
The Crystal Caverns



History

The Island

The Island of Xorb has been abandoned for several years. It lies to the west of the Stone Confederacy, about 10 days (a week) off of land. The island was once of great commerce for awhile, exporting exotic fish that can only be found near the island. There was also a particular ore that was shiny and had very unique reflective properties, and it was considered to be one of the best ores to create jewelery out of. The caves underneath this island was filled with these ores, and the humans who inhabited the island enslaved the Kuo-Toa to mine for them.

After the events about 500 years ago, the humans abandoned the city. Trade began to dwindle as the Free Cities began to fall and most fled due to fear of armies surrounding their community. Since the area is mostly consisted of swampland, there is no sustainable way for people to survive there without the import of goods.

The People

All the Kuo-Toa were left to fend for themselves against the harshest of swamp creatures. There was a point where the Kuo-Toa were worshipping the aboleth since there were an abundance of these across the island. Each village was pretty much setup to serve one of the aboleth.

The aboleth were mistreating the Kuo-Toa but they were too blinded by their blind faith to the gods that they did not seem to realize this. As time grew by, a Kuo-Toa named Moolowik had a vision of another god, more serpent-like that lived much below the island, way beneath the caves they were once enslaved to work in. He gathered more followers in secrecy as time flew by and convinced most, if not all, the Kuo-Toa to abandon their worship in the aboleths. They started to form small armies across villages and created a central village at Willsden.

The Legend

As all the Kuo-Toa around Xorb united in their beliefs of a god, their collective subconscious caused the god to manifest as a physical entity much below the island. They come together once a year to honor this god, whom they have never seen before, and they celebrated their freedom from oppression with humans. Deep within the caverns, more beasts arose as the Kuo-toa started to create their own belief system around this serpent-like beast. Several guardians arose along with treasures beyond one's imaginations. As travelers come to visit the island due to it being a historical site and still have valuable ores within it, the legend begins to

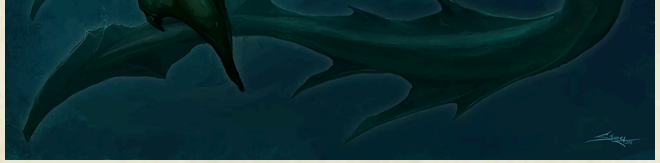
The Challenge

Adventureres who venture to the island eventually began to see if they could go within the caves and search for treasure as well as see this "god" of the Kuo-toa. The villagers, who believe that mere adventurers are no match for their protector started to allow parties to enter the dungeon. The adventurers would enter in parties of 6-8 to not crowd the dungeon too much and were given about 1-2 weeks to navigate through the dungeon before the next party is allowed. All treasure from the dungeon that is claimed by the adventurer can be taken out as the Kuo-toa have no use for such materials or weapons. Several bands of adventurers have entered the caverns, but only few have returned. Even less have returned with any sort of treasure from inside as making it to the valuable crystals takes awhile to reach.

In order to be worthy of even entering the caverns, the locals often issue a challenge to the group. Should they choose to accept it, they must go hunting for the corpse of the island's toughest creatures. The Kuo-toa, being locals, already know what lies within the island, but they do not tell the party what they like to see as it is a measurement of how ambitious the adventurers are to enter this cave. The Kuo-toa, though, love to see it when adventurers bring in an aboleth and will almost give free admissions to that group.



spread more and more about such a beast that guards a mythical weapon.



The Island of Xorb

Travelers who seek to find the rich depths of the Crystal Caverns must first travel to the Island of Xorb. The island is located off the coast of the main land and is about the size of a moderately-populated city, which is about 5-6 miles wide. There are some small ships who offer adventurers passage to the island for a fare, but they don't guarantee the passage back as the adventurers do not usually return after entering the island.

Travel

Island Location

The island is located about 10 days from the mainland and is approachable by almost any medium-sized vessel. As one approaches about 1 mile away, they can start to see the sandy beaches that surround the sides, but these beaches only make up part of the island as the rest of the island consists of a swamp-like terrain all the way to its center.

