

Elven Tower Cartography



Snacks for the GM's Mind

Adventure Resources and Ideas
One-shot Suggestions
Game Design Tips



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April - 2018

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170 Kuo-toa Lair

Cartography by:



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Kuo-toa Lair

About this Resource

This resource features the general description of an underground kuo-toa lair. It includes adventure ideas that are appropriate for low-level (Levels 1 to 5) adventuring parties. Challenge Rating (CR) is calculated using a party of four as the model.

The DM is free to change or modify any or all the information found here. NPC names and settlement names are the first the DM should consider changing to accommodate any homebrew world lore. To modify the challenge rating of the adventure, the DM must first consider the power level of the party. Considering the PCs' individual levels and the number of players is crucial to presenting a good challenge. Not all parties are the same, different playing styles and command of the system in the party can increase or decrease their effectiveness in encounters. The DM may adjust the encounters slightly by adding or subtracting monsters. Alternatively, controlling monsters with more intelligence and strategy is often the easiest way to raise the difficulty of an encounter.

When monsters are referenced, book name and page numbers are noted in parenthesis. Be aware that page numbers may vary depending on the book print. If the DM can't find a monster where noted, it means it is a different book print. Page differences tend to be small so whatever is missing will be reasonably close to the pages noted in the adventure.

Background Lore



here is a cave hidden between the sharp rocks of a coastal cliff face. No ship can reach it because of the rocks that protrude from the sea water. Not that it bothers the monstrous inhabitants. A tribe of kuo-toa claimed this cavern a decades ago. It is now a place of worship for their Sea Mother, Blibdoolpoolp.

Deep inside the kuo-toa's cave is a blasphemous

altar. A repugnant effigy that any surface dweller would destroy on sight. In his own deranged expression of divinity, Guurdulfoon, the kuo-toa archpriest received a holy vision of the new form of their goddess. He built the altar with petrified dragon dung and gave it the form of a deformed aboleth resting on top of a pile of dragon dung. He then placed a clay vase inside of the stone fish's mouth. The maddening effigy was a representation of beauty and fertility for the kuo-toa. Guurdulfoon then rallied his people. He brought scores of other fish-men to worship his invented divine creation. The malformed icon resonated with the other kuo-toa and they worshipped it.

After months of continued adoration, their subconscious energy and worship manifested itself in the physical world. The vase in the stone aboleth's mouth started to pour a pale orange liquid with a strong bitter odor. Guurdulfoon was pleased with the response from their gods. He and his people built spawning pools and let them fill with the arcane liquid. With the proper prayers and rituals, the archpriest was able to summon forth strange elemental creatures from the orange water. It was then that the stone statue spoke directly to Guurdulfoon's mind. There is no way to write or represent the mad whispers that the archpriest heard. Kuo-toa are insane creatures that never sleep and thrive in their own madness. Guurdulfoon's interpretation of the message was that surface dwellers were nothing but potential fish. He rationalized that surface creatures were sea creatures trapped in strange bodies. It was his call to bring them here, baptize them in the orange liquid, and then flay them from their strange skins to bring them back to the watery realms.

Guurdulfoon stormed out of the cave the next day with a party of other kuo-toa hunters. They attacked fishermen, sea merchants, and sometimes raided nearby fishing towns. Many victims died during the fights because the kuo-toa were careless with their weapons. But they did manage to capture a few humanoids to bring back to the cave. Guurdulfoon, anxious to start, brought the first batch of sacrifices to the altar chamber. He sang, prayed and danced. Instructions given by the strange stone statue. The helpless fishermen cried in silent anguish, they knew well they would not see the next dawn.

Guurdulfoon brought a man to the spawning pool and submerged the man in it. The man screamed in pain as the acidic substance tore away his skin, killing him in a matter of seconds. Or so it seemed. The burnt lifeless body rose again from the pool, its eyes burnt to the core by the acid, but radiating an eerie yellow light still. Men killed this way died but came back as silent servants to the archpriest. Guurdulfoon was aware they did not become sea creatures as he believed, but they could move underwater without breathing and that was enough.

Adventure Design

The *kuo-toa* (*MM*, p. 199) in the cavern are slowly building an army of undead *zombies* (*MM*, p. 315). Use the stats for regular zombies but add a swimming speed of 20 ft. The strange vase in the aboleth altar can be removed. It stops producing the acidic liquid if removed from the statue but remains magical. If it is purified with a *Remove Curse* spell, it becomes a *Decanter of Endless Water* (*DMG* p. 161).

Once the adventurers are in the nearby area where the kuo-toa have been attacking, they'll



soon hear the terrible things they have done. If the adventurers go looking for rumors or information in taverns or inns, they may hear some of the following information:

◇ It is terrible here. We've lost ten or so fishermen in the last few weeks. No one knows where they have gone. At first, people thought they died at sea but after so many, something evil must be going on. I hope they are still alive somewhere.

◇ A fisherman named Gustaff was the only survivor from a fishing trip two days ago. He is in a bad state... barely made it. He claims fish people or something like that came from the sea and attacked them.

◇ As the mayor of this town, I request your help. We will reward you appropriately if you help us solve our problem. Fish monsters are attacking our boats. We captured one alive, it is currently in a cell. If you are willing/capable of interrogating that monster and find out where are the rest of them and kill them, we will pay you in gold. The DM is free to determine whether there are any remaining survivors. Otherwise, all prisoners are now zombies.

Area 1

The first chamber is protected by a group of 6 *kuo-toa* and 4 *zombies*. Adventurers notice that the zombies still wear clothing similar to other people from nearby towns.

Area 2

The mad statue awaits in this room. Guurdulfoon (*kuo-toa archpriest*) is here, along with 2 *kuo-toa* and 4 *zombies*. They fight fiercely, but if the *kuo-toa* start losing the fight, Guurdulfoon has a divine vision again. He tries to stop the fight and communicate with the adventurers. If any form of communication is possible, he informs the adventurers that they are the chosen ones. They are chosen to represent the will of the Sea Mother in the surface of the world. If they agree to accept the *kuo-toa*'s offer, Guurdulfoon and the other *kuo-toa* become allies. That does not mean that they pretend to stop killing people. The DM is free to determine the meaning of this alliance.

Area 3

The first chamber is protected by a group of 3 *kuo-*

toa and 4 *zombies*. Adventurers notice that the zombies still wear clothing similar to other people from nearby towns.

Area 4

This chamber is an improvised cell. The personal belongings and some clothing of the kidnapped fishermen are here. The DM is free to determine whether there are any survivors left.