

# **ACT III – THIBET**

## **THIBET MOOD**

### **HOPEFUL BEATS**

- A colorful bird you don't recognize – a lark of some kind? – alights on a branch near you. It sits still for a brief moment, looking at you, then chirps out a short – well, you'd swear it was an encouragement – and then flaps away.
- The smell of sizzling meat and vegetables wafts through the air, and then you hear them cooking as well.
- A brisk motion at the edge of your vision makes you look up, and a colorful string of prayer flags whips in the wind – blue, white, red, green, yellow – reminders of the five pure lights.
- In a small alcove you spy a single burning candle and a small golden statue of Ganesha, Remover of Obstacles and Lord of Beginnings. With any luck, the small Hindu shrine augurs well for the success of your endeavors.

### **SINISTER BEATS**

- You look up at the solid ceiling of grey clouds above. It suddenly occurs to you that you haven't seen the sun in days. You wonder for a moment, bitterly, whether it's there at all.
- On the road, you pass the remains of what was once a shed where a shepherd's animals could take shelter. Now it is fallen, part of the rubble gone, probably dragged away to be burned. Everything erected by mankind comes to naught, it occurs to you.
- You hear gunshots in the distance. Soldiers, it turns out, firing their rifles at nothing in particular, joking and probably drunk.
- You see something red in the mud and bend over to pick it up. A wood-block print on red cloth, a torn scrap of a prayer flag, tied out in some better place, on some happier occasion, now torn and trodden upon.

## **THIBETAN WARDROBE**

- Clothing made from the yaks herded throughout the Himalayans.
- Wool tunics and loose pants form the basic layer for nomads and town dwellers.
- In mountains and colder months, heavy wool coats – lined with yak fur.
- Boots of yak fur keep feet dry. White cylindrical fur hats.
- Monks wear robes of orange and red.
- Wealthy adorn garb with multicolored coats, beads, and aprons.

## **THIBETAN NPC NAMES**

Tenzin, Tashi, Dolma, Passang, Pema, Metok, Dhundup, Lhamo, Sangyal, Yangkey, Tsomo, Rabten, Phuntsok, Rabgyal, Rigzin, Jangchup, Tsundue, Jorden, Bhakto, Namgyal Wangchuk, Khando, Rangdol, Nyima, Pemba, Dawa, Tsering, Bhuti, Konchok, Gyatso, Kelsang, Karma, Gyurmey, Rinchen, Namdol, Choedon, Chokey, Rigsang, Sonam, Padma, Paljor, Namdak, Kunga, Norbu, Chokphel, Dorjee, Jungney, Dema, Damchoe, Dickey, Dolkar, Lhawang, Legshey, Dharma, Bhuchung, Lhakpa, Samten, Choenyi, Samdup, Ngonga

**THIBET SPINE**

**SEQUENCE 1: JOURNEY TO MT. KAILASH**

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**REVELATION LIST – NPCs**

**PANNU SINGH**

## SEQUENCE 1: JOURNEY TO MT. KAILASH

### FLYING TO INDIA

- *Prop: Photo of the Silver Saber Flying in Tibet*
- There are no airfields in Nepal.
  - **Piloting (difficulty 9):** To land a plane on an open stretch of plateau 2-3 days from Mt. Kailash. Taking off again is another Piloting test (difficult 7).
- Imperial Airways will get you to Delhi. Then you can try to directly cross the Transhimalayan Mountains or circle far to the east through Kathmandu and up onto the southern edge of the Tibetan plateau.

