

# Come the Tiger

*A Living Jungle Adventure*  
for Heroes levels 6-10

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After two years of omens and portents, Tiger's time is now! Yet Malatra is not ready. Divided, bickering, suspicious, the good peoples and tribes of the Living Jungle will fall easily before the Tamara. You must unite the peoples, forge an alliance, and strike at the very heart of the enemy. An adventure for Living Jungle heroes levels 6-10.

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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, race, and gender 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 capsulize their characters for each other and vote. The standard RPGA Network voting procedures will be used. Complete the Judge's Summary before you collect the players' scoring sheets. This way you will not be influenced by their ratings and comments.

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

A note about the text: Some of the text in this scenario is written so that you may present it as written to the players, while other text is for your eyes only. Text for the players will be in **bold italics**. It is strongly recommended that you paraphrase the player text, instead of reading it aloud, as some of the text is general and must be adapted to the specific situation or to actions of the player characters.

## The Living Jungle Campaign

Players bring their own characters to Living Jungle events, and are responsible for keeping records of the characters experience, wealth, and possessions. Look over the characters that are brought to your table, both to familiarize yourself with them and to check for unusual magic items or discrepancies. Magic in the Living Jungle is very rare, with permanent magic items being very, very rare. Most Living Jungle possessions will be ornamental, symbolic, or items carried for barter. If a player has an unusual item or items, question them where they got it. If you are not satisfied with their answer, you may disallow the item for the round.

During the course of the adventure, the heroes will earn experience points based upon their accomplishments. Some of these points are for overcoming obstacles, finding information, defeating monsters, and recovering treasure. This is summarized at the end of the adventure. All characters that contributed to the success of an encounter receive the listed experience points. For example, if an encounter lists an experience point value of 100, then each participating character receives 100 points. All points will be awarded at the end of the adventure. Do not award experience points after each encounter.

This scenario is designed for characters from 6th to 10th level. As such, the opponents encountered in the

scenario, their number and capabilities, will stay the same regardless of the total number of levels.

## At Death's Door

Living adventures use a version of the Death's Door rule for the duration of the adventure. If a hero is reduced to zero or less hit points, he/she does not die immediately. Instead, the hero continues to lose one hit point at the end of each round until aided by another hero or NPC. heroes who go unaided die when they reach -11 hit points.

A hero who is saved "At Death's Door" will have one hit point and will be unable to perform any physical action greater than walking unless magical healed. Spellcasters who fall into the negative hit points lose their spells in memory.

## Introduction

This scenario is the beginning of a new phase of the *Ancient Enemy* story arch. Tiger, the Tamara, the People of the Tiger, all refer to the same thing: a race of violent, hatefull beings who destroyed the ancients of Malatra a thousand years ago in a single, blood-filled night. The tamara would have destroyed all traces of the ancients civilization, including the very jungle itself, but for one thing: the Tamara were from a distant sphere, and the gate used to travel from their home sphere to Malatra and back again were closing. The tamara left Malatra, vowing to return one day and finish what they began.

Now the time of their return has come. For two years the prophets, sages, and wise men of Malatra have been warning of the return of Tiger. For over a year the servants of Tiger have walked the land, preparing the gate and making the way clear. Yet despite all that time, the people of Malatra are not ready.

This scenario is the story of the council of elders final, desperate attempt to unify the good peoples of Malatra, to make allies of old enemies, and to prepare for the coming of Tiger.

Yet Bengoukee, head of the council of elders, has an even bolder plan. He seeks to shut down the gate between the Tamara and Malatra, preventing Tigers arrival for another one thousand years. Though Bengoukee really doesn't understand how inter- and extra-planar gates work, he will nevertheless ask a high-level party of heroes to unite the tribes, strike deeply at the heart of the enemy, and close the way between the worlds.

In encounters one and two, the heroes will be sent to a small korobokuru village. This village failed to move to the safety of north bank of the River of Laughing Idols with the rest of the Katimayans, and has

not been heard from in a moon. Upon arrival the heroes will find a decimated village, with only the dead—and the undead—inhabiting it.

Encounter three is an attempt to enlist the aid of the enigmatic plantmen. Their great knowledge of both the tamara and of arcane lore not known to the “animal races” could save the peoples of the jungle. The plantmen, however, may have different ideas. They survived the destruction of the ancients by hiding in the jungle. Though they have helped Bengoukee and the council in the past, they are once again ready to ‘disappear’ into the darkness of the jungle in the hopes that tiger will once again pass them by.

The militaristic and proud Huroola are the focus of encounter four. Fearing a subversion of their way of life by the council, the Huroola have refused to support the council or interact with anyone in Malatra. Yet they are needed, as the Huroola are the only people in memory that actually waged large-scale war.

Encounters five and six will require the heroes to enlist the aid of the enigmatic black leopard katanga.

Encounter seven will bring the heroes and their new allies to the Jungle of Lost Tribes just as the ceremony to open the gate and evoke the Blood Bridge gets underway. At the heroes’ signal, the forces of Malatra will attack.

Encounter eight will determine how many tamara are able to cross into Malatra. It will also bring the heroes into conflict with a new evil, the mother of the next generation of spider katanga, the “Mother of a Thousand Young.”

## Player Introduction

*You sit about the fire within Bengoukee’s hut. Bengoukee, that short and, at times, frightening korobokuru witch-doctor sits with you. Since answering his summons Bengoukee has said little, other than to offer you food and drink. He seems to be preparing himself to speak, gathering his thoughts and his powers.*

*You notice how tired and harried Bengoukee looks. It is said that he never fully recovered from the wounds that the traitorous shaman, Kural, inflicted upon him. Bengoukee was supposedly healed by the Amaranth, the flower of immortality, yet he remains pale and tired. Others of the tribe have said that Bengoukee despairs in private, for the Amaranth was used to heal him instead of being saved to aid the coming of the Vizerathu, the spirit of the lion. Without the Amaranth, it is whispered, the Vizerathu will be vulnerable when it finally comes to Malatra.*

*At last Bengoukee speaks. “Heroes, I have called you because you are among Malatra’s greatest warriors and most learned sages. The time*

***has come: Tiger will be in Malatra by the next full moon.”***

This pronouncement may cause questions and concern from the heroes. The DM should paraphrase the following:

- Tiger’s servants will begin their ceremony to open the gate between Malatra and the home of the Tamara by the next full moon, three weeks from today.
- The ceremony, while not completely understood by Bengoukee, will involve the evocation of the “Blood Bridge.” The servants of Tiger have been building a huge, amphitheater-size sacrificial altar in the center of the ruins in the Jungle of Lost Tribes. There many creatures, both animals and real “people,” will be sacrificed en masse. Tigers power and the power of some of tigers servants are known to be derived from the blood and spirit of living creatures.
- Bengoukee believes that disrupting this ceremony will destroy this ‘Blood Bridge’, closing the gate for a thousand years. Cut off from their masters, the servants of the tamara could then be dealt with by the good peoples of Malatra.
- If the tamara cross into Malatra, they will find the peoples of Malatra ill-prepared to resist them. Many of the tribes are unorganized, some are even refusing to believe in the seriousness of the threat.

***Bengoukee speaks. “You must not only try and destroy the Blood Bridge, you must also help prepare the good peoples of Malatra in case you fail. Therefore, I ask that you spend these last three weeks before Tiger’s coming doing the following:***

***“First, cross the river and travel due south five days’ journey until you reach the isolated Katimayan village of Katikanan. They are a small village, about 60 villagers, but are the only village of korobokuru who have refused to move to the safety of the north bank of the River of Laughing Idols. We have had no word from them in a moon. Go to them and try to convince them to move north with their brethren.***

***“Second, turn west and travel for about eight days. This is wild country and rarely traveled by anyone except those whom you will meet—plantmen. Travel until you find a huge growth of the Grandfather Trees. They are the largest and oldest growth of jungle trees anywhere in the jungle, reaching as high as 35 Nubari standing on top of each other. Even the smaller tree species will be found large and overgrown here. It is the site of a large plantman village. There you will meet Old Root, the great plantman shaman. His people have great powers and great knowledge. You must convince Old Root to return to the council of elders,***

*as you must convince his people to rejoin us in our fight against tiger. Many plantmen argue that tiger is not a threat to them. You must convince them otherwise.*

*“After this, you must continue west, cross the Dreaming River, and enter Huroola lands. You have to go about two days’ travel beyond the plantmen village. Their warriors are among the greatest in Malatra, but their pride makes them believe they can walk the path alone. Convince them that our survival lies in our unity. Remember, they have a strict taboo against any Nubari male being armed.*

