

Huroola Prophet

**A One-Round AD&D[®] Game Living Jungle Adventure for
Mid/High Level Heroes**

Ancient Enemy #3

by Tom Prusa

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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 module 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 *oblique font*. 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.

Welcome to the Living Jungle!

If this is the first time you've judged a Living Jungle adventure, be sure to obtain a copy of the Judge guidelines from your event coordinator. In any event, review the use of optional rules (especially the "At Death's Door" rule) before beginning play.

The Living Jungle is a tournament campaign exclusively for members of the RPGA Network. Be sure that you distribute scoring sheets at the *beginning* of the round, and make sure that each player at your table has a membership card (or at least remembers his or her membership number).

This is a mid/high-level Living Jungle adventure; any level characters may participate. However, characters below 4th level will find the adventure extremely challenging. Groups consisting of all 1st to 3rd level characters should not attempt this adventure at all.

During the course of the adventure, the heroes will earn experience points based on their accomplishments. Some of these points are for overcoming obstacles, finding information, defeating

monsters, and recovering treasure. After each encounter an experience point value is listed. This is summarized at the end of the adventure as well. *All characters contributing 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 hero participating earns 100 points. All experience points are awarded at the end of the tournament. Do not award experience points after each encounter.

In some places the characters can gain treasure. For common items, like normal weapons and equipment, the players simply record the new items on their character sheets. But for magical or other special items, you must hand the appropriate Treasure Certificate, included with this tournament.

DM Background

This is a one round Living Jungle adventure for low/mid level heroes. In this adventure the heroes must negotiate a peace with an ancient enemy, the yuan-ti, or snake people.

The adventure begins with the heroes summoned by Bengoukee, legendary witch doctor of Bagoomba's tribe. They are rumors of a great prophet that has arisen amongst the Huroola tribe. With the danger that is looming over the whole jungle, Bengoukee and Malatra need seers, if such can be found.

The heroes can aid some korobokuru, and fend off some pteranaodons. Then they must roleplay their way into Huroola country, and locate the prophet. When they finally do, they find that it is an evil servant of the tamara, the form that tiger will take when it returns. If they are successful, Bengoukee gives them a choice that will affect their characters in the times to come.

Earthquakes

From time to time during the adventure, earthquakes will happen. The territory the heroes are in is far to the north of the epicenter, so the results should not prove fatal. They should prove distracting, as well as a continual sign that bad things are happening in the jungle.

Earthshake results (D6)

1. Mild tremor, dexterity rolls to remain standing. No damage from falling.
2. Mild tremor, some tree branches broken, small trees may fall. Dexterity check or struck by a falling branch for 1d2 points of damage.

3. Mild tremor. Some areas of the ground are pushed upward, small trees may fall. Dexterity check to avoid 1d2 points of damage.
4. Mild tremor. All effects above, dexterity check at -1 to avoid 1d3 points of damage.
5. Moderate tremor. All effects listed above, one random member of party must make a dexterity check at -4 or be pinned by a falling tree for 1d4 points of damage.
6. Moderate tremor. All effects above, plus one random member of party must make dexterity check at -6 or be pinned by falling tree for 1d6 points of damage.

Players Introduction

Terrible things are happening in the jungle! It started a few moons ago, when some of you were sent on a mission to make peace with the snake people. Odd as that sounds, Bengoukee insisted that the snake people were vital to the survival of Malatra. And when you went, you were indeed able to make peace, with difficulty. But the worst part of it was the vision you witnessed. And those of you who were not there have heard the story many times in the past few months. Tiger is returning!

The members of the Simbara tribe are preparing, ready to meet their fate in defense of the jungle. But many believe that the end of the jungle is at hand.

Even more believe it since the events of last week. The ground has begun to shake. Not always, the earthquakes are always a few days apart, and don't do much damage here. But it is considered a very bad omen, a sign of impending doom.

You are gathered here at the village of Bagoomba, awaiting a meeting with Bengoukee. No piddling heroes have answered this call, one and all you are among the most sung about heroes in the jungle. But all your skills may be tested in this time of trouble. And as some great boaster once said, it could always be worse, it could be the monsoon season. Well, the clouds are rolling overhead, the monsoon season will certainly start within the week.

Stop and let the heroes introduce themselves, if they do not already know each other. Descriptions are in order now, as well.

Bengoukee

You squat about the fire, and look up as the door opens. No flash and smoke entrance this time, Bengoukee just comes outside and joins you. Not

only does he know you, and you know him and his routines, but the fact is that Bengoukee looks both fired and discouraged.

"I am glad you are here, my friends;" says Bengoukee. "Once again, I have need of your aid. I have no special rewards or thinly veiled threats, I can only say that Malatra needs you. It involves danger, that should be no surprise, And it involves your skills at diplomacy and problem solving as well. What say you?"

The party should certainly agree, but just to add emphasis, roll on the earthquake table now, applying appropriate effects. If anyone is injured, Bengoukee passes them a healing draught and continues (when the party has agreed to help).

"Thank you, you are truly heroes. Now, to business. I have heard rumors of a new seer in the jungle, a prophet of unheard of power. We could use such power in the times to come. Unfortunately, this prophet is said to be among the men of the Huroola.

As you know, the Huroola are fiercely territorial, and permit no man from their tribe, indeed no male at all in their territory, to bear weapons of any kind. It is their strongest taboo, and death is their only punishment for breaking it. Yet we must have someone seek out this prophet, if he truly exists.

