

Iron Will

**A One-Round Living Jungle Adventure for heroes of
all levels**

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A streak of fire across the nighttime skies of Malatra becomes a summons for evil and heroes alike. Join a race to recover the mystical item before the forces of necromancy can turn it against you. Some of the most feared foes in Malatra, those who are dead but will not remain dead, try to prevent you from obtaining an important weapon for the good forces of Malatra. An adventure for Living Jungle characters of any level.

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This is a RPGA Network adventure game. A four-hour time block has been allocated for playing the game (or this round of the game).

It is a good idea to ask each player to put a name tag in front of him or her. The tag should have the player's name at the bottom, and the character's name, race, and gender at the top. This makes it easier for the players to keep track of who is playing which character.

Scoring the game for RPGA points: The RPGA has three ways to score this game. Consult your convention coordinator to determine which method to use:

1. *No-vote scoring:* The players write their names and numbers on the scoring packet grid, you fill in the top of the grid. That is all. No one is rated. This method is used for people who are just playing for fun.
2. *Partial scoring:* The players rate the game master and the scenario on their player voting sheet, and provide personal information, but don't vote for other players. The game master rates the scenario and completes personal and event information, but does not rate the players as a team or vote for players. This method is used when there is no competition, but the convention coordinator wants information as to how the game masters are performing, or the game master wants feedback on his or her own performance.
3. *Voting:* Players and game masters complete the entire packet, including voting for best player. If this method is used, be sure to allow about 15-20 minutes for the players to briefly describe their characters to the other players, and about 5-10 minutes for voting. This method is used when the players want to know who played the best amongst them, or when the adventure is run in adventure format with winners and prizes. Multi-round adventures usually required advancing a smaller number of players than played the first round, so voting is required for multi-round adventures.

When using Voting, rank the players in order of your voting choice while they are completing their forms, so that you are not influenced by their comments on your abilities.

The players are free to use the game rules to learn about equipment and weapons their characters are carrying.

Some of the text in this scenario is written so that you may present it as written to the players, while other text is for your eyes only. Text for the players will be in ***bold italics***. It is strongly recommended that you paraphrase the player text, instead of reading it aloud, as some of the text is general and must be adapted to the specific situation or to actions of the player characters.

The Living Jungle Campaign

Players bring their own characters to Living Jungle events, and are responsible for keeping records of the characters experience, wealth and possessions. Look over the characters that are brought to your table, both to familiarize yourself with them and to check for unusual magic items or discrepancies. Magic in the Living Jungle is very rare, with permanent magic items being very, very rare. Most Living Jungle possessions will be ornamental, symbolic, or items carried for barter. If a player has an unusual item or items, question them where they got it. If you are not satisfied with their answer, you may disallow the item for the round.

During the course of the adventure, the PCs will earn experience points based upon completion of the story. If time does not permit the completion of this adventure, award 50-75% of the story award, depending on how far the heroes get in the adventure.

DM's please note: The maximum experience points available for this adventure is 1200. This is attainable only if the PC's do everything correctly and make it through the entire scenario.

This adventure is designed for characters of any level. Low tier refers to parties with an average character level of 1-5. High tier refers to parties of 6-12th level.

Adventure Summary and Background

In this adventure the PCs will have the opportunity to battle undead Lacerials, complete a quest to recover a mystical object (an iron meteorite), receive two cold iron weapons, and bring Malatra into the beginning of the Bronze Age.

Introduction

A clear, moonless night covers Malatra, land of heroes. The stars glitter in the blackness of the sky while your ears are filled with the sounds of night in the Jungle, sounds both of life and death.

Suddenly the darkness of the sky is rent by a streak of fire! The fire passes overhead, heading towards the Jungle of Lost Tribes. Another, smaller section heads somewhat in the direction of Fire Mountain. A roaring noise accompanies its passage. For a moment, the entire Jungle is silent. Then, slowly, the normal noises of the night re-assert themselves.

When you do manage to sleep, your dreams are strange and troubled. Yet when you awaken, you can remember only a great feeling of dread. You know, somehow, that the fire in the sky is an omen.

*For several weeks, you go about your daily life. Some of you spend time working with Starr and Trueblood, leaders of the lacerials (for those who played *It Came From the Sky*), before returning to your normal lives.*

But then, as you make your preparations for the coming day, a large, brightly colored parrot lands on a nearby limb. The parrot fixes you with one beady eye and squawks "Awk! Go to Starr! Go to Starr, village of Lilac!" Its mission accomplished, the bird flies away without further comment.

Encounter One: To Find a Star Stone

Determine the location in the Jungle of each party member when they first see the fire in the sky. Encounter One takes place when all party members have arrived at Starr's hut. Until the final party member arrives in the village of the lacerials, the rest will be kept waiting. This may take several days. During this period, each meal served to the party members will be unvarying--roasted lizard on a stick, mashed roots on a leaf, and fresh berries.

Any complaints about the monotony of the food will be met with incomprehension--this is what the guests eat all the time. The DM should feel free to have fun with this. Remember that lacerials don't generally cook their food, and consider this special treatment. Anyone complaining about the food may be served a different type of lizard or berries at his next meal, with the cooks all awaiting compliments on their skill in producing a new and exciting dish.

Player characters with or without cooking skills may attempt to instruct the locals in the preparation of different types of foods. Such efforts should run aground on the innate conservatism of tribal peoples, earning either visible dislike of the new food or the dismissive comment "Tastes like garuda."

Since all summoned are finally here, Starr asks you to his hut. He is wearing the speaking shell, a magical device the lacerials brought with them from the Valley of Spirits. It allows him to converse in your tongue.

Starr is an impressive bladeback lacerial, the shaman of the lacerials. Many of you have met him before, when you investigated the large ball of fire that fell from the sky.

His hut is filled with strange trinkets and items, for Starr possesses a mind that is always seeking

answers. He asks you to sit upon the floor, and resting back upon his tail, he begins to speak.