*“When finished with the Huroola, turn back east again and travel almost all the way back to Katimaya lands. Our newfound allies, the great white saru, have convinced me that the black leopard people will be open to an alliance of convenience. The kretch have killed many of their warriors and the black leopard people are in need of help. The black leopard people are proud and adhere to a rigid code of honor. Go as the gentle follower of peace and learn of their honor. ‘The enemy of my enemy is my friend,’ as the saying goes. I believe that will apply when dealing with the black leopard people.”*

*Begoukee whistles and a multi-color parrot hops out from the shadows. It bows before you. “This is Eats-Too-Much. He is one of my familiars. What he sees and hears, I see and hear. You will take him with you on your travels.*

*“Make haste in your tasks, for they must not take you more than 16 days or we will run out of time and the tamara will come to Malatra unopposed. On the 17<sup>th</sup> day you must travel south into the Jungle of Lost Tribes. By that time I will have assembled a host of warriors to follow behind you. You will find the place of sacrifice and evocation and wait until the ceremony is about to begin. By my divining, that should be the dawn of the 20<sup>th</sup> day. I will provide you with antelope horns of sounding. On your signal, the warriors of Malatra shall attack. While they engage the servants of tiger, it will be up to you to close the gate and secure Malatra’s future for another thousand years. “Good luck, and may the spirits of our ancestors smile upon is all.”*

The heroes may spend the rest of the evening casting spells and making any other preparations they wish. Any non-magical supply the hero asks for will be made available to them.

**Eats-Too-Much, parrot familiar:** AL CG; AC 6; MV 2, fl 24 (C); HD 1+1; hp 6; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1; SA nil; SD nil; MR nil; Int 12, Wis 11; SZ S; ML 12. Special abilities: Bengoukee may cast one spell per day through this familiar.

Eats-Too-Much is an unusually bright bird dedicated to Bengoukee and his plans. In this vein, he will carry out Bengoukee’s instructions as best he can. Yet he is spoiled and has a superiority complex. He does, after all, work for **the** Bengoukee. He will spend the adventure reminding the heroes who he works for, demanding to be fed fruit, seeds, and nuts often, and derogatively commenting on the heroes’ failed actions.

Finally, the Jungle of Lost Tribes has a Curse of Madness associated with it, as well as a taboo against anyone entering it. Bengoukee will remove the taboo and give each hero a colored stone that will ward of the curse for a full moon.

### **A word on traveling**

Yes, the heroes have to travel faster than such a journey should normally take. The total time for the journey (before the Jungle of Lost Tribes) is about 24 days to get to the black leopard village. The rendezvous is two days’ travel beyond that, for a total of 26 days. Since they must arrive at the rendezvous at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> day, they 16 days to travel 24 days’ worth of distance.

Find out how fast they want to try to accomplish this journey, and then calculate the rate multiplier. If they want to do it in 18 days, then the rate multiplier is 0.75. The rate multiplier will tell you how many days they travel between various points. The text below gives the normal travel time and the 0.67 travel time (for making it in 16 days).

Travel through the jungle is assumed to be at a rate of 20 miles per day (which is how the times are calculated). Naturally the heroes won’t know what a mile is. This is a very fast rate for jungle travel. The heroes have to travel a bit faster, though, so they should be running all the way.

Running for days on end causes one to have to rest. Luckily, they will have a couple days to rest before the attack at the end, but during the journey they will suffer a cumulative –1 penalty to Con, Dex, and Str for every continuous stretch of 3 days that they maintain a faster-than-normal pace. If they spend a day at normal pace, the penalties go away until three more days of fast travel have taken place.

Be sure to impose this penalty, to lend urgency and atmosphere to their fast trek.

## **Encounter One— Katikanan.**

The heroes may cross the River of Laughing Idols without incident. Normal time 5 days, rushed time 3.35 days.

The village of Katikanan is small, having only two dozen huts scattered around a village center, a spring, a kiln, and a wooden structure for drying skins. The huts are made of mud and sticks and pretty much all look the

same. Only by entering them can the hut of the shaman and the chieftain be determined from the rest.

If the heroes approach the village cautiously they will see everything is eerily quiet. Nothing moves, no fire burns. Closer inspection will reveal overturned carts, broken pottery, partly burned huts (whose fire was put out by a rainstorm) and the spoor and track of the green-furred kretch. The kretch, along with the traitorous Katiman shaman kural, attacked Katikanan about a week ago. They took prisoners and weapons, and left everything else behind—including a nasty surprise.

## Encounter Two—Ju-Ju's

Kural left behind a dozen ju-ju zombies with instructions to kill anyone who enters the village two hours after they arrive. The ju-ju's are "playing dead," all stacked up like cordwood in the center of the village. Close inspection of the bodies will show they all died in battle, but only a spellcraft roll at a -2 will reveal that they've been "zombi-fied."

If the ju-ju's are attacked before the 2 hours is up, they will attack the heroes immediately.

**Ju-Ju Zombie (Malatran Ju-Ju) (12):** int Semi; AL LE; AC 6; MV 6; HD 3+12; hp 30; THAC0 15; #AT 1; Dmg 3d4; SA nil; SD Immune to blunt weapons, electricity, or mind-affecting spells. Half damage from fire. Hit by normal weapons; MR nil; SZ M; ML n/a.

## Encounter Three—Old Root

*You travel west for (X) days. Those who have never traveled in these jungles are often struck by how heavy the vegetation grows on the ground. Often you cannot see farther than 5' ahead, though occasional swatches of greenery are laid low by the passing of large, silent, plant-eating garuda. The trees regularly tower above you 100' or more. All around the jungle is quiet, with an eerie and timeless quality hanging in the air.*

*As you travel deeper and deeper into the jungle you see the trees are getting larger and taller. By the end of the third day you come across the largest trees you have seen yet—gargantuan trees that soar two hundred feet or more into the air, with trunks easily 20' across. The weight of many centuries steady growth presses down upon you—silent and alien.*

Normal time from beginning is 13 days, and from Katimaya 8 days. Rushed time from beginning is 8.71 days, and from Katimaya 5.36 days.

This is the beginning of one of the plant people's holiest of places. The plant people are already here, watching with steadfast patience and observing the heroes actions. They intend to impose three tests on the heroes before the end of the next day. The number of tests passed will influence the reaction of the plant people to the heroes' proposal.

### Test # 1—The Test of Patience

The plant people will wait until the heroes decide to make camp before approaching. If a hero tries to light a fire, a spear will thud into the ground near the hero as warning not to do so. Once camp is made, 40 plantmen of heights ranging from 5' to 9' will enter. One of the plantmen is 10', and will be recognized by all as Old Root, shaman of the plantmen and once a member of the Council of Elders. Without a word they will sit down within the heroes camp and spend the entire night silently watching them. They will not communicate to the heroes in any way until tomorrow evening, except to prohibit firebuilding and to protect themselves from attack.

If the heroes are foolish enough to attack the plantmen, they will disappear into the jungle with no chance of being followed. Even magical divination (like 'Detect Plant), will fail as this holy grove acts as an 'obscurement' device. The tests will be over and the heroes will have failed to enlist the plantmen's help. Go to encounter four.

The DM may repeatedly ask the heroes what they want to do in an attempt to emphasize the passage of time, implying that action is required. The only acceptable actions, as far as the plant people are concerned, is eating (the heroes may eat flesh or vegetable matter), sleeping, or waiting. The DM must exercise some judgment here, but if the heroes try to force communication through extravagant or impolite means, or if they persist well into the night and early morning hours with their attempts to talk, the plantmen will judge that the heroes are lacking in patience.

### Test # 2—The Test Of Spirituality

There is no sunrise in the jungle, but as the light grows Old Root will rise and say in clear and perfect common, "Though a single night and day is hardly a real test, you have passed (or failed) the test of patience. The next is the test of spirit. Do you wish to continue?" If the heroes say "Yes," then continue. If "No," the plantmen disappear into the jungle; continue to encounter four. Old Root will ignore any attempts to converse on subjects outside the purposes of the last two tests.

The questions Old Root will ask are these: "What is the holiest of symbols? What is the unholy?"

The holiest of symbols, at least as far as the plantmen are concerned, is the circle. The unholy is

the square. Clues are listed below for each. The clues may come to the heroes as products of their discussion, as flashes of inspiration (proficiency and intelligence rolls), and from help by Eats-Too-Much. Eats-Too-Much may also encourage the heroes to “think as a plant may think.” The DM may encourage the players to try and think in terms of Native American culture.

