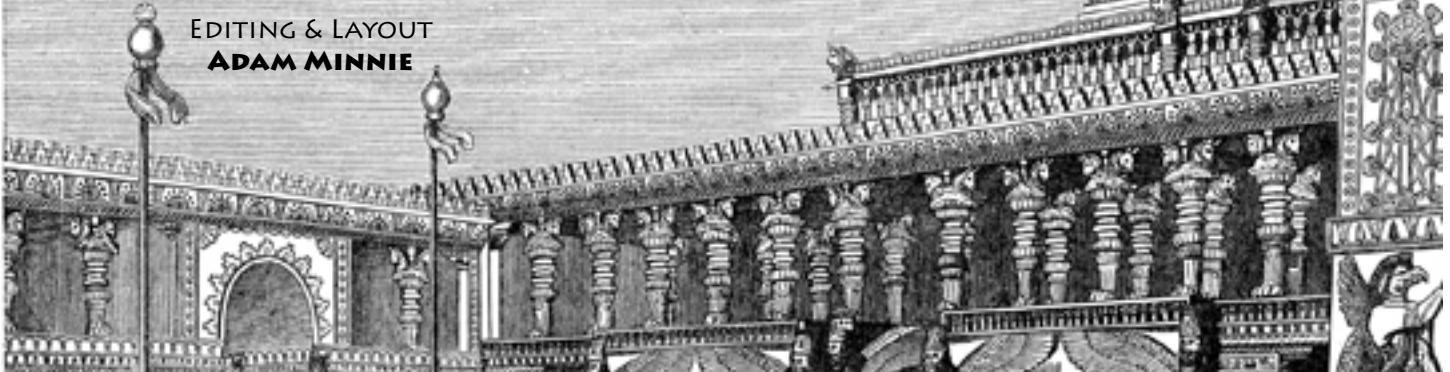


# THE TOWER OF THE ELEPHANT

A SWORD & SORCERY ADVENTURE  
ADAPTATED FROM THE TALE BY ROBERT E. HOWARD

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## ABOUT THIS ADVENTURE

This adventure is inspired by Robert E. Howard's Conan tale, *The Tower of the Elephant*, and adapted for Dain Lybarger's [Sword & Sorcery hack](#) of *Marvel Heroic Roleplaying*.

## USING THIS ADVENTURE

Use this adventure as a stand-alone tale or as an episode in an on-going campaign. Throughout the adventure text, notable details are called out in **Red Bold**. Character speech is **Green**, and traits and Scene Distinctions for each location are called out in **BLUE SMALLCAPS**. Find scene reference sheets on the last two pages of this document.

## THE TOWER OF THE ELEPHANT

This adventure is suitable for a pair of heroes—characters suited, either by skill or by inclination, to commit a robbery. In what may be the origin of a time-honored fantasy tradition, our pair of erstwhile criminals meet in a tavern...

If your players wish to use Howard's characters rather than their own, use Conan and Taurus the Nemedean thief, provided on the following pages.

The stereotypical **Nemedean** is an over-civilized, politically corruptible Mitra worshipper who is constantly plotting and scheming for his own benefit.

## EVENT MILESTONE OPTIONS

### The Better Thief

- 1 XP** when you challenge someone to a friendly contest of skill involving a criminal activity.
- 3 XP** when you outdo someone in a contest of criminal skills, or when you are bested in such a contest.
- 10 XP** when you declare someone else to be a better thief, or when a person whose criminal skills you respect declares that you are their better.

### Blade of Mercy

- 1 XP** when you show sympathy for a captive or victim of torment.
- 3 XP** when you make the choice of life or death for someone in your power.
- 10 XP** when you free someone from torment by granting them death, or when you convince someone who longs for death to hold onto life.

# TOWER OF THE ELEPHANT

## CONAN THE CIMMERIAN

### MEANS

STEEL D10

GUILE D8

LORE D6

### DISTINCTIONS

CIMMERIAN WANDERER

QUICK TO LAUGHTER, AND TO ANGER

PANTHERISH GRACE

### CIMMERIAN HERITAGE

MIGHTY THEWS D8

WOLF-LIKE STAMINA D8

SFX: *Hardy*. Spend 1 PP to ignore Stress, Trauma, or Complications inflicted by cold or exposure to the elements.

SFX: *Second Wind*. Before you make an action including a CIMMERIAN HERITAGE power, you may move your physical stress die to the doom pool and step up the CIMMERIAN HERITAGE power by +1 for this action.

Limit: *An Insult is a Challenge*. Gain 1 PP and take d6 Emotional Stress when ‘civilized’ men casually insult you or an ally, especially when couched in flowery language.

Limit: *Distrust of Cities*. Gain 1 PP and step up Mental Stress or Complications from being in a city or urban area.

### BELONGINGS

WEAPON D8

ARMOR D6

SFX: *Dangerous*. Add a d6 to your dice pool for an attack action, and step down the largest die in the pool by -1. Step up Physical Stress inflicted by +1.

Limit: *Gear*. Shutdown any BELONGINGS power and gain 1 PP. Take an action vs. the Doom pool to recover gear.

