



TEMPLE OF THE SERPENT

MICRO ENCOUNTER

A caravan of Xolpenti have taken refuge by a temple to an ancient serpent god in order to pay their respects. Unbeknownst to them something has been tracking them through the sands and is nearly upon them.

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INTRODUCTION

The Orange Dawn Caravan is a Xolpenti caravan that has been traveling through the neighboring lands and is currently on their way home to the city of Cos Epec. They have been traveling for months and have amassed a collection of iron, fur and other foreign goods for their people. Caravan Master Sahlshu has been worried about raiders and bandits in the desert and so has plotted a course through the sands that is not often used by travelers in order to keep them off their

trail.

As is custom to their travels, anytime they pass one of their peoples' temples they must stop and pay their respects in order to ask for safe passage through these lands. This caravan is special for in their entourage they are traveling with a Coatl (Co-AT-ill), a priestess of the Hiss.

Coatl Essari has been tasked with an important job to record the locations of forgotten temples and to pay their peoples' old gods a final rite. It's a task she takes great pride in. She is preparing an offering to the forgotten serpent god in hopes



that it will bring them peace before the desert claims the temple.

The Orange Dawn caravan is made up of two guards; a head guard and supporting guard, the caravan master, two merchants, an animal handler, a cook and the Coatl Priestess. All

being carried by four great ayolt.

XOLPENTI SOCIETY



Xolpenti hail from the empire of Xollica. A tropical society flourishing on the banks of the Bal'si river and surrounded on all sides by an imposing desert. It is an ancient land, rich in culture that has flourished for eons in its isolation. It is home to great step pyramids and emerald jungles; rich in gold, life, and spices.

Xolpenti are a spiritual people who worship their Xolhiss as a divine. The royal bloodline is said to carry the incarnation of the Serpent God Xolyolt; the Rainbow Serpent. By divine right the Xolhiss rules over Xolpenti society from their throne in Cos Epec.

Under them are their priests of the Hiss, known as the Coatl. The Coatl are a society of well educated philosophers who keep time, manage the empire, and maintain the ancient religious practices the Hiss entails. Often seen as judges, tax collectors, mathematicians and scientists. The Coatl caste is charged with keeping the wellbeing of xolpenti civilization. While movement into this caste is highly restricted. Sometimes a warrior hero or an individual with a lucrative marriage contract may find themselves honored by rising to the Coatl caste.

Those who carry out the protection and laws of the Coatl are the Hetsoni. They are the standing army, the policing force, and the nobles who own large pieces of land with work forces and guilds.

Pur tol are minor merchants and artisans. Crafters who deal in specialized goods. Potters, Jewelers, musicians, and painters. Skills that require some education. This caste, although not as educated as those above it, are at least educated on reading, writing and arithmetics.

Pur vuld the lowest caste in xolpenti society. It is made up of free citizens who work manual labour like: Farmers, Miners,

stone masons, and often servants. Pur Vuld can move up by taking on apprenticeships or applying for military service if they make the right connections.

While movement up and down the caste system can be done through marriage, warrior deeds or excellent service to a higher caste member; it is not often that Xolpenti socialize outside their caste. When someone does change position in the caste it is often declared at some large social event and those of the caste the person is moving into will know or easily learn about it by word of mouth. Particularly if someone of a higher caste has fallen or has been declared Tal Lis and exiled from Xolpenti society.

Xolhiss The Divine Ruler
Coatl Priests and other spiritual professions including Law.
Hetsoni Warriors and Nobles
Pur Tol Merchants and artisans
Pur vuld Free workers
Tal lis Everyone outside this caste.

COS EPEC

A large Xolpenti settlement on the Bal'si river. It sits in the middle of the empire and has held the throne of the Xolhiss since it was built a millenia ago. Home to lush hanging gardens and the Golden Pyramid, Xolpenti try to make a trip to the capital at least one in their lifetime.

Typically outsiders or Tal Lis are not welcome within the walls of the city. But on several occasions after proving their worth a few bands of adventurers have been lucky enough to receive an invitation to visit the splendid city. Fewer still have been honored enough to see the face of the Xolhiss themselves- an honor even many Xolpenti do not receive in their lifetime.