#### Circle Clues:

- Life is a circle of birth, life, death, and rebirth, particularly in the plant world where the previous generation becomes the fertilizer for the next generation.
- The trunks of the trees, indeed of all plants, are circles.
- The plantmen have seen the sky above the trees, and the horizons are a circle.
- The wind, in its greatest powers, whirls in a circle.
- The sun and moon rises and falls in an endless circle, as do the constellations.
- Villages of all kinds of creatures are formed in a circle, as are the campsites.
- The nests of the birds, bees, wasps, ants, and termites are in the form of some of kind of circle.
- Many (though not all) of the Nubari huts are built in a circle.

#### Square Clues:

- The square can be said to be the circle violated, its symmetry subverted, its power gone. All the power of the circle has been removed.
- The heroes are not bound to agree on an answer together, but Old Root is looking for the correct answer from at least one of them.

***“You have passed (or failed) the test of spirit. Do you wish to continue?”***

#### Test # 3—The Test of Nobility

***Old Root places a set of five stones in front of you saying, “This stone is a Nubari. This stone is a korobokuru. This stone is a plantman. This stone is a lizardman. And this last stone is an oscray. Choose.”***

If a hero reaches for any of the stones Old Root will shout, “No! Life is equal to life when no tale is spoken. Watch. Understand. Then speak.”

***Old Root then takes a much larger rock and places it near the other five. “This,” he says, “is death. Its form is unimportant.” Then Old Root picks up a seventh and final rock. It has glittering flecks in it. “This is one of you, a hero of Malatra.” He sets the rock off to the side of the group of five. “You cannot***

***stop death from taking one of the rocks. As a hero, your actions sometimes decide life or death for others. Choose now. Who shall die so that the others might live?”***

The heroes must now decide which rock to pick up from the ground and, thus, condemn to death. The correct answer is the rock with the glittering flecks, the one representing the hero. If the heroes choose correctly, Old Root will say, “The hero is a servant of life. You have passed the Test of Nobility.” If incorrectly, “The hero is a servant of life. You have failed the Test of Nobility.”

#### Finale

If the heroes pass at least two of the tests, Old Root will say, “You have proven yourselves and your kind worthy of the risk. Tell Bengoukee we will stand with you when Tiger comes.”

If the heroes fail two of the tests, Old Root says, “You have proven yourselves and your kind unworthy of the risk. We shall not stand with you when Tiger comes.”

Without another word, the plantmen disappear. Continue to the next encounter.

## Encounter Four: The Huroola

***Following Bengoukee's directions, you are proceeding to Huroola territory. He insists that you need to secure allies for the coming confrontation with the Tamara and their servants. The Huroola are known as some of the best warriors in the jungle, their aid will be vital. Of course all the males in the party must cache their weapons somewhere outside of Huroola territory, or face one of the more violent taboos in the jungle.***

***Ahead, you can see the Dreaming River, the southern border of the Huroola lands. Time to find a spot to hide your weapons.***

Normal time from beginning is 15 days, and from plantmen 2 days. Rushed time from beginning is 10 days, and from plantmen is 1.33 days.

The heroes have no problem finding a hollow tree to hide their weapons. They will be there when they come back. Females in the party can carry weapons for the males, within reason. If the Huroola see five strapping males show up with one small female mage who is carrying five two-handed spears, they are not going to be fooled. Since the males would not actually be carrying weapons, they probably would just confiscate four of the spears, and let the female off with a warning not to trust male warriors.

If any males resist, make sure that they understand that the Huroola will **kill** them if they are caught bearing weapons in Huroola territory. This does not apply to plantmen, who have no sex that the Huroola can determine. Of course a plantman male who identifies himself as such is asking for trouble.

When the heroes cross the Dreaming River—they may use logs to float across, they may swim, or they may even find vines they can use to swing across, they are soon confronted by a Huroola patrol.

***Appearing out of the jungle are a quartet of warriors, female Nubari all. They wear scant hide armor, and necklaces of many crafted wooden beads. Each carries a spear, and holds it ready for use. On each side three more emerge, along with another four behind you.***

Stop a moment and allow rolls against jungle lore proficiency. Any Huroola will also know, without a roll, that the absence of blue paint on their faces means that this is not a war party, it must be a hunting party.

The Huroola's attitude must depend on party composition and preparations. Some reactions are outlined below:

- Party possesses at least one near-Nubari female (anyone clearly recognizable as a female by a Nubari), and no obvious males bearing weapons—Cautious, but not hostile. May gradually warm up to female warriors in the party.
- Party possesses a Huroola warrior (female, of course), or a Huroola male who is not known for carrying weapons, like a priest or mage, plus no males bearing weapons—Almost friendly, but reserved. True Huroola warriors or shamans should not leave the tribe. But still, there should be little chance of a conflict erupting.
- Party possesses only males, none bearing obvious weapons—Cautious, a bit hostile. A bit of a ‘what are you males doing out without someone to watch over you’ attitude.
- Party has a male bearing obvious weapons—Extremely hostile. Combat a very real possibility, unless something is done immediately, and that means right now. If relations are otherwise cordial, Sitka, the Huroola leader, may warn the male that he has entered Huroola territory, and must not carry weapons. Perhaps he did not know? If the male divests himself immediately of any and all weapons, the Huroola relax a bit. Relations will still be strained.
- Party possesses a Huroola male bearing what they would see as a weapon. Huroola male will be killed. Tell him this before the Huroola show up, although he should certainly know it. The same applies to any other obvious male who refuses to

give up his weapons. The Huroola warriors will all fight to the death to accomplish this, as will any others they encounter. If combat does break out over this, at least two of the warriors will slip away to warn others. At this point the Huroola will want to take the weapons, they won't allow them to be turned over to other party members, unless perhaps another Huroola female.

- Party is composed of all non-Nubari, especially the more varied races. Huroola will be suspicious, they have little experience with these races. But they won't be hostile, not at first.
- Party contains a lizardman. Huroola have had trouble with the lizardmen to the north, they'll take some convincing before they allow a lizardman of either sex to carry weapons. Best way is for a female warrior to vouch for them. Next best way is to give up their weapons. Weapons will not be confiscated, nor will combat break out immediately, but lizardman will be watched constantly.
- A note on katanga. Tiger katanga especially will be viewed with mixed emotions. Of course they carry some very potent weapons of their own, in tiger form. Yet they are also known to be a goodly sort, a noble lifeform. Basically, the Huroola would prefer that the tiger katanga stay in Nubari form, weaponless, and not think about the other side. They won't mention it if the player does not mention it.

**A note on role-playing Sitka and the Huroola**—The history of the Huroola is a sad, violent, and bloody one. About 300 years ago the Huroola men were the warriors and the women took on the role of spellcasters and “speakers of the dead,” a shamanistic role that emphasizes ancestor worship. The men valued battle prowess above all things and waged war with everyone, even the other good peoples. They also waged war amongst themselves, clan vs. clan. At the height of their power the Huroola controlled fully one-third of Malatra. Yet their intertribal conflicts were so destructive and volatile that the Huroola eventually found themselves on the brink of self-annihilation.

Then the Speakers had a vision. In it, the ancestors of the Huroola told them that men could not be trusted with the weapons of war. The visions were so powerful and the need for change was so desperate that virtually overnight Huroola society changed forever. Men became the speakers, while women became the warriors (although some women speakers still remain). Thus the Huroola keep their men from becoming drunk with the power of warfare and addicted to the frenzy of slaughter. To this day all Huroola are taught that men with weapons can simply not be trusted with the tools of destruction.

**Sitka, Huroola F7:** AL NG; AC 6 (hide armor); MV 12; hp 65; THAC0 12; #AT 2; Dmg 1d6+3 (spear); SA specialized in spear; SD nil; MR nil; Str 17, Dex 13, Con 16, Int 14, Wis 13, Cha 15; SZ M; ML 18.

Sitka is broad-minded, for a Huroola. That's why she'll give any males (except another Huroola, of course) a chance to drop their weapons.

**Huroola Warriors, hf F3 (13):** AL N; AC 6 (hide armor); MV 12; hp 24; THAC0 17; #AT 3/2; Dmg 1d6+3 (spear); SA specialized in spear; SD nil; MR nil; Str 16, Dex 13, Con 15; SZ M; ML 17 (fanatic).

Not friendly to outsiders, generally suspicious of everybody.

Sitka may have met other heroes before (in the scenario *Huroola Prophet*). If so, she recognizes them. Relations will improve, provided they did not flaunt any Huroola customs last time they were here.