### CAREERS

BARBARIAN D6

THIEF D6

PIRATE D6

MERCENARY D6

### MILESTONES

#### Savage Superiority

1 XP when you display or express ignorance of ‘civilized’ customs.

3 XP when a victory shows your barbaric heritage to be superior to ‘civilized’ ways, or when you take Mental or Emotional Stress from being defeated by ‘civilized’ means.

10XP when you convince a superior ‘civilized’ opponent that savagery is mankind’s natural state, or when you choose ‘civilized’ life and settle in a city (even as its king).

#### King by your own Hand

1 XP when you fight for or against the forces of a nation’s Sovereign.

3 XP when you lead men into battle, or when your political cunning brings you success.

10XP when you seize a throne by force, or when you decline the offer of a crown.

## TAURUS THE NEMEDEAN

### MEANS

STEEL D8  
GUILE D10  
LORE D6

### DISTINCTIONS

NEMEDEAN  
'PRINCE OF THIEVES'  
BULL-NECKED AND BIG-BELLIED

### BORN TO STEAL

EYES LIKE A CAT D8      SURPRISING AGILITY D8      STRANGLER'S HANDS D8  
THICK-SKINNED D8

SFX: *Wrestler*. Step up or double STRANGLER'S HANDS when making a physical attack against a single opponent. If the opponent beats your total, they may use their reaction Effect die against you at no cost.

SFX: *Intense Concentration*. In a pool including a BORN TO STEAL die, replace two dice of equal steps with one die of +1 step.

Limit: *Wounded Pride*. Take 1d6 Emotional Stress and gain 1 PP if someone else visibly outperforms you when you use a BORN TO STEAL power.

### BELONGINGS

DAGGER D6      BLOWGUN D6      CLIMBING GEAR D6

SFX: *Dangerous*. Add a d6 to your dice pool for an attack action, and step down the largest die in the pool by -1. Step up physical Stress inflicted by +1.

SFX: *Black Lotus Powder*. Add a d6 and step up your effect die by +1 when inflicting poisonous complications on a target with your BLOWGUN.

Limit: *Gear*. Shutdown any BELONGINGS power and gain 1 PP. Take an action vs. the Doom pool to recover gear.

### CAREERS

HUNTER D6      THIEF D10

### MILESTONES

#### Reputation

1 XP when you declare yourself 'Prince of Thieves' in front of witnesses.

3 XP when boasting of your exploits or doubt cast upon the veracity of one of your tales becomes a central conflict or confrontation in a scene.

10XP when you become publicly known (and wanted) as the 'Prince of Thieves', or when a rival is accorded that title.

#### Wanderer

1 XP when you first come to a strange town or city.

3 XP when you leave a place, or a person, behind you.

10XP when you chose to settle permanently somewhere.

# TOWER OF THE ELEPHANT

## SETTING

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This adventure takes place across only two locations – a tavern known as a meeting place for criminals and thieves, and the eponymous Tower of the Elephant, an arcane stronghold belonging to a mysterious sorcerer.

## DOOM POOL

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The **DOOM POOL** begins at **2D6** for this one-Act adventure.

## HOOK

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In the **Zamoran** city of **Arenjun**, in a dangerous district called the **Maul**, there are countless taverns, brothels, and dens of iniquity...

Howard tells it best:

In one of these dens, merriment thundered to the low smoke-stained roof, where rascals gathered in every stage of rags and tatters—furtive cut-purses, leering kidnappers, quick-fingered thieves, swaggering braves with their wenchers, strident-voiced women clad in tawdry finery.

Native rogues were the dominant element—dark-skinned, dark-eyed Zamorians, with daggers at their girdles and guile in their hearts. But there were wolves of half a dozen outland nations there as well. There was a giant Hyperborean renegade, taciturn, dangerous, with a broadsword strapped to his great gaunt frame—for men wore steel openly in the Maul. There was a Shemitish counterfeiter, with his hook nose and curled blue-black beard. There was a bold-eyed Brythunian wench, sitting on the knee of a tawny-haired Gunderman—a wandering mercenary soldier, a deserter from some defeated army. And the fat gross rogue whose bawdy jests were causing all the shouts of mirth was a professional kidnapper come up from distant Koth to teach woman-stealing to Zamorians who were born with more knowledge of the art than he could ever attain.

## BUILDUP

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Conan and Taurus (or characters of your choice), as yet unacquainted with one another, are among the listeners as the Kothian kidnapper tells his tales.

The Kothian swells with self-importance as he launches into a story about an unattainable prize—the great jewel men call the **Elephant's Heart!** It is owned by a mysterious priest called **Yara**, who lives in seclusion within the **Tower of the Elephant**. The tower is set in a great garden above the level of the city, surrounded by high walls. There are no visible guards, and the walls would seem to be an easy climb... but no man has ever succeeded in parting Yara from the source of his magical power—the Elephant's Heart. When a member of the audience (probably one of the player Heroes) questions why no one has yet stolen the gem, the Kothian roars with laughter.