THE HISS

The Hiss is an ancient philosophy and religion practiced by the Xolpenti people. They believe that there is an order to the cosmos and it is their job to keep it in order. Their legends tell of a trickster god that convinced the Xolpenti to shed their former gods. In doing so they broke the balance of the cosmos allowing the World Eater to wake from its slumber early. It was Xolhiss who sacrificed himself to save the Xolpenti, and in doing so feeding the World Eater and keeping it at bay till the next cycle.

Due to this belief many Xolpenti believe they are above other people because it is their divine work that keeps the world

from ending.

Xolpenti value three tenets; There is honor in service, power in words, and always rever the sound of the Hiss.

The hiss that snakes are known for is considered a sacred sound, the Xolpenti believe that it is the sound of the cogs working in the cosmos. They believe that making this sound can bring luck, good fortune and protect them from the dangers of the world. Often worshipers of the Hiss will hold a gathering and simply stand together making the hiss sound in prayer.

THE ORANGE DAWN CARAVAN

Head Guard(spear)

Eszill - Exiled From Civilization



A proud, loyal and honorable Tal Lis. Eszill was once Sahlshu's servant and a Pur Vuld when they lived in the Xolpenti capital of Cos Epec. Eszill was driven to anger when she found her master running away from the unwanted advances of a Coatl Priest. Eszill leaped into action and slew him. The crime of killing a Coatl cost her her place in Xolpenti society and she was exiled.

Shortly after Sahlshu found her and they started the caravan as a way for them to be together. Now they are loving Sihaulti (Seh-haw-I-ti), the Xolpenti equivalent of a spouse. If Sahlshu is in trouble Eszill will do whatever is necessary to defend her.

Traits

IDEALS, I'd gladly throw myself in the line of fire in order to protect the ones I love.

BOND, As long as Sahlshu and I are together we can survive all the world eater throws at us.

FLAW, It's hard for me to trust others. I'm always wondering what they really want behind their pleasant smiles.

ESZILL

Medium humanoid (xolpenti), unaligned

Armor Class 16 (Chain Mail)

Hit Points 130 (20d8 + 40)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	11 (+0)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)

Saving Throws Str +6, Dex +4

Skills Athletics +10, Intimidation +9, Perception +8

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 18

Languages Xolpenti, Common, Draconic

Challenge 5 (1800 XP)

Speak With Snakes. Xolpenti are able to understand, relate ideas and communicate with snakes.

Protection. When a creature Eszill can see attacks a target other than her that is within 5 feet of her, Eszill can use her reaction to impose disadvantage on the attack roll.

Second Wind (Recharges After A Short Or Long Rest). As a bonus action, Eszill can regain 20 hit points.

ACTIONS

Poison Spray(1/day). Range 10 ft., One creature. The creature must succeed on a Constitution saving throw or take 1d12 poison damage.

Multiattack. Eszill makes 2 attacks with her Spear or Shortbow.

Spear. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., or range 20/60 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 7 (1d6+4) piercing damage. *Versatile.* Thrown 4(1d8)

Shortbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 3 (1d6) piercing damage.

Guard(Bow)

Thalti - Unproven Warrior



Enthusiastic, peppy and accident prone. Thalti was recently hired to the caravan on a recommendation from his master Hetsolossi. This is his first journey outside the barracks of Cos Epec and one he is determined to succeed at in order to make Hetsolossi proud. Thalti has two little brothers back in Cos

Epec that he cares for and the money from this journey will put much needed food on their plates.

Traits

IDEALS, I want to make my Master proud. I train my skills for her.

BOND, Family is most important to me. I do what I can for them.

FLAW, I like to hear the sound of my own voice.

THALTI

Medium humanoid (xolpenti), unaligned

Armor Class 16 (Scale mail)

Hit Points 71 (11d8 + 22)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	11 (+0)	12 (+1)

Saving Throws Str +4, Dex +2

Skills Perception +4, Athletics +6

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14

Languages Xolpenti, Common, Draconic

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Speak With Snakes. Xolpenti are able to understand, relate ideas and communicate with snakes.

Second Wind (Recharges After A Short Or Long Rest). As a bonus action, Thalti can regain 20 hit points.

ACTIONS

Poison Spray(1/day). Range 10 ft., One creature. The creature must succeed on a Constitution saving throw or take 1d12 poison damage.

Multiattack. Thalti makes 2 attacks with his Spear or Shortbow.

Spear. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., or range 20/60 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 6 (1d6+3) piercing damage. Versatile. Thrown 4(1d8+3)

Shortbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 6 (1d6+3) piercing damage.