Sitka wants to know why the heroes have returned to Huroola lands. If told they are sent by Bengoukee on a mission of importance for the Huroola leaders, she agrees to set them a guide to the village of Taupassin.

### The Village of Taupassin

*The village of Taupassin is a collection of about thirty huts. A number of men are going about mundane tasks, weaving, fishing, caring for children, it seems a normal village. As you approach many warriors emerge from the huts, bearing weapons at the ready. The men and children scurry into the huts, casting fearful glances at you. A warrior with no weapon in her hands approaches. "I am Kimichi, a speaker of this village. Who are you and what do you want here?"*

The village is suspicious. Most of the men have scurried out of sight as the heroes approached. Only the warriors and the speaker are left to greet the party. If the party consists of any who have played Huroola Prophet, she recognizes them and welcomes them to her village.

**Kimichi, hf P7:** AL LN; AC 10; MV 12; hp 33; THAC0 16; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 (club); SA nil; SD nil; MR nil; Str 10, Dex 10, Con 9, Int 14, Wis 17, Cha 15; SZ M; ML 17.

Spells—as needed.

Kimichi is a good solid Huroola citizen. That is, in normal times she wouldn't even consider letting a group of outsiders into her village. However, she has been warned that strangers would be coming. If she recognizes them, opening relations are much friendlier.

Let the heroes introduce themselves and Kimichi then invites them into her hut. There they can get down to real negotiations.

The heroes have been instructed to secure allies for the assault on the Jungle of Lost Tribes. Kimichi will agree, after some concessions are made.

This is what Kimichi knows:

- The servants of Tiger, known as the Kretch, have infested the Jungle of Lost Tribes. Huroola scouts estimate the number of Kretch to be no less than a score of scores (400). The Huroola do not have the strength to face such foes alone.
- The Kretch are engaged on a great construction project. Scouts have seen them carrying huge stones and logs toward the ruined village at the center of the Jungle. They have also been seen leading captured garuda to this ruined village.
- The Jungle of Lost Tribes used to be home to the Black Leopards. Now, many of the leopards have been driven out, and are roaming the jungle near the Huroola lands.

Eventually, the heroes should get around to making their request for aid. Kimichi at first refuses. The Huroola want nothing to do with the council or the males who rule it. Let the heroes make some of the obvious arguments (united we stand, etc), and she'll slowly be convinced. She does have her demands, however:

- The Huroola cannot afford to put most of their warriors at risk, with the threat of the black leopards now facing them from the south. In order for the Huroola to go, the heroes must also seek the cooperation of the black leopard katanga. After all, it is their homeland the Huroola would be helping to free. The Huroola can give directions to a black leopard village, some four days travel southeast of Huroola country.
- The Huroola will not take orders from a male war chief. The war chief must be a female, preferably a Huroola. (This is not actually a problem, as the Snake Mother of the Yuan Ti will be in charge).
- As many as 20 of the Huroola hunters have been captured by the Kretch. The heroes must agree to make freeing them a priority while the Huroola attack.
- The Huroola want a voice on the Council of Elders. They would prefer that their representative be the leader of the council, and will ask for that first, but will settle for a seat on the council.
- The Huroola want assurances of the party's veracity from the only Council member they actually trust. That is Lana, the tiger katanga shamen, the only female currently on the council.



If the party agrees, Kimichi casts a spell that allows her to speak with Lana from far away. On behalf of the council, Lana will agree to all the demands agreed upon by the heroes. She cannot and will not commit to putting a Huroola as head of the council, at least not while Bengoukee still lives. (Note—Lana is a hero, and as such, may actually be on this adventure. If so, she can speak for the council in this matter).

The only non-negotiable demands are the ones about the black leopards and the seat on the council. As long as the party agrees to this, the Huroola pledge to deliver 80 warriors and a dozen shamans.

When negotiations are complete, the heroes are shown to a hut where they can rest and study spells, if necessary. They are expected to leave in the morning, no matter what the outcome of the negotiations.

## Encounter Five: Black Leopard Patrol

*Having successfully (?) concluded negotiations with the Huroola, you have set out on the next stage of your mission. You crossed the Dreaming River and are following Kimichi's directions to the lair of the black leopards.*

Normal time from beginning is 24 days, and from Huroola is 9 days. Rushed time from beginning is 16, and from Huroola is 6 days.

*Suddenly you are confronted by eight black leopard katanga, in biped or Nubari form. They appeared out of the jungle with little warning, but alert as you were, you are not surprised. They do not immediately attack, showing that these black leopards, at least, are not hunting. It must be a patrol, something you would expect here. The leader, a large male in Nubari form approaches with a battle axe at the ready. "This is now black leopard country. We wear the protectors' face. We have no use for your kind. Go, or we shall kill you."*

Let the heroes respond. The leader of the patrol, Atlan, is willing to listen to them, but he is by no means friendly. Only if the heroes mention that they are here to seek the help of the black leopards against the Kretch will he permit them to pass. In fact, he offers to lead them to the village personally.

**Black Leopard patrol, h(Katanga)m F2 (8):** AL LE; AC 5; MV 12; HD 5; hp 43; THAC0 16; #AT 3; Dmg 1-3/1-3/1-6 or 1-6 (spear); SA nil; SD nil; MR nil; SZ M; ML 15.

The leopards, if they must attack, do it in leopard form. They fight until ½ of them are dead or unconscious, then break off to retreat and get reinforcements.

**Atlan, h(Katanga)m F5:** AL LE; AC 5; MV 12; HD 7; hp 50; THAC0 14; #AT 3 or 3/2; Dmg 1-3/1-3/1-6 or 1-8+1 (battle axe & strength); SA nil; SD nil; MR nil; Str 16, Dex 15, Con 15, all others normal; SZ M; ML 16.

If the heroes are deadly enemies of the black leopards:

- Many a ranger has black leopards as his/her hereditary enemy, and even more have cloaks made of black leopard hide. This does not provoke an immediate attack. At most, it promotes a question. Atlan asks if the hero won the cloak 'according to the code.' He'll explain that a hunting black leopard takes his chances. If he was defeated in one-on-one combat by an opponent using only natural weapons, the fight is fair. To the winner go the spoils.

## Encounter Six: Black Leopard Village

*The village of the black leopards looks just as you would expect. It has a few huts and lean-tos, for they obviously haven't been here for very long. Small cubs play in the dirt, mock fighting and stalking each other. Warriors work on their weapons, while others in the tribe go about the daily business of preparing food (uncooked), and caring for the young. From the looks of the village, some six score leopards live here. As they spy you, all come forth. You get the feeling that without Atlan's escort, you would now be in a battle for your lives. The largest leopard you have ever seen bounds up to you and changes to Nubari form. Even in this form she is large, almost the size of a saru. "Atlan! What is this thing you have done. Our village must remain secret. These lives are now forfeit, as is yours."*

*Atlan responds; "No, Piressa. I have broken no vow. We were never to lead strangers to our home, but this is not our home. It is but a place to rest until we regain our home. These lesser creatures have offered to help do that. Will you not listen to them before having them killed?"*

The heroes had better speak up here, or things could go ill for them. If they do not, Atlan finally insists that he has acted according to the code, and they must be listened to.

**Piressa, Black Leopard war chief, h(Katanga)f F9:** AL LE; AC 5; HD 9; hp 80; THAC0 12; #AT 3 or 3/2; Dmg 1d3/1d3/1d6 or 1d6+3 (spear); SA nil; SD nil; MR nil; Str 18/20; Dex 17; Con 17; Int 15; Wis 12; Cha 15; SZ M; ML 16.

Piressa is the widow of the former warchief, who was killed or taken by the kretch. She hates the kretch with a consuming ferocity. This is a good talking point for the heroes. She makes her feelings about the kretch known almost immediately.

According to both Bengoukee and the Huroola, the heroes need to secure the aid of the black leopard warriors for the assault against the Jungle of Lost Tribes. This should not prove to be too difficult as the black leopard demands are nowhere near as inflexible as the Huroola were.

### **Piressa's Demands**

- The heroes will take the lead. Her warriors will attack only when all the other allies attack.
- The leopards agree not to hunt anyone in the Jungle of Lost Tribes until after tiger is driven back. As soon as that happens, they will go back to hunting the lesser races (that means everybody but BLKat).
- Any members of her tribe that are held prisoner must be freed first, before they start the attack. She expects the heroes to carry out such a deed.
- Once tiger is driven out, the Jungle of Lost Tribes is to be left to the leopards forever. Only those who will take their chances according to the code may enter, at the risk of their lives.
- The black leopards have already attacked the kretch (in "Shadows of Earth"), and been repulsed with heavy losses. They will not attack alone again. Other tribes must be there to attack, or the leopards will just go home. (Not a problem, allies will be there).
- She is not interested in a long term truce, in membership on the Council of Elders, or anything like that. Only two things have any meaning for her. One is to get their homeland back, the other is to kill kretch.

