

ACT II – YUCATAN

MERIDA MOOD

HOPEFUL BEATS

- Children run and laugh through the street and plaza, chasing each other for fun. One has a dark rubber ball that he's trying to keep away from his cohort.
- The smell of fresh flowers drifts down from window boxes along the street ahead. A young woman, tending some flowers, smiles a casual "hello".
- An old man pushes a *salbutes* cart up the uneven street. The smell of cooking, spicy turkey, and fresh tomato tickles your nose. A row of taco-like *salbutes* in simple paper wrappers tops the cart, the bright avocados catching your eye.

SINISTER BEATS

- A black bird picks at a cat left dead in the road. The bird looks at you with its yellow eyes, a bit of raw meat dangling from its mouth, then flies away.
- You notice a mural depicting conquistadors in the jungle, pointing towards a Mayan pyramid. The mural is riddled with bullet holes.

MEXICO NPC NAMES

Male: Juan, Jose, Francisco, Antonio, Alejandro, Pedro, Manuel, Ricardo, Daniel, Fernando, Jorge, Roberto, Carlos, Eduardo, Javier, Miguel, Martin, Rafael, Raul, Arturo, David, Gerardo

Female: Maria, Juana, Margarita, Veronica, Elizabeth, Alejandra, Leticia, Gabriela, Patricia, Josefina, Rosa, Rosa Maria, Alicia, Teresa, Francisca, Adriana, Yolanda, Martha, Isabel, Silvia

Last (2 Surnames): Aguilar, Flores, Lopez, Ortiz, Ruiz, Alvarez, Garcia, Martinez, Pena, Salazar, Castillo, Garza, Medina, Perez, Sanchez, Castro, Gomez, Mendez, Ramirez, Santiago, Chavez, Gonzales, Mendoza, Ramos, Soto, Cruz, Gutierrez, Morales, Reyes, Torres, Delgado

YUCATAN SPINE

PROLOGUE: MERIDA

SEQUENCE 1: THE JUNGLE JOURNEY

LOCATION 1: PLAZA OF CHICHEN XOXUL

LOCATION 2: THE UNDERWORLD

LOCATION 3: PYRAMID OF THE SORCERER

SEQUENCE 2: VISIONS OF GOLXUMAL

SEQUENCE 3: AN AUDIENCE WITH GOL-GOROTH

FLOATING 1: BEAST OF GOLXUMAL

FLOATING 2: ATTACK OF THE XOXUL

REVELATION LIST – NPCs

FRANCISCO DE LA VEGA

- Letter from Merida (Mexico City)
- Questioning the Guides
- Research on Chichen Xoxul

THE GUIDES

PABLO GARZA

GUILLERMO CASTILLO

RICK LUKE

FRANCISCO DE LA BELALZCAR

- Research on Chichen Xoxul: Diary of Francisco de la Belalcazar
- Interviewing Francisco de la Vega

ALVAR DOMINGUEZ

REVELATION LIST – MISC.

DOMINGUEZ SANCHO WENT TO CHICHEN XOXUL

- MEXICO CITY: Screech of the Pyramid of Blood
- Research Sancho Dominguez in Merida
- Interviewing Francisco de la Vega

LOCATION OF CHICHEN XOXUL

- *Into the Yucatan Peninsula* (Rough Position)
- Questioning Francisco de la Vega (Rough Position)
- Questioning the Guides
- Tracking Dominguez
- Oral History in the Local Villages

REFERENCE – XOXUL CULT

XOXUL HISTORY

- **Isles of Gol-Goroth:** The people of Bal-Sagoth were once the chosen people of Gol-Goroth, creating an empire to rival Atlantis. Their worship degenerated over time, however, into primitive animalism for reasons that are not entirely clear.
- **10th Century:** The Xoxul tribes begin raiding the Isles of Gol-Goroth.
- **11th Century:** The Xoxul invade Bal-Sagoth itself, carrying away the monuments and artifacts of the city. (See “The Gods of Bal-Sagoth” by Robert E. Howard.) Using the looted lore of Bal-Sagoth, they make contact with Gol-Goroth and become his chosen people.
- **12th Century:** With the aid of the Fisher from Outside, the Xoxul steal a Mayan pyramid from the 15th century and bring it back to the 12th century. This temporal purloining also divides the temple (or reflects it); it now exists simultaneously in the Yucatan and on the alien moon of Golxumal. (The Xoxul’s tales of this epoch become confused, and it’s eventually recorded as a sorcerer “creating a pyramid and its twin in a single day”.)
- **13th Century:** Xoxul Heretics left Chichen Xoxul, stealing away a Fire Jewel of Gol-Goroth. (This jewel eventually ends up in the Temple of the Toad in Honduras and appears in “The Thing on the Roof” by Robert E. Howard.) These heretics degenerate into Children of the Night (and are described in *Children of the Night and Nahua Legends*, which can be found in Trammel’s library and Brooks’ library.)
- **15th Century:** The history of Chichen Xoxul becomes somewhat confused as the Mayans conquer the site and take the temple from the Xoxul. And then the Xoxul steal it. And then the Xoxul reclaim the land. (Continuity around Chichen Xoxul is, in fact, deeply confused.)
- **1523 AD:** Francisco de la Belalcazar and his expedition are captured by the Xoxul.
- **Late 16th Century:** The Xoxul retreat to their refuge on Golxumal, leaving Chichen Xoxul abandoned except for their temporally displaced visitations. Some of the Xoxul, however, choose to go into exile and act as guardians to keep people from disturbing Chichen Xoxul. (This is necessary because, due to the unwound temporal continuity of the Xoxul people, people entering Chichen Xoxul could unravel the history of the Xoxul even though they have already “left”.)

MODERN XOXUL CULT

- The plagues and decimations of Spanish colonialism and Mexican imperialism, however, seriously degenerated the Xoxul cult. Much of their lore was lost and even the nature of their charge was forgotten: They now believe that they must keep Chichen Xoxul “pure” and guard it against the future return of the Chosen People. (In reality, when the Xoxul left they never returned. And as the years pass, less and less Xoxul continuity is tied to the site. The day will come when the Xoxul will no longer “return” there at all.)
- During the Caste Wars in Yucatan during the late 19th century, the cult ended up mixing heavily with European occultists and getting further corrupted with strong nationalist fervor.
- The current cult leader, Francisco de la Vega, has no Xoxul blood at all. He’s of Spanish-Mayan descent (ironically descended from Francisco de la Balalcazar).

RESEARCH PRIOR TO MERIDA

CHICHEN XOXUL / GOLXUMAL

- **Library Use / Archaeology:** *Chichen* means “at the mouth of the well” and likely means that there’s a cenote at the site.
- **Library Use / Anthropology:** *Xoxul* is an obscure Mayan word meaning “outcast” or “pariah”.
 - **Library Use 1 / Anthropology 1:** That, however, is not the original meaning of the word. It’s a proper noun that’s been loaded up with a new definition nby years of ill association. The Xoxul were most likely an ethnic or cultural group outside of Mayan society which would have worshipped a god or gods outside of the popular religion.
- **Library Use:** *Prop: Into the Yucatan Peninsula* by Dr. Arthur Cartwright
- **Library Use / History 1:** *Prop: Diary of Francisco de la Belalcazar*
- **Library Use / Occult 1:** *Prop: A Survey of Satan* by Glauco Suarez

RESEARCH IN MERIDA

CHICHEN XOXUL / GOLXUMAL

- **Library Use** (after researching elsewhere): There's a noticeable lack of information available in Merida, especially considering it was the basis of Arthur Cartwright's expedition in 1846.
 - *GM Note*: That's the clue. References in local libraries have been scrubbed.
- **Oral History** (Academic Community): Chichen Xoxul was supposedly discovered by the archaeologist Arthur Cartwright in 1846, right before the Caste War broke out. He wrote a book about the place, but died without revealing its precise location.
 - Curator at the Museum of Anthropology suspects it doesn't actually exist.
 - There are three local guides who know that part of the jungle: Jacinto Exposito, Guillermo Castillo, and Pablo Garza. A guide named Rick Luke has shown a lot of enthusiasm for Mayan ruins, but hasn't actually been to that region.
- **Oral History** (Occult Community / Local Elders): Chichen Xoxul is a cursed place. "Xoxul" means outcast, deviant, or pariah. Chichen Xoxul is the mouth of the well of Xoxul; a place where horrible things pour forth into the world.
 - **Oral History 1**: To get someone willing to talk about Golxumal. It is the place from which evil is born, where the fishers from outside cast their nets seeking to pull mortals through the mouth of Chichen Xoxul. (In a generation or eight, people might start scaring their children by threatening to send them to Golxumal. But right now, everybody who knows of it is too scared of it themselves.)