(to the males in the party) **I know it is asking much of you to leave your weapons behind, but we cannot have a war with the Huroola. While not numerous, they are all fierce warriors, well, the women are. And their speakers, the rulers of their villages, are always potent shamans, as well.**

(to the females in the party) **It is up to you (or one of you) to act as leader, the Huroola will respect no one else in the party.**

If there are no females in the party, the heroes are in a bit of trouble. Alternatives abound. Plantmen certainly have no gender, as far as the Huroola are concerned. A case could be made for both lizardmen and lacerials as well. Basically, the farther away a race is from Nubari, the more likely it is that the Huroola will accept them, and/or allow them to carry weapons.

If there are no alternatives, the heroes will just have to do the best they can. Point out that in the event of an attack, it is the matter of but a round in the jungle to pick up a serviceable club or staff. Torches, fishing poles, a number of mundane items can serve as weapons in time of need.

Assuming the heroes agree, Bengoukee has some help for them, and answers to questions that should be forthcoming.

- **Where do we find the Huroola?**

Their territory lies to the west, on the other side of Fire Mountain. West until the foothills of Fire Mountain end, is where Huroola territory begins. The villages are generally well hidden, although not to heroes like those present. (about 200 miles just to Huroola territory).

- **Where do we find the prophet?**

Rumor says that he is in the village of Taupassin, one of the larger Huroola villages. Bengoukee does not know the exact location, somewhere north of the Dreaming River. (almost all of the Huroola territory is north of the Dreaming River).

- **What do we tell him?**

Bengoukee would like the heroes to convince the prophet to return with them, he could be of great aid. If he will not, there is one question which must be answered. What is meant by the prophecy "Tiger returns". Bengoukee is aware of the obvious symbolism, but he needs more facts to fight it. Have him look worried, all of the portents he has read have been bad.

- **Why us? or, why not just send a group of women?**

Depending on the party composition, Bengoukee may reply that's just what he is doing. Otherwise, he points out the earthquakes, and the approaching monsoon season, make a tough party a requirement. He'll also point out some of the more famous heroes in the party (pick a few heroes and brag them up, especially including any Huroola women or other famous female warriors), may well have had their songs sung around Huroola campfires. The heroes are among the most famous in the jungle. Make them pay for it.

- **What about supplies?**

Food, waterskins, extra arrows, two coils of vine rope, all are ready. Bengoukee also hands over a pair of *brews of healing* (certificates provided).

- **Do we have to leave our weapons here?**

Of course not. Just make sure that no males carry any into Huroola territory, for it is safe to assume that you'll be watched as soon as you leave the foothills. Of course nothing stops a female from carrying three knives, for instance, to distribute if necessary. A little restraint must be shown, even the best female warrior would not carry three spears and a pair of battle axes,

not if she wanted to be effective in combat, or even move very well.

When questions are finished, Bengoukee has a final warning.

A final warning, and the main reason I have sent for such great heroes for such a seemingly simple task. Part of the reason that I cannot locate the prophet is that my efforts are blocked, blocked by a great evil. No, not tiger, not yet, I hope. But something that seemed to leech at my very life force when I touched it. It was with difficulty that I broke free of the dreamland. One thing only did I learn, whatever it is, it is of the night, and the shadows. Such beings should fear fire, if it comes to that.

The presence of this evil makes me fear that the prophet may be in grave danger, so I ask all haste from you. Can you leave immediately?

There should be no reason why not, the heroes can change spells along the way, if they wish. At best speed, they'll need four or five days to reach Huroola country. That's moving pretty fast, but these are some of the best heroes in the jungle, they do know their way around.

Encounter One: Korobokuru in trouble.

Two days after the party starts out, an earthquake occurs. Roll on the earthquake table. Any effects listed as coming from tree limbs should come from tumbling rocks, instead, but otherwise apply the effects normally.

A few hours after this occurs, the heroes stumble on a group in trouble.

As you move along the base of Fire Mountain, you are thankful that the effects of the earthquake were no worse. Here and there some rocks tumbled down, but nothing terribly dangerous.

As you move along, you see a small cloud of dust in the air. As you get closer you see short figures stumbling out of the dust cloud. You can now see that the dust cloud is coming from a cave entrance, and the short figures are korobokuru, although strangely dressed and with very pale skin.

The heroes have stumbled on the lost tribe of Fire Mountain, a group of korobokuru who chose to move underground many moons ago. The most recent

earthshake caused a cave in, and many of the korobokuru are wounded. Some are still trapped.

The heroes can aid in several ways.

Healing the injured.

About twenty of the lost tribe have injuries ranging from minor scrapes to shattered bones. Two have shattered ribs, a *cure light wounds* spell is necessary to save them, or a successful healing proficiency roll. The others can be helped by anyone with healing proficiency, no roll required.

Rescuing trapped korobokuru.

Five of the tribe are trapped in the cave in. One is buried near the edge of the cave in (strength check to pull free), she has stopped breathing. Again, a successful healing proficiency check or spell can save her life. The other four are trapped in a small cave, some serious digging is required. Mostly this involves carrying rocks. There are only three of the korobokuru able to help, the brunt of the work will be on the party.

The cave in will require six hours of work to clear, the trapped tribesmen have enough air for at most an hour. Of the three korobokuru, they can only supply two hours of the needed work, they are too bruised and battered for a sustained effort. The other four must come from the heroes. Have each hero involved make an endurance NWP check, or Constitution check at a -4 if that proficiency is not possessed. If successful, their efforts count as a full hour. If they fail, it counts as but two thirds of an hour. All the heroes may help, but if someone is going to care for the wounded, they can help for at most one half of that time.

If the heroes just make it, they are able to reach the trapped korobokuru just a minute or two after they pass out, healing checks will be needed to get them breathing again. If they have some time to spare, they make it just as the air begins to turn bad, the tribesmen stumble out coughing. If they fail by only one third of an hour's effort, the tribesmen are near death, and only curing spells can save them. Any longer than that means the tribesmen could not be saved.