### **Piressa's concessions**

Piressa is willing to make a few concessions.

- As far as hunting the lesser races. She agrees that the heroes have performed a dangerous mission with bravery. Such spirit deserves something. She volunteers that when the leopards "wear the hunter's face" (go hunting), they will warn those near their lands by means of the jungle drums.
- If pressed for a long term truce, she merely laughs. "Silly Nubari. The enemy of my enemy is my friend, this is true. But when that enemy is gone,

then you are my friend no longer. Let us not waste time on such foolishness."

### **Piressa's information**

Piressa has the following information to share, if agreement is reached:

- The kretch have built a large structure near the center of the ruined city of the ancients. There they have constructed dozens of huge cages, some big enough to contain a gnasher, a full tyrant lizard. Most of the others hold prisoners taken from the black leopards, and other lesser peoples.
- The black leopards will require a full day to conduct the ceremonies to induce a state of war. Without this ceremony, they cannot attack as a group, and their losses will be even worse than they were last time.

Assuming the heroes get her to agree, which shouldn't be too difficult, she agrees to let them live. She and her warriors, five score, will meet them in two days at the agreed upon spot.

When the heroes have finished negotiating, they are immediately led from the village and warned never to return under pain of death. No oaths are expected. The leopards feel the warning is enough. The heroes can make their way to the meeting spot.

### **The Black Leopards' Code**

As a species, black leopard katangas are usually lawful evil and occasionally lawful neutral. Though not widely known to outsiders (Jungle Lore at -4), the BLK's are governed by a rigid code of honor and conduct.

This code says that every individual BLK must declare their role or duty at the beginning of each and every day. For instance, a BLK that decides to go hunting for the day must declare, "Today I wear the hunters' face." Such roles are frequently pre-determined for the individual by custom, phase of the moon, needs of the tribe, and tribal leaders. Each role has a pre-defined set of responsibilities and goals. Once in a role, the BLK must act within the narrow definition of that role. Roles may only be changed during the day for reasons of personal or tribal safety, and even then the change must be declared openly. It is considered good manners (and sporting) for the BLK to inform intelligent prey, "Today I wear the hunter's face. Through his eyes I see you as prey," before attacking.

## **Encounter Seven: The Diversion**

If the heroes have been traveling on the rushed time scale, they have two days to get to the rendezvous. This

would eliminate their penalties for being fatigued. If they are running behind, they have to make up the time in this section.

*You have reached the meeting spot and find that your efforts, and those of other heroes, have been quite fruitful.*

*First and foremost are the representatives of the council of elders: Old Root of the plant men [assuming the heroes passed 2 of the 3 tests in encounter three], Syanya of the Simbara and Trueheart of the lacerials. They and Big Chief Bagoomba bring seventy warriors of from his tribe. Next comes the legendary Snake Mother, a gigantic yuan-ti fully thirty feet long and the only female yuan-ti you have ever seen. Clustered around her in a terrible cluster of warriors is a full 200 of her snake people.*

*Kimichi is next to appear, with 60 of the best warriors of the Huroola, as well as 20 male and female shamans.*

*Piressa is next to arrive, bringing 80 of her black leopard warriors. You notice that Atlan is not among them. Before you can ask she reports that some of her warriors were captured, including Atlan. "But fear not, they will not speak of this attack."*

*Other groups of allies straggle in over the course of the day. From the Simbuki, their chieftain Booda with 20 of his best blowgunners. From the far off Forbidden Mountains comes Swiftwing with a dozen of his best javeliners, ready to swoop to attack. The Rudra send two dozen warriors and a dozen mages, while the lacerials have managed to get 20 warriors and five mages to the fray. Looking splendid in their brass chain mail, a company of 30 large oscaray led by Bentfang himself have come to do battle. The Wise Ones send 10 warriors only, but every one of them wears a lion pelt, proving that these are the best the Wise Ones have to offer. The simbara, mortal enemies of the tamara, arrive with 30 warriors. The plantmen have come with 50 warriors. And perhaps the strangest and most impressive of all, a pair of jungle giants, as tall as four Nubari, has come to face the coming of tiger.*

*The various leaders are summoned to council, as are you, for your fate is to be decided here as well.*

### **The Council of War**

*Trueheart opens the council with a greeting. "I thank all of you for your help. Never before has the jungle seen so many races and tribes gathered together for a common cause. Of course never before has the jungle faced such a threat. First, we need to determine who will be war chief over the combined forces. I will not take this role, nor shall Syanya. Our training lies in other areas. We must go*

*with either experience, or power. For experience, Kimichi of the Huroola and Bentfang of the oscaray have had the most training in the arts of war. For power, I can only speak of the Snake Mother, both for her magical power, and the number of troops she has brought with her. I propose a vote, everyone here may cast one lot. Choose now."*

The voting goes as follows (of course the heroes will have the deciding votes).

- Syanya—Snake Mother
- Trueheart—Snake Mother
- Old Root—Bentfang
- Booda—Kimichi (he always was a sucker for a pretty warrior lady).
- Swiftwing—Bentfang
- Rudra—Kimichi
- Piressa—Snake Mother
- Big Chief Bagoomba—Kimichi
- Jungle giants—abstain (they just came to fight).
- Each of the nominees votes for themselves.

Thus the votes before the heroes get their chance stands—Snake Mother 4, Kimichi 4, Bentfang—3. Obviously, the way the heroes vote will decide the matter. Whoever is voted in, their plans are basically the same. Remind them that if Bentfang is elected, the Huroola may very well up and leave. In case of a tie, Kimichi will agree to take the second position in favor of the Snake-Earth Mother.

### **The Plan**

*The new leader thanks the others for the vote of confidence, and turns to business. "We must deploy on at least three sides. While the attack goes on, a group of brave heroes (everyone looks at your party) must sneak in and destroy the Blood Bridge. It is this that will prevent the coming of tiger, and it is the most important single action to be taken thus far in the battle against the Tamara. Will you do it?"*

Let the heroes agree; they haven't much choice. If they object that they are not powerful enough, the new leader simply says, "**The battle does not always go to the most powerful, it often goes to the best prepared and those with the strongest will. This you have, I know.**"

Once they agree, the leader hands them a horn. "**Sound this horn when you are ready for the attack. You have many options here; we will coordinate around your plans. As I see it, you can do many things, and it is up to you to make the choice. But first, let us have some suggestions from those here.**"

## The options that the council can think of

- Sneak in and free as many large garuda as possible. This would create a great distraction, and certainly help when the attack comes.
- Wait until the attack starts, then attempt to free as many prisoners as possible to join in the battle. Kimichi and Piressa like this one, and look surprised to be agreeing with each other.
- Ignore everything else, and charge straight in to destroy the Blood Bridge. The Rudra are the only ones who like this choice, all of the others agree that a diversion would be most helpful.

The heroes can come up with other ideas if they wish. They are given an up to date scouting report, such as it is.

## Scouting Report

There are dozens of cages around a large bowl-like depression in the earth, 150' across and perhaps 20' deep (the scouts couldn't get close enough to tell exactly, and remember to give distances in terms of number of Nubari lined up end to end, rather than in feet). Much worked stone has gone into the bowl, and the kretch have been busy with their powers of shaping stone and other elements.

The cages contain everything from captive Huroola, simbuki, and black leopards to one with a full grown tyrant lizard, and another with 2 large three-horns. The cages are guarded by many kretch.

The war party is only a day away from the kretch stronghold. The reason that this is so is because the kretch all seem to be gathered for the ceremony. They are not alone. Spider katanga, hyena katanga, and even a few turncoats like the traitorous katimayan shaman Kural have gathered on the side of tiger. The akathasa, the bloodsucking servants of tiger also abound.

The cages are made of magically hardened bamboo, proof even against the strength of a tyrant lizard. The doors are fastened by a single loop of metal vine, which may be cut only at the cost of a very sharp weapon.

Eats-Too-Much will remind the heroes that, according to Bengoukee, at the bottom of the bowl there will be a raised platform that will anchor the Malatran side of the Blood Bridge. Bengoukee expects that the vast quantity of blood released by the sacrifice will be allowed to collect at the bottom of the "bowl." A thin wire net will in some way be attached to or wrapped around the platform. This "net," Bengoukee believes, is the vital material component to summoning and maintaining the Blood Bridge. Destroying this net should be a top priority.