*“Know that in Zamora, and more especially in this city, there are more bold thieves than anywhere else in the world, even Koth. If mortal man could have stolen the gem, be sure it would have been filched long ago.”*

The Kothian rogue continues, explaining that the outer wall might indeed be an easy climb, but within the wall lie the gardens. Although Yara maintains a force of armed guards in a watch-chamber at the base of his tower, it is known that there are no guards in the gardens at night... no human guards, at least... The Kothian will make much of this mysterious nocturnal threat to life and limb, merrily enjoying his audience's nervousness.

## ACTION: DEN OF THIEVES

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In the original tale, the Kothian ends his tale by poking fun, insulting Conan's naivete about the tower, and provoking the barbarian to anger. In the ensuing confusion, the lights are doused, the Kothian is killed, and Conan disappears.

If the Heroes are not so easily moved to violence, engineer some other means of starting a general brawl—a dispute over the Brythunian wench, perhaps. The tavern starts with the Scene Distinctions **LOW CEILING** and **CROWDED WITH TABLES AND CHAIRS**. Spend a Doom die early in the fight to add a Scene Distinction by putting the **LIGHTS OUT**.

## KOTHIAN

EXPERT THIEF D8

STEEL D4

GUILE D6

LORE D8

## ROGUES AND CUTTHROATS

STEEL 3D6

GRAB D6

SURROUND D8

SFX: *Area Attack*. Target multiple opponents. For each additional target, add d6 and keep +1 Effect die.

Limit: *Cohesion*. Defeat each Steel die (with d8 Stress) to reduce the mob.

## LIONS

MEANS

STEEL 3D8

DISTINCTIONS

CUT VOCAL CORDS (SILENT)

NOCTURNAL

BESTIAL STRENGTH D8

RENDING CLAWS D10

SFX: *Teeth & Claws*. Add a d6 to your dice pool for an attack action, and step down the largest die in the pool by -1. Step up Physical Stress inflicted by +1.

Limit: *Pride of Lions*. Defeat each Steel die (with d10 Stress) to slay a lion.

## ACTION: SCALING THE TOWER

Because of the lions, the human guards do not patrol the garden at night. The single door into the bottom of the tower is heavily-paneled and barred from within. An unknown number of Yara's guards lie beyond. Their guard-room is described later in the adventure. Modify that description if the Heroes decide on a frontal assault.

## YARA'S GUARDS

STEEL 5D8

JEWEL-HILTED SWORDS D8 TACTICAL DEPLOYMENT D8

SFX: *Area Attack*. Target multiple opponents. For each additional target, add d6 and keep +1 Effect die.

Limit: *Cohesion*. Defeat each Steel die (with d8 Stress) to reduce the mob.

## TRANSITION: ILL-MET IN ANY LIGHT

Making their escape from the tavern brawl, our Heroes encounter one another and (presumably) conspire together to steal the Jewel. Alternatively, as in the original story, they might each determine to steal it separately, and encounter one another in the gardens surrounding the Tower of the Elephant.

During this scene, allow the Heroes to gather Resources to aid them in their project. (Taurus' lotus powder and climbing gear could be re-defined as Resources, if you prefer, rather than as part of his customary belongings.)

## ACTION: THE TOWER GARDENS

The shimmering shaft of the tower rose frostily in the stars. In the sunlight it shone so dazzlingly that few could bear its glare, and men said it was built of silver. It was round, a slim perfect cylinder, a hundred and fifty feet in height, and its rim glittered in the starlight with the great jewels which crusted it.

The tower stands amid the **EXOTIC TREES** of a garden comprised of **LUSH CONCEALING FOLIAGE**, enclosed by a **HIGH WALL**. The tower is entirely windowless, and the gemstones around its cornice sparkle enticingly in the starlight.

Scaling the outer wall requires a roll against the Doom pool. Once inside, among the lush foliage of the garden, the Heroes face a surprise attack by the lions that guard the tower grounds!

Or, perhaps, cunning thieves might have a stealthier plan for entry...

Another roll against the Doom Pool is required to scale the exterior of the tower. Any complications that arise should be described as fraying rope, a slipping grappling hook, or some other challenge of the climb.

The roof of the tower is a few feet below the gem-encrusted ledge. It is flat, and tiled in dark blue stone flecked with shining gold specks. In the center of the roof is a small chamber of the same silver-white stone as the tower walls. It, too, is encrusted with gemstone shards, and its single door is plated with gold scales, each crusted with gem-chips that gleam like ice.

This door is neither locked nor barred. Pushing it open will reveal a glittering chamber. Every wall, the ceiling, and the floor are inset with great white jewels, all gleaming with bright reflections, and combining to light the room clearly.

# TOWER OF THE ELEPHANT

The **JEWEL-ENCRUSTED FLOOR** boasts only three or four **SILK-COVERED COUCHES**, their covers embroidered with gold in serpentine designs. Several **SILVER-BOUND MAHOGANY CHESTS**, some locked with heavy golden locks, others with their carved lids wide open, are near the walls of the room. The open chests are brim-full with a fortune in mixed gemstones, in all the colors of the rainbow!