Note: if the heroes are just barely going to fail, a particularly strong hero (17 Str or better) may try to burst through just enough to get the tribesmen some air. Such an act would involve some damage to themselves, as skin, fingernails or claws, things like that are ripped away in frantic haste. Don't suggest this, but if someone tries it allow it to succeed with a strength roll. It also causes 2d6 points of damage, mostly to the heroes hands.

Whether or not they save the four tribesmen, the lost tribe is at once grateful and terrified. They don't know what is going on. Let the heroes role play with them for a bit, then they start for another entrance to their main village. They cannot be talked out of returning to the underground, they are quite certain that it was not harmed by the earthquake. In this case they are right, but that may not hold for the future.

Encounter Two: Predator above

Later that day, the heroes are subject to a passing attack of a predator. A few pteranodons spot them and decide that they would make a good meal.

Pteranodons (Bigbeaks). (3): AC 7; Int Animal; MV 3, Fl 15; HD 3+3; hp 20, 17, 23; THACO 17; #AT 1; Dmg 2d4; SA swoop and spear victims too small to swallow at one gulp; SD nil; MR nil; SZ L (20' wingspan); ML 9.

The pteranodons attack with a single swooping run, they do not return if they are resisted. Allow normal surprise rolls, if anyone succeeds they see them coming and can react. Anyone surprised cannot react until after they attack.

They will target the three smallest members of the party, although they avoid any plantmen, not recognizing them as food.

If they roll a successful hit, they have speared a hero and lifted them off of the ground. This does mean they are close enough for one quick melee attack, and at least two rounds of missile attacks.

A speared hero takes 2d4 points of damage. A successful strength roll can allow them to break free of the pteranodon. If they break free on the first round, they fall and take 3d6 points of damage. On the second round, the damage is 6d6. Any longer means 10d6 points of damage. In all cases allow a dexterity roll for 1/2 damage, representing a heroes chance to land in a tree and come out relatively unscathed.

If there are any aarakocra in the party they will not be speared, but they will be targeted as a potential rival for the food, and attacked in preference to anyone else.

Encounter Three: Huroola Country.

The rest of your trip has been uneventful, but the tricky part starts now. Behind you lie the foothills of Fire Mountain, ahead of you lies the jungle. The jungle controlled by the Huroola.

Any ranger, forest tam'hi, or anyone with tracking or jungle survival proficiency can find a decent hiding place for those weapons which must be left behind. These items WILL be there when they return. (assuming they return).

Reward player ingenuity. If someone attempts to disguise a spear as a fishing pole, don't have the hero killed out of hand, merely have the Huroola note that this could be used as a weapon, and confiscate it. (It could be turned over to a female fighter in the party, as long as she promises never to give it to a male while in Huroola territory).

You move into Huroola territory, some of you feeling quite naked without your weapons. And from the first hour, you have the feeling that you are being watched. Nothing you can put your finger on, or can you?

Let the heroes make some rolls. Alertness proficiency (make it a wisdom roll), rangers, forest tam'hi, plantmen, and rogues can all make a wisdom roll to detect something going on around them. Other proficiencies may be appropriate. If in doubt, give them a wisdom roll at a -4.

Assuming someone does notice, read or paraphrase the following:

As you move through the jungle, your vision is obstructed by the lush fronds and verdant growth. With a crack of thunder, the monsoon finally makes its presence known. Rain comes down in sheets, battering the vegetation and drenching you thoroughly. Yet through the rain, you can hear a stealthy squish. Someone is moving into place, attempting to surround you. They are good, but not quite good enough. Behind you there are two, and at least three on each side. Ahead of you, you hear nothing, perhaps you are being herded somewhere?

Let the heroes react as they wish. If no one can detect the hidden Huroola warriors, play up the feeling of being watched, until the heroes are certain that something is out there.

If the heroes stop and call out, or challenge the Huroola to come forth, they will make an appearance. Otherwise, they follow the party for about four hours. By then, the party is nearing a village, although they don't realize it yet. In that case they push through some vegetation to see a quartet of Huroola warriors waiting for them. Adjust the following depending on whether or not the heroes called out the Huroola.

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. They do not look happy to see 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 I mean 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.

Sitka, Huroola female F7: AC 6 (hide armor); AL NG; MV 12; hp 65; THAC0 12; #AT 2; Dmg 1-6+3 (spear); SA specialized with spear; SD nil; MR nil; St 17, Dx 13, Cn 16, In 14, Ws 13, Ch 15; SZ M; ML 13.

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 (13), Nubari female F3: AC 6 (hide armor); AL N; MV 12; hp 24; THAC0 17; #AT

3/2; Dmg 1-6+3; SA specialized with spear; SD nil; MR nil; SZ M; ML 17 (fanatic).

Not friendly to outsiders, generally suspicious of everybody.

- **Fame:** As noted before, the heroes are some of the most powerful heroes of the jungle. Allow each hero 6th level or higher to make a Saving Throw vs Paralyzation, using Charisma reaction modifiers as a bonus or penalty. If successful, Sitka has heard of them. If successful by more than 1/2, even some of the warriors have heard of them. Adjust their attitudes up just a bit, and the respect by a lot.

The heroes must try to find the village of Taupassin, the Huroola need to find out what the heroes are doing here.

Information from Sitka.