## Offers of Help

Once the heroes have begun to form a plan, the leader offers as much help as possible. This includes:

- Four vials of acid that will eat through a single metal vine on a cage in one round. If used on the wire net of the Blood Bridge, it does 3d6 points of damage for 3 rounds.
- *Invisibility* spells for any and all of the party.
- *Remove fear* spells for any saru who might be freaked out by being turned invisible.
- *Silence* spells on rocks or other objects to aid them in sneaking in.
- Spell advice—Bengoukee and the Snake Mother both advise that the clerics should take as many *heat metal* spells as possible. These will melt the metal vines on the cages, or do a great deal of damage to the Blood Bridge (1d6 per level). If a hero is of the level to take *call lightning*, the Snake Mother agrees to summon the clouds before dawn to aid this spell. The construction within the ruins of the ancient village has caused much of the jungle to be cleared away. It is open to the sky.
- Sleep poison for any shu who carry blowguns. This poison is not effective on kretch, who are immune. It will work on hyena and spider katanga, however.
- Results of a *divination*. Bengoukee and the Snake Mother have cast a divining spell and learned that the ceremony will begin at dawn, and will not take long. It does involve the sacrifice of many creatures, and a large amount of blood must be collected to support the bridge while it is open. On or near the rim of the bowl are *alarm* type spells that will negate the *invisibility* or *silence* spells they may have, so they should signal for the attack before entering to destroy the Blood Bridge. Also, the various spellcasters gathered here cannot help destroy the Blood Bridge; the protective rim will prevent any magic cast from outside from being effective. Once inside the rim, magic functions normally.

Let the heroes discuss their options as long as they wish. When they are ready, the troops disperse, to await their signal. Any spell casting can be done overnight or just before they head into the ruined city.

Just before they leave the troops to start on their mission, Old Root approaches them with one more bit of help.

***"The strange looking plant that is also a shaman approaches you. Old Root hands you each a single petal of a purple flower. This may give you strength and courage in the battle to come. You must consume this completely for it to be effective. [Assuming someone tries...] Indeed, when you***

***chew on the flower petal it seems as though courage does flow into your veins. You look at each other and smile. You can do this thing!***

Old Root has given them a modified version of a *heroes feast*. Effects include:

- *bless* (as the spell)
- immune to poison
- immune to *fear* effects of any sort

The effects last for 24 hours.

## The Approach

The following paragraph assumes that everyone in the party is invisible, at least to start. If not, change the description to fit.

***As you enter the ruined city, you are surprised by the lack of activity. A few lone kretch seem to be on watch, but they do not notice you. To the south you can hear the sounds of chanting and much activity, as the first light of pre-dawn begins to brighten the horizon.***

***Moving forward, you come to the area of the Blood Bridge, or so you assume. From your vantage point you can see more than 50 cages, including three large enough to hold tyrant lizards or tri-horns. Two of them are occupied, one by a tyrant lizard, the other by a pair of tri-horns. The third stands open, and the gouges in the earth, along with a half-eaten kretch body, indicate that this cage was recently occupied by a gnasher.***

***The other cages hold Nubari, saru, black leopard katangas, korobokuru, and many others. In one cage you spot Atlan and four other leopards, (anyone who belongs to a tribe can probably see at least one or two tribe members in a cage). Many others hold common animals of all kinds.***

It's up to the heroes now. The one thing that overrides this is that as soon as anyone gets close enough to the arena to look down into it, the encounter ends. They are noticed by the kretch (if they have not before), because the arena bears a protective spell around it that negates any *silence* or *invisibility* spells.

They have several options, and results are based on preparation, and good strategy. As long as they are taking proper precautions, do not require rolls for anything. Once they open a cage, of course the kretch see them, and begin to move towards them. Each cages has one or two kretch nearby, but not in front of the door. Most are watching the action in the arena.

## Results of various options:

- **Free garuda.** They just have to melt or cut the metal vines and start pulling on the door. The garuda take care of the rest. No roll needed unless

they attempt to cut the metal vines, in which case they must do 20 points of damage with a sharp weapon. If the weapon has a plus to damage, it loses that plus. If it does not, it is ruined.

- **Free prisoners.** They can get three cages open before they are noticed. As was stated above, they can find a cage with almost any kind of race/tribe as a prisoner. Only the aarakocra and the lizardmen do not have members in these cages. If the party looks, they do spot Atlan in a cage with four other black leopards, two cages over from the tyrant lizard's cage.
- **Head straight for the Blood Bridge.** Find out exactly when they are winding the horn. If they wait until they look down, they will become visible at the moment when they are surrounded by more than 40 kretch. Even the attack won't save them. If this is their plan, they must wind the horn sooner, and let the attack commence before they move closer.

Don't get too bogged down in rolling dice, there will be plenty of that in the upcoming battle. The focus here is on stealth, strategy and cunning. Remember the time constraint—the ceremony is supposed to start at dawn. (Actually, they were slightly in error, the ceremony is to finish at dawn; the Blood Bridge will be open at that time.)

## The Attack

Eventually, the heroes will blow the horn to start the attack:

***With a deep blast, [heroes name] blows the horn calling for the attack. The kretch turn in your direction, but before they notice you a second horn and then a 3<sup>rd</sup> sound. Soon the air is filled with the sound of the horns in the dawn, and the attack begins.***

***From the south come the two jungle giants, each carrying a tree trunk sized clubs. They set out by bashing a half dozen of the kretch on the first blow, a good start to the battle. Elsewhere, all is confusion. From the east and west the jungle is black with leopards, leaping on kretch from everywhere. You see the unbelievable sight of a black leopard and a simbara warrior attacking the same large kretch. A flurry of claws and blood and the simbara staggers up and moves on, the other two lie still.***

***Nearby, you see a snakeman and a kretch rolling through the underbrush. A Huroola warrior pauses near them. When the kretch begins to rise from the body of the snakeman, she pins them together forever with a savage spear thrust.***

Elsewhere magic crackles and blood flows. The spirits be praised, you are given time to complete your mission. Almost half of the kretch and most of their allies have moved to face the attackers. The other kretch seem to be concentrating on getting prisoners, especially the tri-horns to the arena, perhaps to continue the sacrifices. It is up to you now.

You may modify this to reflect player actions, but in the main, it is up to the heroes to get to the arena and destroy the Blood Bridge. Continue with encounter eight.

## Encounter Eight—Come The Tiger

*You come over the rim of the bowl and what you see fills you with horror. Blood from the sacrificial cages run in rivulets in stone grooves to the bottom of the bowl. The warm blood steams in the cool morning air, raising a grim, macabre fog around the pedestal in the center. Rising from the blood and fog like some sort of wire spider web is the metal net Bengoukee spoke of.*

*Atop the pedestal you see a gathering of the most hated creatures in all Malatra. Four large kretch stand near the center, arms outstretched, chanting in some guttural language that reminds you of stones grinding together. Fifty or sixty Akathasa fly and swoop in the air above them like a black cloud. To the right is Kural, the katimayan traitor, clutching a black staff whose surface gleams like that of a tar pit. Next to Kural is a very large hyena katanga in half-Nubari form.*

*To the left of the kretch are three of the infamous spider katanga. The first two grasp great staves at least ten feet long and shining white like ivory.*

*The third spider katanga is like none you have ever seen. Fat and squat, it stands hardly five feet tall. Its spider's visage slavers and drools steaming, hissing venom. Its Nubari lower torso is clearly female, but seemingly bloated and swollen. With a start you realize the monster is carrying hundreds, perhaps thousands, of flesh colored egg sacks the size of swift eggs (1" across).*

*As the pool of blood rises, now nearly six inches deep, the metal net begins to glow and pulsate a red to match that of the blood. With a shout of bestial fury and triumph, the kretch finish their chanting. A swirl of energy resolves into the form of a shadowy, red bridge. One end is anchored on the pedestal. The other end disappears into the eddying mystic energies in a way you don't quite understand. What you DO*

***understand is this: So long as the metal net remains in contact with the blood that still runs to the bottom of this mad amphitheater, the Blood Bridge will remain open.***

Roll initiative. If the evil minions win, they will attack immediately. They cannot be surprised. Spells already cast are ~~struck out~~. The distance from the rim of the amphitheater to the metal net surrounding the pedestal is 60'. The pedestal is 30' across and is raised 2' from the floor. The metal net is not a barrier and both heroes and evil minions can leave or enter the pedestal without damaging the net, if they choose; there are large gaps in the net allowing them to do so.

