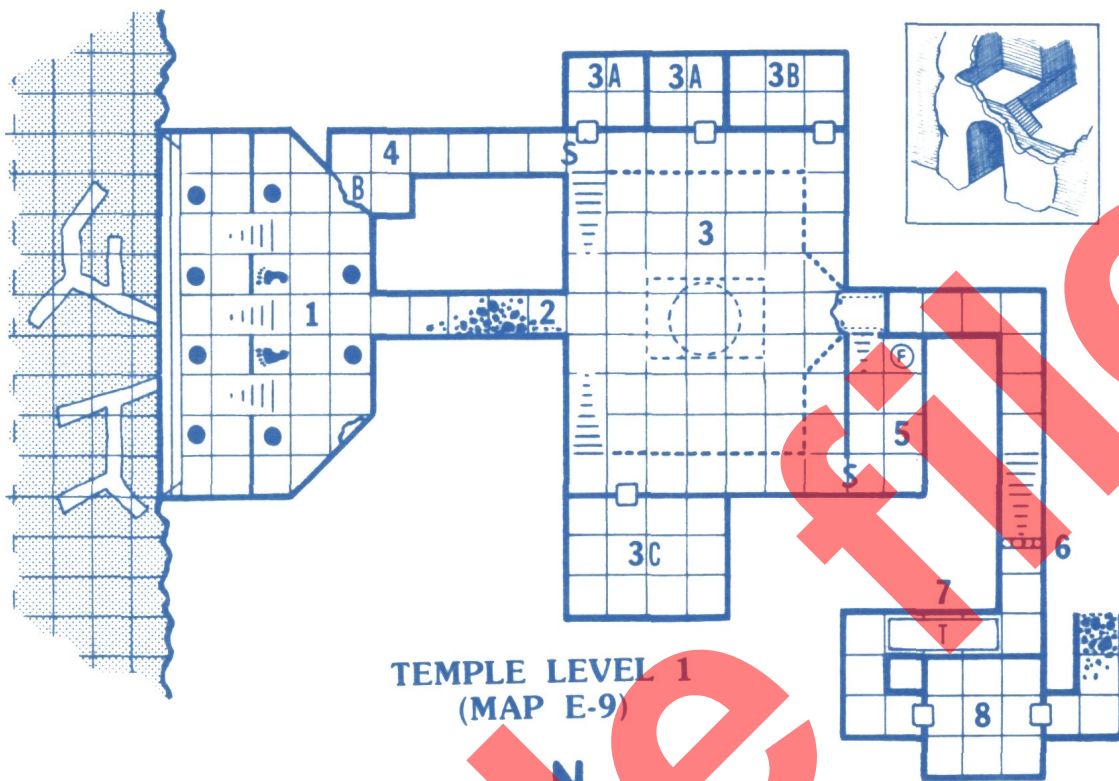
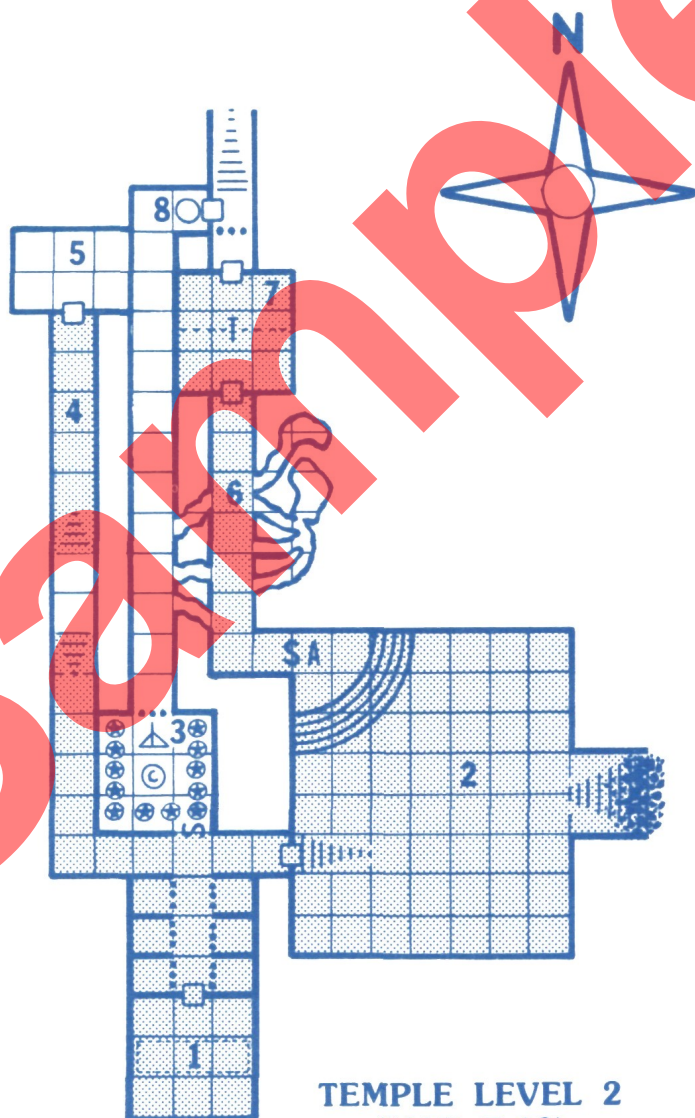


