

Pulp Egypt

Labyrinth of Set

A Short Adventure
by Peter Schweighofer

Use this scenario for any pulp setting; this dungeon-crawl may also serve almost any genre in which evil cultists kidnap the heroes and imprison them in their subterranean headquarters.

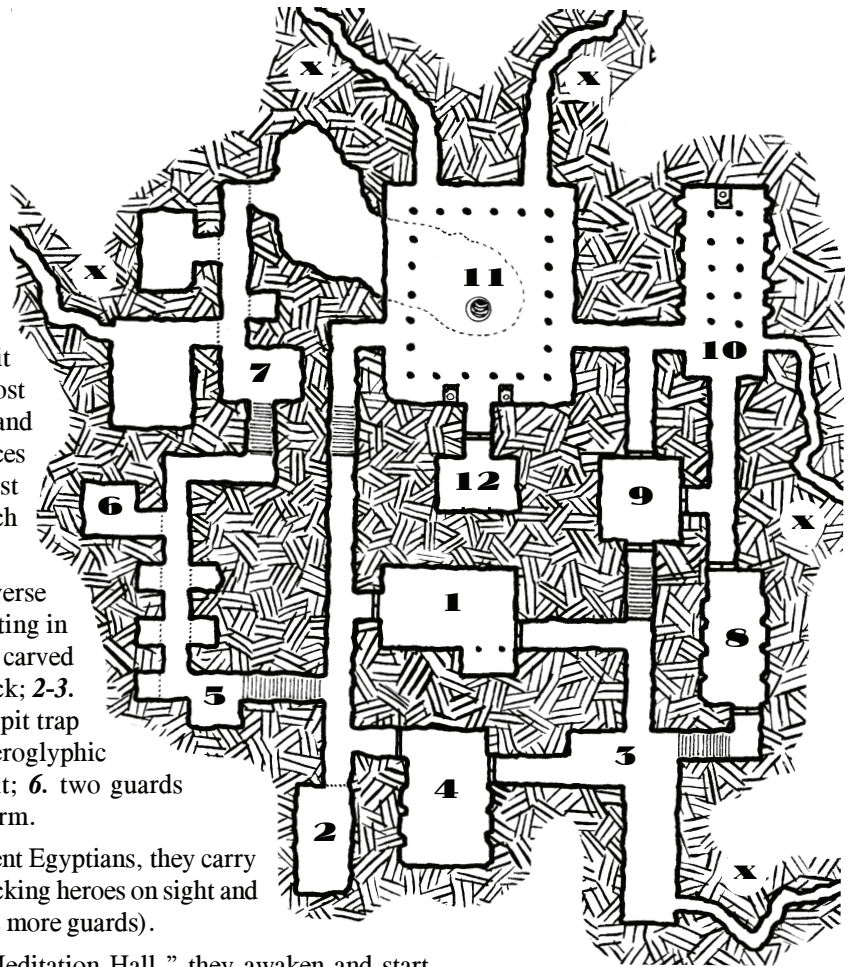
The heroes go to sleep in their rooms at Shepherd's Hotel in Cairo, but wake up in nothing but their bedclothes, lying on cold, stone tables in a torch-lit subterranean chamber ("1. Embalming Chamber"). Most corridors in the labyrinth contain carved hieroglyphs and scenes in ancient Egyptian style; frequent iron torch sconces (removable for improvised weapons) illuminate most locations. The Legion of Set uses the catacombs to hatch their diabolical plans for political domination.

Chance Encounters: Roll 1d6 each time the heroes traverse a passageway; a "1" indicates a chance encounter resulting in combat, injury, or incarceration (roll 1D6): 1. foot-long carved scarab hieroglyphs decorating the wall animate and attack; 2-3. a wandering "pet" crocodile sniffs out the heroes; 4. a pit trap sends some heroes down a chute to "5. Cells"; 5. a hieroglyphic ward on the walls "freezes" heroes passing through it; 6. two guards patrolling discover the heroes, attack, and raise the alarm.