- The prophet. She has heard of the prophet. She doubts it is still alive, it is said to have brought a plague down on Taupassin. Many of the warriors have sickened, some have died. No one goes there now.
- The location of Taupassin. She is VERY reluctant to give out such information. It will be much easier if one of the heroes who made their 'fame' roll is known as a seaman of some sort (priest or mage). Otherwise she'll want some solid evidence that the heroes can and will help.
- The great evil that Bengoukee spoke of. She doesn't know of any such thing, unless the prophet still lives, and it really did bring the plague.
- What do you mean, 'it'. Yes, she said 'it'. She has heard that the prophet is an ancient talking tree, one that walks like a woman. A warrior pipes up that the prophet is supposed to be a great dark shadow. Another corrects her, saying that she heard the prophet was a great snake. A third denies this all, she heard it was a great lion, that spoke like a woman. Obviously, the heroes are hearing rumors at best, here.

Sitka has some questions that must be answered, as well. She is amenable to a trade off, answer for answer. Among the questions that need to be satisfactorily answered:

- What are the heroes doing here?
- Who sent them?

- Why are there males along (if there are).
- When are they leaving (give a good strong impression that 'now' would be the best answer).
- What do they want with the prophet?
- What do they know about the earthquakes?

This should be a serious roleplaying encounter. Do not make the Huroola easy to convince. The heroes must do a good job here. Playing up their advantages, the seriousness of the mission, the rumors of destruction coming to Malatra have two effects. It will help convince Sitka, but it makes the xenophobic warriors even more xenophobic.

A sincere desire to help the village of Taupassin and exterminate any evil that is lurking there is the best way to get information out of the Huroola.

Depending on roleplaying, there are a few likely outcomes:

- Huroola convinced of danger, and that the heroes can help with the plague in Taupassin. Sitka tells two warriors to guide the party to Taupassin, which takes two days in the monsoon. The warriors will not enter a plague village, only take the heroes there.
- Huroola convinced of danger, but not too sure of their ability to do anything about it. Will give directions to village, will follow surreptitiously to make sure they don't go anywhere else.
- Huroola just barely able to keep from killing party because of arrogance or the like. Huroola escort party to nearest village, under constant guard. Heroes meet Taki, speaker for village of Parala, they get to go through the whole thing again, hopefully doing better this time.

Women of course should do most of the speaking, although famous male shamans will be accorded just slightly less respect than a village speaker.

Monsoon Season:

It starts slowly, just a drenching downpour for about three hours on the first day. The next day, it rains for six hours, and from then on it rains at least ten hours a day for the next three weeks. The rainy season brings about the following changes:

Lizardmen and Plantmen have no need to soak themselves in water, it is happening naturally.

Aarakocra have a real problem flying in this weather. All landing and takeoffs (requiring Dexterity checks), are at -4. In addition, flight speed is at best 1/2 of normal, and it's exhausting. No more than four hours of flight per day may be attempted, and if that much time is spent in the air, the flyer must rest for the remainder of the day.

The temperature drops significantly during the rainy season, heroes may be prone to colds and other diseases. Anyone wearing a waterproof cloak or similar protection is unaffected, anyone running around in normal jungle dress has a 10% chance per day of catching a cold. No real game effects, but it should serve to make the heroes miserable, as well as rendering useless any sense of smell that may be used, in tracking, for instance.

Encounter Four: Taupassin

On the way to the village, the heroes spot a giant snake, hidden in the trees. The snake is sluggish from the cold of the rain, and will not attack, only defend itself. If the two Huroola warriors are along, they'll want to stop and hunt here. Female warriors can earn a bit of respect by helping with the hunt.

Giant Constrictor Snake (1): AC 5; MV 9; HD 6+1; hp 31; THAC0 15; #AT 2; Dmg 1-4/2-8; SA constriction for 2-8 per round, total Str of 30 to free, melee damage has a 20% chance of striking held victim; SD nil; MR nil; SZ H (35'); ML 9.

If the warriors are not along, a pair of warriors who were told to watch the heroes stopped to hunt when the heroes come upon them. Use two of the warriors from the previous encounter. One of them is being constricted, the heroes can save her life. She should have taken two rounds of constriction damage when the heroes arrive.

If she is saved, they offer to guide the heroes the rest of the way.

The village of Taupassin.

The accompanying warriors will not enter under any circumstances.

The village of Taupassin is a collection of about thirty huts, several of them knocked down due to the recent earthquakes. It does not look healthy, but you spot no immediate signs of the plague. A number of men going about mundane tasks, trying

to keep fires going in the rain, caring for children, it seems a normal village. But there are few warriors about, only perhaps a half dozen. They are approaching now, spears in hand. Several of them look haggard and drained, perhaps with a weakening sickness. One with no weapon in her hands approaches. "I am Kimachi, a speaker of this village. Who are you and what do you do here?"

The village is suspicious, most of the men scurried out of sight as the heroes approached. Only the few warriors and the speaker are left to greet the party. Kimachi is a priest in her own right, and is quick to explain that the village is not suffering a plague. It is under a curse.

Kimachi, hf P7: AC 10; MV 12; AL LN; hp 33; THAC0 16; #AT 1; Dmg 1-6 (club); SA spells; SD nil; MR nil; St 10, Dx 10, Con 9, Int 14, Wis 17, Cha 15; SZ M; MI 13.

Spells - as needed. She generally doesn't have many left these days, as she attempts every kind of spell that could conceivably help - to no avail.

Kimachi is a good solid Huroola citizen. That is, in normal times she wouldn't even consider letting a group of outsiders into her village. The fact that she does indicates her desperation. She herself shows no weakness, but she is clearly exhausted. This should make her a bit short tempered, especially for dumb questions, but she'll apologize afterward.

Assuming that the heroes express a desire to help, she invites them into the village. She has heard of any of the heroes who might qualify as well known.