SANCHO DOMINGUEZ EXPEDITION

- **Oral History**: A dozen or so people came out from Mexico City and spent several weeks/months preparing for an expedition to the interior (hitting up supply shops, etc.). They finally left Merida 6 weeks ago.
 - They were led by a guy named Sancho Dominguez, who kept talking about finding "the legendary Chichen Xoxul". He kept trying to get discounts on equipment by promising to make people "famous" after he found it.
 - **Oral History + Outdoorsman**: Their preparations are amateurish.
- **Oral History**: They apparently spent several weeks trying to hire a guide with expertise in the area where they claimed Chichen Xoxul could be found.
 - **Oral History 1 / Outdoorsman 1**: To learn that the guide they hired was named Jacinto Exposito.
 - **Oral History 2 / Outdoorsman 2**: They mentioned that they were also thinking about hiring Pablo Garza, Guillermo Castillo, and Rick Luke.
- **Streetwise**: Dominguez and his crew had no contact with the local criminal scene.

JACINTO EXPOSITO

- **Oral History**: He's got a spotless reputation. He left with an expedition from Mexico City about six weeks ago into the interior of the Yucatan. They haven't been seen since.

NECTAR IN MERIDA

- **Oral History**: The local drug addicts aren't familiar with it.
- **Law / Cop Talk**: It's not something the local cops have heard about.
- *GM Background*: Maybe if Brooks didn't suck at his job it would be here, but it isn't.

PROLOGUE: MERIDA

CASA AZUL

- *Prop: Photo of Casa Azul*
- 343 Calle 60, Centro, Merida, YUC, Mexico
- 19th century hotel, painted a brilliant azure blue.

READYING AN EXPEDITION

- **Guide:** Hiring a guide familiar with the area will (a) pinpoint Chichen Xoxul for them and (b) organize the expedition for them (the guide will hire a familiar team, arrange for supplies, etc.). (See their NPC sheets.)
 - **Multiple Guides:** Each additional guide adds 1-2 porters.
- **Organizing an Expedition:**
 - **Outdoorsman:** To efficiently organize supplies. 1-point Credit Rating spend per week of supplies.
 - **Outdoorsman:** You'll generally want 1 porter per investigator + guide. For an expedition lasting more than three weeks, double the number of porters. 1-point Credit Rating spend per porter.
 - **Bargain:** Reduce Credit Rating spend by 1.
 - **Bargain 1:** Halves Credit Rating spend.
- **Finding Chichen Xoxul:** Without a guide, they can try traveling to the little villages out there and asking people about Chichen Xoxul to narrow it down. (This is the work that Rick Luke did.)
 - **Oral History 3/ Anthropology 3** For each week they spend traveling between villages, they can make a spend. For every 3 points they spend, they can roll 1d6. On a roll of 6, they've succeeded in narrowing it down. (Being able to speak Mayan counts as a 1-dedicated pool point for these checks.)
- **Tracking Dominguez:** They can also try to locate Chichen Xoxul by following the Dominguez expedition.
 - **Outdoorsman / Oral History:** Tracks down a set of four green pick-up trucks parked on the edge of the deep jungle.
 - **Evidence Collection / Outdoorsman:** The trucks were prepped to sit there for awhile.
 - **Outdoorsman 1:** Per day of the journey to keep on their trail.

HIRING A GUIDE

- See *Research in Merida* for identifying the three guides who are familiar with the area: Guillermo Castillo, Rick Luke, and Pablo Garza.
- **Hiring Montage:** Hard frame this, with the potential guides coming to their hotel to be interviewed. (Swap between each guide freely, even if they aren't being interviewed simultaneously.)
 - *Prop: Photo of Casa Azul (Courtyard)*

DINING WITH FRANCISCO

- Research will indicate that they legally need to get Vega's approval to mount their expedition on his property.
- None of the guides will agree to go out unless they get Vega's approval.
- If approached, Francisco will agree to meet them for dinner at their hotel.
 - Prop: Photo of Casa Azul (Dining Room)

VISITING HIS HOME (alternative scene)

- Home is packed with artifacts and treasures.
- **Archaeology:** Notice Mayan stone fragments. (Gathered from sites throughout the Yucatan, "where they are often just lying on the ground, broken off the walls they once adorned by years of harsh weather.")
- **Art History:** A painting from Robert Seldon Duncanson's "Yucatan" series. ("He never actually came here. He read John Stevens and Frederick Catherwood's *Incidents of Travel in the Yucatan*. It reminds me of how quaint and inaccurate the view outsiders have of my homeland is.")
- **History:** A rusty helmet in the fashion of a Spanish conquistador accompanied with a handsomely decorative sword. ("Willed to the Museum of Anthropology if I were to die without heir. But passed down through my family." They belonged to Francisco de la Belalcazar, Vega's reputed ancestor.)

SEQUENCE 1: THE JUNGLE JOURNEY

Staging Site to Chichen Xoxul: 4 days

Explosives / Large Guns: Hauling them into the wilderness is tough.

- **Charge:** Roughly enough TNT to blow up a small house.
- **Dedicated Porter:** Carry 1 large gun or 1-3 charges of dynamite.
- **Lugging It:** Use table below.

Charges / Large Guns Carried	Damage	Difficulty Increase
1-3	1 point per day	+1
4-5	-2 damage per day	+2
6	+0 damage per day	+3

THE STONE MARKER

- Overgrown, like a sentinel of vines.
- Nine feet tall. Intricately carved, but badly weathered by rain and deeply settled in the mud.
- **Archaeology / Anthropology / Art History:** Carvings are Mayan-like, depicting warriors in cotton armor standing on the backs of decapitated Mayan bodies, snakes slithering forth from their open necks. The warriors are holding severed heads up toward the top of the marker with apparent pride.
- **Archaeology / Craft:** The marker was once taller, some portion of stone has been broken off at the top – above the position where the warriors hold aloft their severed heads.

GUIDE REACTIONS

- **Pablo:** Gets nervous. This was a Xoxul warning. (“Xoxul still haunt these jungles. They deserve respect.”)
- **Guillermo:** “It’s an old artifact I use as a path marker. We’re on the right track.”
- **Rick:** Stops to take a rubbing. (“I recognize this from descriptions I picked up in Polol. The Xoxul would post these on the borders and throughout their territories as a warning to the Maya.”)

DAY 2: THE STORM

- Blows in unexpectedly.
 - **Outdoorsman:** Baffling. No storm was supposed to be in the area for days.
- Jungle trembles with falling rain. Trail turns to a muddy rivulet. Clothes soak up the weirdly cold water. Impossible to see more than 10 or 20 feet.
 - **Make Camp:** Adds to length of the journey
 - Storm lasts 1d6+2 days.
 - **Athletics** (difficulty 4, made in marching order): On first failure, the trail collapses and the character goes sliding down a sudden mudslide – banging into tree trunks, huge boulders.
 - -1 damage
 - Slams into *Idol of Gol-Goroth* at bottom of hill (see below)

GUIDE REACTIONS (THE STORM)

- **Pablo:** Storm is a sign that they should turn back.
- **Guillermo:** Wants to make camp.
- **Rick:** Doesn't want to stop; he's eager to press on and get to Chichen Xoxul ASAP.

GUIDE REACTIONS (THE FALL)

- **Pablo:** Carefully instructs the porters in forming a rope line to get down to them.
- **Guillermo:** Coldly indifferent. "Get them out of there." Or "Tell them we can get back together up ahead."
- **Rick:** "Hold on!" He recklessly plunges down the hill to help (spending 3 Athletics).

THE IDOL OF GOL-GOROTH

- Almost identical to the previous market, but here the top portion has not been broken off.
- **Top of the Marker:** A broad, frog-like mouth with razored fangs reaching down with a grasping tongue to devour the offered heads. The body of the creature roils upwards in bunched mounds of distorted, gluttonous flesh.
 - *GM Note:* This sculpture is nearly identical to the one seen on the base of the Ezana Stone in 2.2.1 *Obelisk of Axum*.

GUIDE REACTIONS

- **Pablo:** Says a prayer of over the idol.
- **Guillermo:** "Ah, good. You found the trail. Let's keep moving."
- **Rick:** "We're the first outsiders to see the god of the Xoxul in nearly a hundred years!"

DAY 3: THE INTERLOPER

- After the investigators have made camp.
- **Sense Trouble** (difficulty 4): The guide is missing.
 - **Calling Out**: Guide comes back into the firelight about 20 seconds later.
 - **Stealth** (difficulty 4): Find them talking to a shadowy figure who slips off into the darkness of the jungle before they can draw close.

GUIDE REACTIONS

- **Pablo**: Comes back worried. (He thinks he was talking to a Xoxul ghost.) “We shouldn’t be out here. We’re not welcome here.” He decides to turn back with or without them.
 - **Reassurance 2 / Intimidation 2**: Convinces Pablo to stay.
- **Guillermo**: Pretends he went out to pee.
 - **Assess Honesty / Seeing the Shadowy Figure**: It was just one of the locals. They’re trying to scare us off. I didn’t want you worrying about it.
 - *GM Note*: In point of fact, this was one of the cultist ambushers coordinating their upcoming attack.
- **Rick**: “I was just threatened when I went out to take a leak. Bandits, I think. They want us to turn back.” He wants more money.
 - **Credit Rating 3 / Flattery 2**: Convinces him to stay.

