

DATASHEET - TROPICAL MOVIE TROPES

REVIEWER NAME: _____ **MOVIE:** _____

Category	Timestamp	Trope	Description
PLOT & ACTION			
	___H___m	Chased by Angry Natives	Stock scene for the Adventurer Archaeologist and Evil Colonialist types, the Hollywood Natives are angry at the hero stealing their sacred idol or refusing to be their dinner, or even merely trespassing in their territory. Expect there to be hilariously ineffectual thrown spears and arrows, hooting and jumping as he makes a clean getaway via plane, boat, car, or train. Of course, this amounts to nothing so much as Mighty Whitey "preserving for posterity" the ancient sacred objects of a lesser culture to a place they'll be truly appreciated: a public museum. The natives on the other hand, usually prefer seeing it as "theft" or "desecration," and hence the pursuit.
	___H___m	Deadly Road Trip	Start with a trip; it could be for work, play, study or research. Add a traveler, maybe a couple or a group of friends, or for extra trope points a group of friends who are couples. They're traveling far from home to someplace remote and rural, a foreign country, or both for quadruple trope points. So now they're someplace new and exciting and different... where they will be off guard; no one knows them or will notice if they disappear; they have trouble communicating with the locals or there are no locals with whom to invoke Safety in Muggles; and there will be no help from home if they get stranded, robbed, kidnapped or killed. And so they are.
	___H___m	Give Chase with Angry Natives	A chase scene trope wherein Bob (the chased) runs/drives through an area containing people potentially hostile to both him and Charlie (the chaser), in the hopes of slowing the chaser down. Usually this involves riling them up somehow. If it fails, Bob ends up Chased by Angry Natives.
	___H___m	Inevitable Waterfall	If the characters are rafting, swimming, or just floating down a river, then they will either go over a waterfall or narrowly avoid going over a waterfall. Always. No exceptions.
	___H___m	Ridiculously Difficult Route	Not many people use a particular route. Why? It's damn difficult, that's why, otherwise most people probably would. But, for some reason, a character needs to use it, probably because the usual route has been destroyed or otherwise blocked off.
	___H___m	Tarantula on your shoulder	Don't. Move. I'm going just going to brush this Tarantula / Scorpion / Giant Centipede off your shoulder....
	___H___m	Vine Swing	The usual way of transportation of a Nature Hero: grab a conveniently placed, always available vine on a tree, and swing on it to the next one.
CHARACTERS			
	___H___m	Bold Explorer	Only the bold need apply. Those who, through no fault of their own, are kidnapped to or ship-wrecked on new lands, or who are merely bad navigators, do not qualify, though their subsequent actions may prove them to be examples.
	___H___m	Damsel in Distress	A female character is put into immediate danger in order to put the cast in motion. Her plight unites the cast, causing them to put aside their differences and work together to save her or provide the premise for The Quest and is considered Older Than Dirt.

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	__H__m	Egomaniac Hunter	This guy just loves to hunt. He doesn't do it for food, or because his prey is a danger to mankind, not even because it's Personal. He will hunt anything that tickles his fancy and he does it for the thrill and the glory. He is an adventurer and egomaniac.
	__H__m	Evil Colonialist	This is an imperialist or colonialist man who has just come to take advantage of the natives with a friendly smile and a rifle on his shoulder. He only cares about winning a quick buck at everyone else's expense and exploiting the poor natives since he is convinced his race/culture is superior. Since he is either rich and powerful or in the middle of The character, usually a white one, was originally depicted as Western European (usually from Britain, Spain, France or Germany) but people from Eagleland joined the group later. nowhere where nobody can hear your screams, he becomes the king of the place. He is likely to be Chased by Angry Natives either when declaring such dominion or somewhere else along the line.
	__H__m	Evil Poacher	Be aware! The wild is just filled with Evil Poachers willing to murder any human who gets in their way. Poaching means any illegal hunting, but in fiction it is usually associated with the hunting of endangered species, such as cute panda babies or meddling kids.
	__H__m	Great White Hunter	The heroic counterpart to the Egomaniac Hunter and the Evil Poacher, the Great White Hunter is a heroic big game hunter. He is most likely a Gentleman Adventurer, but he could also be an earthier type who leads safaris for a living. Either way, he will be an expert tracker, a crack shot, and skilled at wilderness survival. He may have learned his trade as a Hunter Trapper. Often this character does admire animals even as he kills them, considering them a Worthy Opponent of sorts.
	__H__m	Hollywood Natives	Quite simply, this trope is the (hopefully) now-discredited stereotypical depiction of "natives" in a Hungry Jungle, Deserted Island, or other such unsettled wilderness. The locals will inevitably be portrayed as culturally "inferior" to the main characters — typical depictions will show the (usually dark-skinned) natives as unkempt and scantily clad, decorated with Tribal Face Paint and Savage Piercings, and brandishing spears or bows. When they meet the protagonists, they will either be mesmerized by the Mighty Whitey and accept them as gods, have the heroes for lunch, or invite them to be guests of the volcano god. They often have one woman among them, The Chief's Daughter, who looks more attractive by Western standards than the rest of her people, and falls in love with the Mighty Whitey protagonist. If they can speak the protagonists' language, expect lots of You No Take Candle.
	__H__m	Jungle Princess	this is a young woman of European extraction who has been raised in a jungle environment, usually by animals. Despite her upbringing, though, she has managed to grasp the basic rudiments of English, tools, and fashion — she is frequently seen wearing fetching leather or Fur Bikinis and wielding a spear. She is far more likely to have Rapunzel Hair than Wild Hair, and her legs and armpits will be inexplicably hairless. She's likely to be an Earthy Barefoot Character. For some unfathomable reason, the animals of the jungle obey her slavishly instead of viewing her as lunch, and the woefully benighted Hollywood Natives treat her as a goddess. Inevitably she will be single when she first encounters a hunky American or European explorer. She will find him in the clutch of some local danger (being menaced by her tame leopard is always fun if it's a romantic comedy), rescue him, and romance will ensue.
	__H__m	Native Guide	Being The Hero can take characters to lands far beyond their homes, and not all of them are easy to navigate. Perhaps the hero finds their goal is on the other side of the Rapids of Death or somewhere deep in The City Narrows. It's time to enlist the help of the native guide.

