty of -6 to his boating score. Bagoomba does not want members of his own tribe to win, and has instructed his Challenge assistants to help them lose.

#### Key NPC Results

Hasshuna	Boating: 6 Total so far: 22
Agoomma	Boating: 4 Total so far: 22
Inhoc	Boating: 2 Total so far: 17

*Your arms ache, the sun beats down on your scorched head, but you see it in the distance: the cliffs beyond the great twin tree that you must climb. You can see that many people have gathered at the base of the cliff, and you realize that the course of the race has brought you is a semi-circle. You quickly beach your boat and run up to the cliff base. The trees have been cleared in the center of the cliff, in the clearing three rings stand on sticks in the sand. One is made of ivory, one pepperwood, and one of stone. The stone one is closest to the ground, the ivory higher, and the wood one higher still. On the sides of the cliffs great trees soar high, reaching towards a platform built over the cliff's edge.*

### **Climbing**

The climbing score is determined by adding the modifiers below to 1d6 (again, the climbing rate is the same for all creatures).

#### Modifiers

Monkey or pangolin katanga	+2
Thief hero	+1 per 30% climb walls skill
Saru, snake katanga	+1
Strength 17 or more	+1

Add these results to the previous total to get the overall timing for when heroes arrive at the platform. Each jump attempt takes one round, and the heroes may make as many attempts as they want until the rings are all taken successfully. One hero may only take one ring.

#### Key NPC Results

Hasshuna	Climbing: 4 Total so far: 26
Agoomma	Climbing: 5 Total so far: 27
Inhoc	Climbing: 4 Total so far: 21

*At last you reach the top, and look over the side of the platform. The ground seems a long way from here, and you gather your courage as a warrior ties a thick vine to your ankle. "Just jump off, face downwards, and grab for the rings. Stone is first, ivory second, wood third. The vine will bring you back up."*

- If the PCs ask, these warriors tell them that they have all done the leap, and it is very terrifying the first time. Falling to the ground and a sure death is enough to chill the blood of even the boldest hero. Only after the vine pulls one up does the fear subside.

If the PCs hesitant have some of the people in the audience below (like other PCs) wave and shout encouragement.

If there are any members of the Bagoomba tribe among the contestants, the attendants here delay those heroes by taking extra time to tie the vine (for safety), a 1 round delay. Then they find that the vines are just slightly too short, necessitating a return to the platform and a new vine (another 1 round delay). A warrior of Bagoomba's tribe can still win; if this happens see the appropriate text in the next encounter.

To grab a ring, the hero must hit AC 5 for the pepperwood ring, AC 3 for the ivory ring, and AC 1

for the stone ring, with only Dexterity reaction bonuses applying (except the NPC Inhoc gets a +1 to hit). The hero must declare which ring is the target. If the hero rolls a 1, the vine breaks the PC hits the soft ground for 1d4 points of damage. Such PCs must take three rounds to climb the cliff again to make another attempt. Different PCs may make attempts in the same round. If more than one succeeds in a round, use Initiative to determine who got the ring.

Do not forget to have the Key NPCs make attempts, but they should always fail (though they can look close).

This contest is based on actual New Guinea tribal practice of bungee jumping with vines from wooden platforms, proving manhood and bravery.

Once the Challenge is over and a winner determined, read the following.

*With loud cheers, the winners are carried back to the village on the shoulders of the people who watched and cheered. The warriors sing celebration songs to honor the champions. All participants all are given wreaths made of the leaves of the billitri, a fragrant flowering plant. Chief Bagoomba welcomes you back and congratulates the winners, and the feast begins.*

*After the feast is finished, you are stuffed with all the good foods which the tribe provided. Chief Bagoomba climbs carefully to the large platform and gestures for attention. The people quiet down, and the chief speaks.*

*"The Challenge of Warriors has indeed shown us who has courage and prowess. To the one who took the pepperwood ring, (3rd place winner), who ran like the great lion, boated like the Koshiva, and took the wooden ring with great daring, I present to you a wooden statue representing Creena the spirit of the jungle." He takes from a wooden gourd a wood figure of a human and places it around (3rd place winner)'s neck. "May you embody the jungle spirit always " The figure is freshly carved wood , an elongated neck with short legs and arms. "In addition, I present to you this carved spear which will strike true and help you to defeat all foes."*

During the next speech, bad luck falls on Chief Bagoomba and the 2nd place winner. Roll on the Bad Luck Table in the Appendix and apply the results (unless they make no sense, in which case choose something appropriate).

*"To the brave warrior who took the ivory ring, (2nd place winner), who ran to the river steady and strong, who boated like a water spider and beat all others to the ivory prize, I present you with this ivory statue representing Konhan the elephant spirit. May you embody the spirit of the great beast always." He takes this figure from a woven basket; it is small 2 to 3 inches long. The ivory is yellowed, it is an elephant man with a long nose tusks and big feet. "I also give you this pair of finely crafted and balanced javelins, made by the best craftsmen in my village. May your arm always be true."*

*"Lastly, I honor the brave champion who took the stone ring, the winner of the Challenge of the Warriors, (1st place winner), who ran like the wind, boated like the crocodile and climbed faster than a bird flies. But of greatest praise is his/her bravery in fearlessly plunging from the platform and taking the earthen ring before all others. I give to you a stone figure representing Eethh the spirit of the ground itself." The chief reaches into his shirt, drawing out a five inch stone figure on a cord. He removes it from his neck and places it on the PCs neck. "This has been in my family for two generations. To match it, I also present this long knife made from the jaw of a great garuda. It will serve you well." The figure is of a Korobokuru male, unadorned but of high detailing.*

If PCs ask villagers about the figures they can find out the wooden figure was made recently by a village elder, the ivory was traded for recently, but the stone figure no one has seen before.

As the moon sinks in the sky, the celebrations come to a close and the PCs can return to where they are sleeping for their visit (a place out in the open under the trees).

