

speech with one another.

At length, after perhaps an hour, they were voyaging high over sifting dunes and tawny seas of sand, to a range of ragged, craggy plateaus.

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"Look well, friends, there lies the end of your journey, the isle called the Headless Horn!"

Even from their vantage in the bow they could see that the isle was well named, for it was indeed shaped like a giant horn—broad and blunt at one end, tapering like a crescent moon to a fine point at the other; a horn without a head. The fortress of the demoness Shali-Moloth stood upon the widest portion of the horn, rising up from the flat surface of the island like a colossal monolith of wrought steel, glimmering dully in the glow of the starlight. Towering above the scattering of low-lying islands and broken shoals that surrounded the Headless Horn, devoid of doors or windows, the face of the abode was one enormous, seamless mass of metal, unpolished and untarnishing. Three short round towers rose up from the crenelated battlements of its massive, square foundation.

And dangers such as should only be seen in nightmares . . .

Now before them stood a towering figure no less than twelve feet in height. In body it was very manlike, though it stood stooped over on bent legs, and a slender, sinuous tail depended from its hindquarters. Its chest and shoulders were powerfully built, though it possessed a fat, swag belly, and its limbs were leanly muscular almost to the point of emaciation.

Of suggestion of hair there was none, and the nose, chin, and ears of its virile countenance were long, thick, and pointed. From the crest of its head and thence down its back to the tip of its pendulous tail ran a ridge of stone spines not unlike the pinnacles of a mountainside, just as its teeth were rows of stalagmites and stalactites, and the glinting eyes that now looked down upon the man and woman were smooth-polished