

DEEP IN THE haunted jungle, in an unnaturally cold hollow filled with ancient temple ruins, is an unholy ziggurat. It has for a millennium been the prison of the death demigoddess *Arakyani*, who was brought down by the cosmic sultan *Varhu* when her people revolted with *Varhu's* aid. But the confinement would not last forever. Recently, the top of the ziggurat exploded when *Arakyani* escaped from her prison. She is now channelling *Varhu's* energies to raise an undead army and retake the land.

1d8 Random events (roll every thirty minutes)

- 1 Clouds drawn into the fog cloud, thunder roars
- 2 Clouds open up, a small spiraling, colorful galaxy with black center is visible in the night sky.
- 3 Arctic cold hits for a few seconds, everything freezes
- 4 Discovered by 1d6 *undead* who moan and attack
- 5 1d4 *rot priests* approach carefully
- 6 1d4 confident *rot priests* with 2 *horn beasts*
- 7 Stalked by *Sakarru*, who accidentally makes some noise before hiding
- 8 Approached by *Sakarru*

When searching the ruins, roll 1d4:

- 1 surprised by 2d3 *undead*
- 2 roll a random event above
- 3 minor treasure
- 4 major treasure

Ruin types: pagoda, stupa, fountain plaza, walled garden, archway, dome, tower, monolith, ziggurat

Treasure: idol, brooch, bracelet, necklace, chalice, medallion, pearls, jewels, tiara, gems, ring, dagger
Major treasure is like minor, but special or magic

A cave opening leads to dark passages where *undead* lurk. It is cold and there is a foul smell. Leads after an hour through a rotting mouth to the jungle outside. The mouth is closed, opens when blood is dripped on it.

In a camp near the mouth are **25 death cultists**, looking for their god *Arakyani*. Have not dared to go inside the rotting mouth. Bodies covered in white symbols. Wear strange headdresses signaling rank.

The demigod Arakyani is clad in a dazzling black robe, embroidered with gold and crimson. Five eyes symmetrically placed around the head, crowned with cylindrical antlers. A huge, rotting vertical mouth covers the chest and abdomen.

Grabs with claws to devour victims. Shoots rays of darkness from the eyes, affecting up to five nearby enemies. Powerful sorcerer. Teleports freely in the area. Mostly found in ziggurat. Resurrected at her heart if killed.

THE DEATH ZIGURAT

Carl Niblaeus

A frozen lake covered in icy lotus flowers. The brittle magenta flowers have strange effects when crushed. Next to the lake, dozens of moaning undead are trapped in the half-frozen mud.

Lotus flower effect. Affects all that touch.
Duration: D-1 hour, W-1 week, P-permanent

- 1 (W) Visions of the death plane, bleak and threatening, flicker past at worst of times but can also be of help to find the way in.

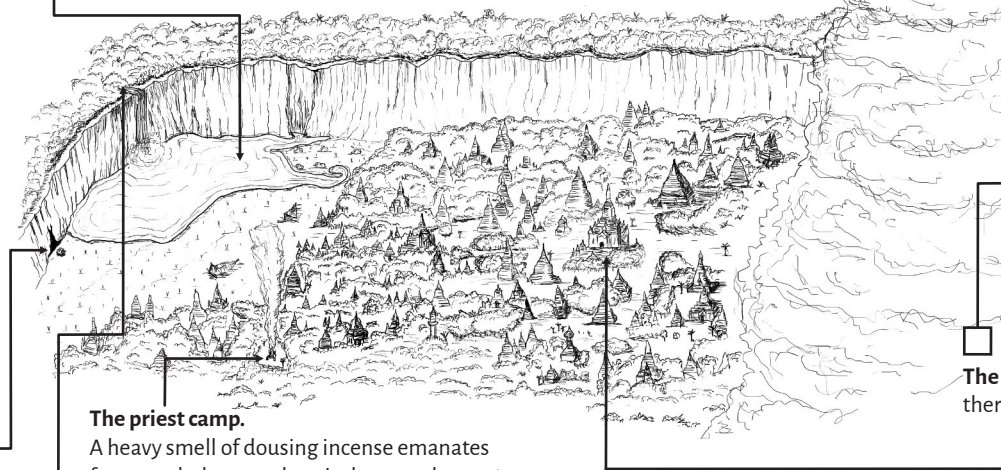
2 (P) All hair on body turns white, skin dark grey.