"You all have seen the fiery thing that passed overhead a few weeks ago. It came from the skies, of course. While the larger ball of fire landed in the Jungle of Lost Tribes, it was destroyed, although it did bring about the existence of the Spirit Tree. It is the smaller ball of fire that we concern ourselves with now. Seeing it as an omen, I spoke with the spirits. They have told me several things.

1. *"The object, which the spirits called a star stone, may change Malatra forever.*
2. *"Those who are dead, but who are not are seeking it.*
3. *"It can also be used to cause the destruction of those who are dead, but are not.*
4. *"Only those who also came from the sky may use this thing properly.*

"Those who are dead but are not sound like the thing that drove us out of the Valley of Spirits. In your tongue, it is called a lichee. I know not why it wants the thing from the sky, but it must not get it. I ask you to go north with all haste and retrieve the star stone before these not-dead things can do so. Then, the star stone should be taken to those who came from the sky, the oscray village of Bentfang. They will know what to do with it, so the spirits say. I cannot say the fate of the jungle depends on this, but the spirits feel that this is important. Can I depend on you?"

Of course if the heroes refuse, he thanks them for their time and sends for a new group of heroes.

Supplies – The lacerial offer only a well-woven small net with ropes suitable for carrying. They don't know how heavy the object is, but the spirits said that it was more than one person could carry.

If the heroes have no canoes, Starr arranges for them to have the use of two canoes. They are expected to return them when the mission is over.

Other supplies are provided, mainly trail rations. This includes lizard jerky, dried berries, and whole roots.

Sense Motive – DC 18 (15 for lacerials) can tell that Starr is truly worried about this, more than he lets on.

Encounter Two – Race Against the Dead.

The best guess the heroes have is that the Star Stone fell somewhere to the north east of Fire Mountain. This would be just south of the Dokuba swamp. The fastest way to get there would be to take canoes upriver,

stopping after two days travel and proceeding north on foot.

The undead are not terribly fast, but they have a head start. Any ranger or hero with a Wilderness Lore skill bonus of 10 or more knows that it should take about four days to travel to the north east of Fire Mountain, with an unknown time for searching for the spot where the star stone landed.

Let the heroes decide how they will travel, and especially, how long. They can choose to make forced marches, march late into the night, whatever they want to cut down the traveling time. Some of the consequences are listed below.

- Travel late into the night (12 hour march) – no effects the first day, -1 to con each day thereafter. Con returns at the rate of 1 point per day when they resume normal travel. All of it returns in one day if the day is spent at rest. This cuts travel time by a day.
- Use of magic (like *fly*) to speed up the trip. Over the course of six days of travel, this can cut one day off the trip.

Searching for the Stone:

Once they reach the general area, it requires a Tracking or Search roll (DC 30 - low tier, DC 40 - high tier) to find the area where the stone landed. For each day spent searching, lower the difficulty by 5. People with search can aid the tracker (and if no one has tracking, the highest search can take that spot).

- Flying heroes add 5 to the roll.
- Climbers who make a point of climbing real high in the trees to aid in the search add 2 to the roll.
- *Speak with animal* or *Speak with plants* spells can get information about it. Subtract 5 from the DC for each day these spells are used.

Once they find the spot where the star stone landed, continue:

The spot where the star stone hit is obvious, now that you have found it. It came down at an angle, tearing through the top of a tree, and leaving the branches burnt and brown. It hit in a small stream, leaving a great gouge in the ground. The gouge is filled with water, and there are tracks of clawed feet all around it.

The sand near the streambed is different than that you are used to. It is a dark crystalline type of sand. You are not sure if this is from the effect of the star stone, or if it is naturally this way. Where the heat has melted it, it is almost shiny.

Tracking rolls can reveal more information.

- DC 5 – There were at least a dozen lizardfolk.
- DC 10 – They were here two days ago. Also, these are the wild lizardfolk, not the smarter ones the heroes may have interacted with (or even have in their party).
- DC 15 – They carried something heavy off towards the Dokuba swamp.
- DC 20 – From the footprints, it seems that at least three lizardfolk were needed to carry the stone, and it must have weighed more than a full-grown nubari.

Investigating in the hole reveals that the star stone is gone. Those who have low-light vision can see that something shiny gleams in the light from the sun above. (Spot – DC 15, 20 for high tier).

If they investigate the something shiny, they find that the stone must have been very hot. Some kind of dirt melted just a little, and there are small flecks of a shiny substance on the sides of the hole. Of course that could have come from the star stone as well.

Any osctay recognizes this as metal, only those with knowledge – smelting have a chance (DC 10) to recognize it as tin. The heroes have found a deposit of cassiterite (tin oxide). They may gather a few of the flecks if they wish. (up to 1 oz. worth without any serious digging).

Tracking the lizardfolk is not difficult, given the weight they are carrying. Have the tracker in the party make a roll (DC 10) twice a day for two days until the reach the swamp.

Encounter Three: Taboo Spirit

As the heroes approach the swamp, a lesser taboo spirit attempts to stop them. The spirit cannot attack, although it can and does attempt to mess with them a bit.

As you approach the outskirts of the Dokuba swamp, a cold feeling comes over you. This area is taboo to non-lizardfolk. A small spirit in the shape of a small nubari with no fingers, toes, or facial features floats up out of the ground. Somehow, even without a mouth, it can speak. (use your best cemetery voice) “You must go back. Only death and disease wait for those who enter here. Go back, go back, go back, before death claims you all.” (change to cheery upbeat voice). “How was that? Was it scary? I haven’t scared

anyone away in so many seasons I just had to try it. Were you scared? Please say you were scared."

The spirit is glad to tell them its name, which is Pekalini. He's trying to do a good job as a taboo spirit, but he's also lonely. He'd love it if the heroes would stay a while and talk to him, as long as they don't go in the swamp.

He'd like to hear about why they are here, and why they want to go into the swamp, and who they are, and have they met any other taboo spirits. He is perfectly willing to let any lizardfolk, any blue hands, or any lacerials into the swamp; they aren't affected by the taboo. He still wants them to talk to him.

