



Braving the Isle of Dread

by Nicolas Logue • illustrated by Ben Wootten

The Isle of Dread is not idly named, and its formidable shores are no place for fools. To endure its fearsome predators, cryptic natives, and the vicious pirates who prey upon those who settle its coast, this article series presents you, the player, with the tips, tricks, and tools you need to avoid being swept away. While the pages of *DUNGEON* present DMs with the isle's monstrous denizens and the dangerous plots of the Savage Tide Adventure Path's myriad villains, *DRAGON* offers details and options to give you the edge you need to survive. This month's

ADVENTURE TIE

This installment of *Savage Tidings* links to the fifth episode of the Savage Tide Adventure Path, "Tides of Dread," presented in *DUNGEON* #143.

installment details the Olman natives of the isle, ideas for replacement PCs, and a look into the defenses (or lack thereof) of Farshore.

The Olman

The Olman are a remarkable people whose traditions remain unsullied by the rising forces of commerce, industry, and corruption.

The human tribes of the Olman existed on the Isle of Dread as far back as their stories stretch. Descended from the once-great Olman theocrats of the sprawling city-state of Thanaclan, their capital city is now nothing more than

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a mist-shrouded ruin filled with horrors that have driven mad the stoutest men. Their "deities" of old are now worshiped as powerful totems, granting these dark-skinned natives power over life and death. Seven tribes live southeast of the Great Wall on the Isle of Dread: Burowao, Dawa, Kirikuka, Mora, Panitube, Tanaroans, and Usi. Other Olman exist beyond the wall, but no peaceful contact has been recorded with these cannibalistic savages whose war drums herald only slaughter and madness.

The reception strangers receive at Olman villages varies, but awareness of each tribe's culture increases the chances of avoiding violence and gaining the favor of the elders. While all Olman share many cultural proclivities, each tribe has its own distinct culture as well.

Burowao: The finest fishers and aquatic hunters of the islanders, the bold young warriors of the Burowao prove themselves by braving the terrors of Widow's Reef far from their cliff-top villages. Burowao sail war canoes and glide atop the waves on polished boards made from koa, a type of tree considered sacred and only found on the isle. Damaging koa groves is blasphemous and highly insulting to the Burowao. On the other hand, presenting the village with evidence of a great victory over a fearsome aquatic predator, such as a masher or elasmosaurus, goes a long way to winning the favor of the tribe, as does surfing the waves as the young Burowao do, or otherwise displaying magical power over water. The Burowao were the first Olman to craft and use shimalo'koa (see Olman Weapons and Items), and displaying proficiency in its use gains their respect.

Dawa: Nestled in their ancestral cove, the Dawa are frequently targeted by pirates, foreign powers, and agents of the Scarlet Brotherhood, all seeking the perfect location for a secret headquarters in the southwest peninsula of

the Isle of Dread. While all Olman are stealthy, the Dawa specialize in it and maintain their control of their cove through guerilla tactics and shadow warfare. Constant attacks by foreign powers make the Dawa extremely paranoid, and they attack obviously well-armed parties on sight. A group that approaches with no arms or armor on display finds the tribe peaceful enough. The Dawa are proud of their skill at stealth. If their sentries are spotted, the Dawa grow disgruntled. Pretending not to notice the sentries or approaching war party pleases the Dawa chieftain greatly.

Kirikuka: Most of the Kirikuka's totems consist of aerial creatures. Their village is dotted with idols carved in the shape of couatls, dragons, great avians, and pterodactyls. Anyone who can fly or who rides a flying mount greatly impresses the chieftain of the Kirikuka. In addition, the Kirikuka invented the japute, so becoming proficient in its use wins their favor.

Mora: The stoic but generous people of Mora frequently offer shelter and asylum to visitors. Mora fighting traditions are central to their culture and they respect martial power above all else. A party unafraid to display its skill at warfare earns the respect of this tribe.