3 (D) Steals energy from death plane, gains health, inflicts more damage on *undead*.

4 (P) Turns into a ghoul creature with pale skin and red eyes. Loses sense of taste.

5 (P) Starts aging in reverse

6 (W) Wounds do not heal, attract larvae. Immune to the *rot priests'* touch.



The priest camp.

A heavy smell of dousing incense emanates from symbol-covered conical tents. 1d4+2 *rot priests* sit around a fire, discussing metaphysical matters, such as the possibility of existing simultaneously in all the planes.

The river flows rapidly towards the waterfall. Closer to the waterfall the temperature drops rapidly and the river becomes covered in ice.

The spiral pagoda, dedicated to the spiraling cosmic force of *Varhu*. The ceiling inside is a painted night sky with galaxy in center. Underneath the galaxy, the golden, ruby-adorned *spiral crown* is hidden under the floor. To open, put spiral-patterned metal disc (see right) in depression on floor and press, failure triggers lightning trap from galaxy in ceiling.

Like a huge tornado, clouds are drawn from the night sky into a great fog cloud.



The city of the dead. In a frozen pond are hundreds of old mausolea on an island. Among them is a bottomless pit from which the *horn beasts* crawl when summoned by the *rot priests*, who have set up a tent next to the pit. No more beasts appear if the meditation of the two *rot priests* is stopped. Guarded by two *horn beasts*.



The ziggurat rises 100 feet into the air with a tornado of clouds at its top, ever pulling from a point in the sky. The top is broken, looks as if something has exploded on the inside.

Inside the ziggurat is an open space. 40 feet below the broken top, 1d4+1 *rot priests* and 2 *horn beasts* guard a rotten mouth-like opening in the floor that is sucking in the spiraling clouds above. There is a thundering roar from the icy tornado. Warm air emanates from the maw, reeking of rotten flesh.

Inside the maw is a quiet and warm space with walls of flesh. A tunnel descends into darkness, a rhythmic beating sound is heard. 20 feet below, growing from the wall, is **Arakyani's heart**, black and pulsating. Stabbing it with a magic weapon will banish *Arakyani* into the void for the next millennium

The ziggurat is hidden in the death plane. In the normal plane, there is only a barren wasteland in the fog, swarming with *undead*.

On a wall in the pagoda is a mural of a priest on a temple, gazing out over the Cosmos. Pressing priest's head reveals metal disc.

If the **crown is worn**, lightning shoots into it and the wearer becomes a cosmic vessel, seeing strange visions, such as swirling colors in the Cosmos. This breaks *Arakyani's* channeling and quickly drains her powers and she will instantly teleport to stop it.

Rot priests. Wear black robes and wide-brimmed cylindrical hats with black veils covering the face. Rotting mouth similar to *Arakyani's* on front of upper body, must eat human flesh regularly. Wear medallions that allow for traveling into the death plane.

Curious about existential and metaphysical issues. When provoked, attack with claws and a rotten roar (affects all nearby). Their touch causes death and ruin.

The medallions are gold, shaped in the form of an elongated skull with five ruby-filled eyeholes placed around it. To travel into the death plane at the ziggurat, one should grab the medallion tightly and think about death while walking into the fog.

Horn beasts. A chaotic mass of horns and bones with a circular mouth filled with teeth instead of a face, they rip enemies apart with their sharp claws.

Undead. The rotting dead, awakened to serve. Drooling tongues, red eyes. Fight weakly with a paralyzing touch.

The sharp-tongued Sakarru was *Arakyani's* closest advisor but betrayed her in favor of *Varhu*. A ghost with a long, sharp tongue that sucks the blood of his victims and stretches their tongues. The dried up corpses hang upside down from the trees. Wants to be set free from his earthly prison and move on the afterlife. Knows where *Arakyani's* heart is and that stabbing it kills her.