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	___H___m	Nature Hero	The native guide knows about the place they hero needs to pass through, whether they live in the area, have made the journey themselves, or are simply Closer to Earth and know more about the lands around them.
	___H___m	Noble Savage	A character who is, due to their race or ethnicity, a member of a barbaric or savage tribe (or alternately, a group perceived as such by outsiders), and because of it portrayed as nobler or of higher moral fibre than the norm. (Often regarded as living the Good Old Ways).
	___H___m	Nubile Savage	A young woman from prehistory or a primitive tribal culture depicted as a ravishingly sexy bombshell to modern audiences, even if circumstances make that unlikely and/or her appearance wouldn't be considered attractive by her contemporaries.
	___H___m	Science Hero	A hero who uses science, technology and/or super-science to save the day. This hero is one part Badass Normal, two parts The Smart Guy, with a hint of Wrench Wench and Gadgeteer Genius. They're defined mostly by being highly technically proficient scientists (often in all fields) and with a sense of adventure and curiosity. Plus, gadgets!
	___H___m	Tarzan Boy	A Tarzan Boy is a white man who lives in the jungle, usually in the Darkest Africa. He's usually Raised by Wolves after being marooned in the jungle as a child. Expect the Nubile Savage trope to be in play, as the Tarzan Boy will always be handsome and surprisingly well-groomed and clean-shaven for a guy who lives completely isolated from civilization. Often he will have one or several animal companions and is able to communicate with them. He'll wear a Loincloth and travel around by Vine Swing. Tarzan Boy usually finds his "Jane" in a civilized white woman he has to rescue. Sometimes, however, he will choose his Distaff Counterpart, the Jungle Princess, or occasionally the native Chief's daughter (who will inevitably be drawn in a much more attractive manner than the other natives who are seen).
	___H___m	The Chief's Daughter	Even in Darkest Africa, Injun Country, or the land of Hula and Luaus, everything's better with princesses. The Chief's daughter, in her Fur Bikini or Braids, Beads and Buckskins, is often the first to befriend Mighty Whitey during his visit to the strange new land. She'll conveniently be beautiful by Western standards, but with just enough racial traits to be exotic, and will be a Noble Savage in contrast to the amoral Barbarian Tribe of Hollywood Natives. To show that she is native, gentle, and Closer to Earth, the wild forest animals will flock to her.
	___H___m	The Missionary	One common plotline involves a Wide-Eyed Idealist going to the mission field expecting to do some Easy Evangelism, only to have a Crisis of Faith when their targets don't respond quite so readily. Of course, it will probably turn out that God works In Mysterious Ways. (If the Easy Evangelism works, you've probably got an Author Tract on your hands.)
COSTUMES			
	___H___m	Adventurer Outfit	Beige or tan linens, big brown belt, boots, probably a rifle and binoculars; also, a safari hat called a pith helmet. (Monocle optional but recommended). Usually, the wearer is book-smart but ignorant of what they should actually wear for the expedition. Counterintuitively most of them needed more coverage in Real Life to avoid sunburns and harmful insects and during the age of African exploration the pith helmet was the narrow-brimmed model of Zulu War vintage, not the broad-brimmed "Bombay Bowler" of the post-1900 years.
	___H___m	Fur Bikini	A two piece bikini, or some close variant, that is covered, trimmed, and/or lined with fur (either real or fake), or even feathers.