"I am honored that you came to help in our time of need, but we do not welcome visitors. I ask that you stay away from our villagers as much as possible. In particular, keep your males away from ours, we want no return to the bad old days. As she says this, a male approaches, his dress similar to Kimachi's. He speaks directly to any males in the party "I am Sartok, also a speaker for the village. I can assure you that the weakness of our warriors is only temporary. Is it perhaps that you have come seeking the prophet?" Kimachi's eyes flare as she says "Sartok, we have spoken of this. The prophet is no friend of ours." "I disagree Kimachi," says Sartok. "And the boons he grants me are proof enough." To you he says: "look me up if you would know more of the prophet." He walks away through the rain, entering a nearby hut.

In response to questions about the prophet, Kimachi's replies are curt.

"I have seen no prophet, only the men have seen it. But we have heard rumors, rumors that this so-called prophet urges the men to break the most sacred of taboos, that they carry weapons in defense of the village. So far none has done so, but with our warriors weak, we fear such vile influences. Pay no heed to the prophet, whatever it is."

She refuses to discuss it any further, preferring to inquire if there are any shamans in the party. If so, or if anyone offers to help, she shows them into the nearest hut.

On the mats in the hut lie two warriors. The muscular frames and many trophies on the walls show that these once must have been fine strapping women, the pride of the village. Now they are deep in the throes of a wasting disease, or something like that. Looking at them almost makes the most hardened of you ill. The pustules of plague you could bear, the wounds of leopard or garuda you have all borne, but what has struck these warriors down seems to have taken not their blood or their muscles, but the very life itself from them. One of them opens her eyes. Seeing you, she totters to her feet with great difficulty, much like an old Nubari who has seen many many moons. "I am Janra, chief hunter of Taupassin"; she wheezes, before collapsing on the floor of the hut like a limp rag.

Kimachi moves to comfort her, concern in her eyes.

Let the heroes examine the stricken warriors. Allow whatever rolls the heroes can think of.

- Healing or Herbalism proficiency, if successful, can determine that the wasting sickness they have seen before is nothing like this. It eats away at the body from the inside, the muscles disappearing first. These seem to be physically perfectly healthy women, but they have no strength or life left in them.
- Spellcraft can tell that only *chill touch* has a similar effect, but that always wears off in a short time. If the roll is really good, say 1/2 or less, you can tell them that they have heard of such magical effects being permanent, but only as theory. No one since the ancients has had the power to cast such spells, not even Bengoukee. Such spells would drain the very life from a person. Besides, such spells are always said to kill instantly, and frequently turn the victim into an evil spirit after death.

- Jungle Lore reveals nothing like this in even the oldest tales.

Kimachi will answer such questions as are put to her, but only about the victims.

- **When did this happen?**

About one moon ago Janra first came home complaining about missing a kill because her spear felt too heavy to throw properly. In the days that followed, many of the warriors complained of this strange weakness. It wasn't until about a week ago that Litila (she points to the other figure on the cot), first became too weak to walk. Now, almost every day sees another warrior succumb to the strange weakness.

- **What remedies have you tried?**

The usual herbs, even magical healing (*cure disease & remove curse*) have produced no results. Nor does it appear to be poison related, Kimachi has tried spells for that, as well.

- **Has anyone died?**

Not yet, not from the sickness, but Litila cannot last too much longer, nor can several of the others in the village. Several hunters have not returned, but in their weakened state, they may have fallen victim to their own prey.

- **Has anything helped?**

Only Sartok's boons have any effect. He performs a long and complicated ritual, rubbing the dung from garuda and anointing the victim with the hair of a cheetah. This seems to relieve the weakness for a time, but it always returns. He always says that this is because the warriors have not embraced the prophet, but how can one embrace what one has never seen.

If someone thinks of it, a spellcraft roll by a mage, or an Intelligence -4, can allow them to realize that this sounds remarkably similar to your basic *strength* spell. If this is tried, it works, for as long as the spell lasts. It doesn't take care of all the weakness, Litila has a 16 Strength, it is now a 4, while Janra has dropped from a 17 to a 5.

- **Why have you not sought out the prophet?**

We have, but even when the men lead us, something they are always willing to do, the prophet never appears when a warrior or any other woman is present.

- **When did you first hear of the prophet?**

Sartok first began speaking of it two weeks ago. He claimed that the prophet had granted him boons, and when he first cast his ritual on Janra, many were glad, thinking perhaps there was something to it. But when it did not last, hope drained out of the women in this village.

- **What do the men feel about this?**

They are a mixed lot. Most care for their wives deeply, and are doing whatever they can to help. All seem taken with this prophet, urging the women to truly believe.

- **Have any men or children suffered from this weakness?**

No.

- **The prophet is obviously at the bottom of this, why have you not sought him out and slain him?**

A group of warriors tried. They could find nothing. Now, we do not even have enough warriors to hunt properly, and with the rainy seasons here, hunger will soon strike others low.

- **How can we help?**

As she said, food is a problem. Someone could do some hunting. Because of the rain, hunting checks are at a -4 penalty. Any medical aid they can render will be appreciated, although the heroes will find that only a *strength* spell does any good.

Talking to Sartok

Obviously, as some point the men are going to want to break away and go talk to Sartok. Kimachi won't even pay any attention, unless the men leaving are priests or mages. Sartok will talk freely to any male, any non-Nubari of any sex, and in a pinch (an all female party), will even try to spread the word to anyone.

Sartok, hm W5: AL N(E); AC 10; MV 12; hp 12; THACo 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 (staff); SA spells; SD nil; MR nil; Int 17, Wis 8; SZ M; ML 11.

