

AGE of CTHULHU

Death in Luxor



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Scene 3 – Ramesses Temple Complex

Scene 3 takes place at Medinet Habu, the funerary complex of Ramesses III. The work gangs live in a tent city here, renting out their services to archeologists and epigraphers. Unlike many in Luxor, they are openly friendly towards foreigners, welcoming them in the hopes of getting work. Their proffered friendship is only skin-deep – the work gangs are notoriously loyal to one another and never betray the confidence of their brethren.

A work gang has been infiltrated by a cult dedicated to the worship and release of the star-spawn. While there are only a handful of cultists active in the tent city, the work gang’s devotion to secrecy ensures that the cult remains protected.

Scene Summary: There are a number of reasons why the investigators might happen upon the ruins. Enterprising investigators might come directly here after leaving Chicago House, in the hopes of stumbling across the ‘new crypt.’ Others might come here, following leads offered by Rose Bollacher in Scene 2. Finally, investigators escaping the clutches of the theosophists in Scene 5 might also make their way here, in an attempt to beat Madam Carlisle and Jack Saul to the new crypt.

The purpose of the scene is to direct the investigators – by clues or informants – to Scene 4: The Crypt of the Deep Ones.

Area 3-1 – Medinet Habu:

The description assumes that the investigators make it to the ruins after dark, though the scene is largely unchanged, regardless of time of day. Read or paraphrase the following when the investigators come to the Ramesses Temple Complex for the first time.

The ceaseless rain hammers the ruins, running in red rivulets down the worn paths and crumbling stone walls. The cold rain comes in sheets, soaking your clothes and chilling you to the bone.

In the glaring flashes of lightning, you can discern the outlines of a work camp, set near the heart of the dig. In between the rolling thunder, you can hear the telltale sound of drums.

The investigators are free to approach the camp any way they see fit. The darkness makes it easy for even the least dexterous of investigators to sneak up through the ruins. Once the investigators come within 50 yards of the camp, proceed with the description of area 3-2.

Area 3-2 – Tent City: Read or paraphrase the following:

At the heart of the dig is a tent city, sheltered from the force of the storm by an ancient stone wall. Amid the score of canvas tents is a bonfire, roaring in spite of the rain. Ominous figures caper and dance around the fire, howling at the thundering storm, and passing bottles back and forth before hurling them into the crackling flames.

There are over twenty forms dancing in the light of the bonfire, and more in the shadows. The ferocious storm has brought the diggers’ primal souls to life; in spite of the storm (more accurately, because of it) they are drinking and dancing, howling in time with the rolling thunder.

Investigators might be quick to mistake the rude celebration for a Cthulhu rite. A successful **Mythos** check (+15%) recognizes that the dancers are simply drunk and enjoying the storm. If an investigator beats the check by 10% or more, their estimation of the drunken work gang is more precise: while the dance is not a Cthulhu rite, there are occult undertones to some of the dancers’ howlings.

There are thirty-two diggers in all, seven of whom are cultists sworn to the star-spawn. The diggers welcome the investigators into their circle, offering them wine, hard alcohol, and shelter beneath the awnings of their tents. The cultists, for their part, do their best to put the investigators at ease. While five of the cultists see to the investigators’ needs, the other two scurry back to warn the Old Man of Persia. They return after a minute or two, bidding the investigators to follow them.

A fight with the cultists isn’t in the investigators’ interests. The other members of the work gang are quick to come to the aid of their brothers, fighting with shovels, picks, and long-bladed fighting knives. A digger doesn’t stay in the fight once injured, but the cultists fight to the death, fully believing that their patron, the star-spawn, will protect them.

Tents: Investigating the tents yields naught in the ways of clues. The investigators discover caches of foodstuffs kept in cracked clay pots, bottles of hard alcohol and wine, sleeping cots, lanterns, and digging tools.

7 Cultists

STR	CON	SIZ	DEX	POW	HP
14	15	12	08	09	13

Damage Bonus: +1D4

Weapon: Fighting Knife 40%, damage 1D4 + 2 + db



25 Dig Workers

STR	CON	SIZ	DEX	POW	HP
15	10	13	11	09	6

Damage Bonus: +1D4

Weapon: Shovel/Pick 30%, damage 1D6 + db
Kick/Punch 35%, damage 1D3 + db

Area 3-3 – Tent of the Old Persian: Read or paraphrase the following:

The tent is larger than the others in the makeshift camp, securely anchored against the storm by heavy stone blocks. Inside, past the whipping canvas flaps and trio of heavily muscled thugs, the tent's furnishings are worn, but comfortable. A boiling kettle rests atop a woodstove in the center of the tent. In the back of the tent is a well-appointed cot. Tapestries of peculiar origin hang from every wall, making the otherwise large tent feel small and claustrophobic.

A gray bearded man in a black turban sits near the center of the tent, warming his hand before the stove. To his left sits a British couple, immaculately dressed despite the raging storm.