## The Dawn Visit

During the night the figure will animate, become invisible, and return to the chief. At dawn the chief will awaken with the figure and panic. He will ask one of his skilled warriors to return it to the hero who won it as quietly as possible, as one of the other warriors must have stolen it. The dishonor to the tribe would be great if the theft was discovered. The warrior is asked to sneak into the PCs' camp and replace the statue, hopefully before the heroes awaken.

The warrior sneaks into the PCs' camp area, making barely audible noises (he is not silent, but then again he is not whistling or anything like that). This happens just after dawn, while the PCs are probably asleep. Have all the heroes who could reasonably catch

this guy make Wisdom checks at -4 to be awakened by the warrior; heroes who are awake catch him as soon as he steps into the area (he is also not trying to hide, as he assumes the PCs to be asleep).

The warrior protests any charge of theft and explains why he was sneaking into their area, giving back the statue and saying that some other thief had stolen it last night and Bagoomba found it at dawn outside his own hut (which is what Bagoomba told him).

The PCs can do whatever with the warrior, but he has not done anything wrong. This happens every night for the next four nights (the length of the Council of Tribes) until the PCs ask Bagoomba what is up. When they do, skip to "The Real Problem."

If an NPC won the contest because no hero entered it, then the return is bungled and a commotion is started. The NPC catches the sneaking warrior and accuses him of theft loudly. He explains what he was doing as he is pushed out of a hut and into the village common area. A small crowd gathers and stops the winner from assaulting the warrior. Bagoomba (looking sickly and a little beat up) and Bengoukee show up soon afterward. PC heroes are appealed to by both sides (draw the PCs in here). Eventually one of the heroes overhears bengoukee tell Bagoomba in a whisper, "This won't work. Find some heroes who can help us, and bring them to your hut." Naturally Bagoomba picks the PCs, as they are the nearest heroes. Skip down to "The Real Problem."

### **The Real Problem**

Chief Bagoomba finally begs for the PCs help in desperation, as he cannot rid himself of the figurine. If Bengoukee had to get involved (see above), then he is present at the meeting. This either happens when the PCs confront Bagoomba about the theft (such as asking to know who the thief was) or because Bagoomba picked them out of the crowd to help the tribe.

*Big Chief Bagoomba leads you into his large hut and motions for you to sit around a low stone table. He slips on the floor and crashes his head into the edge of the table, and it is several minutes before he is lucid enough to speak to you. The chief looks as if he has been falling a lot lately, or that many warriors have beaten him soundly.*

Waving aside any offers of healing, he begins to speak:

*"By the God of Fire Mountain, I beg you help me. I'm cursed. It's this figure. It causes nothing but*

*misery and sorrow. I was given it by my grandfather just before he died. Since then I've fallen, been stabbed, poisoned, attacked by ants and had trees fall on me.*

*"Worst still my tribe is now beginning to suffer. The hunting trips have failed and children have fallen sick. I do not know what will happen to my people if the cursed thing is not gotten rid of.*

*"I beg your help."*

If all the PCs decline he offers promises of rewards. If some accept and some decline, he accepts the help of the one who agree and thanks them for being true warriors and heroes, unlike some others he could name.

When they agree the Chief will answer questions or provide the following information:

- His grandfather, the proud warrior Noburra, gave it to him last month after being brought home very sick and with multiple injuries.
- Grandfather was discovered almost dead by the Koshiva people, who brought him home. Bagoomba now believes that the Koshiva were acting less from kindness than from a desire to be rid of the cursed old man.
- Grandfather was on a walkabout for many, many moons and had visited many tribes and probably seen strange things. he probably picked up the figurine somewhere on his journey.
- Grandfather told him to take the figure and "return it to the fire of revenge." He claimed to have taken it from a spirit of the jungle. Bagoomba does not understand his grandfather's words (nor does Bengoukee).
- The chief has tried to throw it away, burn it, and even bury it, but every night at moon set it returns to him.
- He will sheepishly admit he hoped to get the PCs to take it away. He did it for the good of all and he is not that smart or caring of people outside his own tribe
- The chief does not now where it came from, or where the grandfather traveled.

He will offer the possessions his grandfather was carrying as clues. Perhaps the PCs could retrace his steps. The following will be shown to the heroes.

- A large woven basket shaped like a tontor. The basket is very fine workmanship and even proves nearly waterproof. This basket was strapped to his back and contained all other objects.
- A bone carved like a lion. (From the Simbara--Simbara heroes will recognize it)
- A fine pot with water snake designs on its sides. Tallow is inside. (This pot was made by the Koshiva but was stolen by the Katimaya and given to the grandfather as a present--Koshiva heroes will recognize the design).
- A small, woven cloth, died red by berry juice. (From the Rudra--Rudra heroes with weaving skill will recognize the work)

To retrace the grandfather's steps, the heroes will have to travel to one of the tribes they can identify from the grandfather's possessions and ask them about the grandfather (Noburra, in case you forgot).

The figure must be taken along to send it back to "the fires of revenge." Bagoomba suggests this if the heroes don't think of it themselves. Bengoukee (if present) adds his support to the suggestion that the heroes take the figure, but warns them that it is dangerous and that they must hurry. The curse must eventually come upon whoever owns it, but there is no saying how long it takes for the curse to take effect.

Bagoomba also warns that the figure always returns to him at night, so they will have to come back for it.

## Investigation

The PCs can travel to the Rudra, the Simbara, or the Koshiva based on the clues they have. Fortunately for them, the magic of the curse senses somehow that the figure is on its way back to the abandoned Morta village and so the figurine stays with the PCs throughout the adventure (and forever if they don't get trid of it). Roll two checks on the Bad Luck Table (at the end of the adventure) for each day of travel. Better yet, have the players roll the checks, and then roll 1d6 as appropriate to see who is afflicted with what. Bad luck should start minor and get worse and the days pass, even if a result is duplicated (it is worse the next time).

The heroes do not have to travel to all the villages to retrace the path, so let them go where they will and plague them with bad luck along the way.