### PLANNING THE EXPEDITION

- **Organizing:** Outdoorsman to efficiently organize. Or hire a guide. Or find a group of pilgrims to travel with.
- **Hiring a Guide:**
  - **Theology / Oral History / Anthropology:** Climbing Mt. Kailash is forbidden. Finding the services of an experienced guide who's still unprincipled enough to help them do that is difficult.
  - **Streetwise:** A growing collection of guides who state that any attempt to ascend Mt. Kailash is to violate the natural order and invite death. "Only a madman would agree to lead such an expedition!" (Do you know any madmen? "Well, Pannu Singh... but keep my name out of it.)
  - See *NPC: Pannu Singh*.
- **Joining Pilgrims:**
  - **Oral History:** To find a group of pilgrims in Delhi making the Transhimalayan journey. May have to wait 1d3 days for them to be ready to leave.
  - **Travel With Pilgrims:** No mitigation test possible. It takes the full 14 days from Mahendranagar to Burang as the pilgrims travel with excruciating speed (stopping at innumerable roadside shrines to pray, meditate, hang prayer flags, etc.).
  - **Suspicious:** Conceal test to hide the climbing equipment they're carrying or 1-point Reassurance to convince them it has some other purpose. Otherwise +1 difficulty to Stealth check to avoid being detected going up Mt. Kailash.
- **Supplies:** 1-point Credit Rating spend per week of supplies.
- **Porters:** 1 porter per investigator + guide. For an expedition lasting 3+ weeks, double the number of porters. 1-point Credit Rating spend per porter.
  - **Bargain:** Reduce Credit Rating spend by 1.
  - **Bargain 1:** ½ Credit Rating spend.
- **Charges / 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

## NAVIGATION - TRANSHIMALAYAN

- **Delhi to Mahendranagar:** 1 day
  - Take trucks from Mahendranagar (modern day Bhimdatta). The roads are dusty. Vehicles are rare.
- **Sarda River Valley:**
  - **Outdoorsman Mitigation Test:** 14 days - result, minimum 1 week
  - **Outdoorsman 2:** Without a spend, everyone suffers -2 damage from exposure. (Spend is made by guide/pilgrims if traveling with them.)
  - *Prop: Transhimalayan 1 – Looking Back*
  - *Prop: Transhimalayan 2 – Looking Ahead*
  - They leave the tropical lowland climate of central India behind, climbing through forests that become colder and drier (and sparser) the farther they go.
  - Realize that they've left the foothills behind and are now deep in the Transhimalayans. Switchback mountain trails take them high above the gorge of the river below, before coming back down into broad valleys.
  - With hard frost on the ground, their path leaves the river and cuts through the mountains.
  - *Prop: Transhimalayan 3 – Himalayas Ahead*
  - They enter the Lipulekh Pass, marking their transition from India to Thibet, as it begins to snow – the new fall joining prodigious drifts from previous snowfalls which haven't melted.
  - On the far side of the Lipulekh Pass they emerge from the snow line, and then – at the lip of a valley – they can look down into the small village of Burang.
  - See *Burang*, below.
- **Burang to Lake Manasrovar:** ½ day
  - See *Lake Manasarovar*, below.
- **Lake Manasrovar to Darchen:** ½ day
  - See *Darchen*, below.

## NAVIGATION - KATHMANDU

- **Delhi to Kathmandu:** 4-5 days
  - 1,000 km by truck through the sweltering roads of India, gradually climbing up into a drier and cooler climb
- **Kathmandu to Burang:** 20 days
  - *Prop: Kathmandu 1 – Leaving Kathmandu*
  - You can push the trucks a bit farther up into the smaller settlements along the southern edge of the Thibetan plateau, but eventually you run out of road.
  - Now it's 1,000 km back to Burang, making your way through the relatively clear paths between the Transhimalayan mountains on your left and the Himalayan peaks on your right.
  - The scattered trees are hardy shrubs or evergreens – pine, cypress, fir – interrupted by sweeping grasslands. Civilization seems impossibly distant.
  - *Prop: Kathmandu 2 – Nomads on the Plateau*
  - As the altitude slowly climbs and the weather turns colder, you can see bharal (Himalayan blue sheep with curving horns and sure feet), tahr (wild goats), musk deer, and mainland serow (goat antelopes) grazing. These animals are occasionally accompanied by shepherds from the small, indigenous villages your route passes. The land is completely wild. Wild yak become your constant traveling companions.
  - *Prop: Kathmandu 3 – Yaks on the Plateau*
  - As the peaks of the Himalayans rear higher and higher, they reach the lip of a valley – and look down into the small village of Burang.
  - See *Burang*, below.
- **Burang to Lake Manasarovar:** ½ day
  - See *Lake Manasarovar*, below.
- **Lake Manasarovar to Darchen:** ½ day
  - See *Darchen*, below.

## BURANG

- *Prop: Photo of Burang*
- Burang is a staging point for travels to both Mt. Kailash and Lake Manasarovar.
- Carved into the cliffs above town:
  - Teglar Kar (“Lying Tiger Fort”) contains the Thibetan regional administrator.
  - Simbling Monastery, home to hundreds of monks. (Sudhana, an incarnation of Buddha, once lived in Burang.)
- Populous enough to purchase modest supplies, sleep in warm beds, and have a hot meal.