As soon as one of the Heroes steps past the golden door, spend a Doom die if needed to have the chamber's guardian act first. A gigantic black spider, the size of a wild boar strikes from its vantage point above the door!

## EXPERT GIANT SPIDER D8

### MEANS                      DISTINCTIONS

STEEL	D6	QUICK
GUILE	D8	STEALTHY

### ARACHNID

EIGHT GLITTERING EYES	D8	UNCANNY REFLEXES	D8
WALL-CRAWLING	D6	SPINNERETS	D8
SWINGLINE	D8		

SFX: *Venomous*. Add a d6 and step up your effect die by +1 when inflicting poisonous complications on a target with FROTHING FANGS.

SFX: *Web spinning*. When creating web-related Assets or Complications, add d6 and step up the Effect die by +1.

Limit: *Guardian*. The spider will not leave the chamber, nor will it strike at anyone who is outside on the tower roof.

The image had the body of a man, naked, and green in color; but the head was one of nightmare and madness. Too large for the human body, it had no attributes of humanity; wide flaring ears, a curling proboscis, on either side of which stood white tusks tipped with round golden balls. The eyes were closed, as if in sleep.

This then, was the reason for the name, the Tower of the Elephant, for the head of the thing was much like that of such a beast.

As the Heroes approach, the idol's huge topaz eyes snap open! It is alive! Its sensitive trunk quests out after the slightest sound they make. Then, it speaks, from jaws never built for human speech.

"Who is here? Have you come to torture me again, Yara? Will you never be done? Oh, Yag-kosha, is there no end to agony?"

Tears roll from the creature's sightless eyes—for it appears to have been violently blinded. Its limbs bear the marks of the rack, the searing brands of flame, and are but ruined deformities of limbs that were once human-like and whole.

## YAG-KOSHA

### MEANS                      DISTINCTIONS

STEEL	D4	BLIND BUT ANCIENT
GUILE	D4	TORMENTED
LORE	D12	ALONE

## TRANSITION: SEEING THE ELEPHANT

A door from the spider's chamber leads to a spiraling silver staircase, leading deeper into the tower. Landings on the staircase open upon the circular rooms that comprise each floor. If they explore the first of these, the Heroes see a large chamber beneath a golden dome. The walls are covered with sheets of green jade, the floor is inlaid ivory strips, partially concealed beneath thick rugs. A brazier on a golden tripod releases curls of exotic-scented smoke. Behind the brazier is an idol seated upon a marble couch.

Yag-Kosha has no Power Sets at this time—Yara's black sorcery has robbed it of all abilities. If the Heroes deny being Yara, Yag-Kosha will ask that they draw near, so that it can touch them. Its sensitive trunk will run over their features, light as a girl's touch.

"You are not of Yara's race of devils. The clean, lean fierceness of the wastelands marks you. I know your people from of old, whom I knew by another name in the long, long ago when another world lifted its jeweled spires to the stars." He will sigh in a faint voice. "There is blood on your fingers."

Yag-Kosha is extremely sensitive to deaths, and knows specifics of each thing or person that the Heroes may have slain this night. The strange creature will convulse with emotion at the presence of potential friends.

"I am foul and monstrous to you, am I not? Nay, do not answer; I know. But you would seem as strange to me, could I see you. I am very old; long and long ago I came to this planet with others of my world. We fought the strange and terrible forms of life which then walked the earth, so that we became feared, and were not molested in the dim jungles of the east, where we had our abode."

For some time, Yag-Kosha's faint voice will recount the ages of the earth; he has seen the rise and fall of continents and empires, the coming of great floods, the ebb and flow of civilization.

"At last I alone was left, dreaming of old times among the ruined temples of jungle-lost Khitai, worshipped as a god by an ancient yellow-skinned race. Then came Yara, versed in dark knowledge handed down through the days of barbarism, since before Atlantis sank."

Yag-Kosha will recount how Yara first acted as his acolyte, learning wisdom and white magic. But Yara was not satisfied with that; he desired more knowledge, evil lore, the power to enslave kings! Yag-Kosha denied him the black secrets that he had learned through the eons—secrets that he had no wish to know, and had never used.

But guileful Yara used wiles learned among the dusty tombs of dark Stygia to trap Yag-Kosha into divulging one of those black secrets, and with it, Yara turned his master's power back upon him, enslaving the strange creature.

"Ah, gods of Yag, my cup has been bitter since that hour! He brought me up from the lost jungles of Khitai where the gray apes danced to the pipes of the yellow priests, and offerings of fruit and wine heaped my broken altars. No more was I a god to kindly jungle-folk—I was slave to a devil in human form."

Great tears fall from Yag-Kosha's blind eyes.

"He pent me in this tower which at his command I built for him in a single night. By fire and rack he mastered me, and by strange unearthly tortures you would not understand. In agony I would long ago have taken my own life, if I could. But he kept me alive—mangled, blinded, and broken—to do his foul bidding.