TABOO ISLAND



TEMPLE LEVEL 1
(MAP E-9)



TEMPLE LEVEL 2
(MAP E-10)

SCALE:
ONE SQUARE = 10 FEET

	Door
	Secret Door
	Trap Door in Floor
	Trap Door in Ceiling
	Iron Bars or Portcullis
	Stairs
	Trap
	Trigger
	Statue
	Pillar
	Dais
	Rubble
	Stone Wall
	Dock
	Balcony
	Water
	Smokehole

Dungeon Module X1

The Isle of Dread

by David Cook and Tom Moldvay

A WILDERNESS ADVENTURE FOR CHARACTER LEVELS 3-7



The Isle of Dread is the first in a series of adventure modules for use with the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® Expert rules. As the first D&D® wilderness adventure published by TSR™ Hobbies, the Isle of Dread is designed as an instructional module to help novice Dungeon Masters design their own wilderness adventures.

This module contains maps and background material for the Isle, fifteen new monsters, and suggestions for further adventures. In addition, The Isle of Dread contains a map and background information for a large continent, and eleven smaller maps for encounters on the island itself. In this module, players will push their way through dark jungles and treacherous swamps to discover the lost plateau, and the final secrets of – the Isle of Dread!

If you enjoy this module, watch for future releases in the D&D® line from TSR, The Game Wizards.

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TSR Games
POB 756
LAKE GENEVA, WI 53147

Dungeons & Dragons® Expert Set

Dungeon Module X1

THE ISLE OF DREAD

This module requires information found in the D&D® Expert Rules, which are a continuation of the D&D® Basic rules. Without a copy of both booklets, some sections of this module may be confusing.

PART 1: INTRODUCTION

About This Module

This module is intended for use with the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® Expert rules. The **Isle of Dread** is a wilderness adventure designed as a framework to help Dungeon Masters (DMs) design their own wilderness adventures.

If you plan to participate in this module as a player, please **stop** reading at this point. The information in the rest of this module is for your DM so that he or she may guide you and other players through the adventure. Knowledge of the contents of this module will spoil the surprises and the excitement of the game for everyone concerned.

Notes for the Dungeon Master

The **Isle of Dread** is a wilderness adventure module in five parts. Part one is the INTRODUCTION, which outlines both the adventure and the fantasy "world" it takes place in. Part two, THE ISLE OF DREAD, is the first stage of the adventure. It includes getting to the Isle of Dread, exploring the main island, and setting up a base for the next stage of the adventure. In part three, the party investigates the island's great CENTRAL PLATEAU. With good fortune and thought, the party should establish a base at Mantru, a small village on the shore of the plateau's great crater lake. Part four is the climax of the adventure. Here, the party discovers the secrets of the TABOO ISLAND in the center of the lake. Part five contains the NEW MONSTERS introduced in this module. After the basic adventure is over, the **Isle of Dread** can be used as the site of additional adventures, some of which are described at the end of Part 4.