Travel distances are summarized in this chart:

Bagoomba to Koshiva: 1 1/2 day  
 Bagoomba to Rudra: Pass through Koshiva lands so do the Koshiva encounter  
 Bagoomba to Simbara: 3 days  
 Koshiva to Katimaya: 1/2 day  
 Koshiva to Rudra: 1 1/2 day  
 Rudra to Simbara: 3 days  
 Rudra to Wise Ones: 7 1/2 days  
 Simbara to Wise Ones: 5 days

## The Koshiva Tribe

### Background Info

The Koshiva, or "Boat People," derive most of their food by fishing, though older women and men also forage to supplement their diet. Rare hunting parties will bring back a boar or some other jungle beast for special occasions.

Fishing and boat-making are the trademarks of the Koshiva, but their tree villages are the most spectacular feature of their villages. Woven bridges, cunningly-fitted tree-houses, and open platforms sprawl across their territory, sometimes even crossing over a narrower portion of the river.

The Koshiva are not warlike, though their hunters (both men and women) make good defenders on the rare occasions when they are raided by the korobokuru (very rarely, since the jungle dwarves are terrified of water and rarely approach Koshiva villages), lizard men, or evil caiman katanga. They are an industrious people, especially clever with crafted items. Their pottery, carving, and jewelry-making are among the finest of the Nubari.

Koshiva women wear elaborate head ornaments contrived to raise their hair in tall coifs. The higher the hair, the greater the relative social position of the woman. Woe to she who presumes too high a station, for the other women will catch her and cut her hair short. "She wears her hair too high," is the phrase used to describe haughty or arrogant Koshiva women. Koshiva men, on the other hand, shave their heads almost completely, leaving simple ornamental shapes of hair. Men never let women shave their heads; only their closest male friends are given this privilege. It is considered bad luck to let a woman shave a Koshiva man's head.

Other tribes, including the shu and korobokuru, are especially friendly with the Koshiva. But the river tam'hi, though rarely seen, are well-disposed to most of the Koshiva villages; on the rare occasions that the Koshiva harm or show disrespect to the river, relations

between the tam'hi and the Koshiva turn drastically worse. The usual Koshiva reaction to these times is to make amends as soon as possible, usually in the form of repairing damage, seeking advice of the tam'hi, and offering restitution in the form of gifts.

### **Action**

*As you enter the Koshiva village, you see two groups of Koshiva people. The one on the left is angrily shouting and pointing, and the one on the right, slightly larger, is quieter while still being restless. Between them in a small enclosure made of woven material are four korobokuru looking scared and very tired.*

*In front of the smaller group is a young warrior. He shouts, "We must give them the mark of the thief!" The elderly lady leading the other group argues back, "No no no, that is wrong. We must wait for the leaders to return from the hunt, they will decide." The other yells back " They will just set them free as they have always done. Last month my father's greatest pot was stolen, these hairy things must have done it!"*

This will go back and forth for a few moments or until the PCs interrupt. After the few minutes, the young man, Hoven, will grab one of the korobokuru's hands and pull a bone knife, as if to cut it off.

Hoven will argue with the PCs if they step in. He will only back down if the PCs discover that the father's pot is the same one they carry, with the snake pattern (the one that the Katimaya stole from the Koshiva and gave to Noburra). This can be determined by asking a couple of questions about the missing pot and the recent theft, which is about some beads. The korobokuru here do not have the beads nor did they steal them. The angry young man lost the beads in the River of Laughing Idols when he was fishing and does not know that. This also could be brought out in questions like, "When was the last time you saw the beads?"

Of course, revealing that Noburra, the grandfather of Chief Bagoomba, had a stolen pot will cause problems for Bagoomba's tribe later, but it will get the small crowd to release the korobokuru.

Hoven will also agree to a challenge of single combat if no evidence can be brought to free the korobokuru; the victor chooses fate of thieves.

**Hoven, Nubari male F2:** Int Average; AL N; AC 9; MV 12; hp 10; THAC0 19; #AT 2; Dmg 1d2 (unarmed combat); SA nil; SD nil; MR nil; SZ M; ML 10.

Hoven will insist on single unarmed combat with a Nubari. He will not fight with any non-human.

When the conflict is resolved the older woman will ask why the PCs are visiting. When Bagoomba's grandfather is mentioned, she will tell them the grandfather stumbled into the village sick, feverish, delusional, and with many injuries. The Koshiva nursed him for two days but he grew sicker. They took him to Bagoomba's territory when the end was clear. They gave him no presents as he was sick. He came in from the direction of the Katimaya village.

The korobokuru prisoners will say he did visit them. When he arrived he was sick, but not feverish or delirious. He grew more sick and while visiting he stepped on a thorn. This festered and he grew even sicker. He wandered away one night. He came from the direction of the Rudra. If the pot was returned to Hoven then they claim that they gave it to Noburra as a gift. If it has not been brought out yet, the korobokuru do not mention it.

If they admit to the pot, Hoven enters the fray again, now having proof that the Katimaya stole the pot (actually he only has proof that they had the pot, but it is the same to him). He wants them punished. The argument flares again, and the heroes have to quite everyone down to get any more information.

The korobokuru will also tell the following (if given a chance):

- Noburra claimed to have walked around the world.
- He spoke of the Morta, a wondering tribe of Korobokuru. They are legendary among the Korobokuru; they do not build villages nor use fire. Noburra found them somewhere in the Rayanna.
- He had the statue. He suspected it was cursed but said little else other than it was given to him by a ghost.

The PCs can continue to the korobokuru village (katimaya) if they wish. They will learn nothing else from the Katimaya villagers, though the villagers will ask the fate of the four thieves. In case they go there, here is the background information on the Katimaya:

### **Background on Katimaya**

A loose translation of "Katimaya" is borrowers, and the korobokuru of this tribe do have a great fondness for things belonging to others. This is not a typical trait of all

korobokuru.

The Katimaya do not practice agriculture, except foraging for those fruits and vegetables which require little effort to collect. Hunting is considered hard but necessary work, and it carries some status. Those Katimaya with a more honest nature make good hunters and defenders. But it is in trading, raiding, and scavenging that the Katimaya prosper.

