

## Islands of the Known Lands

# Paradise



There are rumors and legends spoken in Mekanus, mostly by those who are desperate, hopeful, or inebriated, of an island somewhere to the west of Urbana that is home to an idyllic village where the Dark-fall has not reached. The island's bounty ensures that those who make their home there want for very little, and the thick, cloying pollution of Mekanus is completely unknown. Some say it is a forgotten hunting preserve established by the royal line of Columbey, long since forgotten. Others say it is home to the descendants of an ancient tribe who struck out onto the seas rather than bend knee to the new nations formed by the Peace of the Rose more than a thousand years ago. The stories change from one person to the next, always impossible, always too good to be true. No one knows the truth.

Paradise is very real. And it is not at all what people imagine.

More than a week's travel west of the coastline of Urbana, on the other side of a dangerous series of reefs that could shred the hull of even the sturdiest sailing vessel, there is indeed a large island blessed with abundant resources. A day's trek inland from the coast through thick jungle there is indeed a village, a settlement that seems quite old and was apparently discovered there long ago, standing silently waiting for men to arrive as they first did centuries ago. The people who live in the village, a mixture of races and ancestries, do indeed call their home Paradise, and seem to want for very little.

Paradise is a prison.

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The real civilization of Paradise is concealed underground, in a vast, pre-existing network of tunnels and caverns that has been dramatically expanded by one of the largest populations of ratmen, a prominent sub-species of ferrans, who arrived on the island dozens of generations ago and promptly took control. The ratmen have tunnels that permit them to access any portion of the island in a fraction of the time that overland travel would require, and have extensively trapped the majority of the island save for a handful of carefully plotted routes through the jungle, most of which are not immediately obvious to the naked eye. Anyone who discovers the island, which is not something that happens more than once every year or so, will have difficulty finding their way inland and surviving. If they manage to do so, they quickly discover that they cannot leave.

The origins of this strange arrangement are somewhat vague. The people living in the village have little in the way of written records, and as a species, ratmen tend not to care overmuch about history so much as they care about surviving the present. It is generally agreed upon that the ratmen occupied the island first, and regarded the village as little more than a curiosity. Travelers whose ship was blown off course by a storm found the island, explored it somewhat, and departed, the ratmen never having revealed themselves. Unfortunately, the explorers returned later with more ships and began harvesting the island's resources, which was an unacceptable outcome. The ratmen depended upon the resources for survival, and the conversations they overheard indicated that the explorers had no plans to remain there, only to take everything they could. The ratmen knew that they would return, most likely again and again until they had taken everything. This could not be allowed. So they came together to find a solution.

The ratmen who ruled below Paradise were not bloodthirsty beings. They had existed by themselves for many years without bloodshed, and had no desire to cause any. After many days of debate, they settled upon a plan. When the explorers returned again, the ratmen used distraction and misdirection to guide them to the island's interior, where they found the village. While the explorers stayed there, the ratmen set countless jungle traps and sank the ships the explorers came in. Then they revealed themselves to the explorers in the village and told them that they could either remain in the village safely and have their needs met through the ratmen's largesse, or they could attempt to escape the island and most likely perish.

Many of the explorers attempted to flee the village. Some turned back after the first few were killed. Others were rescued from certain death by the ratmen and returned. Some insisted on forging ahead. Only a few of the latter survived, and of those who did, the ones who lasted long enough to build a raft to escape found themselves facing a watery grave when they inevitably dashed the raft to pieces on the treacherous reefs around Paradise. Initially there were only a handful of survivors, but in twos and threes over the course of hundreds of years, more and more have come to join them until the village became a true settlement, albeit not a voluntary one.

Since the Darkfall, the mood at Paradise has changed somewhat. Only a few have found their way to the island since that cataclysmic event, but those newcomers have expressed a profound gratitude to have found a settlement with ample resources that is so well defended, as the ratmen are completely ruthless in eradicating any nocturnals that appear on the island. Unfortunately the change has not been uniformly positive. After Lord Urbane's attempt to destroy the ratmen population of Mekanus with the alchemical poison arkana, a handful of ratmen refugees found their way to the island as well, and their feelings toward the surface dwellers are markedly more violent than that of their kin.