## LAKE MANASAROVAR

- *Prop: Photo of Lake Manasarovar*
- Highest freshwater lake in the world, just past 15,000 feet above sea level. 55 mile circumference and surface area of 120 miles.
- Pilgrims from India, Thibet, Nepal, and farther come to drink or bathe in its waters on their way to Mt. Kailash.
  - **Theology / Anthropology:** The name derives from Sanskrit. “Manas” meaning mind and “sarovara” meaning lake. According to Hindu religion, the lake was first created in the mind of Lord Brahma and manifested on Earth as a perfect reflection of that mind. The lake is the personification of purity, and one who drinks water from the lake will go to the abode of Shiva after death; they are cleansed of all sins committed over even a hundred lifetimes.
- **Site of Pilgrimage:** Each investigator gets from Lake Manasarovar what they expect.
  - Those expecting nothing, get nothing.
  - Those seeking clarity about their purpose gain insight.
  - Those wracked with guilt or shame who seek absolution experience it (unless they secretly believe they don’t deserve it).
- **Rest / Recovery:** This is the last opportunity for an Accelerated Refresh in the campaign. (Once the apocalypse starts, no place is safe.)

## DARCHEN

- Last stop for pilgrims before beginning their circumambulation of Mt. Kailash. Also a significant waystation for Thibetan shepherds and their flocks.
- Only two permanent buildings, both of which serve as housing for pilgrims. (The rest of the “settlement” are nomadic tents.)
- **Oral History 1:** To gain insight into the various groups and individuals passing through Darchen on pilgrimage to Mt. Kailash. Counts as 3-dedicated Stealth pool points for avoiding detection on their ascent.

## SEQUENCE 2: ASCENT OF MT. KAILASH

### CHOOSING A ROUTE

- **Scouting:**
  - 1 full day (circumambulating the entire peak)
  - **Outdoorsman 1 / Oral History 3:** To reduce the time to a few hours. It's difficult to learn ascent routes by asking people because (a) it's not allowed and (b) it's never been done.
- **The Route:** Safety 0, Speed 0, Stealth 0
  - **Trade-Off:** Trade points in one for points in another (e.g., +2 Safety, -2 Speed for a route that's safer but takes longer).
  - **Outdoorsman:** Increase each category by +1 for each point spend.
  - **Assistance:** Works like normal cooperation.
- **Outdoorsman:** Ascent will take a minimum of 2 days. The faster the Speed of the route, the easier it will be to make the ascent in the minimum time possible.

### ASCENDING UNOBSERVED

- **Stealth (difficulty 7 - Route Stealth):** On success, they avoid detection by the pilgrims. (Keep it tense: Group of prostrating pilgrims passing directly under them, etc.)
  - **Avoiding Pilgrims:** Most pilgrims leave Darchen to perform their circumambulation of the mountain in the morning. If the PCs leave at a different time, +1 to the Stealth test. (It's not fool-proof because many groups take multiple days and travel at different rates of speed.)
- **Pilgrim Pursuit:** Shouts of outrage, demands that they come back down, etc.
  - **Athletics Contest:** Pilgrims suffer -1 cumulative penalty on each check, due to lack of equipment.
  - *GM Note:* After giving up, the pilgrims will spread word about the sacrilegious heathens (which may cause problems during the return to civilization).
- *GM Background:* Some pilgrims walk around in a single day. Others walk a certain distance and stop to meditate, possibly repeating this several times over the course of several days. The most devout prostrate themselves, stretch out to lie flat, then crawl forward to the furthest point they reached and prostrate themselves again.

**PILGRIMS:** Athletics 6, Fleeing 2, Health 6, Scuffling 2

**Weapon:** -2 (fists)

### REACHING THE SUMMIT

- **Base Ascent Time:** 2 days
- **Climb:** Athletics test (difficulty 6 - Route Speed) as group test, to advance 1 day. On failure, remaining ascent time remains unchanged.
- **Safety:** Athletics test (difficulty 5 - Route Safety) for each individual. On failure, +0 damage.
  - **Outdoorsman 1 / Athletics (difficulty 7):** To prevent an unconscious climber from plunging off the mountain to their death.
- **Day of the New Moon:** If they haven't completed their climb by the end of his day, the effects described at the Summit begin during their climb. +1 difficulty on Athletics checks.