The Katimaya take great pride in a successful raid. A warrior is not considered a true adult until he has stolen his first weapon. Thus, any group of Katimaya encountered will have a variety of weapons, ranging from rough clubs to decorated mahogany spears.

These korobokuru live near but not on the River of Laughing Idols, downstream from the Koshiva, whose excellent pottery is often the target of Katimaya raids.

Katimaya raids are carefully calculated affairs, planned weeks in advance. During the raid itself, the korobokuru creep into a sleeping village, gathering up as many goods as possible. Inevitably, one of the raiders loses his nerve and lets loose a terrific ululating scream, at which point all the raiders run shrieking back into the night. The Katimaya themselves claim that these are not shrieks of fear, but screams meant to wake and terrify their victims.

Some victims decline to exact revenge for these comical raids, though others pursue the thieves with a vengeance. The Koshiva are among the former. The one productive skill of the Katimaya is the secret of brewing a fermented drink they call ru'uka. Perhaps it is because they are generous in trading this drink with the Koshiva that the latter have never exacted a punishment for the many pottery raids.

Evenings in the Katimaya villages are always celebrations. Boasting contests are common, with the winner decided by the consensus of the tribe. Boasters who include physical proof with their tales, such as a claw with a tale of escaping a leopard, tend to win such contests.

The chief of the Katimaya is Yrbom, a canny warrior and thief who has been outboasted only once in his life. Yrbom has been chief for nearly 20 years and has scavenged from almost every tribe known. He is a grand boaster, said to be able to talk his way out of a leopard's jaws.

## THE RUDRA

### Background Information

Nestled against a crook in the river is the proud tribe of Rudra, the river people. Fishers and hunters, they derive their livelihood from the river and zealously protect their territory. Their homes are built on stilts to

accommodate the swelling river banks, and there are two towers in which warriors sit to watch for trespassers and other threats.

They are an aggressive and suspicious people, quick to strike out if others hunt in their territory. For this reason, many other tribes give them a wide berth. And when others opt to visit the Rudra, they bring numerous gifts, which make them more welcome. The only people the Rudra seem openly to accept are the saru, who are mobile and seem to pose little threat to their way of life.

All Rudra youths are taught to use the spear and bow. Even the few spellcasters in the village are proficient with those weapons.

Rudra villagers are among the tribes to weave rough linen and coarser fabrics. All of the adults and most of the children wear at least some fabric clothing. The more prestigious villagers wear long, white togas, while most others dye their clothing red or brown.

The village is ruled by a chief and his two hand-picked assistants. The chief is selected through a rigorous contest, in which the most able and clever warrior rises to power. The contest often proves fatal to lesser challengers. The chief reigns for three years, when another contest is called. The current chief, M'tlak has held his position of authority for 12 years and shows no sign of weakening. He is a bull of a man, with great shoulders and impressive muscles.

### Action

*As you approach the land of the Rudra, you see a totem made up of skulls and thorns on the path. The sign is on the right of the path just before a small swampy creek which flows right to left across the path. It is about as wide as a Nubari is long, or maybe a little longer. The far side is jungle sloping upwards for quite a ways.*

Illustration I shows the scene and the places of the various participants.

Rudra PCs know that this means a lands of the Rudra are closed because of a sickness in the region. A successful local history check reveals this as well.

Two Rudra warriors hide in the bush on the other side of the border (across the stream), one on each side of the path. If the PCs attempt to cross, the warriors will show themselves. They will not say any thing except the border is closed and that the sickness is not as bad as it could be. Rudra heroes will be told that they should wait until the totems are down before coming home; the sickness sprang up suddenly but the shamen feel it is almost under control.

After saying this they will turn back to their places. It is at this point, in full view of the PCs, that the two warriors will be attacked by three lizardmen. The lizardmen have surprise. The warriors will not protest if the PCs cross the stream to help.

There are five muckdwellers hiding in the stream, and they will attack by surprise to blind any heroes who cross the river or any Rudra warriors who try to flee across the river.

**Lizardmen (3):** Int Low; AL N; AC 5; MV 6, sw 12; HD 2+1; hp 14; THAC0 19; #AT 3; Dmg 1d2/1d2/1d6; SA nil; SD nil; MR nil; SZ M (7'); ML 11.

**Muckdweller (5):** Int Average; AL LE; AC 6; MV 3, sw 12; HD 1/2; hp 4; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d2; SA Jetstream; SD nil; MR nil; SZ T (1'); ML 10.

The jet of water has a range of 10 yards and blinds a victim temporarily unless a saving throw vs wands is made (no save allowed if surprised). The blinded character loses Dex bonuses to AC, cannot attack that round, and all attacks against the victim have a +2 bonus to hit.

**Rudra Warriors, Nubari male F1:** AL LN; AC 8; MV 12; hp 6; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 (clubs); SA nil; SD nil; MR nil; S M; ML 11.

After the battle the two will be very grateful. They can tell the following if asked the right questions:

- Bagoomba's grandfather was with the tribe. He was healthy when he arrived but grew sick during his visit.
- He was injured while visiting; a group of bullywugs attacked him.
- He was given a gift of the red cloth
- He told same story as Korobokuru but also talked about visiting the Wise Ones for an extended time learning about the Season of Five Fires.

## THE SIMBARA

### Background Information

The Simbara, or People of the Lion, as their name suggests, revere the great cats of the plains. They believe firmly that the greatest of their warriors and shamans are reborn as lions. It is also said that the greatest of Nubari warriors can wrestle a lion into

submission, stealing away some of its strength and wisdom in the victory. In actual practice, though some of the Simbara boast of wrestling a lion, none really have done so. The few who have tried in recent memory died in the attempt. Clever warriors will sometimes attempt to shame their rivals into dancing with the lion, hoping the great cat will dispose of their nemeses.

One curious legend among the Simbara is that other tribes speak of an animal called tiger, the antithesis of the noble lion. Should lion and tiger ever meet, a terrible apocalypse will occur. Most Simbara simply refuse to believe in this thing called tiger, but others fear it terribly. No Simbara has yet seen a tiger and acknowledged it for what it is, saying, That? It is only a striped leopard.