Caravan Master Sahlshu - Femme Fatal



A cunning and resourceful merchant. Once the eldest daughter of House Xoyax. She was educated to be betrothed to a Coatl Priest so the family could go up in status. Yet Sahlshu never had feelings for the betrothed. Eszill had always been her dearest friend and the only one she could trust. So when the Coatl was killed, Sahlshu

threw away her family in order to travel with Eszill for the rest of their lives. Although they don't display their love in public, Sahlshu adores Eszill.

They started the caravan nearly a decade ago as a way for them to be together. Sahlshu has an eye for business and a way with words that makes her an excellent choice for leading a caravan.

Traits

IDEALS, When Interacting with people I never like to show them my whole hand. Words are power and I like to use them sparingly.

BOND, As long as Eszill and I are together we can survive all the world eater throws at us.

FLAW, Sometimes I plan so far ahead that I don't see what is right in front of me.

SAHLSHU

Medium humanoid (xolpenti), chaotic good

Armor Class 14

Hit Points 55 (10d8 + 10)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	16 (+3)	12 (+1)	13 (+1)	11 (+0)	16 (+3)

Skills Deception +7, Insight +4, Investigation +5, Perception +4, Persuasion +7, Sleight of Hand +7, Stealth +7

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14

Languages Xolpenti, Common, Draconic, Undercommon, Elvish

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Speak With Snakes. Xolpenti are able to understand, relate ideas and communicate with snakes.

Cunning Action. On each of her turns, Sahlshu can use a bonus action to take the Dash, Disengage, or Hide action.

Sneak Attack (1/Turn). Sahlshu deals an extra 7 (2d6) damage when she hits a target with a weapon attack and has advantage on the attack roll, or when the target is within 5 ft. of an ally of hers that isn't incapacitated and she doesn't have disadvantage on the attack roll.

ACTIONS

Poison Spray(1/day). Range 10 ft., One creature. The creature must succeed on a Constitution saving throw or take 1d12 poison damage.

Multiattack. Sahlshu makes 2 melee attacks with her Khopesh.

Khopesh. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 6 (1d6+3) slashing damage.

Short Bow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 6 (1d6+3) piercing damage.

Priestess

Coatl Essari - Fish Out of Water



Naive, Proudful and educated. Coatl Essari was born from a lineage of Coatl. She was raised, educated and trained from within the marble walls of Cos Epec. Essari only knows of the world outside the city thanks to the vast scroll libraries in the Sanctum of Knowledge and so much of her education has holes in it. Coatl Essari is traveling with the caravan in order to locate and record the location of ancient Xolpenti Temples and provide them with a final offering before the desert reclaims them.

Traits

IDEAL, We must all do our part in service to the Hiss.

BOND, The world is large and I would like to see it all.

FLAW, Everyone in the world should know the importance of my position.

Merchant(Clothing)

Hetsolossi - The old master



Critical, Coarse but somewhat caring. Hetsolossi was once a great general of a Xolpenti army. It has been many decades since she has seen a battlefield. Instead she has been training new recruits and taken up enchanting light and medium armor to fill the time.

Sahlshu sold her on the caravan journey as the adventure she had been missing since retirement. Hetsolossi would never say it, but she has enjoyed traveling with the

COATL ESSARI

Medium humanoid (xolpenti), lawful good

Armor Class 14 (Ring mail)

Hit Points 45 (10d8)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	9 (-1)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)	15 (+2)	15 (+2)

Saving Throws Wis +4

Skills Medicine +6, Religion +4

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages Xolpenti, Common, Draconic

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Speak With Snakes. Xolpenti are able to understand, relate ideas and communicate with snakes.

Guidance. One per round as a reaction Coatl Essari can say a prayer before one of their allies rolls, adding 1d4 to ability checks.

Spellcasting. The coatl essari is a 5th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 12, +4 to hit with spell attacks). The coatl essari has the following cleric spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *light, sacred flame, thaumaturgy*

1st level (4 slots): *create or destroy water, cure wounds, sanctuary*

2nd level (3 slots): *calm emotions, lesser restoration, Prayer of healing*

3rd level (2 slots): *dispel magic, Spirit Guardians*

ACTIONS

Poison Spray(1/day). Range 10 ft., One creature. The creature must succeed on a Constitution saving throw or take 1d12 poison damage.