## FEATURES OF THE ISLAND

◊ **THE VILLAGE** – As previously mentioned, the village at the island's center is ancient, constructed primarily of stone, and its original inhabitants are unknown to anyone who has ever seen it. The original buildings are slightly more widely spaced than is normal for modern settlements, and there have been some additions made to the village by enterprising inhabitants who wished to add more structures. It seems foolish, given that the settlement is large enough that all pre-existing buildings have never been occupied at any one time. Regardless, the ratmen who oversee the island have never been especially concerned with aesthetics, and thus have never objected to alterations made to the village's layout.

◊ **THE JUNGLE** – The climate on the island is very warm and humid, and has resulted in a great deal of overgrowth by plants in any region that is not frequently cleared away. This suits the island's populace just fine, for the most part. The jungles are heavily occupied with a large variety of both flora and fauna, including some very dangerous predators as well as a number of small game animals that the villagers depend upon for protein. Very few villagers are ever permitted to hunt, as most of that is done by the ratmen warriors who patrol the region. There are a number of very productive fruit and nut producing trees within the jungle, but an equal number that are highly poisonous, and even more venomous snakes and insects. All in all, it is an extremely dangerous environment, and the fact that the ratmen keep the villagers from entering it probably saves just as many lives as it takes.

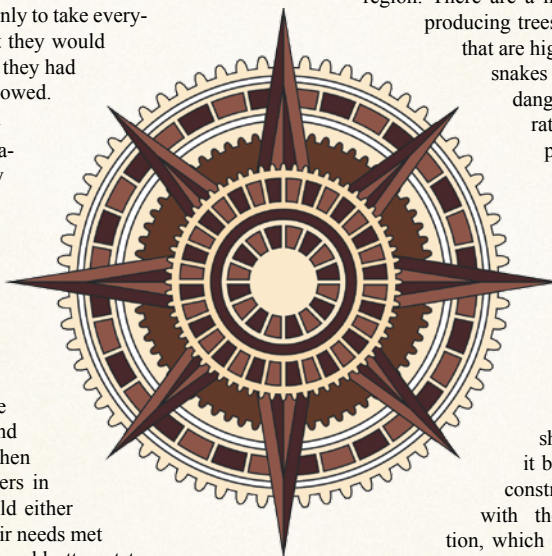
◊ **THE CAVERNS (HELL'S SWITCHBACK)** –

The true depth and width of the tunnel network and the natural caverns that exist beneath Paradise are known only to the ratmen who make their home there; no one else has ever traveled beneath the island and returned.

The vast majority of the materials that the ratmen harvest from newly arrived ships are transported below ground, where it becomes part of their bizarre and eclectic construction. Entire caverns have been filled with their mismatched method of construction, which resembles nothing so much as an urban slum created with all manner of refuse and castoffs from wealthier homes.

◊ **THE REEFS (SHARK'S WRATH)** – Without question the most important aspect of Paradise's separation from the world beyond its waters are the jagged, twisting reefs that surround it. The reefs are a known navigational hazard to the very few water-going individuals who have been in the vicinity of the island before. Of those few who know where the island is, there are among them individuals who are aware that no one who has ever set foot on the island has left. They do not know the truth about Paradise, but instead assume it is home to some horrific threat that has gone undetected by the outside world.

◊ **"THE GRAVEYARD" (REGRET OF BONE)** – The shallow waters immediately surrounding the island are home to a vast number of scuttled ships, the majority of which have had almost everything except the hulls and keels stripped from them by the ratmen in order to expand their subterranean holdings. Most of the wreckage is below the water line to ensure that it does not attract unwanted attention from any ships passing near the outer reefs, but at times of particularly low tides portions of them are exposed. If someone had extensive knowledge of shipbuilding, a lot of tools, and an extremely long time, it is possible that a small seafaring vessel could be crafted from these remnants, but those who would make their escape from the island have none of those.



# DENIZENS OF THE ISLAND

## The Villagers

The denizens of the village at Paradise's center are a mixture of all races, predominantly human but including all manner of others including a variety of ferrans of different species. The introduction of newcomers periodically over the years has led to a strange variant of Western Common with a large number of borrowed words from other languages being spoken in the village, so much so that new arrivals can acclimate quickly to understand everyone. Throughout the history of the island, those who have spent long amounts of time in the village, and even more so their descendants, have become increasingly content with their lot and have not questioned it overmuch. New arrivals have been more resistant and often violently oppose being kept in the village. Such individuals who cannot acclimate over time often come to an ill end, either dead by their own attempts to escape or, reluctantly, killed by the ratmen to prevent them fomenting insurrection.