And for three hundred years I have done his bidding, from this marble couch, blackening my soul with cosmic sins, and staining my wisdom with crimes, because I had no other choice. Yet not all my ancient secrets has he wrested from me, and my last gift shall be the sorcery of the Blood and the Jewel. For I feel the end of time draw near. You are the hand of Fate. I beg of you, take the gem you will find on yonder altar."

Yag-Kosha's trunk will gesture toward a gold and ivory altar against the far wall of the chamber. There sits a great round jewel, clear as crimson crystal; the Heart of the Elephant!

"Now for the great magic, the mighty magic, such as earth has not seen before, and shall not see again, through a million, million millennia. By my life-blood I conjure it!"

"Take your sword, man, and cut out my heart; then squeeze it so that the blood will flow over the red stone. Then go you down these stairs and enter the ebony chamber where Yara sits wrapped in lotus-dreams of evil. Speak his name and he will awaken. Then lay this gem before him, and say, 'Yag-kosha gives you a last gift and a last enchantment.' Then get you from the tower quickly; fear not, your way shall be made clear. The life of man is not the life of Yag, nor is human death the death of Yag. Let me be free of this cage of broken blind flesh, and I will once more be Yogah of Yag, morning-crowned and shining, with wings to fly, and feet to dance, and eyes to see, and hands to break."

If a Hero agrees to its plan, despite the subtle menace of that last phrase, Yag-Kosha will indicate with his supple trunk the spot where the Heroes are to strike. His heart is not precisely where a human's heart would be... Yag-Kosha's blood will not run off the stone; it soaks into it, causing the crystal to pulse with a brilliant deep-red light.

Yag-Kosha's instructions vis-à-vis the jewel cause it to become the equivalent of a **d12 Resource** for any Lore-based attack against Yara.

# TOWER OF THE ELEPHANT

## ACTION: MASTER OF THE TOWER

Further down the silver stairs the Heroes find a landing with an ebony door, in the center of which is a grinning silver skull. Beyond is a chamber of ebony and jet. Inside, lying on a **COUCH DRAPED WITH BLACK SILKS** is a tall, spare man. His eyes are open and dilated with the fumes of the yellow lotus. The drugged incense rises in coils of smoke from a **BRAZIER OF COALS** near the couch's head. A small **EBONY TABLE** holds a covered bowl with more lotus incense.

# YARA

MEANS	DISTINCTIONS	
STEEL D6	CRUEL TORMENTOR	
GUILE D8	MISER	
LORE D10	FUMES OF THE YELLOW LOTUS	

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## BLACK SORCERY

SORCERY D10	ELDRITCH CURSE D8
ARCANE SHIELD D6	

SFX: *Area Attack*. Target multiple opponents. For each additional target, add d6 and keep +1 Effect die.

SFX: *Evil Gaze*. In a pool including a Black Sorcery power, replace two dice of equal steps with one die of +1 step.

SFX: *Wisdom of the Ages*. Step up or double Sorcery when creating Complications.

SFX: *Secrets Man Was Not Meant To Know*. Borrow a die from the Doom pool for an action. After the action, Step up the Doom die by +1 and return it to the Doom pool.

Limit: *Conscious Activation*. When Stressed Out, asleep, or unconscious, Shutdown Black Sorcery. Recover Black Sorcery when you recover the stress or wake up. If you take Mental Trauma, Shutdown Black Sorcery until you recover that Trauma

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## CAREERS

SORCERER D12
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In the original story, Conan has an easy time of it; Yara is in a drug-induced trance brought on by the fumes. He barely has time to react before the jewel has its effect. There is no need to go so easy on the Heroes! Yara will not react to anything beyond his visions until someone speaks to him or attacks him. When he does react, it will be with fury at the interruption of his visions!

**Sorcery cannot normally inflict Stress, it can only create Assets and Complications.**

Yara uses his sorcery to disarm, disable, or bind intruders into his sanctum. Yara's Eldritch Curse is his attack power, and he is grimly creative in its use: He will curse a foe's heart to falter, causing Physical Stress, curse them with frightful visions of the vast, uncaring cosmos (learned from Yag-Kosha), causing Emotional Stress, or curse them with the crawling sensation of a thousand stinging insects inside their skins, causing Mental Stress.

If 2d12 are ever available in the Doom pool, end the scene immediately with Yara's horrible sorcerous vengeance upon the Heroes. Their subsequent fate at the sorcerer's hands will give them reason to envy Yag-Kosha's plight...

When a Hero uses the Jewel as Yag-Kosha instructed, roll it as a Lore-based attack, adding the d12 for the Jewel and any other applicable dice, inflicting Mental Stress on Yara with the Effect die.

When (and if) Yara becomes Stressed Out by attacks utilizing the Jewel, he will begin to shrink, drawn into the pulsating gemstone. Scramble as he might, he cannot outrun Yag-Kosha's blood magic. He will shrink and become trapped within the jewel!

Should a Hero peer into the gem, he will see Yara in its crimson heart, tiny as if he were seen from far away, shaking his fists and shrieking. But Yara is not alone...