While the D&D Expert rulebook contains most of the information necessary to design wilderness adventures, this module is another tool. It is a graphic example of what a wilderness adventure may be. It allows the DM to learn by experience about wilderness design and supplements the rules given in the D&D Expert and Basic sets.

Before beginning the adventure, please read the module thoroughly to become familiar with the details of THE ISLE OF DREAD. Certain sections may be read aloud to players. Other sections contain information the players should not know in advance, but may learn in the course of the adventure. Before the adventure begins, the DM should decide what information to give the players and what information to hold back.

This module has been designed for a party of six to ten characters. Each character should be between the 3rd and 6th level of experience at the beginning of the adventure. The party should have a total of 26-34 levels, 30 being best. For example, a party with a 4th level fighter, a 5th level magic-user, a 6th level cleric, a 3rd level

thief, a 5th level dwarf, a 4th level elf, and a 3rd level halfling would have a total of 30 levels (4 + 5 + 6 + 3 + 5 + 4 + 3 = 30). Furthermore, the group should have at least one magic-user or elf, and one cleric in it. If the party has less than 26 levels or more than 34, the DM may wish to adjust the strength of the monsters, making them larger or more numerous (or smaller or less numerous) as the DM sees fit.

The DM should be careful to give the player characters a reasonable chance for survival. The emphasis is on "reasonable". Try to be impartial and fair, but give the party the benefit of the doubt in conditions of extreme danger. However, sometimes the players insist on taking unreasonable risks; charging a tyrannosaur barehanded, for example. If bravery turns to foolhardiness, the DM should make it clear that the characters will die unless the players act more intelligently. Everyone should co-operate to make the adventure as fun and exciting as possible.

In addition to the large scale map of the continent and the small scale maps of the Isle of Dread and the CENTRAL PLATEAU, there are maps of some of the encounter areas. These are included to give the DM an idea of what the area looks like. The DM may use them as given, change them slightly, or create different ones. For example, when using the general cave lairs, the DM can add new creatures, seal off tunnels, or add secret chambers, to nearly any part of the map. Both cave maps can even be combined for a very large lair!

The lair treasures can be used as given or changed into different forms with the same value. Primitive native tribes like those on the Isle of Dread may not have gold or silver coins. Instead, they may have native carvings of bone or ivory, small nuggets of precious metals, or any other unusual but valuable forms of treasure the DM can create.

When describing monster encounters, the DM should not rely only on sight — there are four other senses — smell, sound, taste and feelings of hot, cold, wet and so forth! The DM should try to vary his or her approach to encounters when possible. For example, the party may first hear the monster crashing through the underbrush, or find its tracks instead of just meeting the monster face-to-face. This is a good way to "signal" a party that an encounter may be too difficult for them to handle. The DM should also try to avoid letting unplanned wandering monsters disrupt the balance of the adventure.

THE MAP OF THE CONTINENT (Map C-1)

Geography

In the center of this module is a large-scale (24 miles per hex) wilderness map, which shows the southeastern portion of the continent and the northern islands of an archipelago (a cluster of islands). This map is useful for the overseas journey to the **Isle of Dread** and serves as an example of a large-scale wilderness design. The DM may wish to base dungeon and wilderness adventures on this map, or expand the map by designing wilderness areas where the map leaves off. The following is a suggested key to the areas mentioned on the map. To read the map of the continent, start at the top and read from left to right.

The following key gives only a brief background of most areas except the Isle of Dread which is further described in PART 2. The rest is left for the individual Dungeon Master to "flesh out", allowing as much creative freedom as possible.