In the past decade, the situation has changed significantly. Newcomers to Paradise are surprisingly pleased to find an oasis of respite from the Darkfall, as the ratmen keep the nocturnal presence on the island brutally curtailed. Given that the villagers are allowed to do whatever they wish within the village and its immediate surroundings, the only restrictions being that they must produce certain items that the ratmen require and that they may not leave the island's interior without consent and an escort from their largely benevolent captors. News of the dire state of the world beyond the island, however, has begun to inflame the interests of younger denizens of the island, those who were raised there their entire lives, and sparked a fire in them to see beyond their borders.

## The Ratmen

The ferrans are an incredibly diverse people, created for that precise purpose in order to provide the nation of Aramyst with a varied population for use as slaves. While that did not work out particularly well for the Aramystians, in the centuries since, their adaptability has served the ferrans well and allowed them to thrive in a number of different environments. Perhaps because they are partially rats, a species of creature than can survive almost anywhere, the ratmen are a particularly hardy sub-species that is well known for being difficult to kill. Unfortunately, this additional strength comes at a cost, as the ratmen also tend to suffer from a significantly more stand-offish nature; they generally do not get along well with other races, and even have difficulty with many other ferran species as well.

The ratmen of Paradise have developed a strange caste system over the years that has, admittedly, served them very well in their endeavors. Their ranks have been sorted into three broad tribes, each of which fulfills a specific purpose within their society. Each of the tribes has a leader, and those three leaders serve the Great Chief, who oversees the entirety of their people. When the Great Chief dies, a new Great Chief is generally selected from among the leaders of the three tribes.

❖ **THE WARRIOR TRIBE** – The largest of the ratmen contingents by far, the warriors are responsible for ensuring the security of the tunnels, caverns, and the overland island itself from all potential threats, including newcomers, nocturnals, and potential escapees. They patrol the overland tirelessly, constantly on the lookout for any new threat that may have manifested itself through the Darkfall's foul presence, as well as making sure that no excursions from the village have been attempted.

❖ **THE SHAMAN TRIBE** – Although intelligent beings with experience in modern society, the ratmen tribes of Paradise are nevertheless somewhat primitive with regard to their outlook toward magic. The affinity for magic seems somewhat less prevalent among their ranks than among other races, and even among the other species of ferrans. Those who possess it are inducted into the ranks of the shamans, regardless of their birth. Likewise, those born into the shaman tribe who do not possess an affinity for magic are fostered into one of the other tribes based upon their perceived attributes.

❖ **THE TINKERER TRIBE** – The smallest of the ratmen tribes consists of those who have, either through natural proclivities or extensive study of confiscated materials, come to understand the rudiments of steam power and the various technologies associated with it. Needless to say, they are quite skilled at less complicated arts, such as carpentry and metalworking, and are responsible for ensuring that the jungle's deadliest traps are maintained, and they strip all valuable resources from newly arrived ships before scuttling them. The tinkerers are also responsible for setting up the processes by which the villagers produce the goods that the ratmen need in order to continue their civilization in the manner to which they are accustomed.

## Persons of Note

### Rhanne, Chieftain of the Warriors

Male ferran predator (rat) fighter 5

Medium humanoid (ferran)

Init +5; Senses low-light vision; Perception +10

#### Defense

AC 20, touch 10, flat-footed 20 (+9 armor, +1 Dex)

hp 52 (5d10+25)

Fort +6, Ref +2, Will +4

Special defenses bravery

#### Offense

Speed 40 ft.

Melee masterwork greatsword +12 (2d6+9, +15 with Power Attack)

Ranged masterwork pistol +7 (1d8+1)

#### Statistics

Str 18, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8

Base Atk +5; CMB +9, CMD 20

Feats Furious Focus, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Power Attack, Toughness, Weapon Focus (greatsword), Weapon Specialization (greatsword)

Skills Climb +4, Perception +10, Profession (mercenary) +5, Ride +2, Survival +9

Languages Western Common

SQ armor training, pack mentality, scent, weapon training (blades)

Equipment 20 standard pistol ammunition, masterwork greatsword, masterwork pistol, masterwork full plate

The warrior called Rhanne is perhaps the largest ratman in the Paradise warren system, standing a full head taller than a human. The villagers of Paradise are terrified of him, although he has never killed a villager, only disabled them and returned them to the village when necessary. As a young rat, Rhanne read extensively of the few records the shamans have maintained over the years, and was particularly fascinated with a human pirate lord named Rhawn who threatened the island many generations ago. Dreaming of inspiring the same fear in others, the little rat took the name Rhanne and eventually rose to the position of chieftain.