Spells: *magic missile, chill touch, detect magic, messenger, strength x2 (already cast), vampiric touch.*

Sartok is proud and boastful. In truth, he was a very minor mage until the prophet came. He was a speaker only because he is intelligent, and knew how to flatter the right people. In the past few weeks he has come into his own, as the prophet has granted him power. He is happy to tell the heroes the last part, only through the will of the prophet has he been able to cast the

spells that are keeping the worst afflicted in the village alive.

Sartok too will answer questions, and offer information freely. Of course his is slanted from his perspective.

- **Who is the prophet?**

The prophet is a great being, an actual spirit of the jungle, taking shape in the form of a tree one night, a lion the next, a shadowy cloud the third. It has come to try to save the village before it is too late.

- **What does Sartok think is happening to the warriors?**

According to the prophet, the village is under a curse of great evil. Only by forgetting the old ways and embracing the teachings of the prophet. Among these teachings are Truth, Justice, and Equality for all. Only if the Huroola give up the silly notion that men cannot be trusted with weapons can they be spared.

- **Why have only women been struck down?**

The men here are used to accepting what comes. They are able to be open and see the prophet for what he really is. The warriors are set in a rigid mode of tradition that is costing them their lives. Sartok actually looks sad when he says this, he appears to really want to help the women.

- **Why can't the women see the prophet?**

He does not like to be around those with closed minds. Their presence is actually painful to him, and so he avoids them.

- **Don't you realize that the prophet must be doing this?**

Of course not. The weakness started weeks before the prophet appeared, when he detected the evil curse upon the village. The prophet' boons are the only thing keeping this village going.

- **Can we meet the prophet?**

Of course. He prefers to meet at night, the monsoon makes him sleepy during the day. The only requirement is that you must have an open mind. Sartok even invites the party to bring along any women that may still be with Kimachi, if they are not as rigid in thought as the Huroola warriors. The best time to meet the prophet is when the moon is high, about midnight tonight.

- **What does the prophet think caused the curse?**

A long time ago, it is said among the Huroola, a great warrior slew the last of the tigers. Now that the prophet

warns that tiger is returning, this village is merely the first to suffer the effects. Only the prophet can save this village, and perhaps the whole jungle.

- **What does the prophet think is causing the earthquakes?**

He does not think it is the tiger returning, but another evil, as old as the ancients.

Sartok welcomes them to the village of the prophet, and does a bit of proselytizing on his own. He exults that the fame of the prophet is spreading through the jungle, drawing even such great legends as the heroes (and no, he does not know who they are, unless one of them is a Huroola).

Let the heroes help as much as they can. They should be kept busy doing what they can. There are bedridden patients, food to be hunted, huts to be rebuilt. Remember that it is the rainy season, there are enough colds which may develop into coughing sickness (pneumonia) to keep herbalists and priests busy.

The heroes should be now be very anxious to meet the prophet, either to speak with it or to kill it. It makes little difference, unless males try to take up weapons, or females express a loud desire to kill it. This may be affected when the event of night falls.

- **The Curse Strikes**

About one hour after the sun sets, one of the heroes is going to be struck by the curse of the village. Choose in order:

1. Nubari females
2. Tam'hi or katanga females.
3. Shu, oscray, butu, or korobokuru of either sex, female preferred.
4. Saru, lizardmen, aarakocra or sauriels of either sex.
5. Plantmen or male katanga or tam'hi.
6. Nubari males.

Only one hero will be stricken, roll at random or choose someone who fits the proper order.

As you sit at supper, you feel strange. There is a pain in your chest, like your heart is being squeezed. With an involuntary cry, you clutch at your chest, but the sudden pain passes. When it does, you break into a cold sweat. You feel ... weak.

Have the hero make a saving throw vs. death magic. If successful, she loses one strength point. If she fails, she loses 1d4 strength points.

Note that spellcasters will have time to change spell lists before meeting the prophet, if they wish.

Encounter Five: The Prophet.

At last, you are on your way to meet the fable prophet of the Huroola. Either it is a prophet, and the greatest hope for the jungle against the coming of the tiger, or it is an evil being that has accursed this village.

Sartok leads you away from the village, into the jungle. The only sounds are the insects and the nightbirds and the dripping of water from the leaves, courtesy of today's downpour. The moon is at half, but still casts enough light to allow you to see, since Sartok would permit no torches. "Tiger is a daylight creature, so the prophet comes out only at night, he dare not reveal his power to Tiger yet." pontificated Sartok, as he leads you towards the meeting.

Suddenly Sartok stops cold, and stands attentively as if listening to something, but you hear no words. "The prophet is near. He says he will meet with you one at a time, the better to judge the strength of your hearts for the coming time of crisis. Listen, and you can hear him call."

Pick out the strongest character in the party, probably the highest level fighter. It absolutely avoids spellcasters if it can, that is, anyone who might be able to detect its true evil nature. That person, and only that person, hears a voice in their head. Stress that the voice seems to project love and understanding, it seems a most wise and benevolent being. Of course this is not true, but the Akathasa is experienced at this type of deception, the heroes have no experience with telepathy.

Come, my child, and let us meet. Move forward, alone, and let me judge the strength of your heart and the fiber of your courage. Truly it warms my being to see that Malatra has such defenders. Come, let us meet.

Find out if the hero will indeed move forward by themselves. If so, take the hero aside and continue. If not, the heroes find nothing, but earn a rebuke from Sartok.

"The prophet must meet you alone. This in one of the reasons that the warriors have been unable to find him, he only meets with a person in a one

on one situation, he is most sensitive to the power of our minds. Go, young hero, and seek out the ailanthus, the tree of heaven, for such is where the prophet currently resides."