The Key to the Continental Map

Principalities of Glantri. Glantri is a magocracy; that is, the princes and princesses who rule the state are all high level magic-users. They live in Glantri City most of the time, though each ruler also has a castle hidden in some remote wilderness area. Actually, the rulers are more concerned with magical research than with ruling. Most decisions are left to the various local councils of elders and the princely stewards. The princes and princesses do not trust each other and live in a state of uneasy truce. In the face of invasion or rebellion, however, they are quick to unite. In extreme emergencies, they will select one of their number as "dictator", to serve for one year.

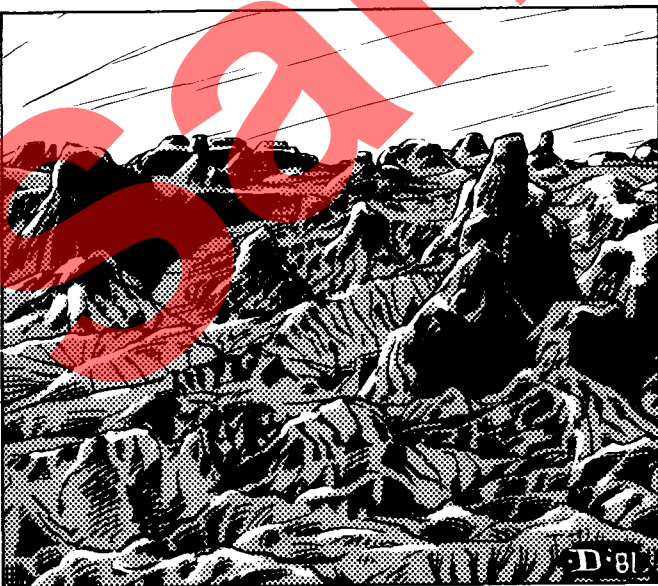
Ethengar Khanate. The Ethengar are nomadic herders of horses, cattle, and goats. They are divided into small family clans. Usually the clans raid and quarrel with each other, but occasionally a strong leader (khan) emerges to unite the entire Ethengar people into a strong "nation". However, with the eventual death of the khan, there is rarely an heir strong enough to hold the Ethengar together. They then break apart, and the family clans begin warring with each other once more. Their culture is similar to that of the horsemen of the central Asian steppes (Huns, Mongols, Magyars, Turks, and so on).

Heldann Freeholds. The Heldann are a barbaric, fair-haired people who hunt, fish, and raise crops on isolated farms. They are related to the people in the northeastern kingdoms but acknowledge no ruler among themselves higher than the individual household leader. Their culture is very similar to that of medieval Iceland.

Kingdom of Vestland, Kingdom of Ostland, and the Soderfjord Jarls. Each of these northeastern states is composed of many petty "kingdoms" that are loosely united under one ruler. In Vestland and Ostland the underchiefs are called "kings"; in Soderfjord they are known as "jarls" (pronounced "yarl"). Their culture resembles that of the vikings.

The people of these kingdoms highly value individualism, physical strength and prowess in combat. They live mainly by fishing and by occasional raids on nearby coastal villages. Besides being fierce warriors, these people are explorers without equal, ranging far and wide in their wooden longships.

The Broken Lands. The "broken lands" are an area of rocky badlands and old volcanic lava beds. The land is extremely wild and inhabited mainly by outcasts and monsters.



Rockhome. Rockhome is the homeland of the dwarves. It stretches throughout the northern Altan Tepe mountain range. The dwarves have built and maintain a road through the mountains for caravans. They charge toll from all who pass.

Atruaghin Clans. These grassy plateau, forest, and hilly regions next to the sea are inhabited by herders, hunters, and fishermen who live in small villages. All the villagers claim to be descended from the ancient hero Atruaghin. If threatened by war they will unite under a temporarily elected leader.

Republic of Darokin. This republic is centered around the capital, Darokin. Its wealth is based on trade from Lake Amsorak (the large inland lake), the Streel river, the eastern caravan route, and sea trade filtering in through the Malpheggi Swamp. Darokin is a plutocracy; that is, the government is run by the wealthiest merchant families. The culture resembles that of Venice or Genoa in medieval Italy.

