

# Jiao Ba's Tower

Jiao Ba is a black giant from the shadow plane, who was conjured by a luckless sorcerer who had little idea about the level of ambition found among these evil outsiders. His bones are now Jiao's favourite necklace.

After slaying his master, the black giant set out to scout the area and stumbled upon the home of a clan of pebble spirits. Using his charm ability, the giant enslaved several spirits and used them to lure their chieftain into a trap. Holding him as a prisoner, the shadow creature forced the spirits to build him an impressive castle and do his foul bidding. The poor earth creatures are now his henchmen and have to collect tribute from the nearby villages. One of these villages was protected by a river spirit which the giant has captured and imprisoned in a special cage he stole from the sorcerer he slew.



## The Tower

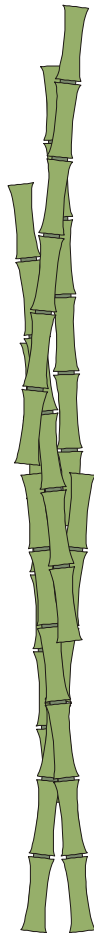
The tower is surrounded by strong walls made of stone. There are three watch towers that are manned by a pebble spirit with a light crossbow at all times. The iron gates are protected by special walls that make it difficult to ram them. These walls are further guarded by 2 pebble spirits each, which have *melded* into the inside, ready to flank possible attackers. Another one sits above each gate, ready to throw bottles of alchemist's fire at the

attackers (each gate has 2 bottles assigned). The rest of the spirits are found in the underground caves.

The walls are of average difficulty to scale (DC: 18, 8 with a rope) and are 20 feet high (remember that climbing is at 1/2 speed). If the pebble spirits see PCs attempting to climb up, they might run to that position, untie ropes, or throw fire bombs.

The human servants of the giant usually hang out in the henchmen's house, either gambling or sleeping. One of them is always in armour during the day and at night there is one 2 hour shift (before and after midnight) for both. In the case of an alarm it takes them 5 rounds to put on the bone armour and 10 rounds to put on the lamellar armour (both of which have -1 AC since they are not properly worn).

The giant himself mostly stays in his tower, keeping a close eye on the cage containing both the chief of the pebbles and the river spirit guardian of the nearby village. While the spirit could wreak havoc with its spell like abilities, it is cowed by the fact that Jiao will cut off a finger for each attempt to do magic (he already proved this in the past). Note that spirits in the Shattered Empire setting can only plane shift into their small pocket planes and only when they are near the entrance to it. Thus there is no way to escape supernaturally.



## The Tunnels

The tunnels normally hold 18 pebble spirits. 6 of these guard the entrances (2 at each), the rest is off duty or on special missions. Note that entry one is a fake entry and thus not guarded.

When the sentries hear somebody approaching they will meld into the walls after sounding an alarm (with a bell mounted near their post) and wait for the enemies to enter. They will let them pass

and attack them from behind when their brethren attack them from the front.

The tunnels have a raw look to them and smell strongly of earth. Roots and small insects are not uncommon and there is no light anywhere. All tunnels can be used by humans but those less than 2,5 feet wide can only be used while crawling and give a -4 penalty to attacks and AC for anyone not small.

There are several interesting locations in the tunnels, as marked on the map:

1. Gas Trap Room: This room is filled with footprints (by the guy responsible for checking the fake entrance) but none lead through the door at the Western wall (which is in fact a fake door). Trying to open the door, releases a cloud of Insanity Mist (DC: 15, Damage: 1d4 wis, 2d6 wis) which fills the whole room. The trap search DC is 15 and the disable DC is 10. The door can be recognised as fake with a spot vs. DC 15.
2. The Dead End: This dead end contains a skeleton leaning on a spear. It is not animated - in fact its purpose is to scare away intruders.
3. The Alarm: This dead end contains a shrieker mushroom. It will wake up the pebbles resting in room 4.
4. The Great Dorm: This room contains 6 blankets and is the community room of the clan. 6 sleeping or resting spirits can be found here almost all of the time.
5. The Meeting Hall: Here the spirits meet when there are things to discuss. There is also a huge gong here which is rung in the case of intruders.
6. The Mess Hall: this hall is a giant kitchen, dining room, and market in one. There are no fixed times for eating and everybody just prepares their own food when they are hungry.



7. Storage Chamber: this room is filled with roots, worms and other food the spirits enjoy. There are also all kinds of trinkets that have been given to them by villagers in the past.
8. Elders' Quarters: The single rooms are home to the clan elders. These four spirits are the most experienced of their society.



## The Denizens

The tower is inhabited by Jiao himself, a charmed barbarian from the North, the sohei bowmaster Black Lotos, a Shadow Swimmer, and the clan of Pebble Spirits (total of 30).