Simbara culture is based largely on status and achievement, so pride often gives way to arrogance among the more adept warriors. Threats and boasting are not uncommon, though the Simbara have devised contests of strength, dexterity, and endurance to keep their young warriors from killing each other while competing for attention and praise. This same pride often leads the Simbara on raids against their neighbors, the object of which is to prove their prowess by stealing cattle or weapons without bloodshed--though almost inevitably a fight ensues when the raiders are discovered. The Simbara win far more often than they lose, though they are feared and distrusted by the tribes who have suffered most from their raids.

Aside from war and raiding, the Simbara are a hunting-based tribe, although they also practice limited agriculture, raising potatoes and other tubers, as well as some grains which they use for a sort of porridge. When hunting, they most often prey on deer-like game (antelope, gazelles, sable, and other herd animals), but they also relish boar, water buffalo, and tapirs. Most Simbara tribes also raise cattle and pigs. However, to call a warrior a "pig herder" is a dire insult.

Constructing straw huts in small clusters, the Simbara rarely relocate, though flash fires and other natural disasters displace villages occasionally. They seek out homes near water holes, or not far from the jungle's edge. Water is never so scarce that they suffer, but dry periods make water very precious.

The Simbara are a tall, thin people. They wear minimal clothing during the day, favoring coarsely woven robes and simple cloaks on cool evenings. They value bone and fiber ornaments and armor. Basket weaving and bone carving are the predominant crafts, though the quality cannot rival that of other tribes' products.

Their warriors carry tall, oval shields and prefer the spear. When they go to war with villages of their own tribe or (more often) with other tribes--usually over water or hunting rights--the Simbara are fierce and brave. Using fire in war, however, is considered evil and dishonorable, though some of the villages will stoop to burning the huts of their enemies. Any village accused of using fire in such a manner is almost always attacked immediately and relentlessly, until destroyed by the other local Simbara tribes. Individuals accused of such a crime are dealt with in much crueler fashion; there is no greater taboo among the Simbara than using fire in combat.

### **Action**

If the heroes have been to the Rudra village first, they know that the answer lies at the tribe of the Wise Ones. Any visit here after learning that should be quick.

On the other hand, they might have decided to come here first. If so, then they encounter the Simbara on a typical day doing typical activities.

The following information can be learned here with the right questions to the tribal leaders:

- Noburra was here about a year ago. He was very physically fit, not sick at all, but was mauled by a lion while visiting.
- He had the statue but did not discuss it other than saying he was given the carving as a gift. He stayed just a week, coming from the Wise Ones. He planned to visit the Rudra and the Koshiva next, then travel further south along the River of Laughing Idols.

## **THE WISE ONES**

### **Background Information**

This human tribe of the savanna pride themselves on their intellect and their ability to treat all beings equally. They revere shamans and witch doctors, and it is the oldest of these people who make up the tribe's council. The council serve as advisors to the chief and act as jurors when anyone is charged with committing a crime against the village. The current chief is Arkari, the highest-level shaman in the village. She is 70 years old, and for the past year she has been scrutinizing the council; she will pick her successor when she feels it is time to step down.

The Wise Ones are peaceful, though the council makes sure one-half of the village's youths are trained in the arts of combat. They realize other tribes in the area are not so peaceful, being especially wary of the

Simbara. The most agile and healthy of the youngsters are selected for the training. The others are encouraged to study arts of the mind, and to pursue shaman or witch doctor training. Because of this, the tribe members look like thin, scholarly people and muscular, active ones. There is little in between.

The Wise Ones are gatherers and fishers, and their trade is woven baskets. It takes years to perfect the skill of basket-weaving, and the baskets the Wise Ones make range from small containers the size of a man's fist to large ones as big as a hut. The latter are used for feasts to honor the elephant. It is the Wise Ones' skill at weaving that make their huts remarkably water-proof. So tight is the thatch woven, that nary a drop finds its way inside, even during the hardest showers of the rainy season. The most skillful weavers often continue to embellish their homes, making some into true works of art. Some few warriors wear cunningly woven thatch armor (AC 8), and most tribe members have at least one piece of clothing made of straw or thatch, usually a skirt or sun cape.

The Wise Ones' totem animal is the elephant, ot tontor, which they consider the wisest of the jungle animals. Elephants are often found near the village, as the shamans speak daily with the great beasts to learn what is transpiring in the area. Injured elephants somehow find their way to the village, where shamans heal their wounds. Sometimes the thankful beasts stay on for years. In fact, there will always be 2d4 elephants living on the edge of the village.

A shaman is considered blessed by the gods if an elephant selects him or her for a companion. Such a shaman soon finds a place on the council.

### **Action**

The PCs are greeted by Arkari, the tribal leader. *"Yes," she says upon being asked about Noburra, "the great grandfather of the mighty Bagoomba visited here, twice! The first time he came from the east, out of the savanna. The second time he returned from Fire Mountain. The second time he did not stay long but the first he stayed for nearly a month. He was very excited and talked to everyone, even the elephants. It seems he found the legendary Morta tribe, they told him of their travels, and especially of the Season of Five Fires. You see," she says, "we formed as a tribe around this time, and some say it was because of the fires. There were five fires which swept the plains in but one season, instead of the one or two a year. The entire savanna was blackened. A terrible time."*

She will answer questions and invite the PCs to talk to all. The following NPCs can be used.

- *Jollee* a young wife of a warrior out on a hunt. She is bored without him and chatters on about the weather.
- *Creen* a young boy who still has to fetch water and wood. He is very anxious for his manhood, he will talk of hunting and wars of long ago.
- *Ronn* a hunter who was injured last week. He can not hunt so he sits by the village tree staring at the clouds, he will happily discuss their meanings and their predictive powers.
- *Fellen* is an older lady, interested in the world's changes.
- *Jolo* a lone saru who wandered into the village two weeks before, he speaks broken common.
- *Greb* the village elephant tender, he is at the village edge watching the three elephants. As PCs approach he asks, "Is the young one limping?" He will talk endlessly on the diets and health of the three elephants. If asked he will introduce the elephants to PCs, and even interpret if this is necessary.