If they still refuse, the prophet contacts a different hero (still one of the stronger fighters), and pleads with them to meet with it. It explains that there is nothing for the hero to fear. Indeed, it is the prophet who must fear, the presence of so many strong hearts actually causes it pain. Only through true believers such as Sartok can it work, granting boons to aid in the struggle against evil.

In other words, do your best to get one hero off by themselves. If the heroes want to find the prophet, they have no choice.

Meeting the prophet

Assuming a hero eventually goes forth alone, they walk about 75' into the jungle. There they find a small patch of ailanthus trees, ranging from 20 to 40 feet tall. If the hero is alone, she sees that one of the trees moves, in a way not natural to trees. The hero sees what seems to her to be eyes of a deep blue that radiate love and understanding. In her mind she hears a message.

"Welcome and well met. I am Tssst, a Akathasa, called the prophet by Sartok and my other friends. Come closer, I would look upon you."

Ask the hero what kind of feelings they are experiencing right now. If it is fear, Tssst projects reassurance. If it is hostility, the Akathasa begs them to stop, it is in pain. Suspicion also causes it pain, it says. The tree actually backs away at first, although slowly.

If the hero is suspicious, or makes a point of asking, tell them that the moving tree does look most imposing, but the movements are so slow that they would have no trouble getting out of the way, should they choose.

Once the Akathasa lures the hero close enough, it begs a favor.

"Great hero, I beg a boon. I would lay a branch on your shoulder, the better to judge if you truly be worthy of the boons I can grant. Will you permit this?"

The Akathasa is most eager to hear the heroes answer, project hope and love. If the hero says yes, the tree actually seems to smile. If not, it shakes its branches a

little and mentally says, "*So be it. The time for unbelievers is past. Go.*" When the hero turns its back, the Akathasa attacks.

If the hero permits a touch, the tree slowly lowers a branch to touch the shoulder of the hero, at which point it can make an attack. A successful hit pins the hero on the ground under the branch, allowing the Akathasa freedom to attack at +4 until the hero is freed.

Slowly a branch twines around and lowers until it just touches your shoulder. It feels strange, but comforting, like the touch of a friend. Like the touch of a very strong friend. In fact, the branch is driving you to your knees, this hurts!

Akathasa (in possession of tree): AL LE; AC 0; MV 12; HD 10; hp 80; THAC0 11; #AT; Dmg 3-18; SA if the Akathasa manages to cause half of the hit points of the victim in damage, it can then attempt to drain the strength of its victims. Each round thereafter, the victim must save vs. death magic or lose one point of strength; SW the tree is susceptible to fire, all fire-based attacks have a +4 to hit and a +1 to damage. Saving throws vs. fire-based attacks are at -4; MR nil; SZ H (25' tall); ML 15.

Akathasa (if forced out of tree): AL LE; AC 5; MV Fl 18 (C); HD 2+2; hp 14; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1-3+special; SA strength drain, if the victim takes more than half damage from slashing or piercing attacks, the Akathasa can attempt to drain one strength point round thereafter. A saving throw vs. death magic is allowed to avoid this effect. When a victim reaches a Str of 1, she falls unconscious, at 0 the victim dies; SD takes no damage while animating a tree, although the tree may. If tree is killed, Akathasa is forced from the tree. It takes two rounds after it reaches another tree to possess and animate it. It is during this time that it is most vulnerable. If killed in its true form, all the strength points it has drained return with a shock to the being drained; SW *light* spells cause 2d4 points of damage to an Akathasa. Wood and bone weapons cause normal damage, metal and stone weapons cause 1/2 damage; MR nil; SZ M; ML 12.

The Akathasa intends to quickly and silently kill one of the stronger heroes, and then summon another one. If it is successful at pinning the character to the ground, she can only escape by making a successful bend/bars roll. It can still attack twice while holding the character down, and hits at +4 while the hero is in this vulnerable position. Judge things depending on the

heroes general preparedness. It is quite likely that the Akathasa may receive a +4 for a surprise attack on a helpless character.

Of course the chance of killing a powerful character with two blows is not good. The hero can still call out, in a muffled sort of way. It should still be enough for you to tell the other heroes that they hear something. It will take the heroes a full round to locate their friend. Sartok will follow, protesting all the way. If he sees the heroes attacking the prophet, he jumps into the combat, on the side of the Akathasa, of course.

Sartok, hm W5: AL N(E); AC 10; MV 12; hp 12; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 (staff); SA spells; SD nil; MR nil; Int 17, Wis 8; SZ M; ML 11.

Spells: *magic missile, chill touch, detect magic, messenger, strength x2 (already cast), vampiric touch.*

The battle with the tree:

If the Akathasa has a hero held down, it always spares one of its attacks on the held hero, trying to get her down to where it can begin its strength drain. The other attack will be directed with intelligence. Note that the size of the tree means it has at least a 15-20 foot range for its attacks.

Sartok jumps in with a *spectral hand*, followed by *vampiric touch* and *chill touch*. He saves his *magic missiles* for anyone who is truly hurting the prophet, especially if is forced from the tree. Sartok will gladly sacrifice his life to save the prophet.

Only if forced from its tree can the heroes truly slay the Akathasa. If it is forced out, it leaves through the top, flying to the nearest tree to seek safety. The heroes will have to make surprise rolls to locate it in the darkness, and even if they do, it receives a -4 bonus to its AC for the blending effect of the darkness. Heroes with infravision can detect it as a darker patch of cold, and are not required to make surprise rolls, nor do they receive a minus to hit. The Akathasa must enter a tree at the base, so it is vulnerable to melee weapon attacks for two rounds while it seeps into the tree.

If it succeeds in reaching and possessing another tree, the heroes must fight another, healthy tree.