DAY 3: GUILLERMO’S BETRAYAL

- **Assassination in the Night**: Guillermo tries to kill a sleeping investigator with a machete.
 - **Sense Trouble** (difficulty 6): To wake with him standing over them, whispering a prayer to Gol-Goroth. (Automatic 7 damage if they don’t wake.)
- **The Pit Traps**: Guillermo flees through an area he knows is laced with pit traps. 2 turns into the chase, he reaches the pit traps.
 - Outdoorsman 1**: Notice Guillermo is zig-zagging.
 - Sense Trouble** (difficulty 6, difficulty 4 if pit traps known/suspected): To spot the pit traps.
 - Athletics** (difficulty 6): To avoid falling in. Otherwise pierced with 1d2 spikes, each for +0 damage.
- **Interrogating Guillermo**: Stubbornly silent. Says only this: “No one who does not revere or impress Gol-Goroth makes it out of Chichen Xoxul alive. I don’t think he’ll find you too impressive.”

DAY 4: CULTIST AMBUSH

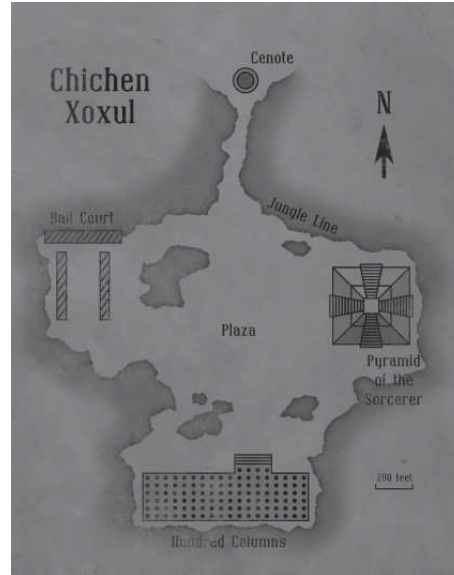
- Led by Guillermo if he's still alive (even if he didn't come on the expedition).
- **Sense Trouble** (difficulty 5): To hear rifle bolts being pulled back from somewhere beyond the thick jungle canopy.
- **Interrogation**: If captured, several will confess to working for Francisco de la Vega.
 - These are all low-level members of the Xoxul Cult. "Stay out of Chichen Xoxul! Only those who revere the Old God are allowed on its hallowed ground! One day the Xoxul will return, and they must find it unstained!"

AMBUSHERS: Athletics 6, Firearms 5, Health 4, Scuffling 5, Weapons 5

GUIDE REACTIONS

- **Pablo**: Screams about Xoxul ghosts. He and his porters flee. (Might run towards *Location 1* and by the time the PCs catch up, they're dead or missing.)
- **Rick**: Comes running back from where he was scouting ahead. "Run! Into the ruins! Take cover!" (Chichen Xoxul is just through the next line of trees.)

LOCATION 1: THE PLAZA OF CHICHEN XOYUL



THE PLAZA

- A large break in the jungle canopy filled with scrub bush (some of it waist- or chest-high).
- Large, stone ruins thrust out of the edges of the jungle line; vines gripping them tight; penumbras of toppled stone surrounding them (although the pyramid looks entirely intact).
 - *Prop: Photo of the Pyramid*
 - *Prop: Photo of the Ball Court (Outer Walls)*
 - *Prop: Photo of the Hundred Columns (Entrance)*
 - **Archaeology / Anthropology:** This was not a city. It was a religious site, a place of ritual, intended for a select few to inhabit and possess.
 - **Biology / Outdoorsman:** Although the sounds of the jungle can still be heard coming from beyond the jungle line, even birds don't dare to enter the grounds of Chichen Xoxul. All is silent.
- **Outdoorsman:** People have come through the plaza recently. Broken grasses and trampled weeds attest to that.
- **Simple Search:** Uncovers the partial remains of a human woman, from about the waist down, festering deep in the weeds near the heart of the plaza.
 - **Evidence Collection:** Around the body are three spent rifle shells and a functional rifle with a broken stock and a half-full magazine of three more rounds.
 - **Forensics:** The woman was bitten once by something the size of a shark with jaguar-like teeth. A caustic fluid around the bite area seared the flesh, causing it to slide right off the bone. Blood stains suggest the other half of the human carcass wasn't dragged off. It's simply missing.
 - **Biology:** No earthly creature could be responsible for this point. (This revelation requires 2-point non-Mythos Stability test.)
 - **Leveraged Clue** (*Photo of Dominguez and His Crew*): The body is wearing the distinctive socks of the woman towards the right side of the photo.

THE BALL COURT

- *Prop: Photo of the Ball Court*
- A flat expanse of short grasses between two fifteen-foot-high walls of expertly laid stone, all sheathed in vines and moss.
 - **Outdoorsman:** The grass was recently cut back, most likely by machete.
 - *GM Note:* Dominguez' crew cleared the ball court to set up their camp site.
- The stone hoops which the ball players would have aimed for still jut out from the center of each wall.
 - *Prop: Photo of the Ball Court (Hoop)*
 - **Archaeology:** This ball court is smaller compared to similar sites around the Yucatan, but more highly decorated. Carvings along the walls depict gruesome human sacrifices made to a sphere in the sky.
 - **Theology / Astronomy:** That sphere is neither the sun nor the moon. Those bodies are both clearly demarked in Mayan symbology and are, in fact, present elsewhere on the mural (and much smaller than the great sphere).
- The court itself is the site of a massacre. A torn and ruined tent flaps raggedly in the wind. Dozens of bodies are scattered around the area.
 - **Forensics / Simple Search:** The bodies are headless. In some cases, they have been torn apart by powerful jaws. Most, however, had their heads cut or chopped off. Arrows jut from corpses, pinning khaki clothes to bloated bodies. A broken spear angles out from one sunken body.
 - **Forensics 1 / Leveraged Clue** (*Photo of Dominguez and His Crew*): Can match thirteen of the bodies to those in the photo. (Including Dominguez, if they've identified him in the photo.)
 - **Evidence Collection:** Empty shell casings lie in sticky pools of congealed blood, speckled with stuck flies.
 - **Evidence Collection 1 / Leveraged Clue** (identifying Dominguez):
Prop – Letter from Xoxul to Mexico City
- *GM Background:* The Beast of Golxumal appeared and attacked the camp. As the camp disintegrated into chaos, the Xoxul showed up and finished things off. Three people (temporarily) escaped:
 - One of the women of the expedition fled across the plaza and was bitten in half by the Beast of Golxumal.
 - Alvar Vasquez made it to the top of the Pyramid and sealed himself inside the Observatory.
 - Jacinto Exposito, their guide, ran to the cenote and died there.

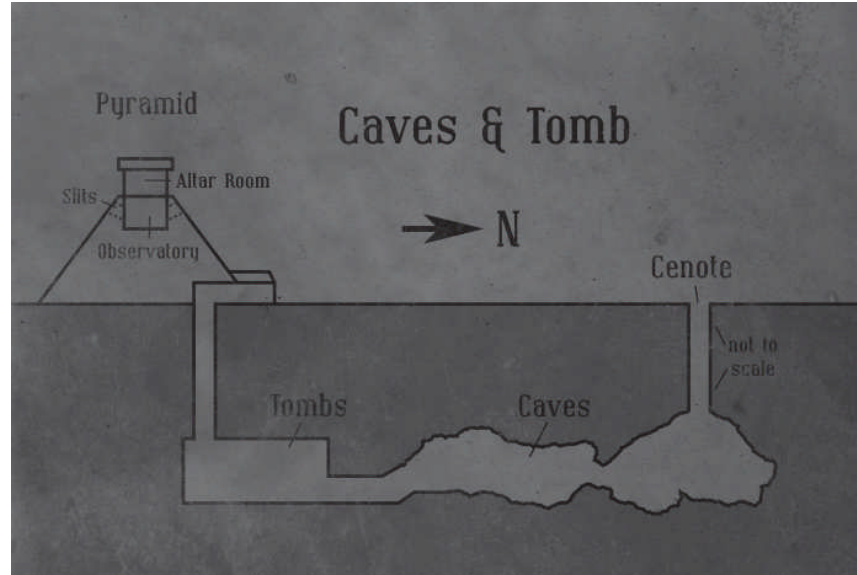
THE HUNDRED COLUMNS

- *Prop: Photo of the Hundred Columns*
- The top of this platform is largely obscured by the thick tangle of jungle trees that curl up around it.
- The broad, too-narrow stairs leading up to it are in mostly good repair.
- The top of the platform is covered in disorienting ranks of hundreds of stone columns.
- A dozen rotting human heads are balanced atop the columns or on stone beams which jut out from the columns here and there.
 - *GM Note:* These heads belong to the members of the Dominguez Expedition killed on the ball court.