### Jiao Ba

This denizen of the Shadow Plane, loves his current position. He controls 6 villages, rules over a whole clan of spirits and has gained some valuable allies. He has grown careless and thinks that nothing can stop him. When talking to his underlings, he shouts at them and just waits to punish some of them - usually by some gruesome torture. He has set up a complex system of rules that is quite hard to follow.

When talking to strangers he behaves like a noble (or at least what he believes a noble to act like). He has two pebbles carry his long white robe and will have 2 others ring gongs to attract everybody's attention. He is loud and brags about his exploits. He will not let strangers enter his castle though.

Equipment: white greatclub, bleached bone necklace, silk robe (200 gp if

undamaged), large carved ivory ring (300 gp).

### Malang, the Red Rider

Male human Ftr2: CR 2; Size M; HD 2d10; hp 14; Init +2 (+2 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 15 (+2 dex, +3 armour); Attack +5 melee, or +4 ranged; SV Fort +3, Ref +2, Will -1; AL N; Str 16 (+3), Dex 14 (+2), Con 10 (+0), Int 10 (+0), Wis 9 (-1), Cha 7 (-2).

Skills: Ride +9(10), Jump +8, Climb +8  
Feats: Mounted Combat, Ride-By Attack, Spirited Charge, Skill Focus (Ride)

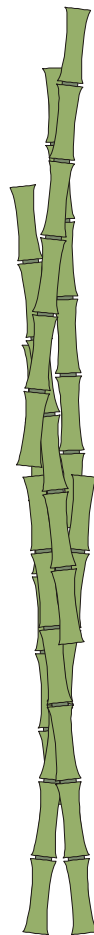
Possessions: red bone armour, heavy lance, masterwork short sword, heavy war horse w/ leather barding, back banner of the red horse.

Malang is a barbarian horseman from the North. He is a member of the brotherhood of the red horse, an elite unit from those lands. About a year ago, he travelled the central lands of the shattered empire to obtain some intelligence for his general, when he encountered Jiao Ba. The fiend managed to charm the horseman and has done so for many times over the month.

Malang is a friendly person with little need for religion or ideology. He is proud of his rank and skill as a mounted warrior.

Despite his battle prowess and friendliness, Malang is a bit of an odd personality to talk to. He seems absent-minded and sometimes ignores what other people say to him when he thinks it is insulting to him. Also he has the tendency to get on people's nerves because he simply never shuts up.

Malang wears a red bone armour and sports a lance with a small red flag at the tip. For close combat he uses a short sword that he inherited from his father. It has a horse's head at the end of the hilt.



### Black Lotos, the Bowmaster

Female human Sohei1: CR 1; Size M (5 ft., 1 in. tall); HD 1d10; hp 11; Init +3 (+3 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 19 (+3 dex, +5 armour); Attack +2 great axe (1d12+2), or +4 longbow (1d8+1); SV Fort +2, Ref +3, Will +5 [+0]; AL LN; Str 14 (+2), Dex 16 (+3), Con 10 (+0), Int 10 (+0), Wis 16 [7] (-2), Cha 10 (+0).

Skills: Craft (Fletching)+4, Heal +7 [+2], Knowledge (Religion) +4, [climb +13]

Feats: [Weapon Focus: Longbow], [Ki Frenzy (1/day)], Soul of Sincerity (+2 sense motive, -4 bluff), Toughness

Possessions: mighty longbow (+1 str), 20 arrows, great axe, lamellar armour, lizard scale talisman, si wang symbol, ring of climbing [cursed: reduces wisdom to 7].

Black Lotos is a young girl with slightly oversized hips that looks quite helpless in her somewhat oversized armour. She belongs to the black order and was on a mission to recover a special item, when she stumbled upon a magical ring. Unfortunately, it is cursed and severely reduces her wisdom. In this numbed state she came across Jiao Ba who realised that she might be an easy victim. She has been charmed ever since.

Lotos is Jiao's diplomat. She leads the pebble spirits when they go to collect the tribute. In her dazed state she does not recognise the wrongness of her actions, in fact she firmly believes that the tribute is payment for the protection of the villagers. Jiao will defend the peasants against anybody who is not a servant of the black giant. Her demeanour is friendly and almost naive.

In her spare time Lotos practices shooting from the guard towers, using the many monkeys who live nearby as

targets. Monkey meat is a dietary staple of the castle's inhabitants.

### **Twotounges**

This young shadow swimmer was helped by Jiao to enter the real world in return for 3 years of service. During the last 4 month however, Twotounges has grown weary of patrolling the forest around the tower and is seriously considering going 'rogue'. He knows that the giant would try to kill him for this, so he is looking for the right time to leave. Thus, Twotounges will do his master's bidding, but be the first to leave when it is certain that the giant will fall. If the opportunity is good, he might even switch sides.