Docks

Any dock from a coastal city can access this island, but only the closest ones would have actual knowledge of the island since there might be some people who travel there on a somewhat regular basis due to noble adventurers. Usually people are familiar with the island, or at least have heard of its name and its general direction while sailing. Not many ships actually pass by this island as it is not located on any trading routes, but there are ships that come in and out of the island once in awhile, bringing new adventurers who seek fame and fortune in the crystal caverns.

The Cavern

Those who travel to the island must venture into the unknown. The local residents of the island normally move their villages a lot, so no map of any kind can be created. One must find the local kuo-toas in order to gain access to the Crystal Caverns.

The Swamp

People who enter the swamp will realize that not that much sunlight passes through the trees that spread through out most of the area. One will still be able to see through as if they had darkvision in the dark since some light does pass through but cannot see that far ahead. The swamp is filled with several creature who inhabit the environment. The main group of people who inhabit this place are the kuo-toa, who are essentially the keepers of the entrance to the caverns. There are also creatures who lurk around the area, looking for prey in the wilderness, but they are usually only in one area and wait to ambush any passing travelers.

The Kuo-Toa

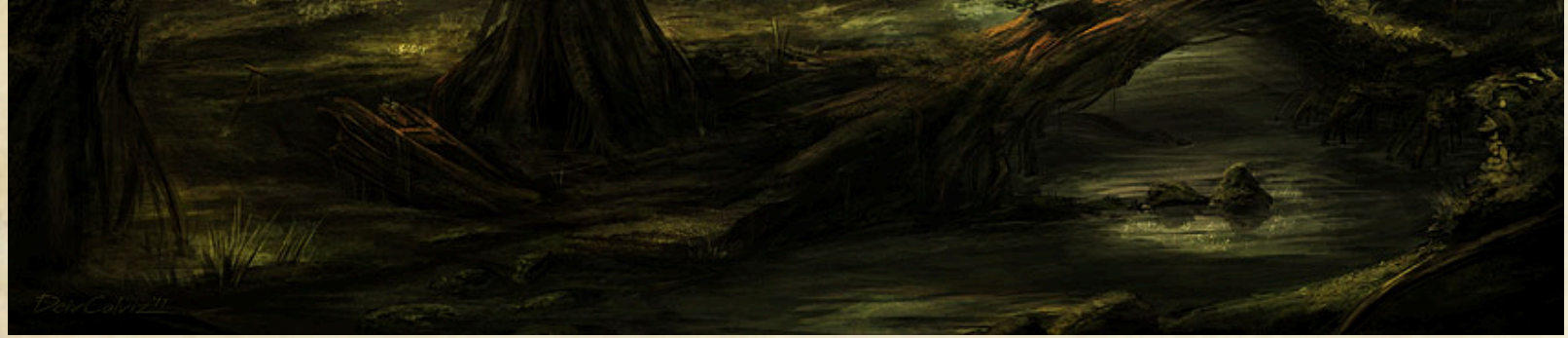
Willsden is the central village of the island. Its location is secret to outside adventurers, and people who are looking to enter the caverns must be escorted to the village by a kuo-toa. Throughout the island, there are kuo-toa villages of roughly 10-20 kuo-toas who are usually friendly to adventurers, but they do not escort them to the central village without a price. The Kuo-toa villager usually consist of 1 kuo-toa archpriest, 2 kuo-toa monitors, and the rest are villagers.

The kuo-toas believe that their god lives in the caverns and usually challenges any adventurers who dare to challenge their god. They welcome any contenders who have proven themselves worthy of even entering the caves. If the personel do not have any reputation known to them, then they must venture into the swamp and hunt the toughest monsters they can find. Once a group has proven themselves worthy of the caves, the kuo-toa archpriest, along with his monitors, will lead them to Willsden and allow them to enter the caverns. Any adventurers who arrive at a village without the archpriest or his monitors present must wait for their return from the main village.

Monsters

Any creature that likes darkness or a swamp-like setting could be found in this region of the island. Examples include shambling mounds, will-o'-wisps, possibly hags, etc.