Approaching meekly or begging for aid provokes the Morans' disgust. They still offer food or shelter, but they refuse to ally themselves or lend their warriors to the cause of a party appearing weak. If a group provokes a nonlethal fight with Mora warriors and wins, the villagers treat the group members with respect and comradeship thereafter. Mora zombie-masters are some of the most powerful among the Olman. Destroying their undead tribesmen greatly angers the Morans. In addition, the Morans are credited with creating the first form of unarmed Kahiko. Displaying great skill at unarmed fighting or learning Kahiko greatly impresses them.

Panitube: The Panitube are interested in foreign trade above all else. The arrival of such comforts and commodities has already deeply undermined their warrior culture. The Panitube happily trade with foreigners, offering pearls and coral in exchange for accoutrements of civilization from far across the sea. They rarely lend military aid to anyone and prefer to remain aloof of foreigners' troubles.

Tanaroans: Power is passed down along matriarchal bloodlines in Tanaroa. They respect strong women and scoff at any group led by a man (or worse, composed entirely of men). By far the fiercest warriors of the Olman, the Tanaroans make formidable allies. They have their own troubles, however, as their proximity to the Great Wall and the terrors beyond it does not allow them to spare warriors to aid in colonial defense. The Tanaroans can offer supplies, weapons, and advice on strategy, but not military aid. The first Olman to craft and use kau'koi, the Tanaroans greatly respect anyone displaying proficiency with this extremely difficult weapon.

Olman Weapons

Olman warriors and zombie masters make use of numerous indigenous weapons in their day-to-day survival on the treacherous Isle of Dread. Parties seeking to brave the dangers of the isle might do well to master the Olman's arsenal.

Japute: The talon of a pterodactyl, deinonychus, or other powerful predator is mounted onto a wooden handle with several leather straps attached. The japute is then wound onto the wielder's wrist and forearm with the strips of leather. Properly equipping or removing a japute requires a full-round action that provokes attacks of opportunity.

While wielding a japute, you gain a +6 bonus on any roll made to keep from being disarmed in combat and a +2 bonus on Climb checks.

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Exotic Weapons

	Cost	Dmg (S)	Dmg (M)	Critical	Range Increment	Weight	Type
<i>Light Melee Weapons</i>							
Japute	20 gp	1d3	1d4	19–20/x2	—	2 lb.	Slashing
Shimalo'koa	10 gp	1d6	1d8	x2	—	3 lb.	Slashing
<i>Two-Handed Melee Weapon</i>							
Kaua'koi	5 gp	1d4/1d4	1d6/1d6	x2	—	5 lb.	Bludgeoning, piercing, or slashing

Kaua'koi: This vicious scrimshaw weapon is fashioned from large lengths of bone harvested from Huge creatures. Several hand-notches are carved all over the bone, while the rest is sculpted into spurs, blades, and polished nodules. Fighting with a kaua'koi is a high art, involving constantly switching grips to make the most of this versatile weapon. In many tribes, carving one's own kaua'koi is a right of passage marking a young Olman's mastery of war arts.

A kaua'koi is a double weapon. You can fight with it as if fighting with two weapons, but if you do, you incur all the normal attack penalties associated with fighting with two weapons, just as if you were using a one-handed weapon and a light weapon (see Two-Weapon Fighting, on page 160 of the *Player's Handbook*). A creature wielding a kaua'koi in one hand can't use it as a double weapon—only one end of the weapon can be used in any given round.

If proficient with a kaua'koi, you may choose the type of damage you deal with each attack.

Shimalo'koa: This hard piece of koa wood studded with rows of razor sharp shark's teeth tears opponents to shreds. Koa is remarkably light, yet stronger than most other woods.

New Feats

The following feats are available to those who experienced the terrors of the Isle of Dread and lived to tell about it.

Friend to the Tribe

You have earned the respect and comradeship of the native Olman of the Isle of Dread and are henceforth treated as one of their tribe.

Prerequisites: Any non-Olman, you must have performed a great service for one of the seven tribes of the Olman and earned their trust and friendship.

