

ONE ON ONE ADVENTURES COMPENDIUM TWO

A COLLECTION OF TEN ADVENTURES DESIGNED FOR 1 GAMEMASTER AND 1 PLAYER



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1 ON 1 ADVENTURES #11

UNBOUND ADVENTURES

BY PETER FRANKE

RULES FOR DUNGEON ADVENTURES WITHOUT A GAMEMASTER



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INTRODUCTION

"Which way?" asked Jareel.

Raising the flickering torch above his helm he could see the dimly lit chamber down the passageway ahead.

The party conferred amongst themselves quietly and the warriors gripped their weapons a little more tightly as the decision was made to go onward, deeper into the dungeon...

Have you and your friends ever sat around the gaming table wanting an exciting, perilous dungeon adventure but no one wanted to be the Gamemaster? Do you find yourself with little time to read through lengthy adventure modules and memorize them? Do you want to get down into the dungeon as quickly as possible and start killing monsters and finding treasure? Then look no farther than "Unbound Adventures"!

WHAT IS AN "UNBOUND" ADVENTURE?

In this rules supplement, players will find the information necessary for using the Pathfinder core rules without a Gamemaster. Players will form a party, find an adventure, travel to the dungeon (which will be generated for them as they explore) and fight the monsters they find there. There are rules inspired by the 1st edition of the core rules, in homage to the solo play rules that edition contained.

Players will need a copy of each of the core rules to use this supplement (hardcopy or digital will work nicely). Since there is no Gamemaster, players will be making all of the die rolls (including for all the monsters), and the dungeon will be generated using the tools in this book as well as the tables and guidelines in the core rules. If there is ever a question or concern that the rules don't have an answer for, use your best judgment or roll-off randomly between available options. Be fair, no one is keeping you honest but yourself and your fellow players. Strive for fun!

I. CHARACTERS AND SETTLEMENTS

Characters for use in this supplement should be created almost strictly in a "hack and slash" manner. Skills that will often be used will be: Perception, Stealth, Heal, Acrobatics, Disable Device, Knowledge, Appraise, and occasionally Survival. Combat is common so combat-related skills and Feats are important. Role-playing or non-combat oriented skills and Feats will likely not be used. Unbound Adventures is very much a "Kick-in-the-door" type of dungeon experience with few opportunities for players to devise an elaborate combat strategy or to role-play their way out of a sticky situation.

The rules provided by this supplement are meant for characters from level 1 to about 10. It is possible to play characters of higher level but the challenges presented by the traps, monsters tables and dungeon features are not as complex as they should be for very high level characters.

Adventuring parties should generally be 4 characters in size with no more than 4 character levels difference between any particular party member. The tables in this supplement are for use with a party of 4 characters. However it is possible to adventure with more or less characters. See the **Going It Alone** section of this supplement for details on playing a very small, low-level (1st or 2nd level) party or a party of a single character. Parties larger than 5 or 6 characters will find the confines of the dungeon very crowded.

Players should create their character as they would normally, however it is recommended they use the Standard Point Buy to purchase ability scores with 15 points for distribution between attributes. It is also recommended that players start with only the average starting money for purchasing equipment. For starting equipment, everything should be available to the players. During the adventure, there will be certain amounts of equipment and resources available depending on the settlement where the players end up. Characters in the party should be of similar alignment although that is entirely up to the players.



Characters advance in level as soon as they reach the appropriate amount of required experience. As a note, all experience gained will be coming directly from defeating monsters, successfully overcoming traps and the occasional special encounter.

DUNGEON LEVEL

To accommodate parties of varying size and composition, this supplement uses a term to quantify a party's adventuring level called "Dungeon Level" or "DL". This represents the level of challenge an adventure might give to players in the party. To determine an adventure's Dungeon Level, use this equation:

$$DL = \text{sum of all character levels in the party} / 4$$

For example a party of 4 1st level characters would = Dungeon Level (DL) of 1.

For DL calculations with fractions, round to the nearest whole number (i.e. round fractions below .5 down and fractions .5 and above up). For example a DL of 2.25 would be DL 2 and a DL of 3.75 would be DL 4.

Dungeon Level may also never be lower than the highest level character in the party minus 2. For example a level 2, a level 3, a level 1 and a level 6 character decide to adventure together. The DL equation gives the party a DL of 3. This is too low for this party. The highest level character in the party is level 6; therefore the lowest the adventure DL may be is DL 4.

SETTLEMENTS

Players will begin together in an initial settlement. Generate the town using the Settlement Population Ranges table in the core rules to randomly determine the size of the settlement the players are in (and any new settlements they find in the future). Players may also use the **Settlement Name Generator** found later in this supplement to name the settlement. Write down the size (and possible name) for future reference. From here they will generate their first adventure.