Alfheim. As the name implies, Alfheim is the homeland of the elves. The elven king rules the great forest of Canolbarth. Because Canolbarth is tended by the elves, it is far larger than a natural forest in this area would be. Darokin pays the elves to protect the caravan route through the forest to Selenica.

Emirate of Ylaruam. Ylaruam is built in the midst of the largest oasis in the Alasiyan Desert. It is the center of caravan routes crossing from north to south and from east to west, and is controlled by the Emir of Ylaruam and his royal family. The culture is similar to that of the Arabic desert states or the Central Asian city-states of Palmyra, Damascus, or Samarkand.

The Five Shires. The five shires are the homeland of the half-ings. The area is ruled by a council of five sheriffs who each control a shire. Four times a year the sheriffs meet at a great feast and there decide shirewide policy by vote.

Grand Duchy of Karameikos. This part of the continent is a wild and unsettled land claimed by Duke Stephan Karameikos. In reality, little of the land is under the duke's control. Large areas are overrun with monsters and hostile humanoids. For a more detailed description of the Duchy of Karameikos, see the D&D Expert rule-book.

Kingdom of Ierendi. The trading ships of Ierendi rival those of Thyatis, and the kingdom sports a magnificent royal palace carved from pure white coral. The king and queen of the land are usually popular adventurer-heroes; however, they are without true power and serve only as figureheads. Actual rule is held by certain aristocratic families (making Ierendi an oligarchy).

Minrothad Guilds. The Minrothad island cluster is a syndicracy: the government is run by the heads of the various trading guilds. Minrothad is closely allied to Thyatis.

Empire of Thyatis. The empire of Thyatis is an autocracy. The emperor holds absolute power, but his decisions must allow for the desires of powerful nobles and for the threat of mob riots over unfavorable laws. The city of Thyatis is built beside a large canal that separates the southern peninsula from the mainland, so the city is a major trade center. The Thyatic culture is similar to the medieval Byzantine empire.

Thanegioth Archipelago. The archipelago is a cluster of islands about 1000 miles from the coast of the main continent. What little knowledge is available about Thanegioth is buried in myth and superstition.

Suggested Pronunciations

Akesoli — ak·e·sō'lē	Karameikos — kar·a·mī'kōs
Akorros — a·kōr'fōs	Kerendas — ker·en'das
Alasiyan — al·as'ē'an	Kopru — kō'prū
Alfheim — alf'hīm	Malpheggi — mal'feg'gē
Altan Tepe — al'tan tep'ē	Minrothad — min'rō'thad
Amsorak — am'sōr'ak	Norrvik — nōr'vik
Aranea — ar'an'ē'a	Ostland — ōst'land
Atruaghin — at·rū'a'gin	Phanaton — fan'a'ton
Biazzan — bē'a'zan	Rakasta — ra'kas'ta
Canolbarth — can'ōl'barth	Selenica — se·len'ī'ka
Castellan — kas'tel'lan	Soderfjord — sō'der'fyōrd
Corunglain — kōr'un'glan	Specularum — spek'ū'lar'um
Cruth — krūth	Tel Akbir — tel ak'bēr
Darokin — dar'ō'kin	Thanegioth — than'ā'gē'oth
Ethengar — eth'en'gar	Thyatis — thī'a'tis
Glantri — glan'trē	Vestland — vest'land
Heldann — hel'dan	Ylaruam — il'a'rū'am
Ierendi — ē'er'end'dē	Zeaburg — zē'burg

Weather & Climate

The general weather patterns of this part of the continent move from west to east. Hence, much rain falls on the western edge of the Altan Tepe mountains, while little or none falls on the Alasiyan desert. The warm offshore currents near Thyatis and Minrothad modify the weather somewhat in the south, making the climate there similar to the Mediterranean.

The southern farm lands are extremely fertile, due to a thick layer of rich ash from the ancient volcanic hills. The farmers here have discovered better ways to grow most crops. The heavily irrigated and terraced gardens of the southern farmlands produce more food than any other area on the map.