The people know the following:

- Noburra talked to all of them, except the saru, asking about the Season of Five Fires and the Morta and their travels on the sides of Fire Mountain.
- He did not have the figure until he returned from the mountain. He was healthy but got burned badly on his trip to the mountain.
- He did discuss where he got the figure.

#### **The elephants:**

*Opelt*- the baby, she is very shy, tucking under mom when the PCs approach. She is only a year old and barely five feet tall.

*Ostrichon*- The mother, she is protective of the baby, moving away slightly as the PCs approach. Not far; she wants to put the father between the PCs and herself. Ostrichon is middle aged with grayish skin.

*Ogea*- The father, he is also called "old one tusk" or just "one tusk." He is huge, very old, with blackish gray skin. He speaks (well, trumpets) boldly and stares into the speaker's eyes.

If the tontors are spoken to by someone who can speak their language, Ogea will do all the talking. He knows the following:

- Noburra did speak to him about many things.
- When asked about the statue, the Morta or the Season of Five Fires, he will drop onto his front knees and roll his trunk onto the ground (you can use your hand to illustrate this). He will then whisper in a very low voice, "*It is forbidden.*" What? "*To talk of this.*" Why "*Because it is forbidden.*" By whom? "*The god of fire mountain.*"
- Ogea will ask why the PCs want to know. If the reason is good, he will rise and walk about casually, talking nonchalantly about the weather, the trees etc. As he does this he will draw in the dirt using a stick. Give the players Illustration II. When he finishes the drawing he will casually mention, "*How I miss bathing in cool fresh water.*"

The heroes have to piece this all together, since this is all the help they will get from the tontors and the Wise Ones. The drawing is of Fire Mountain and the stars in the sky. One "star" is on the side of the mountain, and so cannot be in the sky. This is the fire of revenge, which still burns. It can only be seen and located by standing in the Hebika river. If they stand there at night the "star" will be clearly visible, otherwise the lost village can not be found.

This may take them a while to figure out, but use Intelligence checks, local history checks, and their roleplaying with the Wise Ones to bring out the crucial clues they need to find the village. Don't give it to them, but let them discover what they need to know if they are having great difficulty.

## **THE LOST VILLAGE**

As the PCs climb the face of the mountain toward the lost village (which is where the fires of revenge are), they will find this side is the steepest, most rocky, and barest area on the mountain they have ever seen. The cliff is 100 feet high at the top, and a climbing check is required in the middle (fall of 50 feet for 5d6 if failed and not roped). See the DMG rules for climbing checks for non-thief PCs. Ropes will be almost necessary unless everyone is extremely lucky.

At last they will come upon a stone staircase, seemingly carved from the mountain itself. As the PCs climb the wind will slowly rise, growing stronger with

each step. The wind is air being drawn into the fire, a simple physical effect. The force of the wind requires climbing checks with a +30 bonus (for the stairs) as they reach the village. Failure results in a fall of 10 feet and impact on the stairs, 1d6 points of damage.

As they reach the village a pillar of fire rises high into the air. It illuminates the opening in the cliff face where the village is. The fire is in the pit as indicated on the map.

The heroes have several options at this point.

**1. Throw the figure at the fire.**

Result- It will appear in the lead character's hand, HOT! 1-2 points damage.

**2. Descend and approach from a different way.**

Result- What different way?

**3. Climb outside the staircase.**

Result- the steepness requires climbing checks as well as Strength checks. If a PC fails a check he will be slammed into the ground for 1 point damage, and begins to roll towards the fire. It is up the hero's friends to save him. *Hero points may be awarded for fast heroic actions.*

It will take the PC two to three rounds to roll the fire edge. At the edge the wind abates and he can make a Dexterity check with a +4 bonus to grab a rock and stop. His fellow PCs can rescue him or solve the problem. The heat is intense, causing 1 point of damage every two rounds. The trapped PC can not escape without help; the wind outside the fire zone is too strong.

**4. Continue forward.**

Result -- When the PCs reach the edge of the village it will be noticed that the cliff walls create a wind block and normal but careful movement is possible.

The houses are still solid, two walls of interlocking stones, and a third wall of the cliff face. There are signs that there were thatched roofs once long ago. All are empty except the one with an X.

This one contains the bones of a korobokuru. As the heroes examine the bones, a glowing, shimmering outline of a korobokuru rises from the bone pile. It glitters silverly, rising up into the wind stream, its long wispy hair forming a halo around his head. This is a spirit, and the heroes should make Saving Throws vs Death Magic or flee the village and run away for 1d4

turns. After that the fear subsides and they can return to the village.

If anyone does not flee, the ghost speaks to them in the old korobokuru language. Anyone with ancient languages proficiency understands on a successful check for each utterance. A korobokuru may make an Intelligence check at -6 to understand each utterance. Magic may also help, but otherwise the words of the spirit are not intelligible until repeated to Bengoukee at the end of the adventure.

*"I took the heat. It gave a gift. It seeks revenge (pointing to the fire), because I still live. I will live for another ten tens moons.*

*Its revenge crawls towards me. I live, laugh and .....* "

The last is lost in the howl of the wind.

If the heroes can understand the spirit, they can question it about the stone figure and what happened. Tell the story from the background summary, exaggerating the role of Ronnk (the spirit).

He claims to have tried to warn Noburra not to take the figure but he just scared the man, who ran away with the figure.

The spirit does not care about the suffering caused by the figure, it has been dead too long.

Questions about the lifting the curse go unanswered. If the PCs suggest just leaving the figure, he will claim it will return to the rightful live owner.

The solution is to throw Ronnk's bones in the fire and then the figure after them. The spirit will loom threateningly if this is suggested, but cannot stop the PCs except by scaring them away. If the bones are picked up, Ronnk attacks.

**Ronnk, Spirit:** Int Average; AL NE; AC n/a; MV 16 (restricted to area around hut); HD 7; hp 45; THAC0 15; SA fear; SD immune to material objects; MR nil; SZ S (4); ML 20.