Staff. Melee Weapon Attack: +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. **Hit:** 4 (1d6+1) bludgeoning damage.

caravan and is not ready to return to Cos Epec.

Traits

IDEALS, You can't experience all of life if you sit still.

BOND, I care for the wellbeing of my student. That is why I push him so hard.

FLAW, My coarse language and critical comments make it hard for others to tell I care.

Merchant(Trinkets)

Malush - Enchanting Trickster



A silver tongued and witty merchant. Malush was born into the Pur Tol caste and educated on the luxuries of life. He has an ear for music and an eye for artisan crafting. When he was young his family provided him with a harp, an instrument he still carries to this very day. In the evenings he can often be found by the fire strumming to classical Xolpenti tunes.

Malush joined the caravan nearly a decade ago in order to sell his fine Xolpenti jewellery and trinkets to a foreign market. He has since become good friends with Sahlshu and Eszill. Often teasing them as he knows he can get away with it.

Traits

IDEALS, Only the best for my clients. Both in music and my craft.

BOND, Music is all that I need in life. As long as I can play I can be happy.

FLAW, Sometimes I push people a little too much with my words. Perhaps they just can't handle my esteemed wit?

MALUSH

Medium humanoid (xolpenti), chaotic neutral

Armor Class 15 (Leather armor)

Hit Points 88 (16d8 + 16)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)

Saving Throws Wis +4, Cha +5

Skills Performance +7, Persuasion +7

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses passive Perception 12, darkvision 60 ft.

Languages Xolpenti, Common, Draconic

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Speak With Snakes. Xolpenti are able to understand, relate ideas and communicate with snakes.

Song Of Home. During a short rest Malush can play his harp. While doing so Malush and all allies who hear the performance regain an extra 1d6 hit points if they spend a Hit Dice to regain Hit points.

Spellcasting. The malush is a 4th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 13, +5 to hit with spell attacks). The malush has the following bard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *Friends, Mage Hand, Message, Vicious Mockery*

1st level (4 slots): *Bane, Charm Person, Healing word, Sleep*

2nd level (3 slots): *Enthrall, Suggestion*

ACTIONS

Poison Spray (1/day). Range 10 ft., One creature. The creature must succeed on a Constitution saving throw or take 1d12 poison damage.

Animal Handler

Ihu- Friendly Fanatic



Shy and skittish, Ihu is a Pur Vuld, with very little in the way of social skills. Since a young age Ihu has had a strong connection with animals and finds them far more interesting to interact with than people. This connection made them an excellent choice for caring for the caravan's four Ayolt.

Traits

IDEAL, Animals are the greatest of creatures and I'll do whatever it takes to protect them.

BOND, I don't understand people very well. They worry about too much. Animals just do as they like.

IHU

Medium humanoid (xolpenti), neutral good

Armor Class 13

Hit Points 31 (7d8)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)

Saving Throws Dex +3, Wis +2, Cha +1

Skills Animal Handling +9

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses passive Perception 12, darkvision 60 ft.

Languages Xolpenti, Common, Draconic

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Speak With Snakes. Xolpenti are able to understand, relate ideas and communicate with snakes.

Ayolt Horn. Ihu can take out an ivory horn that once blown alerts the Ayolt within 120ft to danger.

ACTIONS

Poison Spray(1/day). Range 10 ft., One creature. The creature must succeed on a Constitution saving throw or take 1d12 poison damage.

Spear. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., or range 20/60 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 6 (1d6+3) piercing damage. *Versatile.* Thrown 4(1d8+3)

Confident with a fiery temper, and love of all things food. Oop Sshnut was once the head cook of House Xoyax till Sahlshu hired him for her caravan. Oop Sshnut enjoyed the idea of traveling the world to get rare ingredients for his cooking till he experienced life on the road. He has many opinions about the caravan's poor cooking equipment and does bring it up with Sahlshu often.

Traits

IDEALS, Cooking is my passion and I want to serve the flavours of the world.

BOND, As much as I complain I owe my life to Sahlshu. I appreciate the honor she has given me.

FLAW, I do not think before I speak. Most aren't ready for my harsh truths.

OOP SSHNUT

Medium humanoid (xolpenti), true neutral

Armor Class 10

Hit Points 13 (2d8 + 4)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)

Saving Throws Str +1, Con +2, Cha +1

Skills Medicine +5, Performance +5, Intimidation +5

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses passive Perception 11, darkvision 60 ft.