Benefit: For all effects related to origin, you are considered an Olman. For example, you qualify for feats requiring you to be Olman and you may join the Olman affiliation. You gain a +2 bonus on Diplomacy and Gather Information checks made related to the Olman. With a successful DC 25 Diplomacy check, you may requisition a spell cast by an Olman spellcaster. You may request this spell once per week and it is always cast by a spellcaster of the lowest level able to cast the spell. This free spell can have an expensive material component up to 100 gp × your character level or a focus worth up to double that. The spell's level can be no higher than 1/4 your character level. Thus, a 12th-level character can request of the Olman a 3rd-level spell.

Kahiko

You have mastered the Olman martial art called Kahiko.

Prerequisites: Olman, Improved Grapple, Improved Unarmed Strike, flurry of blows class feature, proficient with an Olman exotic weapon.

Benefit: You gain a +1 on all disarm, grapple, and trip attempts when wielding an Olman exotic weapon. In addition, you can treat any Olman exotic weapon in which you are proficient as a special monk weapon, allowing you to perform a flurry of blows with it.

Kahiko Master

You excel at Olman fighting arts.

Prerequisites: Olman, Improved Grapple, Improved Unarmed Strike, Kahiko, flurry of blows class feature, proficient with an Olman exotic weapon.

Benefit: You gain a +2 on all disarm, grapple, and trip attempts when wielding an Olman exotic weapon. This bonus overlaps (does not stack with) the bonus gained from the Kahiko feat. In addition, you may attempt to stun a foe with the Stunning Fist feat (if you have it) when wielding an Olman exotic weapon as if you were making an unarmed strike. Finally, you may throw a shimalo'koa with a 10-foot range increment.

Tribal Trait

Choose an Olman tribe. You are the pride of the tribe and a living testament to its cultural distinctiveness.

Prerequisite: Olman.

Benefit: The benefit you gain depends on which of the seven tribes to which you belong.

Burawao: You gain a +2 bonus on Swim checks and take only half the normal penalties for fighting underwater. You can also ignore

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concealment granted to underwater enemies when you are on the surface or out of the water.

Dawa: You gain a +1 bonus on Hide and Move Silently checks. If an opponent is flat-footed to you during a surprise round of combat and you successfully use sneak attack against him, your sneak attack deals an extra +1d6 points of damage. You must possess the sneak attack class ability in order to gain the bonus for it.

Kirikuka: You gain a +2 bonus on Climb checks. The range increment of any thrown weapon you use increases by 10 feet.

Mora: You gain a +1 bonus on Tumble checks. In addition, you gain the following spell-like ability as a 1st-level caster: 3/day—*hide from undead*.

Panitube: You gain +2 bonus on Will saves made to resist illusion spells and effects. In addition, you also gain a +2 bonus on Appraise checks

and Knowledge (arcana) checks made to identify or price any natural treasures of the Isle of Dread, such as rare corals, dinosaur teeth, or exotic gemstones.

Tanaroans: You gain a +1 bonus on Survival checks and, if female, a +2 bonus on Diplomacy and Intimidate checks made against male Olman.

In addition, when wielding a kua'koi you can have it deal two kinds of damage.

Usi: You gain a +2 bonus on Knowledge (religion) checks and initiative rolls.

New Affiliation: Olman Tribes

Symbol: The blood-spattered talon of a large dinosaur.

Background, Goals, and Dreams: The Olman tribes are beset from within and without by grave dangers. They have contended with the

fierce denizens of the Isle of Dread for ages, but now they also face increasing assaults on their safety and cultural integrity from foreigners. The Olman place the survival of their people and culture as their top priority in the face of outside aggression, strange increased volcanic activity on the isle, and the resurgence of several of the island's most lethal inhabitants. Beyond survival, the Olman seek to preserve their cultural traditions against the corruption of visiting peoples. They exist in a precarious balance and must choose their level of involvement with the foreigners wisely. Many Olman favor isolationism and ignore most foreigners, while others believe the only way to weather the coming conflicts is through careful alliances. Some Olman hold dearly to the belief of restoring their civilization to its former glory.