Guards: Dressed in sandals, kilt, and headdress of ancient Egyptians, they carry archaic-looking shields and curved *khepesh* swords, attacking heroes on sight and sounding the alarm (which brings more guards).

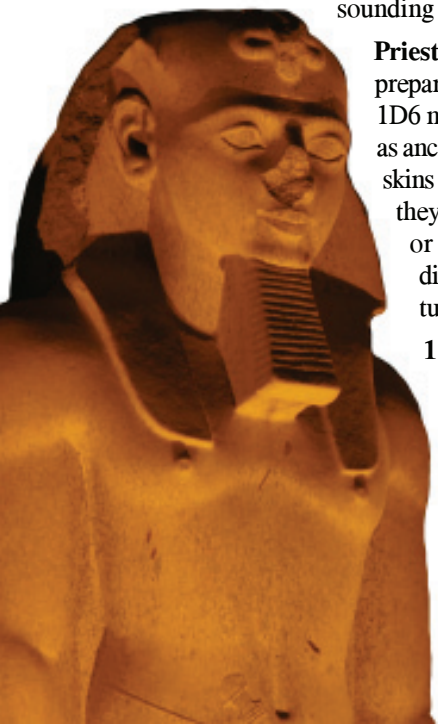
Priests: All resting in "8. Meditation Hall," they awaken and start preparing for the ritual to sacrifice the heroes after the characters explore 1D6 numbered locations (including "1. Embalming Chamber"). Dressed as ancient priests, they shave their heads, wear kilts, sandals, and leopard skins over their shoulders. They fight with metal-shod staves and daggers; they also cast spells, which require complete concentration for a turn or two, including ones that spew green, sickening gas (moderately difficult), zap opponents with red lightning (difficult), and temporarily turn heroes against their fellows (very difficult).

1. Embalming Chamber: The heroes wake up on stone embalming tables. Nearby shelves hold canopic vessels for internal organs and neatly folded linen sheets. Ceremonial embalming tools wait in neat order upon a work table. A cauldron of pitch simmers over a nearby brazier. Another brazier has gone out; apparently its greenish smoke helped keep the heroes sedate and they must work to shake off the haze addling their minds. An elderly yet sinister-looking assistant dozes in the nearby antechamber (apparently a storage and preparation room); he wakes and sounds



Labyrinth Key

1. Embalming Chamber
2. Armory
3. Storeroom & Refectory
4. Guard Room
5. Cells
6. Abomination
7. Animal Pens
8. Meditation Hall
9. Vestry
10. Tomb of the High Priests
11. Temple Chamber
12. Inner Sanctum
- X. Exit Passage





an alarm if the heroes cause too much noise: *Useful Items*: two knives from among the embalming tools, iron poker in one brazier.

2. Armory: A locked iron grate bars entrance to this chamber, which holds both modern and ancient weapons for the cult's sinister political plans (pistols, rifles, ammunition, grenades, scimitars, daggers, dynamite).

3. Storeroom & Refectory: A storage room contains basic supplies necessary should cult members seek prolonged shelter in the labyrinth (various foodstuffs, blankets, barrels of water, and a crate of medicine). An adjacent refectory contains a table, benches, and a simple coal stove for cooking.

4. Guard Room: Like "8. Meditation Hall," this room has rest niches carved into the walls, with a table, benches, and brazier offering some basic comfort. Pegs and racks hold spare shields, *khepesh* swords, and clothing in the ancient style. Typically 1-6 guards reside here resting or playing dice at the table.

5. Cells: The cultists keep several captives in cells sealed with iron grates. Dim conditions don't always allow outsiders to see everything within, though each clearly has a bench/bed and waste bucket. Prisoners include an addled old Frenchman, an annoying Egyptian kid who won't shut up but claims he knows the way out, and a scantily clad priestess in flowing robes and ancient jewelry (who might possibly betray the heroes if given the chance). Victims of the labyrinth's numerous corridor pit traps might find themselves deposited in one of the cells after a dizzying slide down the pit chute (see "Chance Encounters" above).