And into the heart came a green, shining winged figure with the body of a man and the head of an elephant—no longer blind or crippled. Yara threw up his arms and fled as a madman flees, and on his heels came the avenger.

As the Heroes watch the scene taking place within the jewel, the gem itself swells and vanishes in a flare of iridescent color, leaving the ebony table-top bare. Somehow, the Heroes also know that the marble couch where Yag-Kosha—or Yogah of Yag—had lain is now equally bare.

## EPILOGUE...

As the final scene concludes, an ominous creaking comes from overhead—the sound of stones loosening and shifting! The Heroes would be wise to flee down the silver stairs before the tower falls! Although the lower rooms are beautiful and fascinating, the Heroes don't have time to investigate and escape in time.

Coming at last to the guardroom occupied by Yara's soldiers, the Heroes see the guards slumped around the banquet table, their dark-plumed helmets face-down among the dice and fallen goblets. Their silver corselets are unmarked and their jeweled sword-hilts untouched. Their bodies, too, are unmarked, but all the guardsmen are dead.

The promise had been made, the word kept; whether sorcery or magic or the falling shadow of great green wings had stilled the revelry...

Perhaps Yag-Kosha cleared the way for his agents—or perhaps the guardsmen were corpses all along, animated by Yara's sorcery. In any case, the way is clear! The Heroes escape into the gardens just in time to turn and see the gleaming tower—once buttressed by magic—sway and crash into shining, bejeweled shards!

In the original tale, Taurus was slain by the Giant Spider, leaving Conan to go on alone. Presuming that both Heroes survive, this could be the beginning of a long-standing partnership...

## OPTIONAL ACTION SCENES

If you desire a longer or more challenging adventure, insert any of the following challenges either before the pivotal Transition Scene (meeting Yag-Kosha), or before the final confrontation with Yara. None of these elements appear in Howard's original story, they are strictly extrapolations—feel free to add more in a similar vein.

### COCOONS

The Giant Spider guarding the tower roof is not the only such creature... Her offspring are as yet tiny, just now hatching from within disturbingly human-shaped cocoons attached to the ceiling above the silver staircase. Spend a Doom die to have a cocoon burst open and spill thousands of ravenous baby spiders upon the Heroes!

### SPIDERLINGS

STEEL 6D6

BITING SWARM D8

SFX: *Area Attack*. Target multiple opponents. For each additional target, add d6 and keep +1 Effect die.

Limit: *Cohesion*. Defeat each Steel die (with d8 Stress) to reduce the mob.

### TRAP!

Spend a Doom die to spring a sorcerous trap on one of the Heroes whenever they are on the silver staircase. (Spend two Doom dice to affect both or all Heroes.)

### SORCEROUS MAZE

GUILE 3D6

ILLUSORY PASSAGES D8 ILLUSORY RICHES D8

SFX: *Area Attack*. Target multiple opponents. For each additional target, add d6 and keep +1 Effect die.

SFX: *Confusion*. Add d6 and step up Effect die by +1 when inflicting maze-related Complications on a target.

Limit: *True Seeing*. Defeat each Guile die (with d8 Stress) to fight free of the illusion.

Describe switchbacks and landings on the stairs that lead to other staircases, ornate doors, and rooms piled with gems and jewelry. If both Heroes are affected, describe them becoming separated as they explore the switchbacks of the maze.

The trap acts to create and step up Complications on its victims. When a Complication exceeds d12, the victim becomes lost in the Sorcerous Maze until Yara frees him—or until he starves to death!

To an unaffected hero, his companion will seem to shuffle in place, hardly moving, while staring wide-eyed at sights only he can see. A Hero who has freed himself from the trap may take actions to help a companion, either providing assistance dice or rolling to reduce Complications.

### THE SERAGLIO

Behind a heavy teak-wood door inlaid with mother-of-pearl lies a chamber hung all about with **LAYERS OF GAUZY DRAPERIES**. The air here is warm, and **REDOLENT OF MUSKY PERFUME**. An **ORNATE DIVAN** piled with silken pillows is the only furniture.

# TOWER OF THE ELEPHANT

Reclining upon the divan is a voluptuous young woman, her charms hardly concealed by the silk scarves wrapping her curves. A finely-crafted gold shackle encircles one shapely ankle, and a thin golden chain links the shackle to one leg of the divan.

When the Heroes enter, she fixes a smoldering gaze upon them. “Has Yara at last sent me better entertainment than he can provide?” The Heroes will note that the whites of her eye are in fact vivid red.

“No! I perceive that Yara knows not that you are in his house!” Her voice becomes low and eager as she purrs “Free me, and all that you desire will be yours!” The sharp kick that rattles her golden chain makes clear her meaning—the fashion in which her hands glide down her body makes clear the reward she offers...

## DAEMONIC CONCUBINE

MEANS	DISTINCTIONS
STEEL D8	DANGEROUSLY ALLURING
GUILE D10	INHUMAN
LORE D8	TREACHEROUS

### SUCCUBUS

INFLAME DESIRE D8	VAMPIRIC KISS D10
DIABOLICAL SENSES D10	

SFX: *Beguile*. Add a d6 and step up Effect die by +1 when inflicting Emotional Stress.