The spirit only has one attack, causing fear on a successful hit. This will cause the PC to run away, getting knocked down by the wind in the process.

He can be killed by magical attack or by throwing his bones in the fire.

Once the bones and figure are in the fire, it suddenly burns brightly and then goes out, leaving an empty sound where once there was howling wind and flame.

There is nothing of value to find here; the Morta took their goods when they left and Ronnk died soon after.

## EPILOG

The PCs return to the village of Big Chief Bagoomba, and the PCs are given rewards by the chief. He thanks them for their efforts, which have saved the people and the village and probably the whole jungle.

Gifts:

- Two gourds of a special herbal mixture which allows a person to travel for up to ten days without eating any food. The person does not suffer any fatigue for the tenday, but begins to suffer hunger and fatigue immediately afterward. This is used by warriors who have to travel quickly and to a know location.
- Bengoukee will offer wizard heroes a choice of fetishes (each can choose one, non-wizards cannot take spell fetishes): *affect normal fires, audible glamor, dancing lights, enlarge, message, wall of fog, levitate, strength.*
- Bagoomba offers a mask that is intricately painted with the symbols of his tribe and adorned with feathers. It has no special properties, other than its beauty. (relative value 200 gp)
- Bengoukee offers the heroes a carved walking stick. It is one that he used for years, and that he carved himself. It has no special properties.

## The End

## Experience Point Summary

Participating in Challenge of Warriors	100 xp
Agreeing to take figure without reward	50 xp
Helping korobokuru at Koshiva village	200 xp
Defeating lizardmen and muckdwellers	300 xp
Getting information from tontors at Wise Ones village	300 xp
Destroying figurine	500 xp
<b>Total Possible Experience</b>	<b>1,450 xp</b>

## Treasure Summary

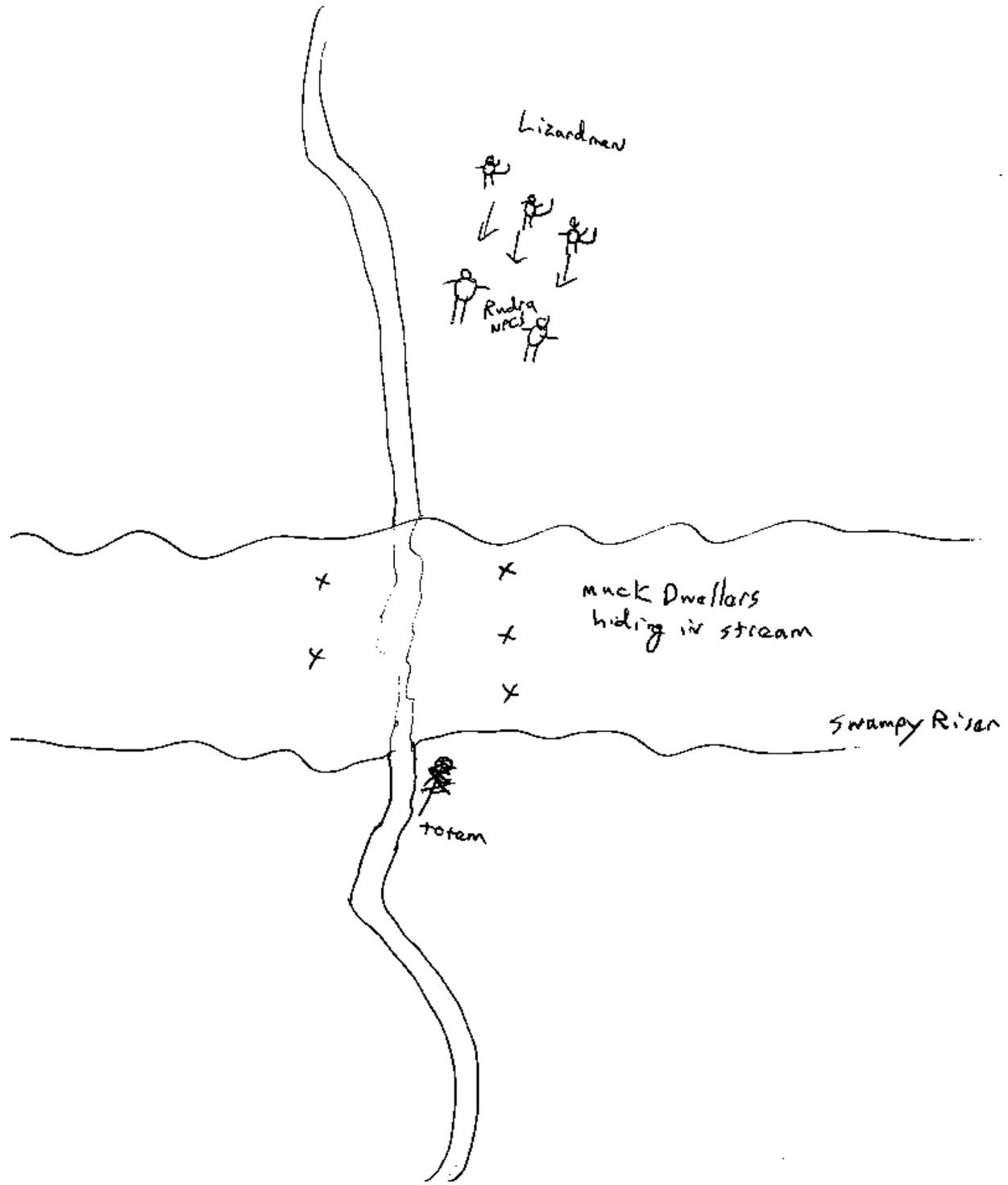
- A wooden statue representing Creena the spirit of the jungle. and a carved spear which will strike true -- 3rd place winner of Challenge of Warriors
- An ivory statue representing Konhan the tontor spirit and a pair of finely crafted and balanced javelins -- 2nd place winner of Challenge of Warriors
- A long knife made from the jaw of a great garuda -- 1st place winner of Challenge of Warriors
- Two gourds of a special herbal mixture which allows a person to travel for up to ten days without eating any food. The person does not suffer any fatigue for the tenday, but begins to suffer hunger and fatigue immediately afterward. This is used by warriors who have to travel quickly and to a know location.
- Bengoukee will offer wizard heroes a choice of fetishes (each can choose one, non-wizards cannot take spell fetishes): *affect normal fires, audible glamor, dancing lights, enlarge, message, wall of fog, levitate, strength.*
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## BAD LUCK CHART