### Slithh, Chieftain of the Shamans

Male ferran sneak (rat) sorcerer 6

NE medium humanoid (ferran)

Init +6; Senses low-light vision; Perception +4

#### Defense

AC 18, touch 14, flat-footed 15 (+4 armor, +1 deflection, +2 Dex, +1 dodge)

hp 35 (6d6+12)

Fort +4, Ref +5, Will +7

#### Offense

Speed 40 ft.

Melee spear +2 (1d8-1/x3)

Ranged masterwork longbow +6 (1d8/x3)

Bloodline Spell-Like Abiliites (CL 6th; concentration +9)

6/day – *grave touch*

#### Sorcerer Spells Known (CL 6th; concentration +9)

3rd (4/day) – *vampiric touch*

2nd (6/day) – *invisibility*, *scorching ray*, *spectral hand*

1st (7/day) – *chill touch*, *mage armor*, *magic missile*, *shield*, *shocking grasp*

0 (at will) – *bleed*, *detect magic*, *disrupt undead*, *ghost sound*, *ray of frost*, *touch of fatigue*

Bloodline undead

#### Statistics

Str 8, Dex 15, Con 12, Int 12, Wis 12, Cha 16

Base Atk +3; CMB +2; CMD 16

Feats Dodge, Eschew Materials, Improved Initiative, Spell Focus (necromancy)

Skills Fly +10, Knowledge (arcana) +10, Linguistics +2, Perception +4, Spellcraft +10

Languages Eastern Common, Fundamental, Lowland, Western Common

SQ bloodline arcana (corporeal undead affected by humanoid-affecting spells), pack mentality, scent

Equipment 20 arrows, speak, masterwork longbow, *cloak of resistance* +1, *ring of protection* +1, *scroll of fly*, *scroll of gaseous form*, *scroll of levitate*

Few outsiders who have encountered the ratman Slithh have any inkling that the unassuming being is the chieftain of the shamans, so unassuming is his appearance. Brown in color, with a slight build and no unusual features to cause others to remember him. Slithh has an obsessive interest in necromancy, the art of raising the dead. He does not draw attention to this, preferring to allow it to remain a secret until such time as his talents are required. Slithh has advanced to the position of chieftain through carefully selected murder over the years, although he has no particular ambition; he simply prefers to be allowed to do as he wishes, and at present there is only a single being who can command him: the Great Chieftain.

### Whistail, Chieftain of the Tinkerers

Female ferran sneak (rat) steamwright 4

N medium humanoid (ferran)

Init +3; Senses low-light vision; Perception +9

#### Defense

AC 18, touch 13, flat-footed 15 (+5 armor, +3 Dex)

hp 34 (4d8+12)

Fort +3, Ref +4, Will +3

#### Offense

Speed 40 ft.

Melee spiked gauntlet +1 (1d4-1)

Ranged thundershot pistol +7 (1d8+1)

Special attacks booby trap

#### Steamwright Inventions (2d8 Firepower)

##### Primary Inventions

*Thundershot*: Mods – Custom Stock (pistol), Deadly, Efficient, Quick Reload; Uses/day: 10

*Turret*: AC 16, touch 13, flat-footed 20 (+3 armor, +2 deflection, +1 size); Mods: Accurate; hp 17; Fort +1, Ref +1, Will +4; Attacks: ranged shot +5 (1d8+2)

##### Secondary Inventions

*Grappleshot*: Mods: Swift; Uses/day: 5

*Entangler* sphere launcher (DC 14); Uses/day: 5

#### Statistics

Str 8, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 12

Base Atk +3, CMB +2; CMD 15

Feats Point Blank Shot, Rapid Shot, Skill Focus: Knowledge (Engineering)

Skills Craft (alchemy) +14, Craft (machinery) +10, Disable Device +14, Knowledge (engineering) +14, Knowledge (local) +9, Perception +9, Sleight of Hand +10