The climate in the Thanegioth Archipelago is tropical, similar to the Pacific South Seas islands (Oceania) and the Caribbean. The climate south of the Cruth mountains (running west to east) is moist and temperate, with mild winters. The climate of Darokin and Glantri is warm and sunny, similar to that of southern France. The climate of the Ethengar steppes is mild in the summer, but cold and bleak in the winter; like the Russian steppes around the Black Sea. The climate of the northeastern coast is wet and mostly overcast, similar to that of Denmark.



PART 2: THE ISLE OF DREAD

Background. Several weeks ago, the party of adventurers was returning from a previous adventure (the DM can work this into the campaign as desired) when they discovered a cache of scroll-papers. The scroll-paper was made of an excellent vellum parchment (a kind of paper that lasts for centuries). On the journey home, the characters were caught in a sudden rainstorm and the entire cache was drenched. Upon the party's return to Specularum, it was found that none of them were magical. Still, magic-users can always use good paper for spell research and writing their spell books, so the characters carefully spread the paper out in front of a fire to dry out. Much to their surprise, as the paper dried out, writing appeared on several of the pages. The heat had brought out secret writing on the parchment.

The pages were part of a ship's log and read as follows:

"When the gale finally ended, we found ourselves approximately seven days normal sailing distance due south out of Specularum, in the Thanegioth Archipelago. We replenished our supplies, patched up the ship, and traded our remaining goods at native villages along the shores of several islands. Some villages were friendly, but others were hostile and the natives attacked on sight. I suspect the hostile villages were filled with cannibals.

"We skirted the coastlines of several islands, sailing south by west until we reached a small peninsula cut off from the main island by a massive stone wall. We were well received by the natives of Tanoroa, the small village that guards this wall. The villagers have no name for the large island other than the 'Isle of Dread'. Their own small peninsula is known simply as 'Home'.

"The villagers told us a tale about an ancient city in the central highland of the isle that was built by the same people who built the wall. The villagers call the builders 'the gods', but I noticed that the names of the gods and the personal names of the clan ancestors were often the same, so I suspect that their ancestors and the builders were one and the same. I believe that the natives once possessed a much more advanced culture and that the descendants of the builders have returned to a more primitive state.

"The inland city is rumored to be filled with treasure beyond imagining. In particular, I heard persistent tales concerning a great black pearl of 'the gods' that still remains in the inland city. The island waters abound with excellent pearl beds, so the rumor of the black pearl may well be true.

"The village contains a number of huge life-like statues of iron, bronze, and stone. Since no villager currently has the skill or the craft to make such statues, the tale of a lost city built by the 'gods' seems reasonable. I would have liked to explore inland to verify the rumors, but too many crewmen died in the storm or by cannibal spears. Only five of us are left. I am the only professional adventurer, the others are only sailors. We can sail the small ship well enough but on land, in hostile territory, we would be helpless. Once back in Specularum I should be able to recruit a new crew and a party of professional adventurers, then I will return to claim the great black pearl.

"One thing I managed to do before leaving: we sailed around the island and made the best map we could. We were afraid to land, since village fishermen had warned us that it was extremely dangerous to land anywhere on the main island and the coasts were rocky with no beaches. As a result, the map only shows the coastal areas we could chart from the ship, but it is better than nothing."

Rory Barbarosa

Note: The DM should hand the players the tear-out copy of the ship's log with the incomplete map of the Isle of Dread on the back. The tear-out sheet represents the parchment that the players have. The players can use the partial map to chart the unknown wilderness as they explore it.

The parchment log is signed by Rory Barbarosa, a well known adventurer and sea captain who died about 30 years ago. A little research in local taverns will reveal to the players that just before he died, Rory was indeed recruiting for a journey south. He had been blown off course on his last voyage and had hardly been in town a day before he started signing on new hands. Unfortunately, Rory angered a powerful wizard over a lost wager and died horribly before his journey south began.

Not only does the story of Rory Barbarosa's death confirm the writing on the parchment, but every rumor that the party can track down about the Thanegioth Archipelago tends to confirm the account (the DM should make up suitable rumors as needed).