No matter how the heroes try, they can't get him to agree to let them into the swamp. He has to try and stop them; it's part of his job. At first he'll just keep warning them that bad things will happen if they go into the swamp. Then he'll try to hit the trespassing heroes with one of his spell effects. He prefers to hit them with *daze* (will save – DC 13) or *confusion* (will save – DC 17). He likes to use *daze* just before someone is about to step into or over a puddle, to get them to fall face first into the water. *Confusion* is used on those near the back of the party, to get them to wander away. Once he has tried both of these spells, he gives up. *"You're too powerful for me to stop, but remember, I warned you. If you see any big spirits, please tell them I tried real hard to stop you, won't you?"*

Lesser Taboo Spirit - Small Fey; Hit Dice: 1d6 (3 hp); Initiative: +4 (Dex); Speed: 20 ft; AC: 19 (+1 Size, +4 Dex, +4 Supernatural); Attacks: None; Damage: None; Face/Reach: None; Special Attacks: Spell-like abilities; Special Qualities: SR 18; Saves: Fort+0 Ref +6 Will +0;

Abilities: Str 6, Dex 18, Con 10, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 16
Skills: Bluff +4, Concentration +2, Hide +14, Knowledge (any) +4, Listen +8, Move Silently +8, Search +9, Sense Motive +6, Spot +8.

Feats: Skill Focus - Hide.

Spell-like Abilities (1/day): *Confusion*, *Daze*, *Detect Evil*, *Invisibility* (all at 6th level).

Pekalini is actually friendly, for a taboo spirit. He's really lonely, and should be more of a pest than a threat. If the heroes get fed up with him and attack him, he tries to hide, or turns *invisible*. If they kill him, he fades away, uttering a plaintive cry and an *"I'll be back tomorrow, you know."*

Encounter Four: The Dokuba Swamp.

You have followed the lizardfolk into the Dokuba swamp. Here the tracking gets more difficult, for the footprints fill in quickly. And of course, you are in the home of the lizardfolk. You are wading through a stretch of dank scummy water. Ahead, the tracks continue. They seem pretty fresh, the lizardfolk are making very poor time through the swamp with the weight they are carrying.

Have the two heroes nearest the back of the party make Spot checks, DC 10 (15 for high tier). On a success, they realize that one of the heroes ahead of them (pick someone who really won't like it) has something white and bloated on their leg. Examination reveals that it is a leech. This should prompt the rest of the party to seek land (about 20 ft. ahead is a muddy knoll), and do some self-inspection.

It should be noted that lacerial and lizardfolk have scales, and are immune to the leeches. Only the warm-blooded (this does include snake katanga) are affected.

Each walking hero has picked up 1d4+2 leeches. (high tier, 2d4+2). The leeches have done one point of damage through blood loss so far. If the leeches are ripped off, they cause another point of damage, with a 10% cumulative chance (per leech) of causing a disease after two days.

Removing the Leeches:

The leeches do not like salt. It is assumed that most heroes don't have salt specifically listed, but would carry some. Unless they do have an item slot or cert listing salt, assume they have just enough to get rid of the leeches. Then they are out of salt. This may make them nervous, since they may well run into more leeches. If they have a certed item listing salt, they use half of what they have.

Leeches: tiny vermin (NA many) HD ½, hp 1; AC 5, SA bloodsucking for 1 point of damage, SQ head tears off if pulled off, causing 1 point of damage and possible disease.

Leeches excrete deadening agents that cause their attack to go unnoticed by the affected party. Only thorough examination of the heroes' body finds all the leeches.

Disease: If the leeches are ripped out, the heads remain. The hero has a 10% chance per head of getting infection. This results in a debilitating disease. The hero loses 1 point of Constitution each day. After two days, she can make a Fortitude saving throw (DC 15) to

get over the disease. Each day, the check can be attempted again, with a +1 per day to the save. Once recovered, the hero recovers Con at one point per day. *Lesser restoration* spells can aid here, as well.

Heal checks (DC 15 – High tier 18) can give a +2 circumstance bonus to a PC's Fortitude save, representing a poultice placed on the infected areas. Only one person per day can be tended in this way. There is a limit on the amount of herbs that can be found to do this.

Remove Disease cures the disease in one day, and the hero begins to regain con points the next day.

After a week, the hero recovers naturally and regains Con at one point a day.

Special note: The disease does not reduce any PC's Con to 0. No one dies from an infected leech bite. (well, not in the juggle, anyway).

Heroes who claim they wouldn't have waded through the water:

You may have some heroes who claim they would have avoided the water. This is impractical, at best. There are not enough trees for consistent vine-swinging, there is not enough flying room for aarakocra to soar over everything and keep sight of the party, and *fly* spells last only around an hour. The heroes have to wade through water every ten minutes or so, all day. So if they claim that they were using a *fly* spell, ask them if they were doing it consistently. If they say yes, remind them that this would be their seventh *fly* spell of the day; they probably don't have many 3rd level spells left. Don't make a big deal of it, but it is not something that a hero can avoid on a one-time basis and be free of it, leeches are prevalent throughout the swamp.

One exception is aarakocra with the Expert Flying feat. This allows them to hover and move slowly from tree to tree. They could be flying the whole time. You might point out that they are actually slowing the party down with this mode of travel, however.

Encounter Five: Lizardfolk and the not-dead.

Having dealt with the leeches, you continue to follow the tracks of the lizardfolk. Now, it is clear that you have found them. A dozen or more wild lizardfolk are gathered on a muddy hillock about 20 Nubari lengths ahead of you. An expanse of muddy water separates you from them. They are gathered around something, and conversing in their sibilant language.

The water is no more than a foot deep, with another foot of mud below.

Unless the heroes have taken special precautions to move silently and hide, the lizardfolk spot them as well. This is unlikely, since they have been trying to catch the lizardfolk. If they make a particular effort, allow them to try, but everyone must make both Hide and Move Silently checks of 20 to succeed. Individuals may succeed, but the party itself is probably spotted.

Those who understand lizardfolk can translate:

A large lizardfolk, one with many fetishes scattered about his body, is speaking. "Thiss is an omen from the skies. We must be rid of it, or the swamp might die!" he hisses. The largest of the lizardfolk, probably a chief, argues with him "No, this iss a good omen. The skies favor us now, we must keep thisss great thing and bring it to our village."