Languages Jurak, Lowland, Sylfanic, Western Common

SQ jury-rig, pack mentality, scent, masterworking

Equipment 20 standard pistol ammunition, +1 chain shirt, masterwork crafting tools, pistol, 2 smokesticks, 3 alchemist fires, 35 gold crests

### Ratman Steamwright

Ferran sneak (rat) steamwright 1

N medium humanoid (ferran)

Init +2; Senses low-light vision; Perception +6

#### Defense

AC 12, touch 12, flat-footed 10

hp 9 (1d8+1)

Fort +1, Ref +2, Will +4

#### Offense

Speed 40 ft.

Melee gearspanner +0 (1d10)

Ranged pistol +2 (1d8)

#### Statistics

Str 10, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 14, Cha 12

Base Atk +0; CMB +0; CMD 10

Skills Craft (machinery) +7, Disable Device +7, Knowledge (engineering) +6, Perception +6, Profession (steamwright) +6, Sleight of Hand +6

Languages Eastern Common, Lowland, Western Common

SQ pack mentality, scent

Inventions Aegis (secondary; mods: mounting), Belcher (primary; mods: concentrated, mixed fuel)

Equipment gearspanner, crafting tools, pistol

### Ratman Warrior

Ferran predator fighter 1

NE Medium humanoid (ferran)

Init +1; Perception +7

## Defense

AC 17, **touch** 11, **flat-footed** 16 (+5 armor, +1 Dex, +1 natural)

**hp** 10 (1d10+4)

**Fort** +4, **Ref** +1, **Will** +1

## Offense

**Speed** 40 ft.

**Melee** greatsword +4 (2d6+4), bite -1 (1d6+1)

**Ranged** light crossbow +2 (1d8)

**Special attacks** pack mentality

**Special defenses** leathery hide

## Statistics

**Str** 16, **Dex** 13, **Con** 14, **Int** 10, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 10

**Base Atk** +1; **CMB** +4; **CMD** 15

**Feats** Power Attack, Weapon Focus (greatsword)

**Traits** Reactionary (+2 initiative), Ruffian (+2 hp)

**Languages** Western Common

**SQ** feral insight, pack mentality, scent

**Equipment** 10 bolts, greatsword, light crossbow, scale mail, 15 gold crests

The likelihood that the player characters possess magical apparatus and most likely an intact ship will be the impetus for significant upheaval amid the ratling tribes. The avarice of Slithh will be too much, and he will use the opportunity to attempt to discredit the warrior tribe and their current position as the favorites of the Grand Chieftain, either because there are more people coming to the island than before (if the characters are captured) or because the warriors were unable to detain the characters at all (if they escaped). Slithh, in an uncharacteristic display of charisma and cunning, will entreat the ratling race as a whole to turn away from the policies of the warrior tribe and the Grand Chieftain who so clearly favors them, leading to a conflict between the warriors and the shamans, the first such inter-species conflict ever to occur on Paradise.

A conflict between the warriors and the shamans would change the landscape of Paradise in a dramatic fashion. The warriors have superior numbers and vastly better knowledge of the island's geography, but the shamans are more at home in the race's subterranean home and have significant magic at their command, which the warriors have had very little experience fighting against. Thus, while it might seem that sheer numbers put them at a major disadvantage, the fact that Slithh has been preparing for a moment like this grants the shamans an advantage going into the conflict. This is, of course, without taking into account the abilities of the average player character, which can and probably will tip the balance in one direction or another.

# ADVENTURING HOOKS

- ✦ Both Slithh and Rhawn learn of a magical talisman found by the party somewhere on the island. They both believe that the talisman will put them in favor with their people and therefore, the Great Chieftain. The party gets caught in a power struggle between both camps who covet their treasure.
- ✦ If there are any Golemoids or Steamwrights in the party, ratmen steamwrights track down and attack the party at every chance to claim any technology or manite carried by them.

## Expanded Adventures on Paradise

Rather than simply a short and doubtless chaotic visit, it is possible that the player characters could spend some significant time on the island of Paradise, and in doing so change the status quo there for better or ill. In all likelihood, based on the island's layout, it is most likely that if the player characters discover the island at all, they will find their way to the village at its center in relatively short order, as there is little else on the island to draw their attention. Indeed, the only other notable feature of the island as a whole is its noticeable lack of predators and nocturnals; the island may well seem very much like its namesake after the travels and horrors the player characters are likely to have witnessed elsewhere.