Preparation. The players begin the module in Specularum, which is in the Grand Duchy of Karameikos. If the players are based somewhere else, the DM should arrange to have them go to Specularum or a coastal city before the adventure begins.

The players must acquire a ship or passage to the Isle of Dread. Most parties should have no trouble raising enough money to buy a small sailing ship. If the characters cannot come up with the money, the DM will have to arrange matters so that the characters do get a ship or smaller boat that can sail the ocean. Some ideas on how characters might acquire a ship include:

- 1) Have a merchant hire the party to investigate the island. The players will receive free passage, but must split any treasure 50-50 with their employer. Alternately, the DM might change the scenario, so that the characters are allowed to convince a merchant to open up a new trade route to the Thanegioth Archipelago.
- 2) Allow the characters to buy an old, decrepit boat. Generate a percentage by dividing the price paid for the boat by the cost of a new boat. This percentage is the measure of the boat's condition. The speed and hull value of the boat are both multiplied by this percentage (giving lower numbers). Also, in any storm, the percentage or lower must be rolled as a saving throw or the boat will sink.
- 3) Allow one player to inherit a boat. If this idea is used, the boat should be no larger than a small sailing ship (and should have no lifeboat). Remember that the normal inheritance tax is 10% of the value of the inherited goods. The inherited boat cannot leave port until the tax is paid.
- 4) Let the characters borrow the money. Interest should be at least 10% per month. The loan must be paid by the end of the first voyage. Local moneylenders have a working agreement with a magic-user who will send an invisible stalker to attack each character who has not paid his or her share of the loan by one week after the due date.

The Adventure. During the voyage from Specularum to the village of Tanaroa on the Isle of Dread, use the wilderness rules from the D&D Expert set and the Ocean-Sea Encounter Tables. Remember to check for weather each day (2d6: 2 = BECALMED, 12 = STORM) and that if a 6 is rolled on an encounter check, there will be one. If the boat enters a reef area, it will take 1-100 (d%) points of hull damage. In spite of these hazards, the DM should remember that the party should still reach the Isle of Dread, and should handle weather, rolls for becoming lost, and encounters with this in mind.

Once the characters reach the Isle of Dread (**Map D-1**), they will probably land at one of the native villages. The details of these

villages are given in the description of **Tanaroa**, the main village (encounter area **1**, p. **7**). These villages are **matriarchies**, so the chieftain will always be a woman. The DM should set up a few typical NPC leaders in advance, or use the ones included later.

From these villages, the party can move inland (note that they can map one hex of terrain in every direction when they pass through a hex: seven new hexes maximum; unless the terrain in the hex is mountainous or covered with dense foliage which blocks sight). For encounters, the DM should use the three **Wilderness Wandering Monster Tables** included in the module. Each table covers a different part of the island.

Using the Wilderness Wandering Monster Tables

Wandering monsters should be checked for twice a day, once for the daylight hours and once for the hours of darkness. (For the night check, subtract 1 from the roll since most of the wandering monsters are inactive at night.)

This method of handling encounters is used only in the first stage of the adventure. When the players reach the **CENTRAL PLATEAU** and beyond, a new method will be introduced (see p. **12**).

Once a monster is encountered, the exact monster is determined by rolling percentage dice (d%) on one of the wandering monster tables, depending on where the party is on the Isle of Dread. **Wilderness Wandering Monster Table 1** should be used on the southern peninsula south of the Great Wall, and on the southeastern islands. **Wilderness Wandering Monster Table 2** should be used on the main island south of the central river (including the swamp), and on the southwestern islands (west of encounter area **6**). **Wilderness Wandering Monster Table 3** is used north of the central river and on the northern islands.

The DM should use logic when rolling wandering monsters. If the monster rolled is highly unlikely for the terrain type (for example, a plesiosaurus in a non-lake hex) the DM should either roll again or choose a different wandering monster. If the monster is either much too strong or much too weak for the party, the DM may change the number appearing or the monster's hit points to provide a suitable challenge for the party.