SFX: *Life Drain*. On successful physical attacks using Vampiric Kiss, step down the Concubine's Physical stress.

Limit: *Mystical Vulnerability*. Step up or add d6 to the Doom pool and step up Stress or Complications inflicted by Magical sources by +1.

### CAREERS

DAEMON D12

The alluring woman cajoles and implores, using Inflammation Desire (a focused form of Mind Control) to inflict a Lust Complication on her target. Whether a Hero attempts to free her voluntarily or because of the Mind Control, a Hero can part the enchanted gold chain with a success against the Doom Pool. Its enchantment gone, the remains of the chain instantly corrodes and falls to greenish dust—it was never truly gold, only ensorcelled brass.

Once free, she indeed offers herself as a reward to her rescuer—but as soon as anyone accepts her embrace, she employs Vampiric Kiss to drain his life force! In ensuing struggles, she uses the Lust Complication to erode the Heroes' resistance to her deadly kiss...

## APPARITION

At any point during an Action Scene, you may spend a die from the Doom pool to introduce Yara's wandering dream-spirit, temporarily freed from his body by the Yellow Lotus. Yara's spirit is primal, drawn from his deep subconscious: It knows no Sorcery, remembers no past, and is driven by base emotional impulses, not rational thought. So long as Yara lives and remains intoxicated by the Yellow Lotus, his dream-spirit cannot be destroyed. If Stressed Out, it will only be defeated for a Scene. You may spend another Doom die to cause it to return in a later Action Scene.

## DREAM-SPIRIT OF YARA

MEANS	DISTINCTIONS
STEEL D8	GHOSTLY
GUILE D8	IMPULSIVE
LORE D6	

### ASTRAL PHANTOM

AIRWALKING D6	INTANGIBILITY D10
VISAGE OF FEAR D8	

SFX: *Unleashed*. Step up or double any Astral Phantom power for one action. If that action fails, take Emotional Stress equal to that power die.

Limit: *Evil Dream*. Yara's spirit cannot touch the material world, and cannot inflict or receive Physical Stress. If Yara's physical body awakens, his spirit form immediately vanishes.

The dream-spirit will use Visage of Fear to cause Emotional Stress, sweeping toward a target and visually transforming into a nightmare form.

Depending upon where in the tower the apparition appears, its other actions will vary: It leads Heroes into the Sorcerous Maze, if possible, but if encountered in the Seraglio, it jealously attempts to drive them away from the Daemon Concubine. If you introduce the dream-spirit after the Jewel has been activated, it focuses its attention solely upon the Hero carrying the Jewel.

## MODIFYING THE SCENARIO

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This scenario is easy to modify—in fact, a modified version figures prominently in the first part of the original Conan movie starring Arnold Schwarzenegger.

- ☞ Replace Yag-Kosha with the Giant Serpent from [Part Four](#) of the [Sword & Sorcery blog series](#) on [exploring-infinity.com](#), replace Yara and his guards with a group of Snake Cultists and either the transforming High Priest from Part Four, or a villainous reptile-man of your own devising.
- ☞ For yet another variation, replace the sympathetic Yag-Kosha with an Eldritch Horror from Beyond The Stars, held barely-in-check by the sorcerous powers of Yara's prize jewel...

## UNLOCKABLES

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Although this adventure is most likely to be played as a stand-alone, if you play it as the start of a campaign, here are some benefits that players could unlock:

- ☞ **[10 XP] Unlock Shards of the Tower of the Elephant**—treat the broken gemstone shards as a d8 Resource for any problem that money can solve.
- ☞ **[10 XP] Insight from Beyond the Stars**—the history Yag-Kosha told returns to the Hero's mind at an appropriate time. Treat the Hero as having Sorcerer d12 as a Career for a single scene involving mystical or otherworldly opposition. Afterward, the Hero can retain Sorcerer d6 as a normal Career if he or she wishes.

THE END

# TOWER OF THE ELEPHANT

## SCENE REFERENCE SHEETS

### KOTHIAN

EXPERT THIEF D8

STEEL D4

GUILE D6

LORE D8

### ROGUES AND CUTTHROATS

STEEL 3D6

GRAB D6

SURROUND D8

SFX: *Area Attack*. Target multiple opponents. For each additional target, add d6 and keep +1 Effect die.

Limit: *Cohesion*. Defeat each Steel die (with d8 Stress) to reduce the mob.

### LIONS

MEANS

STEEL 3D8

DISTINCTIONS

CUT VOCAL CORDS (SILENT)

NOCTURNAL

BESTIAL STRENGTH D8

RENDING CLAWS D10

SFX: *Teeth & Claws*. Add a d6 to your dice pool for an attack action, and step down the largest die in the pool by -1. Step up Physical Stress inflicted by +1.

Limit: *Pride of Lions*. Defeat each Steel die (with d10 Stress) to slay a lion.