Their argument continues. The other lizardfolk seem both awed and nervous. Then they spot you (if they do), and ready spears and javelins. They do not seem overtly hostile, just ready. The chieftain stands up tall and hisses out in broken common "Thiss our skystone. What do you want it? We no give up omen good like this." Softly, the shaman hisses something to the chief.

Have those who understand make Listen checks (DC 12 – low tier, 15 – high tier).

"No, this is great chance. Make them trade many fine weapons and items of worth; they take cursed item from swamp. Lokissi be hailed as great chief, cheat the mammals."

If no one understands, or makes the Listen check, the chief's attitude changes for no reason. If they do understand, the reason is clear.

The chief listens to the shaman for a moment, and then turns back to you. "If want you the stonesky, you mustt pay. What trades do you bring for stone"?

Let the heroes barter for a moment or two. They can also just try to wipe out the lizardfolk. If they do so, jump ahead to the Undead attack section of this encounter.

Bartering:

The lizardfolk chief wants at least the following in trade:

- 2 certed weapons
- 2 certed food items (of types that would appeal to lizardfolk).
- 2 certed shiny stones.
- 1 certed other nice thing

That is for low tier, for high tier, he wants at least 1.5 times that.

Through good roleplaying AND a successful Cha or Barter check (DC 20; he knows that what he's got is valuable). he can be bartered down to:

- 1 certified weapon
- 1 certified food item
- 1 certified shiny stone
- 1 certified other nice thing

If the party is all first and 2nd level, with hardly any certified items, he accepts non-certified starting items, but be sure that the heroes actually have them listed on their sheet.

As the trade is about to be made, a third party enters the negotiations.

The lizardfolk want to trade with the heroes, not fight. If the party insists on attacking, proceed to the undead attack immediately. The only relevant skill is the chief's barter skill of +5.

Undead Attack:

Have those heroes not actually involved in the bartering make Spot checks (DC 15 – low tier, 20 – high tier). If someone succeeds, they notice movement in the water behind the lizardfolk. They can warn the others in the party, and the lizardfolk, if they want to.

Suddenly, rising up from the water is a horror of necromancy. A hornhead lacerial, the black flame tattoo still visible on his arm, rises up out of the water. He is followed by bladebacks and finheads, with even one flyer. But the most horrible aspect of these creatures is that they are clearly dead. Many have gaping wounds that certainly were fatal, when these things were alive. But they are not, yet they move. The lizardfolk turn to them, rage and fear upon their faces. The chief leads the charge, driving his spear through the hornhead. The hornhead merely pulls the spear out, and you see the new wound beginning to close as he does. For now, the star stone is unnoticed, as the lizardfolk rush to follow their chief into battle.

There are 12 lizardfolk [War2, hp 12, +3 melee (1d8/x3, shortspear)] and the Chief [Ftr6, hp 49, +9 melee (1d8/x3, shortspear)] in this combat. The heroes may fight alongside the lizardfolk if they wish. However, given the regeneration of the undead, eventually they should realize that this is a battle they can't win. Try to avoid concentrating on any one hero. If someone backs away, the undead turn to a nearer foe, which should be a lizardfolk. The undead are also more

interested in getting to the stone than in killing the heroes. Since the lizardfolk present a solid line in front of the stone, they concentrate their attacks at that point. They are not smart enough to go around and get to the stone.

If the heroes grab the stone and leave, the undead try to pursue, but they have to get through the lizardfolk line first.

The Heroes fight to the finish:

While the heroes can't kill the undead, they may be able to put them down, temporarily. If all the undead reach zero hit points or below in subdual damage, they have a few rounds to get away. If this happens, any remaining lizardfolk quickly make a deal for the star stone, taking almost anything that is offered, and depart. The heroes should too.

Low Tier (EL 9)

Undead Lacerials (8): CR 3; Medium-size Undead; HD 4d12; hp 38; Init +0; Spd 20 ft; AC 16 (+6 natural); Atks 2 claws +5 melee (1d6+3, claws); SQ Darkvision 60 ft., Scent, Regeneration 2, Undead Qualities; AL N; SV Fort +1, Ref +1, Will +0; Str 16, Dex 11, Con ---, Int 11, Wis 2, Cha 2.

Skills & Feats: Spot +8, Listen +4, Wilderness Lore +8; Track, Scent.

SQ: Regeneration 2—Each round the undead regenerate 2 points of subdual damage. Only cold iron weapons cause mortal damage. All other attacks, including magic, cause only subdual damage. *Undead Qualities*—Immune to poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, necromantic effects, and mind-influencing effects (charms, compulsions, phantasms, and morale effects). Not subject to critical hits, subdual damage, ability damage, ability drain, or energy drain. Immune to anything requiring a Fortitude save (unless it affects objects). Make Concentration skill checks using Charisma modifier.

Note: The Regeneration ability makes all damage subdual unless it comes from cold iron sources. This does not mean that the undead are immune to damage because they are immune to subdual damage; it means that any damage done to them by sources that would cause normal damage is treated as subdual damage when applied to their hit points and regarding how it affects them.

High Tier (EL 10)

Undead Lacerials (8): CR 4; Medium-size Undead; HD 6d12; hp 60; Init +0; Spd 20 ft; AC 18 (+8 natural); Atks 2 claws +7 melee (1d6+4, claws); SQ Darkvision 60 ft., Scent, Regeneration 2, Undead Qualities; AL N;

SV Fort +1, Ref +1, Will +0; Str 18, Dex 11, Con ---, Int 11, Wis 2, Cha 2.

Skills & Feats: Spot +10, Listen +6, Wilderness Lore +10; Track, Scent.

Some LJ heroes may have acquired the cast iron skillet from the crossover Living City adventure in the past. Cast iron has high carbon content and is produced at a higher temperature than cold iron (i.e. wrought iron). As a result, using the skillet as a weapon does only subdual damage, not the mortal double damage of cold iron.