6. Abomination: In a locked cell with slightly more furnishings than the others sits a hulking, crocodile-headed man. He seems eager for freedom and willing to aid heroes who liberate him, though he cannot speak human. Should he escape to the surface he turns to stone in sunlight.

7. Animal Pens: Iron bars keep various animals sacred to Set or useful to his priests in their cells, including crocodiles, a monstrous cobra, and the hungry hippopotami in their vast, flooded cavern extending beneath the sacrificial pit. Nearby chambers house two keepers (treat as guards) and a store of food. *Useful Items*: whip, meat cleaver, length of chain.

8. Meditation Hall: Niches in this chamber's walls hold recumbent priests recovering from earlier rituals summoning the heroes into the labyrinth. The niches look like burial alcoves in catacombs, though they're used for rest and meditation. A guard at each entrance protects the sleeping priests.

9. Vestry: Priests in this chamber prepare for rituals in the nearby temple using the vestments hung here, an ornate bowl and pitcher for purifying ablutions, a niche housing sacred scrolls and liturgies, and a cabinet with various amulets. *Useful Items*: robes, daggers, staves, incense censers.

10. Tomb of the High Priests: Egyptian-style coffins stand upright in niches around this room, each with a small stone offering table

before them. Each inanimate mummy possesses some minor jewelry and a few amulets should anyone ransack them; such desecrators bring bad luck upon themselves for the rest of the adventure (assuming a mummy doesn't animate and attack them).

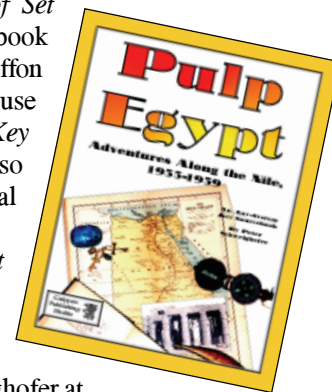
11. Temple Chamber: Colonnades along the perimeter provide shadows around a central meeting area for performing rituals dedicated to the foul god of chaos. Two statues of Set flank the corridor leading to "12. Inner Sanctum." A low-walled well in the center carved with hieroglyphics serves as a pit into which priests throw sacrifices; a deep, flooded chamber below holds angry hippopotami (and an access passage used by keepers to care for the beasts). Depending on how many locations the heroes have already explored (see "Priests" above), several priests may have already gathered here, impatiently waiting for the guards to bring captive heroes to the sacrificial ceremony.

12. Inner Sanctum: The heavy and highly decorated stone doors to this chamber remain sealed yet open easily by removing the ornamental cross bars. A golden shrine sits atop a solid stone plinth decorated in hieroglyphics. Inside the shrine rests a foot-tall golden statue of Set wielding a spear; but entering the chamber without finding and disarming the hidden catch outside opens a secret panel that releases a 10-foot-long cobra!

X. Exit Passage: Each of these corridors gradually turns from a carved hallway into winding, rough-hewn passage rising to a hidden exit on the surface. Most emerge into secret entrances near the Pyramids of Giza: behind souvenir stalls, under shacks near camel ride paddocks, and even inside a rest house offering refreshments for tourists. Roll for an automatic "Chance Encounter" the heroes must overcome before escaping.

If you enjoyed *Labyrinth of Set* check out the *Pulp Egypt* sourcebook for more 1930s pulp resources. Griffon Publishing Studio sourcebooks use the system-neutral *Any-System Key* to define adversary abilities so gamer can customize the material to their favorite rules.

Discover more free *Pulp Egypt* adventures, the pulp South Pacific setting *Heroes of Rura-Tonga*, and more gaming material from the imagination of Peter Schweighofer at



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