THE CENOTE

- *Prop: Photo of the Cenote*
- 35 feet deep, with greenish-blue waters at the bottom. A body floats face-down in the water, two arrows jutting up from its back.
 - **Geology:** Cenotes like this one are common throughout the Yucatan and usually connect to broader underground (or underwater) cave systems.
 - **Archaeology:** Mayans regarded cenotes like this one as a gateway for making offerings to Xibalba, the underworld.
 - **The Body:** Belongs to Jacinto Exposito.
 - **Forensics:** He was shot *before* falling (or jumping) in the cenote.
- **Theology / Anthropology:** Cenotes were sometimes said to grant prophetic visions to those who leapt in and did not drown. Other supposedly had healing powers or other restorative effects. (Their primary function was to provide a water supply for the surrounding region.)
 - 1/day – Leaping into the water (not just climbing down) restores all points in a single General ability other than Health, Sanity, or Stability. (Possibly accompanied by a vision to explain it.)
 - **Athletics** (difficulty 3 or suffer -2 damage from leap).
- **Cave Entrance:** Gapes to one side of the cenote.
- *GM Note:* Neither the Xoxul nor the Beast of Golxumal can manifest here.

LOCATION 2: THE UNDERWORLD



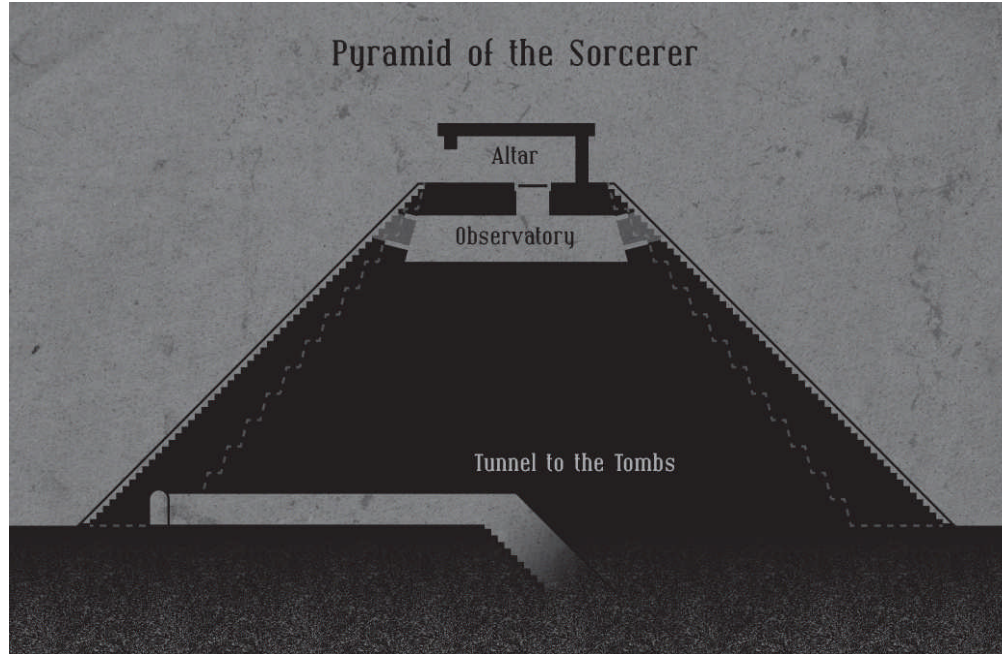
CAVES

- Damp. Piles of ancient stone censers and very old humans bones.
- **Forensics:** Bones are at least 300 years old.
- **Archaeology / Anthropology / Forensics:** The skulls have been placed in niches carved into the walls of the cavern. These are lacquered with multi-colored stone.
 - *Prop: Photo of a Mayan Skull*
- **Entrance to the Tombs:** A wall of fine stonework, fashioned to resemble rows of skulls.
 - **Simple Search:** To find the skull which can be pulled to one side, revealing a latch which can be turned and undone, which allows the door to be pulled open.
 - *Prop: Photo of the Entrance to the Tombs*

TOMBS

- A twisted warren of narrow passages with Mayan/Xoxul funerary chambers opening off of them.
- **Languages (Mayan) / Archaeology / Anthropology:** The inscriptions lining the corridor are a confusing palimpsest of stone. Mayan carvings have been replaced by Xoxul carvings, then replaced with Mayan carvings and then replaced with Xoxul carvings again. The Mayan scripts can be untangled with a little bit of effort, but the Xoxul scripts are sufficiently different to constitute an alien language.
 - The history of Chichen Xoxul, as related here, is confusing: It states that the Xoxul stole the site from the Mayans; then the Mayans built it; and then the Xoxul stole it again. In that order.
- **Cryptography 1 + Languages (Mayan) / Anthropology 1:** Unlocks the Xoxul script by comparing sections of the narrative directly comparable between the two sets of inscriptions. (This also serves as a leveraged clue for unlocking the writing in the Observatory, see below.)
 - The Xoxul inscriptions refer to these tombs as being “etched from the stone” by the “shantak” of their god.
 - *GM Note:* The Xoxul use the term *shantak* to refer to the “fingers” of Gol-Goroth – which include both the lightning communions they share with their god and also physical manifestations like the Groth-Golka.
- **Transdimensional Graffiti:** Some of the inscriptions vanish when no one is looking at them. (In some cases, they reappear.)
 - **Languages (Mayan) / Archaeology / Anthropology:** These all loosely translate as, “The Maw of the Mouth lies within the Devouring Mountain.”
 - *GM Note:* These warnings were carved by the Xoxul on Golxumal; a strange compulsion born by Gol-Goroth’s obsession with the Liar’s usurpation of his identity on Earth. Because they were carved only on Golxumal, they only intermittently manifest here.
- **Francisco de la Belalcazar:** At some point while exploring or passing through the Tombs, the PCs will hear Francisco Belalcazar sobbing or calling out to them. (He’s being held on Golxumal in a section of the Tombs that has been converted to cells by the Xoxul. See *NPC: Francisco de la Belalcazar.*)

LOCATION 3: THE PYRAMID OF THE SORCERER



THE PYRAMID

- *Prop: Photo of the Pyramid*
- One half of the pyramid is thickly overgrown with scrub, vines tear away at the stones on the other side. The jungle itself claws up the backside of the pyramid.
- **Archaeology / Language (Mayan):** Mayan glyphs along the sharp edges of the pyramid name it the “Pyramid of the Sorcerer”.
 - **Archaeology 1 / Language (Mayan):** It appears that the stonework has been reworked multiple times; often deliberately defacing the symbols which came before. This suggests that the pyramid switched hands between the Mayans and Xoxul several times, with the Xoxul finally taking sole possession. The glyph-carvings tell of a Xoxul sorcerer (cursed by the Mayan glyphs, exalted by the Xoxul) who built “two pyramids in a single day” and “aligned them with the stars of Golxumal” (or, perhaps, “used them to align the stars with Golxumal”). The glyphs describe the pyramid as “eternally young” (which could be interpreted as “everlasting”, although a more literal translation would be “both young and old through all eternity”).

TUNNEL TO THE TOMBS

- Entrance at the base of pyramid.
- **Archaeology / Anthropology:** Original Mayan carvings have been defaced. Literally: The heads of the Mayan figures have been chipped away, leaving gouged scars in the stone.
- **Entrance to the Tombs:** A wall of fine stonework, fashioned to resemble rows of skulls.
 - *Prop: Photo of the Entrance to the Tombs*
 - **Simple Search:** To find the skull which can be pulled to one side, revealing a latch which can be turned and undone, which allows the door to be pulled open.

STAIRS

- At the corner of the base of each set of stairs there is a gaping statue of a reptilian, jaguar-like head – the sides of each head are marked by a line of bulging eyes. Sharp, sabertooth fangs thrust from the upper lips of the statues' maws.
 - **Theology / Archaeology:** The Mayans believed that the Earth was flat with four corners. Each corner represented a cardinal direction. And at each corner there was a jaguar called a *bacab* which supported the sky. It's possible that these carvings represent those jaguars. (No explanation for the extra eyes, though.)
 - *GM Note:* These pieces of statuary depict Daughters of Gol-Goroth. (A potential irony in fleeing between stones carvings of the beast's head as it pursues them.)
- The stairs themselves are startlingly steep and very narrow.
- *Prop: Photo from Atop the Pyramid*

OBSERVATORY SLITS

- On each face of the pyramid, near the top, there are four slits (two to either side of the stairs) looking into the observatory.
- **Archaeology:** These slits are consistent with those used at the El Caracol observatory at Chichen Itza.
 - **Astronomy:** Slits are NOT aligned with the night sky.
 - *GM Background:* The slits are aligned with the stars of Golxumal.
- **Looking Through Slits:** See *Observatory*, below.
 - **Alvar Vasquez:** Survivor from the Dominguez expedition is inside the observatory (from his perspective, he's only been there a few days).
 - **Shooting in Panic:** 50/50 shot the bullet passes right through its target. (He's not fully in sync with them.)
 - **Vanishing:** Shadows inside the room shift as if light on them is moving, and then Alvar vanishes. (He can reappear immediately or later.)
 - **Pulling Him Out:** The observatory shifts when he's halfway out, cleaving his body in two.
- **Squeezing Through Slits:** Limbs pushed through tingle and ache, as if from an electrical jolt.
 - **Athletics** (difficulty 6): On a natural roll of 1 or 2, there's the sound of a loud wind and they can see the shadows shifting within the pyramid.
 - If they succeeded, they can choose to go forwards freely or make an Athletics check (difficulty 4) to try to get back out.
 - If they failed, they need to make an Athletics check (difficulty 6) to do either.
 - If they're still stuck in the slit when the shift happens, they suffer +4 damage (possibly losing a limb; or having it age preternaturally; or just being forcibly ejected one way or the other; or cleaved in two if this damage kills them outright).
 - If they ended up inside the Observatory, they shift away from the others. They may be found if the Observatory is entered from above (although how much time has passed – hours, days, etc. – is variable; or perhaps at some point during Sequence 2 they'll sync up).