The Star Stone:

The star stone weighs more than a Nubari (about 250 lbs.). One hero cannot carry it, at least not easily. The heroes do have a net that allows three or four of them to carry it with relative ease. Of course very strong heroes may be able to pick it up, but it is large and unwieldy. A single hero carrying it needs to make a balance check each round. (DC 10, rising to 25 when they reach the water). Such spells as *levitate* could help move the Star Stone quickly.

Star Stone power:

At some point in the battle, before the heroes break free with the stone, one of the undead manages to touch the star stone. Since it is only partially iron, it only does a small bit of damage, but it is something the heroes should notice.

As you struggle with the star stone (or, As you face off against the not-dead), one of them drives through the two lizardfolk facing him. He reaches to grab the star stone, only to fall back, his hand smoking where he touched it. He starts forward again, only to have the lizardfolk fall upon him from behind and pull him back.

Star Stone as a weapon:

Enterprising heroes may think of using the stone as a weapon. At 250 lbs, it is a very clumsy weapon. Also, only the parts of it that hurt the undead are where cold iron is on the surface. So if they have someone, or several heroes, pick it up and dump it on an undead, the undead begins pushing it away from them. Parts of his body take damage from the minimal contact with the iron, but the heroes have effectively given the stone to the undead. They'll have to attack and get it back.

In game terms, dumping the stone on the undead causes 5d6 points of subdual damage, one point of real damage. That is also what the one who touched it took, one point. You may wish to keep track of this; the undead never recover from this damage.

Encounter Six: Fleeing with the Star Stone.

You have completed the first part of your quest. You have obtained the star stone. Now, you must get it to the village of Bentfang and see what the oscaray can do with it. Something about it hurt the not-dead, but only a little bit.

As you exit the swamp, you can tell where the non-dead are. About an hours travel back you see birds fleeing, and hear the occasional roar of a crocodile who attempts to make a meal of the not dead, only to find that he has bitten off something that won't be chewed.

Once the heroes get away, they have a difficult journey ahead of them. They need to carry a 250 lb. rock for at least four days, with a pack of nearly unkillable undead behind them. Ask for tricks they use to keep the undead off their trail. Some options that might work:

- Taking to the trees for a short ways. This buys them some time. The undead climb the trees and follow them. They are not very good at it, and fall a lot. Heroes gain enough time to get some rest. Long-range travel is impractical, they do have a 250 lb. rock to carry through the trees, but enough to throw the undead off the trail for a while should be allowed.
- Using spells such as *levitate* or *fly* to throw them off the trail. Again, this works long enough to give them a chance to rest.
- Wading through streams to hide their scent. This works for short periods of time. The undead simply turn upstream (towards the Mountain, and in the heroes desired line of travel), and cast about for the heroes scent.
- Vine-swinging – with a 250 lb. rock. If they try this, the heroes fall a lot. In addition to the –20 modifier to the vine-swinging roll, there is a 50% chance that any vine breaks from the excessive weight. Alternatively, if they try to split up the weight, their chances of finding three or four vines and coordinating their efforts raise the difficulty by 20.
- Setting snares and ambushes. Things like digging pits, setting up rock or tree falls, etc. This may work, depending on skill and ingenuity. If so, it slows the undead, allowing a chance to rest.
- Using *summoned* animals and allies to attack and slow them down. Works, but it isn't very nice to

the animals or the allies. But it gains them a little time (an hour at most).

- A number of heroes have the ‘Transport device of the ancients’. If one of them brought it along, two heroes can pull the rock along behind them once they get out of the swamp. This saves wear and tear on the heroes, as well as providing a good use of an otherwise useless item. They could also build a travois to drag it along behind. This is not as fast as the wheelbarrow, but doesn’t get caught and have to be lifted over rocks and logs as much. So the speed gain is the same. (about an hour per day).

Make the heroes work for this, the undead are slow, but they are steady. They need no time to rest, and they just keep coming.

Allow the heroes frequent chances to check. Once they leave the swamp, they find that the undead are about an hour behind them. The heroes have to do something to get them off their trail, or they are caught. Try to avoid a lot of needless combat, give the heroes plenty of warning that the undead are coming. Things like animals fleeing through their camp at night, the silhouette of a hornhead climbing over a rock behind them, that sort of thing. The intention of this encounter is to make the heroes tired and feeling like they are about to be pulled down at any second, not to actually pull them down.

When the heroes reach the village of Bentfang, the undead stay back. They have just enough intelligence to know that they cannot obtain the stone from a group this large.

How the undead always find the heroes:

The undead are tracking by scent. When they lose the scent, they blunder about until they find it again. This would normally mean that the heroes should have a chance to lose them completely. However, once per day, the lich in the Valley of Spirits is using a *screaming* spell to locate both his undead, and the star stone. So every morning, the undead are put back on the trail. If the heroes have come up with some imaginative ways of losing the undead, allow them Intelligence rolls (DC 15) to figure out that something is putting the undead back on their trail. Anyone who thinks of it can make a Scream skill check (DC 20) to detect that someone is watching them, for just a few moments, every day.

The other way the undead are locating the heroes is with the flying undead lacerials. There are 8 of them, with the same stats as the ground lacerials, except for flight 50 (poor). They circle high above the party, keeping watch on them. Of course through the thick jungle, they cannot see the heroes.

Possible Outs for the Heroes and avoiding them.

The heroes may attempt to break this encounter by using *fly* and *levitate*. While a *levitate* spell can certainly lift the rock, it won’t be possible to avoid the undead that way.

First, the undead flyers can and will attack any lone hero, or pair of heroes, who attempt to move the rock in this manner. They keep coming after the hero, and eventually should be able to drag down any lone hero. And of course whenever a flying hero has to engage in combat, the stone drifts back towards the swamp. (The prevailing winds are to the west).

Second, *fly* spells and *levitate* spells don’t last forever. At the heroes level, even in high tier, they last at most a little longer than an hour. While a sorcerer could very well have enough slots to lift the stone most of the day, and to fly along with it, he won’t have enough to keep the party together.