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	__H__m	Loincloth	stereotypically primitive ones, have this as the only form of clothing.
FLORA & FAUNA			
	__H__m	Angry, Angry Hippos	On the one hand, they're often depicted as friendly, lovable animals, thanks to their chubby, round appearance that makes them look cute. On the other hand—and that's where this trope comes in—they're just as likely to be seen as Xenophobic Herbivores and something completely terrifying.
	__H__m	Big Creepy-Crawlies	Giant bugs. They are bugs or muppets or Serkis Folk, whichever, but all are mad creepy. They have no individuality or intelligence, except possibly a Hive Mind. Considering almost all variants are hostile towards humans, and every single one of them is really ugly, nobody really worries too much about the morality of killing them.
	__H__m	Killer Gorilla	Gorillas, orangutans, and sometimes chimpanzees: about the same size and shape as humans (normally), but tougher, hairier and meaner (maybe). Don't incite them to gorilla warfare, because the things they throw tend to hurt.
	__H__m	Maniac Monkeys	Apes and monkeys with human-level intelligence, whether artificial or natural, have a recurring tendency to be antagonists in fiction. If the protagonists are humans, they might be suffering an inherent sibling rivalry with the human race, and want to either wipe it out or subdue it. If it's a story with a cast of animals, they might see themselves as "superior" to the other species and try to rule over them. Either way, these monkeys are used as signs that something bad is about to go down.
	__H__m	Mischief-Making Monkey	Monkeys are often portrayed in fiction as mischievous little pranksters, who like to steal things (hats seem to be a common target), throw stuff at people (including their own excrement), drop Banana Peels, and otherwise make monkey business.
	__H__m	Snakes Are Sinister	We've seen lots of evil snakes. Now how many times have you seen a good snake in fiction? None? Very few? That's because of this trope. Aversions of this trope are rarer than aversions of Reptiles Are Abhorrent in general—heroic turtles and lizards are fairly common and good crocodilians, while rare, are not unheard of, but heroic snakes much less so.
LOCATIONS			
	__H__m	Banana Republic	Any backwards Latin American country, usually fictitious, that is ruled by a small corrupt clique. May be called "Val Verde". As seen below, however, there is a whole catalogue of fictional names for these countries.
	__H__m	Bulungi	A Bulungi is a fictional little country nestled somewhere in sub-Saharan Africa. If used as a setting, almost always a thick jungle or parched savannah, even though the southern region is more temperate.
	__H__m	River of Insanity	any river voyage (or other journey into the wilderness) is a doomed expedition in which the characters alternately die, go mad, get lost, go native, or otherwise barely live to tell the tale.
	__H__m	Temple of Doom	An ancient temple or city, usually buried deep within the jungle or in the middle of the desert. The temple is often full of ancient yet sophisticated machines and Booby Traps that still work to lethal effect even after thousands of years without maintenance.

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Category	Timestamp	Trope	Description
	__H__m	Tropical Island Adventure	Whenever an adventure far from civilization is needed, a tropical island is where it usually will be set. Typically located in or based on the Caribbean, Oceania or Southeast Asia, tropical islands are a very popular location for adventures due to their exotic environment and wildlife, remoteness and disconnection from the rest of the world, allowing for more fantastic elements than would be seen in a more civilized setting, and being popular places for vacations, due to their usually sunny weather, warm climate and pristine beaches.
DIALOGUE & SOUND			
	__H__m	"Everything here wants to kill you"	This warning - or some variation - will be spoken by the grizzled veteran of jungle adventures to the first-time rain forest visitors.
	__H__m	"It's Quiet... Too Quiet"	The Stock Phrase itself is long since discredited and made fun of so often it can now be considered a Dead Horse Trope. Exception is made if it is lampshaded by adding in a sign on WHAT is quiet, e.g. "Why have all the forest noises stopped?" the answer usually being "the Monster of the Week killed/drove away all the wildlife"
	__H__m	"We're never going to make it (out alive)"	Well, not with that attitude you won't. (also accepted: "We're going to die here in the jungle!")
	__H__m	Jungle Drums	A sister trope to The Natives Are Restless, this harks back to the days in deepest darkest Africa, where the mood of the natives can be determined by their midnight drumming. If they're banging away on those puppies till the wee small hours, trouble is definitely brewing. The more anxious white people can be driven to nervous exhaustion by Those Infernal Drums (a good name for a band), but the moment you really worry is when they stop, suddenly. Sometimes we get to see the wild abandoned dancing of the natives.