The gray-bearded man is the Zoroastrian mystic known simply as the “Old Persian” to the English, or “Abū” (father) to the Egyptian diggers and cultists. The British couple is Madam Carlisle and Jack Saul, theosophists sent to infiltrate Chicago House. Investigators with the photograph of the expedition team (from area 1-3a) immediately recognize Jack Saul as one of two survivors of the Chicago House murders.

If the investigators lost the star-spawn idol in Scene 2, it is sitting atop a table behind the Old Persian.

Jack Saul is a handsome young man in his twenties, with nervous, darting brown eyes. Madam Carlisle is an attractive, dark haired woman, of indeterminable age – either in her forties, having aged incredibly well, or in her early twenties with maturity beyond her years. Relaxed and composed, she stands in opposition to Jack’s constant nervousness, calming him with a touch of her hand, and speaking for him when the young man falters.

Unknown to the theosophists, the Old Persian is the leader of the star-spawn cult, actively devoted to releasing his master from its ancient prison. Whether or not the investigators realize it, the leaders of all three factions are here in the same tent, sharing tea.

When the investigators enter, the Old Persian smiles and waves to the nearby chairs, as if he had expected guests all along. Jack, suspecting the investigators’ intent, looks as if he could jump out of his skin, while Carlisle simply lights a cigarette from the stove, and smiles warmly through the smoke.

Keeper Note: This scene can appear challenging to run. Key to success is keeping each NPC’s aim and mannerisms in mind. This will allow the keeper to run the three as distinct personalities. Following is a summary of the three NPCs, and their key traits.

Madam Carlisle: *Aims* – The leader of the theosophists wants to learn the investigators’ plans, and any information





or clues they might have that could lead her to the New Crypt or the Prison of the Star-Spawn. If the investigators are clearly ahead in the game, she invites them to Alexis' Bolthole (Scene 5), with an offer to compare "histories." *Mannerisms* – Carlisle is perpetually calm and in control. Nothing the investigators do or say can unnerve her.

Jack Saul: *Aims* – Jack mistakenly believes that he needs to feed misinformation to the investigators, in the hopes of throwing them off the trail. He takes it upon himself to be at the heart of every conversation, engaging every participant; for fear that he might miss something of crucial importance. *Mannerisms* – Jack is a nervous young man, trying desperately to impress his master, Carlisle.

The Old Man of Persia: *Aims* – Old Abū wants to set the star-spawn free, and has already accomplished everything necessary to see this come to pass. All that is necessary now is to keep the investigators and theosophists from interfering. Abū offers to have his men show the investigators to the site of the New Crypt, certain that their investigations will end with their demise. *Mannerisms* – The Old Persian is like an inscrutable cat trying to make up his mind over several mice. Who to dispose of first? He makes his decision deliberately, rightly assuming the investigators to be the greatest threat.

The tenor of the encounter is largely left up to the investigators. Madam Carlisle takes the backseat, waiting for the investigators to make the first move and reveal their hand. Meanwhile, nervous Jack forces a grin, and makes obvious attempts to ingratiate himself to the investigators.

Following is a brief summary of questions the investigators might ask, and the answers they receive (and more importantly, in key instances, who answers them):

- **Who are you? Why are you here? Jack:** I'm Mister Saul of Chicago House. This is my fiancé, Miss Carlisle. She's visiting from India while I complete my internship. After I complete my work, and it shouldn't be long now, we'll take work in India, leading excavations and digs ...
- **Where is the crypt discovered by Professors Jamison and Bollacher? The Old Persian:** Several of my boys participated in that dig. I'll summon them and ask them to show you the site, tonight.
- **What did they find there? The Old Persian:** I'm sure I have no idea. The professors from Chicago House are notoriously private about their discoveries.

- **What are you doing here tonight? Carlisle (silencing Jack):** Visiting with an old friend. You might not know it, but Abū is considered to be a great mystic by his people. And any chance to grow closer to wisdom ...
- **Where were you when Bollacher killed the team at Chicago House? Jack (clearly astonished):** Why, I was meeting up with Carlisle at the ferry. Dead you say? This is terrible!
- **Where is Rose Bollacher? The Old Persian:** I heard some of my workers say that they saw a woman like the one you are describing in a bar in south Luxor. The Ali Baba perhaps? It might simple be a rumor. I can't imagine why a respectable woman would deign to frequent such an establishment.

If the investigators make the mistake of threatening the Old Persian or his guests, the three thugs rush into the tent, using deadly force to restrain the investigators if need be. The Persian refuses to tolerate foolish enemies, and after politely asking Carlisle and Jack to excuse them, orders the thugs to take the investigators out into the ruins and slit their throats.

Clues: As the investigators leave the tent, Madam Carlisle stands and walks towards the most attractive male investigator and wishes him luck in his search, kissing him briefly on the cheek. As she does so, she slips a scrap of paper into his hand; the scrap lists an address: **1005, Shari El Matar.**

If the investigators manage to lure the Old Persian and his guests outside, they can investigate the tent. If the investigators succeed on such an unlikely gambit, chances are excellent they discover a small trove of clues.