## THE SUMMIT

- **Achievement:** A breathtaking sunset across 8,000-meter peaks that stretch into the west as far as the eye can see.
  - Recover 2 Stability from the dramatic moment of success.

## A SPELL TO OPEN THE SKY

- Light pulses and dances along the skin of the caster. St. Elmo's fire dancing through a haze of blue-white Cherenkov radiation.
- It gathers. Intensifies. Pulses.
- The caster's head is thrown back and white light pours in a beam from their mouth towards the sky. It bursts through the clouds – blasting them back in a roiling circle to reveal bright points of stars above.
- And the stars *shift*.

## THE DEVOURING RAVINE OPENS

- **Quake:**
  - **Sense Trouble** (difficulty 5): To notice the tremors early enough to suggest finding stable ground. (If they do so, it's a 3-point dedicated pool that can be divided among the group for the physical challenges from the quakes.)
  - **Athletics** (difficulty 3): On failure, -2 damage.
  - **1-point Stability Test:** Earthquakes on mountains are scary.
- **Visions:** As the tremors continue (growing stronger), investigators experience visions in order of lowest to highest Stability pool.
  - **4-point Mythos Stability Test**
  - **Have Been Affected by Nectar:** Flash back to experiences while on Nectar. If they committed acts of violence, they must make Stability test (difficulty 4) to avoid attacking an ally.
  - **Have Hosted Mouths:** Explosive flavor and pervasive smell of wet flesh, of gory rotting, and of depraved sex across their entire bodies all at once. As if every inch of their skin had suddenly achieved the capacity for taste and smell. Health test (difficulty 4), or immediately throw up (-1 penalty to tests while state of sickness persists).
  - **All Investigators:** Chaotic visions of wheeling stars. Gnashing mouths. Wrinkled flesh. Horrific violations of loved ones.
- **Quakes Intensify:**
  - **Athletics** (difficulty 6): On failure, +1 damage (fall to ground, crushed by falling rock, pitched into crevasses or ravines).
- **The Devouring Ravine:** At the end of the quakes, they realize that a vast chasm that wasn't there before has opened in the side of the mountaintop.

## LOCATION 1: THE DEVOURING RAVINE

### EDGE OF THE DEVOURING RAVINE

- A billowing pillar of mossy Nectar-stink.
- It takes an effort of concentration to avoid becoming distracted by their own emotions and staring off into space, reflecting on the past, or simply wandering away.
- The true depth of the Devouring Ravine cannot be seen. It drops away into inky darkness
- It's about 50 yards across at its widest point, and perhaps four times that long.
- **Outdoorsman:** It's clear that rappelling down is the most sensible method of descent. (If they've somehow lost their equipment, +1 difficulty to Athletics checks and they'll have to make two checks per level of descent to climb the sheer rockface.)

### THE FINAL DESCENT

- There are four possible levels of descent. The deeper the investigators go, the more horrible the descent becomes (but the easier it is to destroy the Maw).
- **Athletics Test:** On a failure, +0 damage and make second Athletics test (difficulty = damage) to avoid falling.
  - **Outdoorsman 1 / Athletics** (difficulty 7): To prevent an unconscious climber from plunging off the mountain to their death.
- **Sense Trouble Test:** See *Descent Events*. Roll 1d6+level to randomly determine an event for each investigator on each level of descent.
- **Mythos Stability Tests:** These summarize the horrific totality of each level. (The entire descent is considered to be one event which caps at a maximum of 7 Stability loss. This does not include other sources of Stability loss – like, say, an aspect of Gol-Goroth being summoned.)
- **Falling in the Ravine:** Characters who fall in the ravine disappear into the depths below. Simply describe them as being “lost” and give the player and NPC to run if any are present.
  - Characters who fall down the ravine may find themselves being excreted from a Major Mouth somewhere else in the world (experiencing its death throes if the other investigators succeed).