ALTAR ROOM

- **Mural Walls:** Decorated with murals depicting figures prancing and fighting beneath strangely colored skies.
 - *Prop: Photo of the Altar Room Murals*
- **Altar:** A large stone altar, carved in the form of a man in warrior garb on his hands and knees with a grimace of pain upon his stylized features.
 - **Art History / Theology / Anthropology / Archaeology:** The figure is a kind of inversion of the *Chac Mool* figure, in which a reclining figure holds a bowl or tray on its belly.
 - **Evidence Collection:** Deep, dark stains of ancient blood remain on the stone.
 - **Theology / Anthropology:** The nature of the altar is consistent with bloodletting or human sacrifices, notably including fine grooves cut into the altar and floor so catch and funnel blood that flows over the altar.
 - **Simple Search:** The channels lead to a number of holes built into the perimeter of the large disc at the foot of the altar.
- **Cartouche of Golxumal:** A large disc of purple-and-blue stone is inset into the floor at the foot of the altar.
 - *Prop: Cartouche of Golxumal*
 - **Theology / Archaeology / Anthropology:** The general iconography is similar to that used to depict the sun and moon at Mayan holy sites, but the specific symbolism doesn't match. In fact, it most clearly resembles the symbols used for *Lamat* (the Mayan name for Venus).
 - **Craft / Archaeology:** The eye at the center of the stone is a later addition that was not part of the original. There is a thin seam that runs around the perimeter of the disc.
 - **Architecture / Simple Search:** The seam is consistent with trapdoor, which open into a chamber below the altar room.
 - **Locksmith:** The trapdoor is locked and sealed inside the stone.
 - **Locksmith 1:** The locking mechanism isn't separate from the latch, so it should be accessible from this side in some fashion, since people would want to be able to get into the chamber below if the door was accidentally closed.
 - *GM Background:* The cartouche is the symbol of Golxumal (hence its planetary aspects). Its central aspect represents the gas giant in the sky above it; the eye was added by the Xoxul when the Eye of Azathoth manifested there.
- **Opening the Observatory:** Liquid must be poured down the holes in the perimeter of the cartouche. (Doesn't have to be blood, although it could be.) The cartouche then dilates open (separating along invisible seams of sub-atomic breadth)

OBSERVATORY

- A squarish chamber with a rounded ceiling, lined with an unearthly red stone. The walls, floor, and ceiling are carved with Mayan-style glyphs.
- **Geology:** Cannot identify the red stone.
- **Language (Mayan) / Anthropology / Archaeology:** Although similar to Mayan writing, the symbols here are not Mayan.
 - *GM Background:* They're Xoxul writing.
- **Occult + Leveraged Clue** (deciphering Xoxul writing in tombs): To puzzle out the core principles of the Create Hyperspace Gate spell (*Reference – Create Hyperspace Gate*).
- **Alvar Vasquez:** A member of the Dominguez expedition. See *NPC: Alvar Dominguez*.
 - If killed through the observatory slits, he might be found rotten or skeletal. (Or still alive but completely out of sync and possibly unaware of them.)
 - **Alvar's Notes:** Spent his time trapped in the observatory trying to figure out how the observatory worked, creating a haphazard (and brief) Cthulhu Mythos text.
 - *Skimming:* 30 minutes, 10 minutes with 1-point Library Use spend
 - *Prop:* *Alvar's Notes*
- **Triggering Sequence 2:** Can be either due to PCs casting the spell described in *Alvar's Notes* or Gol-Goroth may simply choose to begin pulling the observatory towards himself.

SEQUENCE 2: VISIONS OF GOLXUMAL

STABILITY LOSS

- Ask players to note their current Stability level.
- Entire sequence is treated as a single Stability Incident (unless they leave the observatory for a prolonged period of time). Maximum total Stability loss is, therefore, capped at the maximum *possible* loss (which is 10; or 11 if Gol-Goroth kills one of them).

LEAVING THE OBSERVATORY

- If the PCs are in control of the observatory's movements, this is relatively safe (barring local conditions in any given time period).
- If the PCs aren't in control of the observatory, then it could spin off along its track and leave a temporally stable observatory behind. (If that happens, they'll need to GET control of the observatory in order to force it back

CHICHEN XOxUL – 1523 AD

- Nighttime jungle around Chichen Xoxul with Xoxul dancing through flaring torchlight, singing guttural chants, and slaying.
 - The structures are immaculate. The jungle trimmed back.
- Screams and songs echo down from the altar room above.
- Spanish conquistador carried out of the tunnel leading to the tombs, up the steps, and into the altar room above to be sacrificed.
- **Leaving the Observatory:** Almost certainly spotted by Xoxul, although they might be able to slip out the back side of the pyramid.
- **2-point Mythos Stability Test**
- **Special – Xoxul Response:** Xoxul will attack if the PCs are spotted (leaving the pyramid, through the slits, etc.).
 - Trapdoor may open due to blood sacrifices above. Xoxul may attempt to grab investigators and drag them up through the trapdoor (Scuffling, difficulty 6).

GOLXUMAL – 1524 AD

- The structures of Chichen Xoxul stand in the midst of red alien foliage beneath a clear night sky dominated by a vast, purple gas giant which hangs amidst diamond-hard stars that twinkle not at all.
- Xoxul priests, warriors, and common folk mill around the purple dust of the plaza, play games on the ball court, and pray amongst the hall of columns – all seemingly unmoved by their utterly alien surroundings.
- A thin cloud of atmosphere seems to cling to the surface. It billows off in swirls like dry ice.
- All the sounds of life below are muffled and distant.
- **Physics:** Cannot explain the atmosphere and the movements of the Xoxul below suggest strange powers are operant upon the force of gravity.
- **Astronomy:** Recognizes nothing in the sky, except to say that the plan is an unknown gas giant.
- **2-Point Mythos Stability Test**
- **Special – Looking Up:** If players say they're looking up (to carefully observe the gas giant?) or after they've had a chance to process the plaza, they'll see Gol-Goroth:
 - A huge, frog-like body sucking on the pyramid's peak with a gargantuan mouth. With numerous, jaguar-like eyes it scouts the night sky beyond. Long-toed feet drape down the sides of the pyramid. A dozen enormous serpents seem to dangle from the frog-like mouth, as if trying to escape.
 - **6-Point Mythos Stability Test**
- **Leaving the Observatory:**
 - **Altar Room:** An enormous, sucking mouth, filled with catlike teeth and writhing serpent-headed tongues of all sizes. At its center is a dreadful, blackened beak.
 - If the door is immediately shut, no one is attacked.
 - Otherwise, random character is snatched up by snake-headed tongues and speared with a prehensile yellow fang. (Whether this kills the target or not, Gol-Goroth's attention has been gained. Begin the Audience with Gol-Goroth; the lightning will spring from the speared investigator and along the fang to strike the others.)
 - **10-Point Mythos Stability Test**
 - **Slits:** Stealth (difficulty 3) to slip out without being noticed by the Xoxul.
 - This is the time period in which Francisco de la Belalcazar is being held in the dungeons beneath the pyramid.
- *GM Background:* The buildings here are not duplicates of Chichen Xoxul. It's the *same place* in two different locations simultaneously. (Only the observatory itself is physically doubled, with different versions of itself sliding between locations and times like the carts in a rollercoaster.)