Once the characters discover the village, which the denizens call Paradise somewhat ironically, the ratlings will become aware of their arrival if they were not already (although it's highly likely their scouts will see them long before then). Once they are in the village, the ratlings will make themselves known to the characters, and do so in significant numbers, enough so that it should be clear that there is little chance of successfully fighting one's way out of the situation. The most likely outcome is that the Warrior Tribe will see the characters stripped of their adventuring gear and remanded to custody within the village after interviewing them concerning their intentions and assuring them what will happen if they attempt to leave the island. A second possible, albeit less likely outcome is that the characters will fight their way free and escape into the jungle, where they will be at a marked disadvantage when it comes to avoiding the ratling scouts, but such an outcome is still possible (they are player characters, after all!).

## Allies

The possibility that the characters can make allies of the various tribes is a distinct one, particularly if the idea of either combatting either hundreds of ratlings or leaving dozens of villagers to a potentially grisly fate does not appeal to their (presumably) heroic sensibilities.

- ✦ **THE WARRIORS** – Perhaps more so than any other tribe, the Warriors are deeply invested in the status quo at Paradise. They are, in large part, its architects and guardians, while the other tribes merely aid in its maintenance. The Warriors bear no ill will against the prisoners of Paradise, and in fact regard the villagers' safety as their responsibility, but neither will they easily permit any change that will potentially upset everything they have built here, which they genuinely regard as being as close to paradise as is possible for their kind to achieve. As such, it is unlikely that the warriors will easily choose to ally with the player characters. However, if the characters prove to be capable and at least reasonably honorable, and the alternative is to face the destruction of their way of life by the overly ambitious shamans, then it is possible. Once secured, their alliance is steadfast unless betrayed. As the largest of the tribes, the warriors likely make the best allies and an agreement between them and the average party of adventurers is likely to ensure their victory.
- ✦ **THE SHAMANS** – The Shamans are least likely to accept an alliance with the player characters, and in all honesty they are the tribe most characters would least likely seek out an alliance with in the first place. The shamans have very much become a cult of personality under the control of their chieftain, Slithh, and even those who have questions about his plans very much keep them to themselves as a matter of pure survival. If, by some chance, the player characters demonstrate a marked disinterest in the well-being of the prisoners in Paradise, then Slithh may consider them as potential allies, albeit only in the briefest sense and only so long as it remains convenient. Anyone demonstrating knowledge of necromancy or similar dark magics may intrigue the chieftain enough to prompt such an arrangement.
- ✦ **THE TINKERERS** – The Tinkerers are very much the wild card when it comes to the three tribes of ratlings on Paradise. They have the least amount of contact with the surface-dwellers and have no particular interest in either keeping or freeing prisoners. Selfish though it may seem, they merely wish to maintain their present activities, which is



the development of new and different technology for their people. They are not a warlike group, and would be perfectly content to exist peacefully alongside humans instead of keeping them prisoner... again, if it allowed them to maintain their current status quo. Characters with any form of steam-powered technology, notably golemoids, mechamages, or thunder scouts, would be well received by them and make their friendship easier to obtain.



## Enemies

Obviously, the characters will make enemies of some tribes whether they ally with another tribe or not. Some tribes are in a position to be more dangerous enemies than others, but none are likely to spare the characters their wrath when their plans have been upset.

❖ **THE WARRIORS** – As the architects of Paradise's social structure, the warriors are extremely unlikely to befriend any who threaten it. The only possible way to avoid them as enemies is for the adventurers to seem as a lesser evil when compared to the betrayal of the shamans. In general, however, the warriors will present an intractable foe, as they are both the most numerous of the tribes as well as the most immediate and martial threat. Given a choice, the warriors would merely imprison the adventurers in Paradise and continue their normal way of life. Barring that, they would prefer to kill them and keep the villagers safe, as they regard them as their personal responsibility. The betrayal of the shamans is something so beyond their contemplation that the warriors genuinely do not know how to respond to it and they will eagerly believe the adventurers are the source of their woes even when all clear signs point to the shamans instead.