Now, the attack on the Akathasa in its natural form is not a given. Each hero must make a wisdom or alertness roll to even notice the cloud leaving the tree. It blends well with the darkness, and will come down on the side of a tree away from the heroes, to help mask infravision. The heroes should have a chance at it, but it shouldn't be a quick slaughter. Judge according to the difficulty of the battle so far. If the party is hurting pretty badly, give them a good shot at

the Akathasa. If they dispatched the tree in only a round or two, use the next possession as an example, letting them slowly realize what's happening. Then, after slaying the second tree, they can be ready for the Akathasa when it emerges.

The bottom line is that since this is their first actual encounter with one of the minions of tiger, it should be a tough battle.

Variables: Several things could affect this encounter.

- The heroes may refuse to send one of them out by herself. If so, they never find the prophet, and the strength drain happens again, on the next night.
- The heroes may try to sneak up on the Akathasa while the lone hero goes to meet it. Let them get closer, but before they get in sight of it (35' or so), they hear a voice in their mind warning them away.
- **Jungle Tam'hi and plantmen** should have a real problem destroying a tree, no matter how good the reason. Each jungle tam'hi or plantman that attacks must make a wisdom roll to realize the need for the sacrifice (of the tree), or else they are under a -2 penalty on attacks, damage, and AC.

Encounter Six: Aftermath

The heroes are regarded with mixed feelings by the villagers after defeating the Akathasa. Of the 20 warriors affected, 13 have received their strength back, ranging from a few points to all of it. The others have lost their strength permanently. Of course any heroes who were drained in the previous encounters have also had their strength return.

The males are subdued, but most realize that the Akathasa was evil, and needed to be destroyed. Still, the party gets a subdued response from the villagers.

Let the heroes rest up for the day, the next night, Bengoukee shows up.

As you sit around the campfire, with the night just set, you hear the flapping of wings above you. A large heron alights, transforming before your eyes to the wizened form of Bengoukee. "Well done, heroes. I have been restored, and the great evil has been lifted from the Huroola. And in so doing, you have lifted the veil from my eyes."

Bengoukee goes on to explain what he has been able to discover about the arrival of the tiger.

- The Akathasa is a servant of the tiger. It is most likely that the strength it drained was siphoned to

the tiger, somehow. Perhaps it uses these energies to prepare the way for its return. Slaying it should certainly hinder it, in some way.

- He has discovered the source of the earthquakes, a magical source in a distant area, far to the south. A band of brave heroes is going to have to volunteer to face a power even greater than the Akathasa. At this point look around the table and clear your throat, or something.
- The jungle is certain to face great dangers in the time to come. Bengoukee does not know what form it will take, but he is sure it won't be anything similar to the natural form of a tiger katanga. Only through the efforts of great heroes can the jungle survive. There can be no thought of deeds done for fame in song or other rewards. That said, it is time to speak of rewards, he says.

Each of you has earned the gratitude of a tribe, and of the jungle. And you have done something else. If we go to the area where the Akathasa was slain, I can use it. The residuum of the energies it employed can be used in a ceremony to increase the powers of the recipients. You have earned this power, indeed you will need it if you are to survive the coming moons. But it will involve a choice on your part, you must choose wisely.

Bengoukee follows the heroes to the area of the battle. Over the spot where the Akathasa was slain, he begins a long and complicated ceremony, lots of chanting, bursts of smoke, an occasional screech, and many mystic symbols and gestures. After about twenty minutes he turns to them and announces:

"The time has come to choose. You have one minute, all, to make your choice. Choose between these powers:

The heart of the lion, the wisdom of the elephant, the luck of the monkey. Choose now"

The heroes have one minute to make their choice. Pass out the certificates after marking the heroes' choice.

As you make your choice, the magic takes hold of you and you feel ... changed. You have indeed increased your power, but is it enough? The jungle is strong, as are you, but will it be enough, when tiger returns?

Here ends Huroola Prophet

Experience Points

Encounter One:

Each korobokuru rescued alive: 200 pts
1,000 total

Encounter Two:

Defeat or drive off the pteranodons: 500 pts

Encounter Three:

No battles with the Huroola, roleplay well and play by all the 'huroola rules': 500 pts

Encounter Four:

Attempt to aid the village, discover everything they can about the prophet (this award depends on the extent of the heroes' activities): 500-1000 pts

Encounter Five:

Defeat the Akathasa and Sartok: 2,500 pts

Discretionary roleplaying award 0-800 pts
Award this for good consistent character portrayal throughout the adventure

Maximum possible 6,300 pts

spells cast by the servants of the tiger (including tiger katanga).

2. The wisdom of the elephant. You chose wisdom, and have received knowledge instead. You receive a +1 on two non-weapon proficiencies you already have listed.
3. The luck of the monkey. You are now have a small bit of the luck of the monkey. You have one extra hit point, to represent this small bit of luck.

Treasure Summary

From Players Introduction:

- Two *brews of healing*: This bitter beer is steeped with many herbs and has a flat taste. It greatly promotes healing. Anyone who imbibes it will heal 1d8+4 points of damage, at the rate of one hit point per round. It was given to you by Bengoukee when you went to search out the prophet of the Huroola.

From Encounter Six:

- Bengoukee's choice: You have participated in an ancient rite to increase your power. Bengoukee himself performed it in the wake of the energies left by the Akathasa, an evil servant of the tiger itself. You had to make a choice, and since the ceremony can only be performed once on anyone in their lifetimes, you must live with that choice forever. (DM initial by choice).
1. The heart of the lion. You feel a bond with the jungle around you. This translates to a +1 on all saving throws vs. fear of any type. You also receive a +1 on all saving throws vs.