CHICHEN XOXUL – NEAR FUTURE

- The familiar green jungles of earth and the vine-tangled buildings of Chichen Xoxul.
- But it's raining a thin haze of blood from a sky of purple-black clouds. A growling roar echoes high above and yellow-green lightning dances amidst the roiling thunderheads. Strange sounds – music? – echo through the jungle trees, which whip back and forth in an unfelt wind.
- If they wait around, a rain of fire will begin and thick ash will float down from the sky like ebon snowflakes. The temperature slowly rises in the observatory and they'll take -2 damage from the heat.
 - *GM Note:* If they haven't learned the control ritual, they'll be forced to wait around while the heat rises. If they spend this time learning the ritual, they'll be able to get out just after taking damage for the first time.
- **5-point Mythos Stability Test**
- **Leaving the Observatory:** The blood is boiling hot (and the later rain of fire is definitely bad news). Suffer +0 damage repeatedly until driven back inside by the heat.

GOLXUMAL – 1935

- The structures of Chichen Xoxul stand in ruins. On the horizon, the huge green flames of an unearthly forest fire cast ultramine hues that sear the eyes across the red alien foliage. A vast field of smoldering ash shows where some other fire has recently ripped through the area immediately around Chichen Xoxul and the landscape is pockmarked with craters.
- In the night sky above, a vast, purple gas giant hangs in the middle of brilliant white stars. In the center of that impossible mass a giant eye gazes down. Or perhaps it is multiple eyes, twisting away in fractal eddies which dance amidst the purple gases? Or a black hurricane which tears apart the world above; its implication of destructive forces beyond the ken of man seeming to sweep low across the landscape before you.
- In the plaza of Chichen Xoxul, an aspect of Gol-Goroth lies half-buried in the ashes – a fatty, frog-like body with too many tails, gathered under tattered black wings. Its mouth gives off steam in the cold. It slurps up ashes and bones with its serpent-headed tongues. Smaller versions of the same creature cling to its body like suckling bats.
- Six or eight Daughters of Gol-Goroth stalk the perimeter of Chichen Xoxul, their heavy paws causing plumes of ash to rise. As the Observatory arrives, their heads swivel – six or eight jaguar-like eyes in toad-like sockets locking upon the slits in the Pyramid’s side.
- **Leaving the Observatory:** Pushing past the seals of the red-stone shell creates a howling vortex of wind and cold, freezing the appendage that breaches the barrier (+1 damage).
 - The roof of the altar room is gone.
 - *GM Note:* There’s no atmosphere out there any more.
- **Special – Controlling the Observatory:** Gol-Goroth holds the Observatory here. The PCs cannot wrench it away until Gol-Goroth is done with them.
- **Special – Audience with Gol-Goroth:** The Daughters of Gol-Goroth will pad up the Pyramid and peer in through the slits (retaliating, briefly, only if attacked). Then they will sit back.
 - The Aspect of Gol-Goroth rises up out of the dust – dust and ash pluming and pouring from its body – and it flies up over the Pyramid, circling once, before lowering its bulk over the top if it.
 - The trap door dilates open. A huge, unblinking eye – reflecting all the lust, abysmal greed, obscene cruelty, and monstrous evil that has stalked the sons of men since their ancestors moved blind and hairless in the treetops – looks down. In that gaze is mirrored all the unholy things and vile secrets that sleep in the cities under the sea, and that skulk from the light of day in the blackness of primordial caverns.
 - Lightning bursts from its iris. Begin the Audience with Gol-Goroth.
 - **10-point Mythos Stability Test**

GOLXUMAL DESTROYED – DISTANT FUTURE

- The Observatory floats in the midst of thick gases and weightless rocks and dust in deep space.
- No pyramid. No moon. No colossal gas giant.
- **Astronomy 1:** Based on the stars, this is the same place.
- **2-Point Mythos Stability Test** (4-points if they realize it's the same place and an entire world has been destroyed around them)
- **Leaving the Observatory:** That would be a really bad idea. (Use *Golxumal 1935*.)
- *GM Background:* In this, one possible future, Azathoth's gaze has destroyed Golxumal. Gol-Goroth has passed from this place.

CHICHEN XOXUL - 1935

- The present day, although possibly hours or days after they left.

SEQUENCE 3: AN AUDIENCE WITH GOL-GOROTH



COMMUNICATION: Gol-Goroth does not speak.

- **Memory Manifestations:** The investigators' psyches are intermixed and tangles as Gol-Goroth paws through them. The idea he's attempting to communicate either comes from a gestalt of these memories or by transforming/combining them. (Go around the table and ask each player to share a memory of the specified type from their investigators' past.)
- **Visions:** Simply showing them a vision of what he wants them to know.
- **Appropriated Bodies:** Taking control of one or more investigators and speaking through them.
- *GM Background:* The Xoxul refer to this as the *shantak* (it's another way in which the "fingers" of Gol-Goroth manifest).

CONTACT: Arcs of white lightning pass from Gol-Goroth to the investigators.

- **Appropriated Bodies:** *Truth? Let us see your truths.* (All investigators speak at once while linked by lightning.)
- **Memory Manifestation:** What is the worst thing you have ever done?
 - There is the clear sense that Gol-Goroth is holding each investigator up to the light for an inspection.

DESIRE: Gol-Goroth wants to know what they want.

- **Memory Manifestation:** What is your greatest desire in life?

LIAR FROM BEYOND: The Liar From Beyond is hated throughout the cosmos for stealing the names of gods and hiding behind their legends.

- **Vision:** Of the mouths hollowing out the core of the world.
- **Memory Manifestation:** What was a time when something precious was stolen from you?
- **Appropriated Body:** The Liar has usurped my place. / Stolen my name. / Worn my power as slander.

MAW OF THE MOUTH: The Maw of the Mouth lies within the Devouring Mountain.

- **Memory Manifestation:** What have you hidden from?
- **Appropriated Body:** “The Maw of the Mouth lies within the Devouring Mountain.”
- *GM Note:* Gol-Goroth does not know the identity of the Devouring Mountain.

ASPECT OF GOL-GOROTH: If summoned by the investigators at the body of the Liar, Gol-Goroth will do battle with it.

- **Vision:** The investigator’s mouth gapes wide and the great bulk of Gol-Goroth pours down it.
- **Offer:** The offer Gol-Goroth is making is clear. Will they accept? If they do, their mind is blasted with the knowledge of how to cast Summon Aspect of Gol-Goroth.
 - *Note:* Run this as a prisoner’s dilemma (everyone writes their answer down separately and reveals simultaneously).
 - **2-point Mythos Stability Test** (this is separate from the general cap for this scene)
 - *Prop: Reference – Summon Aspect of Gol-Goroth*

DO NOT RETURN: If any of the investigators return to Chichen Xoxul, they will die.

- **Memory Manifestation:** What is your greatest fear?
- **Optional Vision:** Legions of Xoxul standing upon the plains of Golxumal, surrounding them.

OTHER QUESTIONS

These are questions which Gol-Goroth does not volunteer, but which the PCs are likely to ask.

TRUE NAME OF THE LIAR: Gol-Goroth does not know the true name of the Liar.

- **Memory Manifestation:** What is the greatest lie you ever told?

PRISONER OF GLAAKI: Although Gol-Goroth does not know the identity of the Liar From Beyond, he CAN identify the Prisoner of Glaaki.

- **Vision:** See all the many mouths of the world simultaneously and overwhelmingly, as if through infinitely faceted eyes. And they all whisper the true name of the Prisoner of Glaaki.

THE EYE OF AZATHOTH: The giant eye in the gas giant above Golxumal is the gaze of Azathoth.

- **Vision:** Every atom of the investigator’s body is smashed apart and reduced, one atom at a time, to absolute nothingness. And in the soundless echo of that nothing a name is heard through the absence of it being spoken: AZATHOTH.

FLOATING 1: BEAST OF GOLXUMAL

DAUGHTER OF GOL-GOROTH

- *Prop: Photos of the Spawn of Gol-Goroth*
 - Give a separate photo to each character. They all perceive the creature differently.
- A blackened, green toad the size of a small car, with crumpled bat wings on its back and a mouth full of jaguar teeth.
- Or: Lean and sleek like a panther, with reptilian scales and a single, bulbous eye.
- Or: A long serpentine tongue that ends in a sticky, steaming proboscis.
- Or: Lined with a multitude of eyes, the foremost yellow like a jaguar's, a second set running along its flanks toad-like in their gelatinous glare.

SPATIAL ANOMALY

- The daughters around Chichen Xoxul exist only partially in our space-time. It can appear out of mid-air (in a warping of bright, almost blinding light), flicker in and out of sight, walk through trees, etc.
- Cannot pass through the walls of the buildings of Chichen Xoxul itself (since those exist in both planes of existence).

FEEDING

- Daughters of Gol-Goroth attempt to swallow mauled prey whole, their gullets delivering it whole unto Gol-Goroth.

BEAST OF GOLXUMAL: Athletics 14, Health 30, Scuffling 20

Hit Threshold: 5 (large, but sometimes insubstantial)

Alertness Modifier: +1

Stealth Modifier: +1

Weapon: +5 (bite), +1 (caustic tongue)

Armor: -2 vs. any (tough hide and spatial anomaly)

Stability Loss: +3

FLOATING 2: ATTACK OF THE XOXUL

XOXUL

- Ghostly men in Mayan-like armor made from bundled cotton and draped with jaguar hides.
 - Visually strobe in and out of existence.
- Wield long spears, tall bows, and woven garrotes.
- Carry shields adorned with flayed human faces.
- **Physics 1:** The Xoxul are not ghosts. They are out of spatial and temporal synch with the investigators. (2-point Mythos Stability test upon realizing this.)