Into the Cavern

After gaining an escort from one of the outer villages, a party will be lead to the main village of Willsden where a larger amount of kuo-toas inhabit.



Willsden

Willsden is a much larger village than the outside ones, inhabiting about 50-60 locals. There are about 10-15 kuo-toa monitors/whips guarding the village in case any outside monsters try to come in. Adventurers who seek to enter Willsden without an archpriest are turned around by the guards since the archpriest at the village is too occupied while he is maintaining the entrance and shrine devoted to their god. The village consists of very old wooden buildings that are worn down from several hundred years ago. The current locals do not maintain the health of these buildings, and the only structure that looks any where near well-kept is the entrance of the cavern, which is also a shrine where several kuo-toa meet to worship their god.

Looking around the village, there are no special shops or anything that is worthy of purchase. Adventurers have to forage for food in the swamp to survivea as the locals do not share any of their harvest. The village barely is surviving through community efforts, and adventurers who are caught stealing get executed on sight.

The Entrance

Approaching the entrance of the cavern, two thick columns, wrapped in greenery, stand infront of a small opening that is about 6 feet high which only one person can fit into the entrance at a time. The entrance does not have a door and is supported by a decently maintained wooden frame. The kuo-toa use this entrance a lot to go straight into the chamber where they give offerings to a statue of what they presume their god looks like.

The statue is about 300 ft in from the entrance. The statue lies in a medium sized room, enough to fit itself and about 10 other medium-sized creatures. It is made of mostly wood, and

Underground

Adventurers who have permission to enter the caverns will be escorted to the shrine/statue and be left after that to enter the caverns. An entrance behind the statue can be seen to be about 4-5 feet high that allows adventueres to squeeze through. This part is not maintained as much as the kuo-toa do not use the entrance on a regular basis. The tunnel leads down from the shrine and begins the actual dungeon.

Structure

The structure of the underground tunnels consists of 10 floors to explore, each with several medium-sized rooms where adventurers may rest at. There is not much except dirt. Some posessions of dead adventurers can be found here and possibly undead zombies or skeletons of past adventueres can also be found here. There are no chambers that have boss monsters until after the underground. There are some floors that have tunnels that lead to the next and some floors actually collapse to the next floor.

Encounters

As mentioned before, most of the underground portion of the dungeon consists of small and enclosed spaces. Tunnels lead to small rooms on and on. Some monsters can be encountered if they live underground or possibly undead can be found. Fighting in the enclosed space can prove to be difficult as ranged attacks will get disadvantage or creatures will get full cover from all the people in front of it from ranged attacks. Most of the tunnels will only allow one person to walk through at a time (not side-by-side).

Monsters who can burrow underground can also be encountered, and the party might be surprised to see it burrow from underneath, above, or even through the tunnel walls to them. The tunnels these monsters create will usually get covered immediately as the loose dirt above them will collapse to block, preventing adventurers from using the monster-created tunnels.

Suggested Mechanics

Swapping: The party will usually be in a line through this tunnel and during encounters they could be allowed to switch places through the marching order. During a PC's turn, they travel past the line and essentially swap places with another PC at the cost of triple of the required movement (3 feet for ever 1 feet rounded up). The PC that is switching places with them will also use their reaction to take the original PC's spot.

Cave In: Any action or almost any event that may cause the

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other medium sized creatures. It is made of mostly wood, and it has a shiny jewel for eyes. Surrounding it, one can see offerings of food and some valuables from the kuo-toa lieing on the floor.

The kuo-toa archpriest of Willsden is in charge of maintaining the health of this statue and spends most of his daily time here, supervising the locals who come in along with making sure adventurers do not disturb the shrine.

tunnels to shake or cause very loud noises may cause the tunnels to collapse around the party. The collapse of the tunnel can be chosen arbritrarily. If the tunnel collapses on a PC, then they will make a dex save or take damage and will have to choose a side to jump to, pushing any PCs forward/backward and maybe splitting up the party.