A **Spot Hidden (+15%)** check reveals a small wooden locker hidden beneath a pile of embroidered covers beside the cot. The locker is painted with phosphorescent runes, reinforced with metal corners and boning, and sealed with a lock (**Locksmith, +10%**).

An **Occult (+0%)** reveals the runes as a ward against evil spirits. Unfortunately for the investigators, the runes also serve to punish thieves. Anyone opening the locker without ritually cleansing it (**Occult, -10%**, two hours) is struck by an ominous sense of foreboding – the investigator is certain that his doom is at hand (treat as Generalized Anxiety Disorder). The belief is overpowering, and may culminate in a self-fulfilling death wish. To shake the belief, the investigator must succeed on a Resisted POW check;





the curse has a POW of 15. The investigator may attempt to shake the curse once a day. A successful psychology check made by another investigator, increases the cursed investigator's chances by 15%.

Inside the chest, investigators discover the Old Persian's personal papers; including a sketch of the star-spawn idol (show players Handout H) with the Persian's own handwritten notes. The investigators also discover a map of Medinet Habu marking something noted as "the crypt." This is the Crypt of the Deep Ones, what Jamison and Bollacher referred to as the "New Crypt," and is detailed in Scene 4. Finally, Old Abū's notes include a map that leads explorers to Scene 6, the Prison of the Star-Spawn. Beneath the papers are two small glass vials containing oil of myrrh, and a small velvet bag containing five cubes of charred frankincense resin. Both the oil and frankincense can be used to combat the deep ones and the star-spawn, as revealed in the hieroglyphics in area 4-1.

Combat stats for Carlisle and Jack are not included here. If the scene devolves into combat, both do their best to flee. If it becomes imperative to reference their stats, they can be found in Scene 5.

Abū, The Old Persian

STR	CON	SI	DEX	POW	HP
07	09	10	14	16	17

Damage Bonus: +1D4

Weapon: Fighting Knife 40%, damage 1D4 + 2 + db

Spells: Deflect Harm, Dominate.

Skills: Cthulhu Mythos 23%, Fast Talk 45%, Hide 57%, Sneak 40%

3 Toughs

STR	CON	SI	DEX	POW	HP
16	15	15	08	07	15

Damage Bonus: +1D4

Weapon: Club 40%, damage 1D6 + db

Fighting Knife 40%, damage 1D4 + 2 + db

Scene 4, Crypt of the Deep Ones

Scene 4 takes place on the southern side of Medinet Habu, in what Jamison and Bollacher referred to as the "New Crypt," but what is more accurately the "Crypt of the Deep Ones."

The expedition team from Chicago House realized the true import of their discovery and resealed the crypt when

they left. The Old Persian and his work gang of cultists did the rest, disguising the entrance to prevent casual discovery. The most likely way to find the Crypt is to be led here by the Old Persian's diggers, or discover the notes and map in area 3-3.

Scene Summary: Regardless of how the Crypt is found, the scene unfolds in the same way. The Old Persian's servants seal the Crypt, locking the investigators inside. Meanwhile, the Nile's rising water level has transformed the entire crypt into a death trap. Investigators should leave Scene 4 with the location of the star-spawn's prison, and with some inkling of how to stop it.

There is a chance that due to a failure to piece together key clues (or simply a run of bad luck) that the investigators might end the scene with no more information as to where to go or what must be done to save Luxor. If this comes to pass (or if the keeper simply needs to nudge along hesitant investigators) see Scene 5, below, for the plots of the theosophists.

Area 4-1 – The New Crypt: Read or paraphrase the following:

An enormous stone block stands out from the crumbling wall. The stone is inscribed with several bands of hieroglyphics, worn and nearly illegible in the hammering rain.

The stone block conceals a small staircase leading down beneath Medinet Habu. If Old Abū's dig team accompanies the investigators, the diggers use prybars to slide the stone to one side. If the investigators are alone, they will need to come up with another means of opening the crypt. For purposes of opposed Resistance checks, the stone has STR 20.

Very observant investigators specifically keeping watch on the surrounding ruins can spot (**Spot Hidden**, -15%) a small group of diggers watching from a distance. The diggers – disguised cultists – retreat if approached by the investigators.

Edging the stone aside reveals a stone staircase leading down into darkness (area 4-2). Several minutes after the investigators enter the crypt, five of the cultists slip up to the crypt. The cultists attack anyone left to guard the entrance, dumping the bodies inside the crypt before sliding the stone back into place. Finally, the cultists place stone chocks on the three exposed faces of the stone, making it impossible to move the stone from inside the crypt with anything short of dynamite. Investigators inside the crypts will hear a heavy grating sound, followed by silence as the exit from the crypt is cut off.