❖ **THE SHAMANS** – Other than the extremely unlikely possibility of the player characters choosing the philosophy of Slithh as something they can get on board with, the shamans will end up their enemies, and they are dedicated enemies indeed. They will at every available opportunity make the characters the scapegoats of their own machinations and misdirect the other tribes against the humans before they finally reveal their plan to assume complete control of Paradise, its denizens, and its resources. Even the most junior member of their tribe is proficient in basic magical theory and can cast spells that will prove highly problematic under combat situations. Regardless of their initial inclination toward the characters, like the warriors, it does not prevent them from planning to dispatch the adventurers when it becomes convenient to do so. They, like the warriors, regard the adventurers' departure from the island as heralding the end of their way of life, and find this completely unacceptable.

❖ **THE TINKERERS** – Making enemies of the tinkerers is relatively difficult to do, as they are not keenly invested in the conflict at all and will remain largely outside of it as much as possible. They are interested in maintaining the status quo, and toward that end the shamans' rebellion is troublesome, but the idea of taking up arms against the magically powerful tribe is one that is anathema to the otherwise very cautious and cunning tinkerers. If the characters do somehow manage to truly earn the ire of the tinkerers, the tribe will unleash their greatest secret to see them stopped: a small number of patchwork, rebuilt golems with a number of mounted weapons that they have been trying to program to hunt prey in the jungle.



## Paradise after the War

The adventurers may remain on Paradise until matters are resolved, or they may depart before its conclusion of that opportunity presents itself. Regardless, their presence will likely have had a significant impact on the outcome. In the event that the adventurers choose to remain on Paradise (which seems unlikely) or return at a later date (more likely), there are various ways that the island may have changed depending upon which faction may have ascended to a position of dominance on the island. In each case, the tone may vary significantly depending upon what manner of tone the campaign favors.

If the warrior tribe is victorious, the shamans will be largely expunged from the island, with only a handful being judged worthy to remain in service to the Great Chieftain. The others who survive, the most powerful and devious of the lot, will either flee the island to the small satellite islands off the shore or into the deepest recesses of the tunnels beneath Paradise. Without the magical support to which they are accustomed, the warriors will come to depend much more heavily upon the tinkerers, allowing that tribe to rise to a position of significant influence throughout the island. A more positive outcome of this might cause the warriors to see the humans of Paradise as more capable than they previously believed, and eventually accept them as equals. This creates a more diverse and capable society that is actually closer to its namesake. On the other hand, the war could cause the warriors to become colder and less trusting, holding even the tinkerers at arms' length as they more ruthlessly oppress the people of Paradise, violently culling anyone who behaves as though they have even the vaguest notion of escape or freedom.

A victory by the shamans will dramatically change things in Paradise, and not for the better. Indeed, there is very little way for Slithh to serve as Grand Chieftain and the people of Paradise not to suffer as a result. The best possible scenario that might come from such an outcome is that the warriors will become a largely brainwashed and dominated group that carries out the will of the shamans, all under the direct control of Slithh's monomaniacal will. The denizens of the village become little better than slaves, with most of their privileges and freedoms removed, and any transgressions resulting in their execution and subsequent use as experimentation for the shamans' new necromantic pursuits. A darker possibility is that Slithh will see all the villagers executed to continue their labor as undead, and may well repeat this process with the large majority of the warriors as a result. The tinkerers maintain their autonomy because their talents would be lost in resurrection, but are very much second class citizens and will gradually come to actively desire to overthrow the shamans at any cost, potentially sowing the seeds for a second conflict in Paradise.

Essentially, there is very little chance for the tinkerer tribe to ascend to a position of rulership over Paradise without some manner of direct intervention on the part of the characters. The group as a whole, much less their chieftain, has very little in the way of ambition with regards to their society, preferring instead the exploration of technology and knowledge without the distraction of politics, logistics, or administration. Still, if Whistail should become the new Grand Chieftain, it will signal significant if gradual change is in store for Paradise and its denizens. The tinkerers have little interest in keeping the villagers as slaves, and those few among them who are capable of producing items that the tinkerers need for their work are more likely to be treated as equals than as vassals, essentially growing to be a valued part of the tribe as time goes on. With the tinkerers in charge, it is possible that the island could become a sort of fascist technocracy, but that would require some significant change in the psychology of Whistail and her tribe, again likely as a result of some direct action taken by the adventurers.

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