Descent Level	Liar Inertia	Explosive Charges	Athletics Difficulty	Sense Trouble Difficulty	Mythos Stability Test
1	24	14	4	6	2-point
2	22	10	5	5	3-point
3	20	8	6	4	5-point
4	18	6	6	3	7-point

**Liar Inertia:** The Inertia pool the Liar uses to resist A Ritual to Dismiss Y'Golonac.

**Explosive Charges:** The number of explosive charges required to destroy the Maw.

**Athletics Difficulty:** The difficulty for Athletics check made to descend to that level.

**Sense Trouble Difficulty:** The difficulty for Sense Trouble checks made to descend to that level.

**Mythos Stability Test:** Amount of Stability potentially lost on that level.

### DESCENT LEVEL 1

- A persistent, audible hissing growing slowly in volume.
- The rock faces here are natural, but have strange crystalline deposits.
  - **Geology:** The crystalline deposits appear to be vughs – small cavities formed inside of the rock by tectonic activity that become filled with quartz, calcite, and other secondary minerals to form crystalline deposits. However, these crystals appear to have an inexplicable metallic component. Their distribution is also too regular, and their shapes seem curiously deliberate and well-formed.
  - **Occult + Leveraged Clue** (*Aklo Unveilings* from Severn Valley): Recognizes that the crystalline deposits form the symbols and sigils of the Aklo Unveilings.
  - *GM Background:* This is, quite literally, the Wall behind which Glaaki imprisoned the Liar. (Or, at least, one physical manifestation of its pan-dimensional presence.)

### DESCENT LEVEL 2

- As the hissing grows louder, it becomes clear that it is a voice forming distinct syllables. A chanting? An epithet? Almost against your will, your ears strain to pluck out the sounds.
- Minor mouths begin manifesting on the rock faces – snapping and snarling and hissing and spitting.
- A wall of Nectar mist fills the ravine below, roiling softly in unfelt winds.

### DESCENT LEVEL 3

- You can make out the syllables now. The brain-searing utterances of hate and pain and pernicious perversion which are the Tongue of Lies. Here, in the Ravine, it is more terrible than ever: For it doesn't emanate from below. It seems to come from all around. As if you were lodged in the horrific esophagus of some titanic creature. You can feel it vibrating through your fingers and the balls of your feet where they touch the walls.
- It's not just mouths now. The walls of the Ravine are puckered with other orifices: Strange sphincters. Open wounds that run with pus and Nectar. Streams of it cascading down the walls, leaving strange, mineral-like deposits in the wake of their torrid waterfalls.
- The mists of Nectar around you fill with rainbow hues, light refracting strangely – or, perhaps, impossibly – through the sweet-tasting particles hanging in the air. Like a plutonic grease slick.

### DESCENT LEVEL 4

- The Tongue of Lies begins clearly, audibly, soul-piercingly to utter their names. Like a mother welcoming her child home. Like a preacher haranguing its flock. Like an abusive lover scarring your flesh.
- The surface of the rocks have become porous – living pores that expand and contract as if responding to some unseen breath beneath the surface. The air is hot and sultry, and the rocky skein responds by sweating thick, viscous Nectar.
- **The Bottom:** The Nectar mist thickens until you can only see a few feet at best; often you have difficulty seeing your hand in front of your face. The sound of roaring wind rips through the crevasse around you; but you can't feel it on your skin, nor does it disturb the mist which has grown turgid and still. Your feet alight onto a slightly spongy surface, the substance of which it is perhaps best not to dwell upon. You have reached the bottom of the Ravine.

#### DESCENT EVENT 2-5 – NOTHING

- No grave or immediate peril on this section of the climb.
- **Sense Trouble Success:** +2 bonus to next level's Athletics or Sense Trouble test (player's choice).
- **Sense Trouble Failure:** No effect.

#### DESCENT EVENT 6 – MINOR MOUTH MANIFESTATION

- Minor Mouth manifests on wall, ledge, or spontaneously on their climbing gear.
- **Sense Trouble Success:** Athletics test (difficulty 4) to avoid the area of the Mouth. 2 in 6 chance that the Mouth still has Exhort, Searing Bile spit, or a Vicious Tongue that it can use.
- **Sense Trouble Failure:** Mouth gets a surprise attack and investigator must succeed on Fleeing test (difficulty 5) in order to disengage without the mouth attacking again. 2 in 6 chance the Mouth has manifested on their equipment.