The focus of the heroes actions' is supposed to be the destruction of the metal net. This net draws the mystical energies from the sacrificial blood and maintains the Blood Bridge. The heroes are, of course, free to follow a different course of action. **The metal net must take 1000 points of damage before it will stop functioning as a power conduit, forcing the Blood Bridge closed. The net has an AC of 6.** The 1000 points of damage reflect the fact that the thin, web-like strands are supernaturally tough, and that virtually all of the net must be destroyed for it to stop functioning. All spells, weapons, claws and so forth used to damage the net are to calculate damage just as if they were attacking a living being.

The amphitheater is dug out of the native earth, but great stone channels have been constructed from the cages, down the slope of the amphitheater, to the great collection "bowl" that encircles the pedestal.

There is one other less obvious trap set in the floor of the amphitheater. The earthen floor is still thick with growing brush and vines, enough for the *entangle*, *plant growth* and *spike growth* spells described below to be effective. Once these spells have taken effect, the only clear path to the pedestal will be down the blood-filled stone channels—a slippery route at best. Heroes taking this route must make a Dexterity check or fall and slide to the bottom.

### Order Of Battle

**Round one**—If the evil minions win initiative, Kural will cast *entangle* and the Spider Mother Katanga will cast *plant growth*. The combined spells act as a sort of double-strength *entangle*, meaning anyone who saves can only move five feet per round. Other spellcasters will cast *hold* and *charm* spells. Note that the *sanctuary* cast on Kural and the Spider Mother Katanga will mean that the heroes will pretty much ignore them unless directly attacked by them. Area effect spells do not negate the *sanctuary* spell.

**Round two**—The evil minions will not leave the pedestal unless being attacked at range. Their primary

goal is to make sure the Blood Bridge remains open and the Tamara cross safely. The Spider Mother will cast *spike growth*, causing 2d4 damage to anyone who continues to move through the *plant growth* and *entangle* (if cast). Those failing their saves will have their movement slowed to one foot per round.

**Round three**—If three or more of the heroes are held or charmed, read or paraphrase the following:

**Suddenly behind you comes the sound of someone shrieking in terror. Over the rim of the amphitheater races Booda, terror on his face. "Help! Help! They're after me." You had always heard that the Boo's were a cowardly tribe. Now you've seen it for yourself.**

**Booda stops short, seeing that you are in no shape to help him. With an indignant look, he quickly makes some arcane gestures toward you. Instantly, you are free! (Or the charm fades away.) Then, as if realizing where he is, Booda gets a panicked look on his face and disappears back the way he came.**

Also, at some point in round three, read or paraphrase the following:

**One of the kretch on the pedestal reaches into the swirling, mystical fog that surrounds the Blood Bridge and pulls from it a large, hunched figure. Lights and mists engulf both the kretch and the figure, but you glimpse green eyes that glow like fire and a cragged jaw full of jagged teeth. An arm covered in orange and black fur reaches skyward. The arm ends in a hand with large, black claws. A roar like a giant gnasher erupts from the figure and half a dozen akathasa swoop down to the outstretched hand. The akathasa cling to the arm for a moment, then fall dead to the ground.**

This is the first tamara to cross to Malatra. The heroes will not be able to get a close look at it. Its appearance is obscured by the mystical energies of the Blood Bridge, and the evil minions would prevent the heroes from approaching anyway. If at anytime the metal net is destroyed (see below) or the pedestal is about to be overrun, the tamara will teleport away as the kretch cover their retreat.

The heroes have **no** chance of hurting the tamara with weapons. For the sake of plot, spells will have no effect as well. The tamara will simply flee to safety.

**Rounds four and five**—Each round, one more tamara will cross, summon 5 or 6 akathasa, and drain them of their energy. Then these three will teleport away.

**Round six**—The death of Bagoomba:

**Suddenly your fortunes take a turn for the worse. One of the kretch on the platform bellows out a weird call. In response four large kretch appear at the opposite rim of the amphitheater. They start down towards you, only to stop when a spear point comes through the chest of the last one in line. "Take that, foul green thing" is the shout of triumph that accompanies the deathblow. It is Big Chief Bagoomba, whose reputation as a fighter appears to have been somewhat earned after all. The three kretch turn on him and there is a flurry of claws and spear work. When it ends, Bagoomba stands badly wounded while the two remaining kretch try to flank him. "Fear not, I'll be there to help you in just a moment!" yells Bagoomba, thrusting his spear through yet another green form. The last kretch shows no fear, but it is certainly attacking cautiously. To no avail, as Bagoomba puts him down with a blow that shatters his own spear. "Victory will be ours!" yells Bagoomba, raising his hands overhead in an almost heroic gesture.**

**In his excitement, however, Bagoomba has neglected to watch his back. A hunting spider katanga appears behind him and before anyone can yell or do anything the foul creature sinks its poisonous fangs into Bagoomba's neck. The two roll back out of sight, but in a minute only the spider arises, moving off to engage a nearby snakeman. Bagoomba finally stands, with a look of complete surprise on his homely face. "I'm too important to die this way," are his last words, as he flops onto the rim of the amphitheater, his blood running down to join in the flood.**

**Rounds six to twelve**—Two tamara appear each round, drain some akathasa, then leave. If by round 12 the heroes haven't destroyed the net, two dozen yuan-ti and Nubari warriors will charge down the slope of the amphitheater and destroy the remainder of the net. If Kural and the Spider Mother katanga are still alive, they will escape. All the other evil minions will be captured or killed.

Note how many tamara were able to cross the Blood Bridge. There should be at least 3 and as many as 21.

**Kretch, servants of Tiger (4):** AC 4; MV 12, HD 7; hp 49; THAC0 11; #AT 4 or 1; Dmg 1d6+7 x2 (Claws), 1d4 (bite), 1d8 (horn gore), or by weapon type; SA none; SD immune to poison; MR nil; SZ M; ML 19.

Other Abilities: 19 Str, 270-degree field of vision, only surprised on a 1, *polymorph* any non-intelligent object three times daily.

Save vs. Paralyzation: 8, Save vs. Spells: 11

Primary actions during combat—Protect any Tamara that may cross the Blood Bridge.

**Akathasa, servants of Tiger (6):** AC 6; MV 1; fl 18 (C); HD 1-1; hp 2; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1 (bite); SA *stinking cloud* belch on a single target twice daily, telepathic link, and sense warm-blooded creatures within 60'; SD hide in shadows 75%; MR nil; SZ S; ML 16.

Save vs. Paralyzation: 16, Save vs. Spells: 19

Primary actions during combat—The akathasa, 5 or 6 at a time, will swoop down as each Tamara crosses the Blood Bridge. The akathasa will attach themselves to the Tamara, giving up the life force that they stored for their masters. Once finished, they will fall to the ground, dead.

**Kural, former shaman of the Katimaya, P6:** AL NE; AC 8; MV 6; hp 22; THAC0 17; #AT 1, Dmg 3d6 (special staff), SA spells; SD nil; MR nil; Str 12, Dex 11, Con 14, Int 13, Wis 15, Cha 9; SZ S; ML 9.

Save vs. Paralyzation: 7, Save vs. Spells: 12

Spells: 1st—*command, entangle, faerie fire, sanctuary, protection from good*. 2nd—*charm person or mammal* x 2, *hold person* x 2. 3rd—*dispel magic, summon insects*.

Equipment—fetish: *feign death*.

Primary actions during combat: Kural will cast *entangle* if the evil minions win initiative. Otherwise he will rely on a barrage of *hold* and *charm* spells.

Kural is a coward who will cower behind the bigger fighters and cast spells. As soon as the tide of combat turns against him, Kural will turn invisible and flee.

Equipment: *Black Staff of the Ancients*—Acts as a cloak of displacement +2, acts as rings of *free action* and *spell turning*. Must be evil to use it.

*Necromancers Necklace*—This necklace once held the *Necromancers Stone*. It allows the use of the following spells: *invisibility* 1/day, *animate dead* 2/day, *cause disease* 1/week, *regenerate* 1/week, *vampiric touch* 2/day. All spells are cast at 8th level. It also confers 10% magic resistance and 100% resistance to negative plane effects.

**Hyena Katanga Witch Doctor, W6:** AL NE; AC 5; MV 12/24; hp 26; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 2d6 by bite; SA locking bite (successful hit results in automatic damage following rounds until victim makes bend bars/lift gates roll), SD never surprised; Int 13; SZ M; ML 12.

Save vs. Paralyzation: 11, Save vs. Spells: 14

Spells: 1st—*magic missile* x 3, ~~*protection from good*~~. 2nd—*Melf's acid arrow, mirror image*. 3rd—*fly, haste*.