Finally, *levitate* may lift the stone, but it doesn’t make it weightless, just frictionless. Thus, the stone would be easy to start moving, but very difficult to change direction or stop. Canceling the *levitate* spell gets it to drop rather easily, but make the heroes paranoid by having the rock break up a little bit each time they do this.

If the party has enough *fly* spells to take the whole party for an hour or so, reward them by giving them a chance to rest. But the undead still keep coming, and you should have the flyers harass them frequently. They always concentrate on the heroes pushing or pulling the star stone.

Encounter Seven: One-Arm.

At last, you have reached the oscray village of Bentfang. As you approach, a number of oscray come to greet you. Bentfang, the homely chief of the village, is in the lead. “The lacerials sent word you were coming with a stone from the sky. I am glad to see that you have succeeded. You look weary. Let us get you to a hut where you can rest, and tomorrow we will meet in council to discuss what should be done with the star stone.”

If you have run the last encounter properly, the heroes are going to insist on something being done now, with lots of dire warnings about what’s behind them. Bentfang takes them seriously, and summons One-Arm.

If they just agree to rest, One-Arm meets them in the morning.

Coming out of a stone hut is the oldest oscray you have yet seen. He has but one arm, but the arm hangs

almost to his knees. It is also muscled to the size of a small tam'hi. Bentfang introduces him at One-Arm, the last oscray to know about the making of the mystical substance called metals. "He is the one who has taught our young smiths in the making of our brass weapons, and if anyone knows what to do with the star stone, it will be him."

One-Arm speaks no words to you, he simply runs up to the star stone and begins picking at it with a brass tool. "It's real, it is! I thought I'd never see it again. Do you know what you have here?" he asks you. "This is iron, and it's even got some tin on it. Where did you get this? Is there any more? How soon can you be back with more? Do you know what we can do with this? Come on, speak young ones, I must know?"

One-Arm says this all in one breath, not stopping for any response until he runs out of breath. Let the heroes explain what has happened. As he calms down, he offers the following comments/information.

- The star stone hurt the not-dead. *"Yes, I have heard of evil creatures that were only harmed by cold iron. I can fashion weapons from this. There should be enough iron in this stone to make at least a dagger and a spear point."*
- There is no more of this. It fell from the sky. *"I'm sorry there is no more iron, but what about this (he points at the shiny tin on the sides of the rock). Surely that didn't fall from the sky. By the looks of it, it was formed in a stream, wasn't it?"* The heroes should at least admit the possibility.
- *"Do you know what we can do with this? We can make bronze!"* When he says this Bentfang and a few of the older oscray look excited. Only oscray heroes have any idea what he's talking about.
- *"You see, brass is made from copper and zinc. The copper we trade with the Aarakocra, the zinc we got from a deposit in the Great Rift. The Great Rift has been closed to us for a while now; our supply of brass is nearly exhausted. But with tin, we can make bronze. It is harder even than brass, and last longer. The iron is valuable, very valuable, but a source of tin means a new age for the village, indeed for the whole jungle!"*

See the additional info section in the back titled "How do Oscray Smelt" for more information on this. One-Arm is willing to discuss metals for as long as the heroes will put up with it. Eventually, the heroes should remind him that there are undead coming, he needs to make them some weapons.

With the warning of the heroes, Bentfang posts additional sentries during the night. The heroes may offer to help, but he turns them down. *"Your hearts are strong, but your bodies need rest. You are no good to us if you are too weary to stay awake. Rest in the hut we have provided, and take food. Tonight, the oscray watch."*

If a hero insists on watching anyway, Bentfang won't stop them. If they watch from their hut, they miss what happens. If they try to join the sentries on the village outskirts, Bentfang makes a point of having at least two additional oscray sentries posted near the hero, to make sure nothing happens to them. He makes a point of telling the sentries to carry the hero to bed when he falls asleep.

Unless the heroes found a way to get a lot of rest during the trip (which they should not have, if you are doing your job as a harassing DM), they have a good chance of falling asleep. They can make a Fort check (DC 15), starting at a -2, and adding an additional -2 each hour, until they fall asleep. The combination of exhaustion and the removal of the pressure of the chase, as well as a full stomach, make it very difficult for anyone to stay awake.

During the night, seven of the sentries are carried off by the undead, although they do not enter the village.

Encounter Eight: The Litany of Metals:

In the morning, One-Arm is ready to start working on the new weapons. He has charcoal fires, bellows, ovens, and many strange tools gathered about the star stone.

"What type of weapons do you wish? I have enough iron here to make a dagger and a spear point, or I could make a wonderful iron-banded club, or even some javelin tips. What works best for your fighters?"

Let the heroes decide. There is not enough iron for either a battle axe, mace or a scimitar. He won't think of using the precious iron on arrowheads or blowgun darts, those would be lost too easily. But any two small items can be made. Note: One-Arm is an oscray. If there are oscray in the party, he assumes they are in charge of anything to do with metals, and listens to them first. He'll have to rework any weapons he gets. This means, if a hero has a spear or club he wants to have the iron point or bands added to, he gives you his old cert, you tear it up, and give him the new cert. The bonuses that they get are included on the cert, and override any on the old cert.

In case you have a lot of fighters eager to get their hands on these weapons, remind them that the iron will rust in the jungle, and will have a limited use (eight adventures). Under no circumstances should dice rolls decide the weapons One Arm makes. If the party cannot decide, One Arm does. He uses the following hierarchy to decide:

1. Weapons any oscray heroes can use.
2. Weapons young fighters, without certified weapons, can use (he has always preferred helping the young ones, the older fighters usually have favorite weapons they depend on).
3. Melee weapons over any type of missile weapon.

Once the weapons are decided on, One-Arm gets right to work.

One-Arm begins to work. Taking a bronze hammer the size of a nubari's head, he begins to beat out the stone. As he works, you can hear him chanting in a tongue similar to Oscray. It contains many archaic and unknown words. "It is the litany of metals;" whispers Red Eye, a warrior who has come to watch the ceremony. "He is the only one who still knows it. He has even told me of the mystical substance he calls Steel, said to be harder than diamonds."