#### DESCENT EVENT 7 – SEVERED LIFELINE

- Somewhere above, a Mouth materializes and bites through the investigator's rappelling line.
- **Sense Trouble Success:** Grabs the wall or leaps onto a ledge. Rope's frayed end goes plummeting past. +1 difficulty to Athletics check and must check twice at each descent level (unless they can attach to another line).
- **Sense Trouble Failure:** Athletics (difficulty 6) or fall into the ravine.

#### DESCENT EVENT 8 – REALITY / PERCEPTION SHIFT

- Enter area where the pull of gravity suddenly shifts or reality turns inside out.
- **Sense Trouble Success:** Athletics test (difficulty 4) or -1 damage from raking the wall of the ravine.
- **Sense Trouble Failure:** Athletics test (difficulty 4) or fall into the ravine.

#### DESCENT EVENT 9 – NECTAR PLUME

- Sprayed by a massive disgorgement of nectar from below or from some strange and surprising orifice on the Ravine wall.
- **Sense Trouble Success:** Athletics test (difficulty 4) to avoid being sprayed. (If addicted, must also succeed on Stability test to avoid *wanting* to sprayed.) On failure, same effect as a Sense Trouble failure.
- **Sense Trouble Failure:** Soaked by nectar – fills mouth and nose; skin tingles over the whole of their body. Affected as per taking a dose of nectar.

#### DESCENT EVENT 10 – MAJOR MOUTH MANIFESTS

- Major Mouth manifests from the Ravine wall.
- **Sense Trouble Success:** Athletics test (difficulty 6) to avoid the area where the Mouth is manifesting. 2 in 6 chance that the Mouth has Exhort, Searing Bile spit, or a Vicious Tongue that it can use.
- **Sense Trouble Failure:** Major Mouth gets a surprise attack and investigator must succeed on a Scuffling test (difficulty 6) in order to disengage the mouth attacking again. 2 in 6 chance that the Mouth has manifested AROUND them (automatic +6 damage and a surprise attack).

**MAJOR MOUTH:** Health 84, Scuffling 18

**Hit Threshold:** 3

**Alertness Modifier:** +0

**Stealth Modifier:** -2

**Weapon:** +6 (bite), +4 (tongue lash)

**Stability Loss:** +2

## RITUALS

- **RITUALS OF SELF-DENIAL:**
  - 1-point Rituals of Self-Denial spend grants 1d6-point dedicated General ability pool that can be used on any tests (including Stability) in the Devouring Ravine.
- **RITUAL TO DISMISS GOL-GOROTH / NYARLATHOTEP**
  - These do nothing.
- **RITUAL TO DIMISS Y'GOLONAC**
  - Y'Golonac's Inertia depends on the descent level the PCs have achieved.
- **RITUAL TO SUMMON GOL-GOROTH**
  - You only have to reach Descent Level 2. Once there, you have passed the Wall and are within the Liar's body.
  - When the spell is cast, the Aspect of Gol-Goroth materializes above the Ravine with miniature versions of itself attached to its skin like sucking ticks. Gol-Goroth plunges down – the *shantak* detaching themselves and attacking mouths along the Ravine walls. The Aspect itself plunges into the Nectar mists below; they swirl wildly as Gol-Goroth vanishes from sight.
  - Horrible roars and bellow exhortations of the Tongue of Lies echo from below. Then terrible, rending screams as the Mouths howl in agony.

## EXPLOSIVES

- **Explosives:** Anyone with the skill will recognize that planting them at the top of the Ravine and hoping for the best won't do much good. They can get a sense of how deep they need to go (and what they need to do) in order to be effective with the explosives they've got.
- **Setting Explosives:** Setting a charge takes 1 round. Each round, every character in the ravine must make a Sense Trouble check while experiencing a *Descent Effect*.
  - *GM Note:* A failed Explosives test means the charge is only half as effective. (That means you need more explosives to get the job done.)
- **Insufficient Explosives:** All you've done is collapse rock down into the Maw. It's not destroyed and now it's more difficult to get down there (+1 difficulty on Athletics checks).
- **Interfering Mouths:** If a timer is set, 1 in 6 chance that a Mouth will manifest can either cause the explosives to go off early (25%) or not go off at all (75%). If a detonating cord is run up the Ravine wall, there's a 3 in 6 chance a Mouth will bite through it, forcing the explosives expert to descend and repair/replace it.