APPEARANCE

- Simply appear and disappear out of thin air anywhere in the vicinity of Chichen Xoxul.
 - **3-point Mythos Stability test**
- Always preceded by the sounds of their war cries.
- Group of 3 or 4 dozen.
- PCs may notice that each of them have a round, puckered scar somewhere on their torso (with a matching scar on their back).
 - *GM Background:* Every Xoxul is taken through observatory and “tested” by the aspect of Gol-Goroth on Golxumal (who stabs them with one of its yellowed fangs). Those who are found “worthy” survive with the scar. The rest are consumed.

ATTACK

- They are shooting their arrows and throwing their spears from across a gulf of years.
- On a miss, the weapons often just pass through their target (it feels like a static electric shock).
 - **Forensics:** Weapons left behind are new in their construction, not ancient.
 - **Archaeology / Anthropology:** The weapons are contemporary in style and construction to Mayan weapons circa 1500.

XOXUL: Hit Threshold 5, Health 3

Weapon: -1 (spear or arrow)

Special: Killing them seems to have little effect. Their numbers are not diminished the next time they appear.

FRANCISCO DE LA VEGA



RESEARCH

- **Oral History:** He's a land baron and former henequen-farmer who lives in a mansion on the outskirts of Merida.
- **Law / Bureaucracy:** Owns the lands where Chichen Xoxul supposedly stands. Legally it's trespassing to go on that ground without his permission. He's filed numerous reports of bandits operating out there and frequently reports having some of them shot and killed (which is basically his legal right).

APPEARANCE: Movie-star handsome in a tailored suit. Old-fashioned haircut. Wears a pink rose on the left breast of his white silk shirt.

- *Prop: Photo of Francisco de la Vega*

ROLEPLAYING NOTES:

- Relaxed and languid.
- Holds a brandy snifter in his right hand, swirling gently.
- Presses hard to hear stories of their "adventures". (He will play the part of "provincial recluse" who just wants to hear about the excitement outside of sleepy Merida.)

BACKGROUND

- Middle-aged plutocrat. A land baron and former henequen-farmer who lives on a mansion on the outskirts of Merida. He owns vast tracts of the Yucatan interior.
- Inheritor of the Xoxul Cult, a hidden cult once peopled by outcasts from the Maya and that later absorbed 19th century occultists like Francisco's parents. It is the job of this cult to keep outsiders away from Chichen Xoxul and to protect it for the return of the Xoxul, who they believe will carry back with them great powers and knowledge gleaned from study with Gol-Goroth. (Their actual knowledge has dimmed considerably due to centuries of distance from the original Gol-Goroth worshippers.)

CLUES

- **Sancho Dominguez:** Dominguez came to him and requested permission to cross his lands. Francisco was hesitant to do so: Dominguez was clearly an amateur and the jungles are dangerous for “that sort”. Dominguez was particularly persistent, however, and even made a generous donation to the Museum of Anthropology (which Francisco sits on the board of), so Francisco finally relented.
 - **Any Interpersonal 1:** To get Francisco to “admit” that Dominguez told him that he sought Chichen Xoxul.
- **Francisco de la Belalcazar:** Francisco is named after Francisco de la Belalcazar, a 16th century conquistador. The family story is that Belalcazar got his great-great-grandmother pregnant before disappearing into the jungle and never being seen again. (A cautionary tale for those who do not respect the dark interior of the peninsula.)
- **Guides:** Recommends Guillermo Castillo as a guide for that region. (“No one knows it better than Guillermo.”)
 - Castillo has actually been to Chichen Xoxul. “He’s told me about it. Just a few crumbled walls and an old well, I’m afraid. Guillermo thinks it might actually be colonial, not native at all. Perhaps constructed as a way-station for travelers in the 16th or early 17th century.”

NOTES

- “I mean no offense, but I hope that no one comes looking for your expedition in the future.”
- Wants to know why the investigators want to cross his land / go to Chichen Xoxul. His response depends on whether they tell the truth / how many points they spend on the lie:
 - **Truth / No Spend:** Ambush has 4 members per investigator.
 - **Spend 1:** Ambush has 3 members per investigator.
 - **Spend 2+:** Ambush has only 2 member per investigator.

FRANCISCO DE LA VEGA: Athletics 7, Firearms 4, Health 6, Riding 5, Scuffling 5, Weapons 7
Weapon: +1 (long, delicate sword)

GUILLERMO CASTILLO



APPEARANCE: A khaki vest with an accumulation of stains. A tangle of brown-black hair. A deep scar on his right arm.

- *Prop: Photo of Guillermo Castillo*

ROLEPLAYING NOTES

- Arches one eyebrow.
- Frowns constantly, but shrugs casually.
- Badmouths Pablo Garza and Rick Luke (hiring process and on expedition if multiple guides are hired).
- Intransigent. (“Things cost what they cost.”)
- Idly tells horror stories of broken bones, poison berries, and venomous snakes. (“I guess my point is that the jungle is a dangerous place.”)

BACKGROUND

- 41 years old, and the most experienced of the three available guides.
- Member of the Xoxul Cult.

NOTES

- **Hiring – Credit Rating 2**
- **Porters:** 6 porters
 - All members of the Xoxul Cult.
- **Chichen Xoxul:** He’s been there, although he’ll claim it’s just some moldering and broken walls. (Little of real interest.)
- Makes secret offerings to Gol-Goroth when in certain parts of the jungle.

GUILLERMO CASTILLO: Athletics 8, Conceal 3, Driving 4, Filch 2, Firearms 6, First Aid 3, Fleeing 4, Health 5, Mechanical Repair 3, Riding 3, Stability 6, Scuffling 8, Sense Trouble 4, Stealth 4, Weapons 4

Investigative Abilities: Archaeology 1, Astronomy 1, Bargain 1, Biology 1, Credit Rating 2, Intimidation 2, Languages 2 (English, Mayan), Occult 1, Outdoorsman 3, Reassurance 1, Streetwise 2

Alertness Modifier: +1

Stealth Modifier: +1

Weapon: +1 (shotgun), +1 (machete)

PABLO GARZA



APPEARANCE: Missing his left little finger. Sharp cheekbones. Short-cropped black hair above dark, youthful features.

- *Prop: Photo of Pablo Garza*

ROLEPLAYING NOTES

- Looks around before he speaks.
- Fingers the gold crucifix he wears.
- Incredibly superstitious, but torn by a desire to prove himself unafraid.
- Delivers increasingly dire warnings as PCs approach Chichen Xoxul.

BACKGROUND

- Jungle guide who has journeyed over a broad range of the Yucatan. Has a little experience in the specific area near Chichen Xoxul, but grew up near there.
- 33 years old. Honest man covering up a bit of fear borne of wisdom.
- Has a large extended family. Most of his parents' generation fought in the waning days of the Caste War (on the side of Mayan independence, before the British "betrayed" them and allowed Mexico to annex their lands).

NOTES

- Doesn't speak English.
- **Hiring – Credit Rating 1**
- **Chichen Xoxul:** He grew up in a village on the outskirts of the "Xoxul land" and grew up hearing their black legends. He has a fairly good idea of the rough area that Chichen Xoxul can be found in.
- **Porters:** 1 porter per investigator
 - Collected from local villages (very likely to panic due to superstition)

PABLO GARZA: Athletics 8, Driving 4, Firearms 4, First Aid 4, Fleeing 6, Health 6, Health 4, Mechanical Repair 2, Riding 5, Stability 4, Scuffling 3, Sense Trouble 6, Stealth 5, Weapons 3

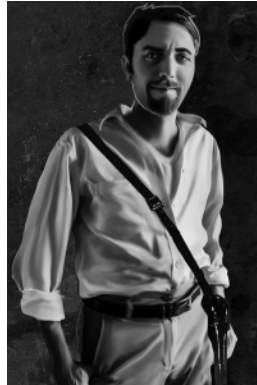
Investigative Abilities: Architecture 1, Bargain 1, Biology 1, Craft 1, Credit Rating 1, Flattery 1, History 1, Languages 1 (Mayan), Outdoorsman 3, Streetwise 1

Alertness Modifier: +1

Stealth Modifier: +1

Weapons: +0 (light revolver), +1 (machete)

RICK LUKE



APPEARANCE: Tight pants with a loose, cream-colored shirt. Goatee. Wears a pistol in a shoulder-slung holster.

- *Prop: Photo of Guillermo Castillo*

ROLEPLAYING NOTES

- Shakes everyone's hands.
- Picks his teeth.
- Bemused by things that confuse him.