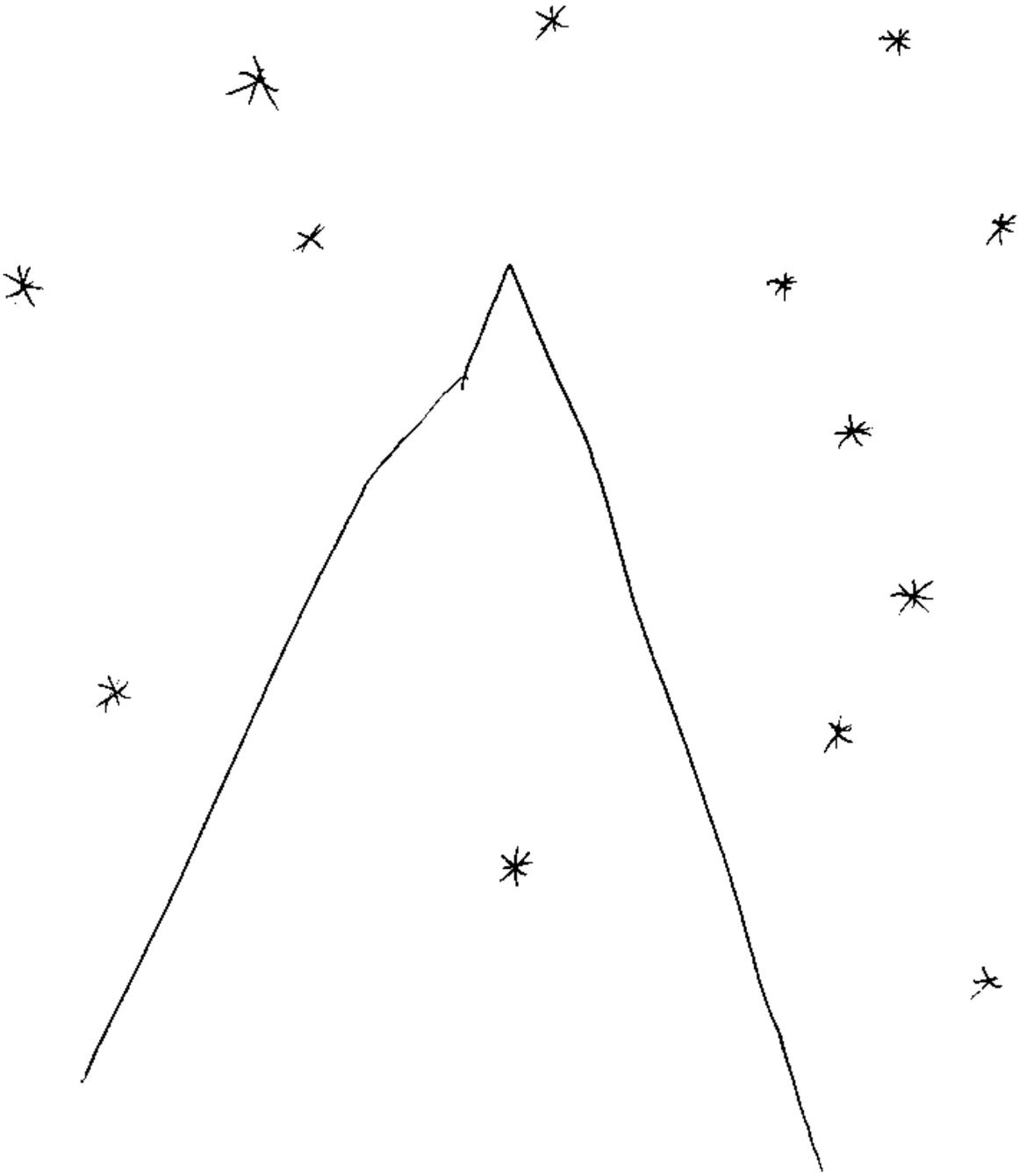
- 1 Hiccups: -1 to all rolls for ten rounds
- 2 Step on thorn for 1d2 damage
- 3 Stomach ache: -4 to all physical actions for one hour
- 4 Muscle cramp: - 3 to move, running not possible rest of day
- 5 Stick self with weapon: no damage but it still hurts and looks silly
- 6 Coughing fit: no action for two rounds
- 7 One possession lost for one day: it is found the next day in another character's gear
- 8 Ants attack all heroes: no damage, just a nuisance
- 9 Step in mud hole: slip and cover self with mud
- 10 Get a sun burn: hurts and Dexterity checks are at -1 for one day
- 11 A tontor (elephant) bellows far away: this is bad luck sign
- 12 Fly lays eggs in a hero's food: half of that hero's supply is destroyed
- 13 Insect bites a hero's arm: swells like a ballon, no use for 12 hours
- 14 Dust settles in eyes: hero is blinded for one turn
- 15 Slip and fall onto a rock: 1d2 points of damage
- 16 Walk into tree accidentally: no damage but painful
- 17 Stick self with weapon: see result #5
- 18 Someone else sticks hero with a weapon accidentally: no damage
- 19 Tree limb falls on hero: no damage 1st occurrence but 1d2 damage subsequently
- 20 Tree falls in path (1st time 20 rolled): no damage but scary  
Group of monkeys rush past hero (2nd roll of 20)  
Garuda runs over character in fear (3rd roll of 20): 1d4 trample damage, garuda escapes (it is moving fast)  
On subsequent 20 results, re-roll

# ILLUSTRATION I

## The Rudra Border



ILLUSTRION II  
The Dust Drawing By ONE TUSK



ILL USTRATION III  
The lost Village