The Gnur Subterrane

This section of the dungeon is after the underground portion. The subterrane consists of about 15 floors worth of large rooms and chambers, some filled with just water and some accessible only by swimming underneath walls. There are more monsters associated with water on these levels that pretty much inhabit the waters and guard their territory or seek to intercept adventuring parties. Some small amounts of crystals (detailed next page) can be found in this region.

Structure

The roome are a lot bigger than the underground portion and consists of several small bodies of water. There are less tunnels that connect the rooms. Secret rooms and chambers lie in this portion of the dungeon and can be accessed through special means. Some are blocked by obstacles, such as large pieces of stone that fall from the ceiling, that would need to be removed in order to access the rooms, and some need to be accessed through swimming underwalls. One can also find treasure at the bottom of the bodies of water.

Encounters

Most monsters at this level actually inhabit the waters, so adventurers who travel through this level can almost avoid most of the encounters. There will be some parts where they have to tread into waist-high water or maybe even dive into water to reach the lower levels of the dungeon. That being said, there are amphibious creatures that lurk some parts who will attack passing adventurers on land.

This section of the dungeon will contain several mini-bosses and a few main bosses, described later in this document. The bosses will ususally guard an important passage or some rare item and may be avoided. sometimes.

There are no natural light source, i.e. sunlight, that comes to these levels so lanterns/torches will have to be used to see. Monsters in the dungeon will either naturally have darkvision, or maybe even adapted themselves to see in the dark, and some will actually have their own light source, such that parties may be able to capture them and use as a natural light.

Suggested Mechanics

Cave In (Same as in Underground): Any action or almost any event that may cause the tunnels to shake or cause very loud noises may cause the tunnels to collapse around the party. The collapse of the tunnel can be chosen arbitrarily. If the tunnel collapses on a PC, then they will make a dex save or take damage and will have to choose a side to jump to,

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Vision: People looking into the water from land will see it be lightly obscured as their light source will reflect off the surface and the water itself will be a bit murky and dark, considering it is an underground cave with no sunlight. Torches do not work underwater, obviously, so another light source needs to be brought or created to even see underwater, unless they have darkvision. Monsters can sneak up on parties who can try to spot them with perception at disadvantage.

The Crystal Caverns

The cavern is filled with the rare crystals mentioned in the introduction that can be mined. A large pool of water lies in the center of the room where the water coming from the entrance falls to. The water is actually a lot clearer than the previous water and the crystals provide a light source that illuminates the entire room. There are cystals that erect all around the room, some even deep on the floor of the pool.

Structure

There is only one entrance between the subterrane and the caverns below and it is guarded by a giant squid. The entrance is a small underwater hole that flows downward and falls into a lake below. The Crystal Caverns is one big gigantic room, which is where the entrance is, with small tunnels that lead to small rooms around.

Encounters

Only rarely are there small monsters in this chamber. Only one creature is in here and it is the serpent-god himself, who resides deep into the lake. Anyone who enters the pool of water will recognize that it is not ordinary in that it is relatively easy to swim in and anyone entering is not required to hold their breath. They will also notice that there is some force pulling them straight down. The pool extends for about 1 mile worth of swimming/traveling where the creature lies dormant. At the base, there are bundles of crystals in water and the area is wide open compared to the way down and extends to create an area about 300 ft wide.

Saneuggite Crystal

This crystal can be found from the second level of the dungeon and after, more in quantity at the crystal caverns of course. They come in two variety, where both look exactly the same. One is the valuable gem that can be sold at a high price; while the other is very reactive when touched with water. The latter one reacts when it comes into contact with a sizable amount of water, which would be about a small cup of wate, and emits radiant energy in a small radius around it, causing 1d10 radiant damage in a 5 ft radius if the crystal is big enough. An investigation check of DC 15 must be met to tell the difference between the gems.

Leviathan

This is the god that the kuo-toa worship. Leviathan is a gargantuan dragon that can live in water. It is mostly dormant in its lair, waiting for adventurers to enter and challenge him.

Leviathan guards a magical trident that is located at the center of his lair. The trident is extremely hard to pull out of the rock it is stuck into, and Leviathan will be come aggressive to this trident. The weapon allows the user to control water within a 20 ft radius of them and even make special attacks with this water.