BACKGROUND

- American explorer and adventurer looking for a breakthrough.
- In Merida by chance, having just come back from taking pictures in Uxmal.
- Read Arthur Cartwright's book about Chichen Xoxul (*Into the Yucatan Peninsula*) and is completely fascinated by it. He thinks he's pin-pointed its location, along with a number of other "lost sites of antiquity". And he's eager to find someone to front the costs of an expedition to prove his theories.

NOTES

- Has a copy of *Prop: Into the Yucatan Peninsula*.
- **Hiring – Credit Rating 3 or Bargain 1 / Credit Rating 2**
- **Chichen Xoxul:** Conducted extensive ethno-interviews with local villagers. Thinks he's managed to nail down the approximate location of Chichen Xoxul.
- **Porters:** Hires twice as many as necessary.
 - Merida-area mestizos who aren't afraid of the folklore around the place.
 - **Outdoorsman / Bargain:** To convince him otherwise.

RICK LUKE: Athletics 8, Driving 5, Firearms 5, Filch 4, First Aid 3, Fleeing 4, Health 5, Mechanical Repair 4, Piloting 3, Riding 3, Stability 5, Scuffling 5, Sense Trouble 4, Stealth 4, Weapons 4

Investigative Abilities: Anthropology 1, Archaeology 1, Art History 1, Bargain 1, Biology 1, Credit Rating 5, History 1, Languages 4 (English, French, Mayan, Spanish), Library Use 1, Oral History 1, Outdoorsman 3, Photography 2, Reassurance 2, Streetwise 1

Alertness Modifier: +1

Weapon: +1 (M1911 pistol), +1 (machete)

FRANCISCO DE LA BELALCAZAR

APPEARANCE: Wears shreds of his Cuban-made, Spanish-style finery and a years-long beard. But he appears as a ghost: Vaguely alight (as if illuminated by some unseen light which doesn't touch his surroundings), flickering in and out like a stuttering film image.

ROLEPLAYING NOTES

- Sobs easily.
- Beats his forehead with his hands.
- Responds to sounds that the PCs cannot hear.

BACKGROUND

- Francisco de la Belalcazar was a Spanish conquistador who came to the Yucatan in 1518, during the early days of Spanish exploration. Hearing legendry of the Xoxul, he decided to seek out their “lost” city. Instead, he and his men were captured by them.
- His men are fed as sacrifices to Gol-Goroth, but for some reason it selects him as worthy and the Xoxul put him in the cells beneath the Pyramid on Golxumal.
- He’s been held prisoner for roughly a year. For him, it is the year 1524.

CLUES

- **Other World:** “The place where I am is not where you are. They touch, but they are far apart. The sky here is always night and filled with some enormous and strange orb. Do you know where I am? Can I ever come back?”
- **Fate of the Expedition:** “My men... are gone. The savages pull me out of this cell so that I can witness them being sacrificed to their grisly god. The Xoxul sacrifice them in order to go back and forth between their temples. They are the lucky ones, though. Off to Heaven. I’ll never be free of this place. Never.”
- **God of the Xoxul:** “The Xoxul god is real. Real! But it is not a god, I think, for it hungers for flesh and petty attentions and flattery in a way that nothing divine should hunger. Yes, I think it is petty.” [to the ceiling] “Do you hear me, you damnable monster?! You are a whelp!” [breaks down sobbing]
- **Xoxul Refuge:** The Xoxul have not taken him out to witness any more sacrifices lately. He believes they have chosen to withdraw from the realms of men. “They speak of the horrific, blasted landscape in which they live now as a refuge from the Xulubchaa. I do not know what it means, but they clearly fear it.”
 - **Languages (Maya) / Anthropology:** Xulubchaa can be translated as “demon death”. Xulub meaning “demon” or “horns”; chaa meaning to take, to carry off (to kill), with a secondary meaning of finding something which is lost.

NOTES

- The PCs appear as ghosts to him.
- If he’s rescued, then he might still go completely insane upon viewing Gol-Goroth shortly thereafter. (Alternatively, a scene where the two Franciscos have to deal with each other could be interesting.)

ALVAR VASQUEZ



APPEARANCE: Balding, egg-shaped head with an ill-advised beard of pale brown hair framing over-sized ears. Wears suspenders (although one has burst free and drags around behind him).

ROLEPLAYING NOTES

- Frantic to escape, but terrified of leaving the observatory.
- Likely to turn violent at any moment.
- Manic grin and tittering giggles.

BACKGROUND

- A dabbler in the occult, Alvar Vasquez was hand-picked by Sancho Dominguez for the Yucatan expedition.
- When the expedition was attacked by the Beast of Golxumal, he managed to escape into the observatory.
- For him, only a few days have passed since the attack (or possibly less than a day; he's lost track of time and he doesn't remember sleeping, although the sun has risen and set several times). He's spent that time studying the observatory, trying to figure out how to control it.

CLUES

- **Dominguez Expedition:** The expedition was sponsored by Jonathan Brooks in Mexico City. Vasquez knows him as a minor businessman who was willing to throw money around to make this happen. Vasquez found the research about "Chichen Xoxul" fascinating, though, and was eager to find it. Was.
- **Fate of the Expedition:** Can provide a fractured account of being ambushed in the jungle and escaping onto the plaza. (The ambushers didn't pursue.) They set up camp, spent half a day studying the ruins. Then they were attacked by huge bears or Yucatanian tigers or something. Alvar ran for the pyramid and then watched the last of his comrades getting cut down on the plaza.
- **The Observatory:** "It moves when you're not looking. It KNOWS when you're not looking. You have to keep a careful watch or THEY will slip through the slits."

ALVAR VASQUEZ: Firearms 4, Health 3, Magic 3, Scuffling 4, Stability -6/6, Weapons 2
Weapon: +1 (heavy pistol), +1 (machete)

STAT SHEET FOR THE YUCATAN

FRANCISCO DE LA VEGA: Athletics 7, Firearms 4, Health 6, Riding 5, Scuffling 5, Weapons 7

Weapon: +1 (long, delicate sword)

GUILLERMO CASTILLO: Athletics 8, Conceal 3, Driving 4, Filch 2, Firearms 6, First Aid 3, Fleeing 4, Health 5, Mechanical Repair 3, Riding 3, Stability 6, Scuffling 8, Sense Trouble 4, Stealth 4, Weapons 4

Investigative Abilities: Archaeology 1, Astronomy 1, Bargain 1, Biology 1, Credit Rating 2, Intimidation 2, Languages 2 (English, Mayan), Occult 1, Outdoorsman 3, Reassurance 1, Streetwise 2

Alertness Modifier: +1

Stealth Modifier: +1

Weapon: +1 (shotgun), +1 (machete)

PABLO GARZA: Athletics 8, Driving 4, Firearms 4, First Aid 4, Fleeing 6, Health 6, Health 4, Mechanical Repair 2, Riding 5, Stability 4, Scuffling 3, Sense Trouble 6, Stealth 5, Weapons 3

Investigative Abilities: Architecture 1, Bargain 1, Biology 1, Craft 1, Credit Rating 1, Flattery 1, History 1, Languages 1 (Mayan), Outdoorsman 3, Streetwise 1

Alertness Modifier: +1

Stealth Modifier: +1

Weapons: +0 (light revolver), +1 (machete)

RICK LUKE: Athletics 8, Driving 5, Firearms 5, Filch 4, First Aid 3, Fleeing 4, Health 5, Mechanical Repair 4, Piloting 3, Riding 3, Stability 5, Scuffling 5, Sense Trouble 4, Stealth 4, Weapons 4

Investigative Abilities: Anthropology 1, Archaeology 1, Art History 1, Bargain 1, Biology 1, Credit Rating 5, History 1, Languages 4 (English, French, Mayan, Spanish), Library Use 1, Oral History 1, Outdoorsman 3, Photography 2, Reassurance 2, Streetwise 1

Alertness Modifier: +1

Weapon: +1 (M1911 pistol), +1 (machete)

PORTERS: Athletics 5, Firearms 2, Fleeing 6, Health 2, Scuffling 4, Weapons 2

Weapon: -1 (improvised club or walking stick), +1 (machete)

ALVAR VASQUEZ: Firearms 4, Health 3, Magic 3, Scuffling 4, Stability -6/6, Weapons 2

Weapon: +1 (heavy pistol), +1 (machete)

AMBUSHERS: Athletics 6, Firearms 5, Health 4, Scuffling 5, Weapons 5

BEAST OF GOLXUMAL: Athletics 14, Health 30, Scuffling 20

Hit Threshold: 5 (large, but sometimes insubstantial)

Alertness Modifier: +1

Stealth Modifier: +1

Weapon: +5 (bite), +1 (caustic tongue)

Armor: -2 vs. any (tough hide and spatial anomaly)

Stability Loss: +3

XOXUL: Hit Threshold 5, Health 3

Weapon: -1 (spear or arrow)

Special: Killing them seems to have little effect. Their numbers are not diminished the next time they appear.