You Bet Your Booty!

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Enemies and Allies: The tribes do not oppose all foreigners, only those who seek to abuse their hospitality and destroy their way of life. They happily ally themselves with anyone who seeks to defeat the dark forces growing in power beyond the Great Wall and beneath the earth. Some among the tribes are quick to embrace the Scarlet Brotherhood or trade with colonists or other visitors. Most Olman know the symbol of the Seekers and are wary of any who bear it, as that organization's past attempts to plunder and exploit their treasures and cultural secrets are not fondly remembered.

Members: Only Olman can be affiliated with the tribes. A non-Olman who impresses the elders might eventually qualify for the Friend to the Tribe feat and this affiliation.

Type: Tribe (racial)

Scale: 7 (peninsula)

Affiliation Score Criteria: Native Olman are automatically affiliated. A non-Olman must be inducted into a tribe in front of a council of elders and take part in a one week ritual of fasting and imbibing an intoxicating herbal mixture called dramkara in hopes of experiencing visions of the tribe's totem. After this week-long ordeal, the non-Olman is considered Olman in every way by the rest of the tribe.

Criterion	Affiliation Score Modifier
Character Level	+1/2 PC's level
5 or more ranks in Knowledge (nature)	+1
5 or more ranks in Survival	+1
Favored enemy (aberration, animal or magical beast)	+1
Dinosaur animal companion or mount	+1
Dream Seer feat	+1
Kahiko feat	+1
Kahiko Master feat	+2
Carve own kau'koi	+1
Slay noted enemy of the Olman	+1/8 enemy's CR
Assist Olman in repelling or defeating threat	+2
Responsible for the destruction of zombie retinue	-2
Responsible for the death of Olman war party	-4
Ignore threat to Olman	-4
Refuse the command of a tribal elder	-4
Wear medium or heavy armor	-1
Use weapons made of metal	-1

Affiliation

Score Title: Benefits and Duties

3 or lower	Junior member of the tribe with no benefits.
4-10	Tribal Warrior: +2 racial bonus on Hide and Move Silently checks, proficient with one Olman exotic weapon.
11-19	Hunt Master: You may request a cleric or druid spell of up to 2nd level once per week. Once per month, you must lead a war party against the tribe's enemies or take a -2 penalty on your affiliation score. A war party consists of ten human (Olman) fighter 3.
20-25	War Chief: +4 bonus on Diplomacy, Gather Information, and Intimidate checks made in Olman villages. In addition, you may request the service of a zombie retinue whose total Hit Dice equals your character level.
26-29	Elder: Any Olman gladly gives his life at your command (although penalties may apply to your affiliation score as normal). Once per month, you can select another member of your tribe whose affiliation score is less than your own and honor his service to the tribe. That tribesman gains a +2 bonus to his affiliation score. A tribesman may only gain this bonus once. In addition, you may pray to the totem of your tribe to receive a boon one per week. This involves a ritual that lasts for 6 hours, in which you burn an offering of 100 gp × your character level or offer a blood sacrifice of a living creature whose Hit Dice equals at least half your own. At the conclusion of the ritual you gain the spell-like ability to cast any spell on the cleric or druid spell list as a cleric or druid two levels lower than your character level. You may use this spell-like ability once. You may only have one spell available to you in this manner at a time.
30 or higher	Chosen One: The tribe believes you are destined to herald a new era of glory and revitalize the long-dead Olman Empire. You no longer suffer affiliation score penalties for the death of war parties, the destruction of zombie retinues, or ignoring the commands of a tribal elder. Your zombie retinue's total Hit Dice may equal twice your character level. You may also cast <i>dominate animal</i> as a spell-like ability at will (caster level equals your character level).

Executive Powers: Craft, Plague, and War.