And indeed, you hear many strange names in the litany, but some you recognize. Copper, brass, gold, and zinc are mixed with other names like bauxite, telluride, and cassiterite. You feel as though magic is being used, although Red Eye insists otherwise. "It is not magic, it is knowledge. The knowledge of the ancients, our ancients."

After many hours of grueling and very noisy work, One Arm is finished. He proudly shows the weapons he has completed. To the recipients, he hands your new weapon, and a bag of sand. "You will need this, as well. For it is cold iron, and rusts very quickly. Each time you see brown spots appear on the iron, you must rub with sand or something abrasive until the spots disappear. Check each day, for this climate is always wet, and moisture was ever the bane of cold iron"

Indeed, as indicated by the certs, the weapons are good for only eight adventures, no matter what care the heroes take.

Also, One-Arm had enough iron left over for two arrowheads or five blowgun darts, whichever the heroes are more likely to find useful. There are no certs for these items. No matter what care the heroes take, they won't last past the end of this adventure.

One-Arm also managed to save enough tin to make one bronze weapon, which will be finished by the time the heroes have finished with the undead. He'll make something for one of the heroes that did not get an iron weapon. Again, no battle axes or scimitars, no arrowheads or blowgun darts.

After the weapons are finished, Bentfang approaches the heroes.

Bentfang calls upon you; "It seems to be your fate to face these not-dead creatures. I must tell you that seven of our sentries were taken last night, and I fear to wait another night. We sent one party to track them, they have not returned. I know that there are only a few hours of daylight left, but I ask that you go out to meet these creatures before another night passes. If you can, find our people and bring them back. If not, destroy these foul creatures".

If anyone was wounded, the shamans have seen to their wounds. If exhausted, a full day of rest (almost) has brought them back to normal.

Bentfang offers to send some warriors with them, if they wish. He has noticed that only small groups (8 or less) of warriors have been attacked, the undead seem to avoid the larger groups. If the heroes wish, they can take one warrior with them. Any more than that and the undead simply avoid them, until they get rid of the extra numbers.

This is a judgment call on the part of the DM. If the party is weak in fighters, or all 2nd level or below, you should probably include Red Eye in the party. If not, the heroes should be able to handle things on their own.

Red Eye, Male Oscray Fighter 6/Shaman 2: CR 8; Medium-size Humanoid; HD 6d10+ 2d8+16; hp 68; Init +2 (Dex); Sp 30 ft.; AC 17 (+2 Dex, +5 brass chain mail); Atks +11/+6 melee (1d8+7/x3, obsidian battle axe); AL NG; SV Fort +10, Ref +3, Will +5; Str 18, Dex 14, Con 15, Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 11.

Skills & Feats: Concentration +6, Heal +5, Knowledge – Kretch +4, Listen +3, Spot +6, Wilderness Lore +2, Weapon Focus – battle axe, Weapon Specialization – Battle Axe, Elemental Turning, Track, Endurance, Dodge.

Domains: Plant, Sun

Spells: 0 Level – *detect magic, guidance, *light, mending*; 1st – *bleed, divine favor, remove fear; protection from evil, *entangle*.

Red Eye is an oscray of few words. He bears tattoos of every kretch he's killed, as well as some of the other large monsters (a gnasher, two raptors, and a pair of black leopard katanga). He follows the heroes' lead,

this is their mission, after all. Don't let him carry the battle; he should be an aid, not a main player.

Encounter Nine: Confronting the Undead:

The heroes have a couple of choices. If they take a number of Oskray with them, the undead avoid them. They cannot find the undead in this manner.

If they search for the missing oskray, they can follow tracks (DC 15, 20 for high tier). They are led to where the sentries were posted. There are signs of combat, with signs the undead overcame the sentries. From the amount of blood spilled, some were dead, but some were not. From here the tracks are easy to follow, the heroes can follow until the undead ambush them. Note – This same result applies if they take a troop of oskray with them, but instead of ambush, the undead circle around and away from them, keeping well away. Stealth is not possible, not by the troop of oskray.

The last choice is to simply take the iron weapons out into the jungle and wait. The undead will find them.

Combat:

The best strategy, and the one Red Eye follows (if present) is that if you knock them down enough times, those heroes with the iron weapons can come around and finish the undead off.

Ambush: The heroes are allowed Spot checks (DC 10, 15 for high tier) to spot the ambush at a distance of 50'.

Wait for the Undead: The heroes can find a nice defensible area, either back to the trees, or in a clearing where they cannot be snuck up on. They should be allowed both Spot and Listen checks (DC 10 – 15 high tier) to see/hear the undead coming. As long as there are seven or less of the heroes (including, possibly, Red Eye), the undead come and attack until one or the other is dead.

Low Tier (EL 9)

Undead Lacerials (8): CR 3; Medium-size Undead; HD 4d12; hp 38; Init +0; Spd 20 ft; AC 16 (+6 natural); Atks 2 claws +5 melee (1d6+3, claws); SQ Darkvision 60 ft., Scent, Regeneration 2, Undead Qualities; AL N; SV Fort +1, Ref +1, Will +0; Str 16, Dex 11, Con ---, Int 11, Wis 2, Cha 2.

Skills & Feats: Spot +8, Listen +4, Wilderness Lore +8; Track, Scent.

SQ: *Regeneration 2*—Each round the undead regenerate 2 points of subdual damage. Only cold iron weapons (including the ones One-Arm made) cause

mortal damage. All other attacks, including magic, cause only subdual damage. *Undead Qualities*—Immune to poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, necromantic effects, and mind-influencing effects (charms, compulsions, phantasms, and morale effects). Not subject to critical hits, subdual damage, ability damage, ability drain, or energy drain. Immune to anything requiring a Fortitude save (unless it affects objects). Make Concentration skill checks using Charisma modifier.

High Tier (EL 10)

Undead Lacerials (8): CR 4; Medium-size Undead; HD 6d12; hp 60; Init +0; Spd 20 ft; AC 18 (+8 natural); Atks 2 claws +7 melee (1d6+4, claws); SQ Darkvision 60 ft., Scent, Regeneration 2, Undead Qualities; AL N; SV Fort +1, Ref +1, Will +0; Str 18, Dex 11, Con ---, Int 11, Wis 2, Cha 2.