Primary actions during combat—This witch-doctor will cast *magic missile* and *Melf's acid arrow*. If he receives more than 12 hp damage, he will cast *fly*, then

*haste* if he can. Physical combat will only occur as a last resort.

**Spider Katanga, Hunting, F8 (2):** AL CE; AC 4/2 (Dex); MV 12; hp 64; THAC0 7 (staff, specialization, Strength); #AT 7 or 2 (specialized); Dmg 1/1/1/1/1/1d6 (6 arms, bite) or 1d8+10/1d10+10 (Ivory staff); SA poison (2d12, save for half); SD nil; MR nil; Str 18/00, Dex 18, Con 16, Int 14, Wis 11, Cha 9; SZ M; ML 18.

Save vs. Paralyzation: 13, Save vs. Spells: 10

These katanga are in half-Nubari form.

Equipment: Ivory Staff—This staff is fashioned from the tusks of a tontor noble that the two katanga hunted and killed. It does increased damage for a staff. A successful hit requires the target to make a save vs. spells or be affected by a *slow* spell.

Primary actions during combat—Will protect the Spider Katanga Mother at all costs. They are willing to sacrifice their own lives for her.

**Spider Katanga Mother (Mother Of A Thousand Young) P10/W10:** AL CE; AC 4/2 (Dex), MV 12; hp 86; THAC0 14, #AT 7, dmg 1/1/1/1/1/1d6 + 3d4 (6 arms, bite + acid); SA acid bite, acid spit 30'; SD nil; MR nil; Str 16, Dex 18, Con 18, Int 19, Wis 19, Cha 9; SZ M; ML 18.

Spells, priest: 1st—*bless, command, entangle, pass without trace, protection from good, remove fear, sanctuary*. 2nd—*charm person or mammal, flame blade* (on other katanga's staves), *hold person, obscurement, resist fire, warp wood*. 3rd—*hold animal, plant growth, spike growth, summon insects*. 4th—*cure serious wounds* x 3, *free action*.

Spells, wizard: 1st—*magic missile* x 3, *jump*. 2nd—*detect invisibility, forget, improved phantasmal force, web*. 3rd—*dispel magic, flame arrow, wraithform*. 4th—*Evard's black tentacles, improved invisibility, fire shield*. 5th—*cloudkill, summon shadow*.

Primary actions during combat—Will aid the kretch until she loses half her hit points, then flee, sacrificing her two warriors if need be. If she wins initiative first round, she will cast *plant growth*.

## Final Note to DM

The purpose of this encounter is to determine how many tamara cross into Malatra. The focus of the evil minions is to get as many tamara across as possible, not to kill the heroes. Incapacitating the heroes and getting the 21 maximum tamara across is quite acceptable.

The focus of the heroes should be to destroy the metal net that powers the Blood Bridge. If, however, a hero forgets this and decides to close ranks with the spider katanga or attack the kretch, then he should face the consequences of his short-sighted actions.



## Conclusion

*As the last of the tamara disappear before your very eyes, the swarms of akathasa turn as one and disappear into the jungle trees. A moment later, the kretch turn and flee into the jungle, abandoning the ruins of the ancients now that it has served its purpose. Even the last of the tamara's allies have fled, melting into the thick, greenery.*

*Over the next few hours you help gather the dead on both sides: your comrades for a hero's funeral, the kretch to count their numbers.*

*Of the over 600 warriors of Malatra that engaged the some 400 kretch, nearly 200 are dead. Another 80 or so are wounded. Of the kretch, just over 100 were slain. There are no wounded, as the kretch are never ones to ask for mercy. It is a victory for Malatra, but a costly one.*

*Late that evening, as the bonfires burn and the warriors lie exhausted, the simbaran shaman Syanya approaches you. The old Nubari leans heavily on his staff, resting. Several bruises the color of ripe plums on his neck and shoulders are all that remain of his scars of battle.*

If three to six tamara made it to Malatra, read the following.

*"Heroes," Syanya says. "Malatra owes you a debt that we cannot repay. Of the hundreds of tamara that would have come to the jungle, only three (or 4 or 5 or 6) were successful. You are to be honored for your great deeds."*

*"But the battle is not over," Syanya continues. "The legends say that the ancients never faced the tamara with anything less than a 2-to-1 numerical advantage. And such was the ancients might, half the council of elders was defeated by a single ancient."*

*Syanya scowls as he says, "By that reckoning, every warrior, shaman, and witch-doctor in Malatra will be needed to defeat just these three tamara and their servants. It is a grim situation, but one in which we may yet prevail."*

*"Rest well, heroes—for the fight for Malatra has only just begun!"*

If seven or more tamara made it to Malatra, read the following.

*"Heroes," Syanya says. "Malatra owes you a debt that we cannot repay. Of the hundreds of tamara that would have come to the jungle, seven (or more) were successful."*

*Syanya shakes his head as if to clear away a bad dream. "Rest well, heroes, and enjoy what life*

*may remain to you. For not in all my dreaming can I imagine us defeating that many tamara."*

At Gen Con 2000, please complete the Critical Events Sheet. After that, please contact [jungle\\_tales@hotmail.com](mailto:jungle_tales@hotmail.com) and report the following:

- Did the heroes gain the plantmen's help?
- Did the heroes gain the black leopard katanga's help?
- How many tamara made it across the Blood Bridge?
- Did any heroes fall?

**The End**

## Experience Point Summary

Add up the values for what the heroes accomplished. Then add the roleplaying award (which can vary by hero). Assign the total to each hero.

### Encounter One

Investigate Katikanan 100 xp

### Encounter Two

Defeat the ju-ju zombies 200 xp

### Encounter Three

Pass the test of patience 100 xp  
Pass the test of spirituality 250 xp  
Pass the test of nobility 150 xp

### Encounter Four

Encountering the Huroola 100-300 xp  
(The more respectful and peaceful, the more experience points.)  
Getting information about the Kretch 100 xp  
Negotiating with the Huroola 250 xp  
Gaining the Huroola as allies 300 xp  
Getting the Huroola to discuss their history 200 xp

### Encounter Five

Encountering the black leopard Katanga 100-300 xp  
(The more respectful and peaceful, the more experience points.)

### Encounter Six

Getting information about the Kretch 100 xp.  
Finding out about the black leopard code of honor 200 xp.  
Gaining the black leopard katanga as allies 200 xp.

### Encounter Seven

Taking part in the vote for war leader	100-300 xp
(Depends on the amount of involvment)	
Actively discussing strategy	100 xp.
Freeing garuda as a distraction	50 xp.
Freeing prisoners as agreed	100 xp.

### Encounter Eight

Engaging in combat and destroying the metal net	500 xp
Each kretch killed	200 xp
Killing Kural	200 xp
Killing the hyena katanga	200 xp
Each spider katanga guard killed	300 xp
Killing the Spider Mother	1000 xp
Only three tamara cross the Blood Bridge	1800 xp
For every tamara above three that crosses, subtract 100 xp. If all 21 cross, no xp.	
Discretionary role-playing	0-1000 xp
Award for consistent character portrayal	

**Maximum XP possible** **9,300 xp**

## Treasure Summary

**Boon of the Council of Elders:** You were there, and you were part of the group that helped to destroy the Blood Bridge. No single act in the last thousand years has contributed more to the safety of the Jungle. According to legend, the Blood Bridge may not be opened again for another thousand years. While it is true that some tamara did make it across the bridge, and still remain to threaten the jungle, if the bridge had remained open, the jungle would surely be doomed. For your heroic efforts, the Council of Elders has rewarded you with the following boon:

Choose one: (DM initials)

Note: These effects only apply after your character is converted to 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition.

- \_\_\_\_\_ Toughness bonus feat—adds 3 hit points permanently.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Instant proficiency—four ranks in a class skill, or two ranks in a cross-class skill of your choice.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Iron Will bonus feat—+2 to Will saving throws.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Lightning Reflexes bonus feat—+2 to Reflex saving throws.

## Come the Tiger Critical Event Summary

Please fill this out at Gen Con 2000 and return it with the scoring packet. After Gen Con 2000, please email the information to [jungle\\_tales@hotmail.com](mailto:jungle_tales@hotmail.com).

Did the heroes gain the plantmen's help? YES            NO

Did the heroes gain the black leopard katanga's help? YES            NO

How many tamara made it across the Blood Bridge? \_\_\_\_\_

Did any heroes fall? YES            NO

If so, list the hero names, classes, player names, and RPGA numbers:

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