## COLLAPSING RAVINE

- Devouring Ravine begins to collapse as soon as Y'Golonac is banished or destroyed.
- **Athletics/Fleeing Test:** +2 difficulty compared to descent. On success, reach next level (or summit from level 1).
  - **Outdoorsman 1:** To automatically succeed on test for self or someone being assisted. Or to negate the collapse damage roll after seeing it.
- **Collapse Damage:** After check, suffer damage depending on descent level:
  - **Level 4:** +2 damage
  - **Level 3:** +0 damage
  - **Level 2:** -1 damage
  - **Level 1:** -2 damage

### SEQUENCE 3: FINAL VISION OF THE LIAR

As the Devouring Ravine finishes its collapse, the investigators experience a final vision in the moment of Y'Golnac's death:

- Time stops.
- Flying pebbles hang in midair. Your mouth freezes in mid-shout. A fine mist of Nectar hovers as if on nothing.
- Then there is a voice, hissing and vowel-ridden, but perfectly and horrifically intelligible, more massive than your mind's power to contain it:

“Turn your empty visage upon this rock, then. The human thing's ritual is complete.”

- Suddenly you can see that every pebble in the air, every droplet of Nectar suspended, every dappling of light on the rocks around you has taken on the same arrangement. They fall into a unity with a field of stars that wheels simultaneously around you and disappears into the limitless and ever-expanding distance.
- You are thrown across space and time for an infinity as the pattern recurs – its fractal curves drawing you ever onward, plunging deeper or farther with every twisting iteration – and simultaneously, in the same split instant, you are sent crashing back onto the living Himalayan rock that roils beneath you in a final heaving throes of death.
- But out there in the hazed depths of space beyond limit, you feel the stars *turn their gaze upon you*.

## PANNU SINGH



**APPEARANCE:** Perpetually bloodshot eyes. Glass or flask somehow constantly finding its way back into his hand. Cheeks reddened.

- *Prop: Photo of Pannu Singh*

### ROLEPLAYING NOTES

- Scoffs at discussion of gods and religion. (“Futile and absurd business.”)
- Seeks drink.

### BACKGROUND

- Once had a family and a good job leading wealthy foreign tourists into the mountains, but he returned from an expedition a few years ago to find his wife and children had been struck down by disease. Attempts to reach him in the mountains to return home before their deaths had failed.
- Singh lost himself in drink. Abandoned the Anglican faith he had converted to from Hinduism, essentially becoming an atheist.
- His family sent him out of the village where he had lived due to his shameful behavior. He’s simply been wandering from village to village, drinking to excess day by day, until forced to move on.
- Long-term plan is to return to the mountains one day and die there.

### NOTES – FIRST MEETING

- Unconscious in the alley behind a bar.
- **First Aid:** Wakes him up.
- **Flattery / Reassurance:** To hire him.
- **Reassurance:** To get him to talk about his past.

### NOTES

- **Hiring:** Credit Rating 1 (0 with Bargain; not free, but so cheap it’s not a spend)
- **Alcoholism:** Treated as hurt (+1 difficulty on all tests).
  - **Sense Trouble (difficulty 5):** To keep him from finding alcohol in civilized areas.
  - **Extra Costs:** Will try to get control of the expedition’s wallet to buy supplies, and buy alcohol (+1 Credit Rating spend).
  - **Withdrawal:** Singh makes Health test (difficulty 7 – days of withdrawal). On success, his symptoms stabilize and taper off.
- **Lake Manasarovar:** Singh makes Stability test (difficulty 6, will spend points depending on how the investigators have presented their task and on how they’ve treated him). On success, he feels that his soul has been cleared. He tells the investigators he intends to return to Delhi to reconcile with his extended family.
  - **Reassurance 1 / Flattery 1 / Intimidation 1:** Convinces him to remain in Burang until they return and guide them back to civilization.
  - **Reassurance 2 / Flattery 2 / Intimidation 2:** To convince him to finish the job with them.

**PANNU SINGH:** Firearms 4, First Aid 5, Fleeing 3, Health 7/9\*, Outdoorsman 4, Preparedness 4, Scuffling 4, Sense Trouble 2/5\*, Stability 4/7\*

**Weapon:** -2 (fists)

\* Scores increase to higher levels after sober for 1 week.