Skills & Feats: Spot +10, Listen +6, Wilderness Lore +10; Track, Scent.

When the heroes hit the undead with the cold iron weapons, make sure to play it up. "Their flesh shrivels at the touch of the cold iron, leaving gaping smoking wounds. The non-dead recoil from the touch of this fell weapon," and so on.

At least one of the undead (probably) took one point of mortal damage, when it touched the star stone in Encounter Five. If any other mortal damage was sustained (if they dropped the stone on the undead, for instance), this damage never regenerates. Since these are the same undead, subtract any mortal damage done to them in Encounter Five. Note that the cast iron skillet is still not a cold iron weapon.

There are also eight undead flyers that may have been used to harass the heroes. When they see what happened to their ground-based confederates, the lich has them return to the Valley of Spirits.

Conclusion

When you return to the village of Bentfang, you are greeted with loud cheers. Starr the lacerial has arrived from the village of Lilac, and he is obviously pleased with what you have accomplished.

With the undead defeated, the missing oskray, the four still alive, are soon recovered. You have defeated a stain upon the face of Malatra, but you know these were not intelligent. Someone, or something, sent these monsters. Someone has to answer for the horror you have seen.

Bentfang and Starr reward the heroes; even One-Arm is there with a bronze halfspear for one of the heroes. It should not be one of the heroes who got the iron weapons.

The Rewards:

- One bronze spear - +1 to hit and damage.
- Fire starting crystal
- Wooden whistle
- Bird feather cloak - (-5) to hide, reverses to camouflage cloak, +5 to hide
- Tattoo of the hero
- Divine Spell fetish – Hold person.
- Arcane Spell fetish – Hold person
- Arcane Spell fetish – Polymorph Other

Each also gets a favor from One-Arm: This favor can be exchanged for the repair of one weapon or item of armor, at a time to be named by the hero. This does not extend to improving existing weapons, or creating new weapons.

The End

Experience Point Summary

Experience in this adventure is awarded for completing the entire adventure successfully. If the heroes complete the adventure by recovering the star stone and defeating the undead, award the full story award. If they run out of time, or detour somewhere, you can award 50-75% of the story award based on what you think they accomplished.

The discretionary roleplaying award is for continuous character portrayal and contribution to the team and to the fun of the adventure. You may award different amounts to different characters.

Story Award:	1,100 XP
Optional Role Playing Award	0-100 XP
Total possible experience	1,200 XP

Treasure Summary

All Living Jungle treasure has certificates.

Encounter Seven:

- Two cold iron weapons – type to be determined by the Heroes.

Conclusion:

- One bronze half-spear - +1 to hit and damage
- Fire starting crystal
- Wooden whistle
- Bird feather cloak - (-5) to hide, reverses to camouflage cloak, +5 to hide
- Tattoo of the hero
- Divine Spell fetish – Hold person.
- Arcane Spell fetish – Hold person
- Arcane Spell fetish – Polymorph Other
- Each also gets a Favor from One-Arm: This favor can be exchanged for the repair of one weapon or item of armor, at a time to be named by the hero. This does not extend to improving existing weapons, or creating new weapons.

Appendix: How Do Oscray Smelt?

The Oscray have been producing brass since their arrival. While some of this would be accounted for by items in their possessions upon arrival and by stripping the spell-jammer ships, they have by now located sources of copper and zinc. They have been obtaining copper by trade with the Aarakocra of the Forbidden Mountains. Individual Aarakocra, using their keen eyesight, scan the mountains for copper placers, nodules of raw copper. Once 20 pounds or so has been collected, the Aarakocra begins the long and dangerous flight across the Yaku Plains, the Jungle, and the Dokuba Swamp to the village of the Oscray. The copper is traded for brass javelin heads, an item of great prestige among the Aarakocra of the Forbidden Mountains.

Zinc has been obtained from a secret mine in the Great Rift. Due to recent events, however, this source of supply has been cut off. The Oscray have become increasingly desperate, as their brass-smelting capacity has been slowly reduced to zero. A nearby source of tin ore, allowing them to produce bronze, will leave them in a far better position than they started.

Bronze Smelting:

Bronze is among the easiest of alloys to produce from raw ores. A melding of about 95% copper and 5% tin, it requires little more than a hot charcoal fire, a ceramic or stone crucible, and the raw metals. The tin is introduced into the copper in several ways. The simplest method is by "cementation," i.e., adding tin ore of reasonably high grade to molten copper along with charcoal. The most controllable method is to add the tin as metal to the copper.

Casserite ore is normally a dark, rocklike material, occurring in layers or deposits mixed with non-tin-bearing rocks. In Malatra, it is accessible in streambed deposits where it has eroded out from its original site and been deposited as gravel or sand-like material. Often the ores can be obtained by using running water to separate the cassiterite from the dross. The orestuff can be thrown into running water flowing in some form of trough or inclined plane, often with a prepared surface so that the heavy ore particles settle out of the water apart from the waste.

Metallic tin is easily rendered from cassiterite by heating in an oxygen-deficient atmosphere. In a ceramic crucible about the size of a dishpan, a layer of fine charcoal is placed and ignited. A layer of tin ore is added, and then a layer of charcoal, and this layering is repeated to the capacity of the vessel. Air is introduced to the bottom of the vessel by ceramic blowpipes or a bellows. When the charcoal is exhausted, the resulting fused gray slag is crushed, releasing tin "prills" (tiny pieces of metallic tin.)

Iron Smelting

Iron smelting is a complex process, and the production of steel even more so. Fortunately for the Heroes, meteoric iron is already in metallic form and can be crafted by the Oscray. The resulting weapons will have superior strength compared to stone weapons, but will need periodic sharpening with a whetstone (a new concept to Malatra, where re-sharpening a weapon means chipping a new edge) and oiling to prevent rust. One-Arm will explain both of these requirements when appropriate.