### YARA'S GUARDS

STEEL 5D8

JEWEL-HILTED SWORDS D8 TACTICAL DEPLOYMENT D8

SFX: *Area Attack*. Target multiple opponents. For each additional target, add d6 and keep +1 Effect die.

Limit: *Cohesion*. Defeat each Steel die (with d8 Stress) to reduce the mob.

### EXPERT GIANT SPIDER D8

MEANS

STEEL D6

GUILE D8

DISTINCTIONS

QUICK

STEALTHY

ARACHNID

EIGHT GLITTERING EYES D8

UNCANNY REFLEXES D8

WALL-CRAWLING D6

SPINNERETS D8

SWINGLINE D8

SFX: *Venomous*. Add a d6 and step up your effect die by +1 when inflicting poisonous complications on a target with FROTHING FANGS.

SFX: *Webspinning*. When creating web-related Assets or Complications, add d6 and step up the Effect die by +1.

Limit: *Guardian*. The spider will not leave the chamber, nor will it strike at anyone who is outside on the tower roof.

### YAG-KOSHA

MEANS

STEEL D4

GUILE D4

LORE D12

DISTINCTIONS

BLIND BUT ANCIENT

TORMENTED

ALONE

### YARA

MEANS

STEEL D6

GUILE D8

LORE D10

DISTINCTIONS

CRUEL TORMENTOR

MISER

FUMES OF THE YELLOW LOTUS

### BLACK SORCERY

SORCERY D10

ELDRITCH CURSE D8

ARCANE SHIELD D6

SFX: *Area Attack*. Target multiple opponents. For each additional target, add d6 and keep +1 Effect die.

SFX: *Evil Gaze*. In a pool including a Black Sorcery power, replace two dice of equal steps with one die of +1 step.

SFX: *Wisdom of the Ages*. Step up or double Sorcery when creating Complications.

SFX: *Secrets Man Was Not Meant To Know*. Borrow a die from the Doom pool for an action. After the action, Step up the Doom die by +1 and return it to the Doom pool.

Limit: *Conscious Activation*. When Stressed Out, asleep, or unconscious, Shutdown Black Sorcery. Recover Black Sorcery when you recover the stress or wake up. If you take Mental Trauma, Shutdown Black Sorcery until you recover that Trauma

### CAREERS

SORCERER D12

## THE DEN OF THIEVES

CROWDED WITH TABLES AND CHAIRS

LOW CEILING

LIGHTS OUT

## TOWER GARDEN

EXOTIC TREES

HIGH WALL

LUSH CONCEALING FOLIAGE

## SCALING THE TOWER

JEWEL-ENCRUSTED FLOOR

SILK-COVERED COUCHES

SILVER-BOUND MAHOGANY CHESTS

## MASTER OF THE TOWER

COUCH DRAPED WITH BLACK SILKS

BRAZIER OF COALS

EBONY TABLE

## OPTIONAL ACTION SCENES

### SPIDERLINGS

STEEL 6D6

BITING SWARM D8

SFX: *Area Attack*. Target multiple opponents. For each additional target, add d6 and keep +1 Effect die.

Limit: *Cohesion*. Defeat each Steel die (with d8 Stress) to reduce the mob.

### SORCEROUS MAZE

GUILE 3D6

ILLUSORY PASSAGES D8 ILLUSORY RICHES D8

SFX: *Area Attack*. Target multiple opponents. For each additional target, add d6 and keep +1 Effect die.

SFX: *Confusion*. Add d6 and step up Effect die by +1 when inflicting maze-related Complications on a target.

Limit: *True Seeing*. Defeat each Guile die (with d8 Stress) to fight free of the illusion.

### DAEMONIC CONCUBINE

#### MEANS

STEEL D8

GUILE D10

LORE D8

#### DISTINCTIONS

DANGEROUSLY ALLURING

INHUMAN

TREACHEROUS

#### SUCCUBUS

INFLAME DESIRE D8

VAMPIRIC KISS D10

DIABOLICAL SENSES D10

SFX: *Beguile*. Add a d6 and step up Effect die by +1 when inflicting Emotional Stress.

SFX: *Life Drain*. On successful physical attacks using Vampiric Kiss, step down the Concubine's Physical stress.

Limit: *Mystical Vulnerability*. Step up or add d6 to the Doom pool and step up Stress or Complications inflicted by Magical sources by +1.

#### CAREERS

DAEMON D12

### DREAM-SPIRIT OF YARA

#### MEANS

STEEL D8

GUILE D8

LORE D6

#### DISTINCTIONS

GHOSTLY

IMPULSIVE

#### ASTRAL PHANTOM

AIRWALKING D6

INTANGIBILITY D10

VISAGE OF FEAR D8

SFX: *Unleashed*. Step up or double any Astral Phantom power for one action. If that action fails, take Emotional Stress equal to that power die.

Limit: *Evil Dream*. Yara's spirit cannot touch the material world, and cannot inflict or receive Physical Stress. If Yara's physical body awakens, his spirit form immediately vanishes.

## THE SERAGLIO

LAYERS OF GAUZY DRAPERIES

REDOLENT OF MUSKY PERFUME

AN ORNATE DIVAN