Languages Xolpenti, Common, Draconic

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

Speak With Snakes. Xolpenti are able to understand, relate ideas and communicate with snakes.

ACTIONS

Poison Spray(1/day). Range 10 ft., One creature. The creature must succeed on a Constitution saving throw or take 1d12 poison damage.

Spear. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., or range 20/60 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 3 (1d6) piercing damage. *Versatile.* Thrown 4(1d8)

FLAW, When talking about animals I get a little carried away.

Cook

Oop Sshnut- Exotic Taste



Ayolt



A mount near exclusively used by Xolpenti who intend to cross the deserts. The Ayolt is a huge creature with a large protective shell over its back, and a massive horn on its head. Ayolt have thick skin which protects them from most blade attacks, as well as layers of fat under their shells that store water, making them the perfect creatures for traveling across deserts.

An animal handler often sits on a saddle on their head, while luggage and travelers ride in a special platform built over the creature's large shell.

Xalicot



Xolpenti tell stories of a great serpent that will devour the world. Said to sleep below the sands of the great desert that surrounds the Bal'si River and Xollica. It is said to be as long as the Bal'si and will swallow the sun if not held at bay with a sacrifice on the day of a solar eclipse.

This creature they call Xalicot the world eater. Is a large eel-like creature that can slither through the sands like water. Some have seen it on their journey through the deserts, spotting it's large body writhing through the sands. Most aren't lucky to survive an encounter with the creature. Their caravans end up as nothing more than bones for the beetles to prey on.

AYOLT

Huge, unaligned

Armor Class 17 (Natural Armor, 12 while knocked prone)

Hit Points 82 (11d10 + 22)

Speed 30 ft., swim 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	2 (-4)	12 (+1)	5 (-3)

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11

Languages -

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Amphibious. The Ayolt can breathe air and water.

Stable. Whenever an effect knocks the Ayolt prone, it can make a DC 10 Constitution saving throw to avoid being knocked prone. A prone Ayolt is upside down. To stand up, it must succeed on a DC 10 Dexterity check on its turn and then use all its movement for that turn.

Tortoiseshell. The Ayolt can withdraw its head and legs into its shell. While withdrawn, the Ayolt cannot move or take any actions but gains a +2 bonus to AC. It can end this effect as a bonus action.

ACTIONS

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 18 (4d6+4) slashing damage.

XOLICOT

Gargantuan monstrosity, unaligned

Armor Class 17 (Natural Armor)

Hit Points 201 (13d20 + 65)

Speed 50 ft., burrow 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
21 (+5)	13 (+1)	21 (+5)	6 (-2)	9 (-1)	3 (-4)

Saving Throws Con +11, Wis +4

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing and slashing damage from nonmagical weapons

Damage Vulnerabilities poison, thunder, lightning, acid

Condition Immunities prone, grappled, restrained

Senses tremorsense 60 ft., blindsight 30 ft., passive Perception 9

Languages -

Challenge 10 (5900 XP)

Tunneler. Xolicot can burrow through solid rock at half its burrow speed and leaves a 10-foot-diameter tunnel in its wake.

Dig. The Xolicot uses 5ft of movement to bury or unbury itself on its turn. When it goes to bury itself due to its massive size its tail will remain above the surface of its previous location for one round and gains +2 AC if attacked. The Xolicot can burrow and rise up at another location on the same turn and use both a bite and tail attack as its action.

ACTIONS

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (2d8+5) piercing damage. If the target is a medium or smaller creature, it must succeed on a DC 16 Dexterity saving throw or be swallowed by the Xolicot. A swallowed creature is blinded and restrained, it has total cover against attacks and other effects outside the Xolicot, and it takes 4 (1d6) acid damage at the start of each of the Xolicot's turns. On the start of the swallowed creature's turn it can choose to try and kick the Xolicot from the inside. The creature must succeed on a DC 18 Strength check to cause the Xolicot to regurgitate all the swallowed creatures, which then fall prone in a space within 10 feet of the Xolicot. If the Xolicot dies, a swallowed creature is no longer restrained by it and can escape from the corpse by using 20 feet of movement, exiting prone.

Tail. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 12 (2d6+5) bludgeoning damage. A target must also pass a DC 16 strength saving throw or be knocked prone and stunned until the start of their next turn.