If you wish, generate random urban encounters using the encounter tables in the core rules (or online generators if those don't suit you) for each day spent doing things in the settlement. Players may determine the results of elaborate urban encounters as they wish. Encounter results such as brawls may be resolved as fights with typical settlement inhabitants (consider the **Monster Psychology** of hostile NPCs), etc. When in doubt, simply use your best judgment for the result of the encounter.

Once the players have completed their first adventure they may wish to stay in the same settlement and generate more adventures or travel to a different or larger settlement. See the rules for this under the **Travel** section below.

2. ADVENTURE HOOKS, OBJECTIVES AND REWARD

In a settlement, players can interact with NPCs that will give rumors or request a task which leads to an "adventure hook". Usually, players interact with the patrons of the local Tavern to gather information and to look for an available job. The locals are willing to share their problems over a mug of ale and NPCs often congregate here if adventurers are seeking extra help. Therefore each settlement always has a place where the players can go to get the motivation they need to journey onward. NPC's can be wherever the players decide to find them, in an inn, a shop, at a market or fair, etc. Any settlement NPC has the ability to give rumors or tasks which could become adventure hooks in this manner.

Once the adventure hook has been established, roll randomly to determine the player's dungeon "objective".

There are 5 different kinds of typical dungeon objectives. (See Table Below). Players may also decide to choose the objective based on what fits the adventure hook best.

The Dungeon Level or "DL" for the adventure is set at this time. See the entry under **Characters and Settlements** to determine the appropriate Dungeon Level for the party.

(OPTIONALLY) If the players want a more challenging adventure with tougher monsters, they may choose to increase the adventure's Dungeon Level to whatever they think they can handle.

Later, when determining the dungeon layout, the dungeon objective will ultimately help shape the deepest areas of the dungeon so make sure it is recorded. There will be specific instructions under the **Dungeon Generation** section on what the players will need to do to accomplish their objective when they reach it.

There will be a large reward for the players for successfully completing the objective and returning to the adventure's settlement. When the successful players return to the settlement, roll once for each character in the party on the Random Magic Item Generation tables found in the core rules. The table used should be Minor or Medium according to the DL of the adventure (1-7 Minor, 8-10 Medium). This "reward treasure" will not require any sort of identification or appraisal and will be at full value and utility.

(OPTIONALLY) Players may use either the Diplomacy or Intimidate skills to re-roll or possibly increase their reward treasure results. To re-roll their table results, each player may make a single Diplomacy skill check at DC 10 + DL. If the check is successful the player may re-roll their results once but must accept the new result even if it is worse. If the player fails the Diplomacy roll they must accept the reward they were originally given.

To increase the table level of the reward treasure, make a single Intimidate skill check at DC 15 + DL. If the check succeeds, the player may roll on the table 1 level higher than normal (Minor to Medium, Medium to Major). If they fail the Intimidate roll they have offended the locals so much they are thrown out and receive no reward at all.

(OPTIONALLY) When the players level-up in the middle of a dungeon they may increase the DL of the current dungeon to their newly recalculated DL. This however does not change the reward they receive when they return to the settlement. For example, the 1st level party begins at DL 1. During the adventure they gain enough experience to level-up to level 2. The new DL for the party is 2. They may increase the DL to 2 for the rest of the adventure but the reward they were offered when they took the adventure at DL 1 remains the same when they return to the settlement.

Table 1: Dungeon Objectives

D6	Dungeon Objectives
1	Rescue
2	Item Retrieval
3	Eradication
4	Feature Destruction*
5	Discovery
6	Epic - Roll again (ignore 6). Increase DL by +1

*The NPCs suggest that the players bring a flask of holy water with them to the dungeon.

Table 2: Unbound Campaigns

Title	Completed Campaigns
Defenders of (Settlement Name)	1
Champions of (Settlement Name)	2
Heroes of the Realm	3

UNBOUND CAMPAIGNS

For a “campaign” of consecutive adventures, players should play each objective once from the same settlement. The players may play the objectives in order or whatever order they choose. The final objective will always be an “Epic” objective.

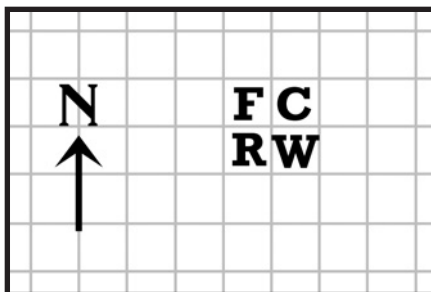
They may also choose to play any or all of the objectives in the same dungeon. In this case, each new objective will only be found on the next unexplored, lower dungeon level of a previously found dungeon. Players must find stairs leading down from an explored level to an unexplored level to begin the new dungeon and objective (begin counting encounters towards the objective on this new level).

Once the players have completed all 6 objectives, the settlement holds a celebration and dubs the players with a title (see the table above). That settlement no longer requires the services of the players and will not generate any more objectives. To continue adventuring, the players must travel to a new settlement and again complete all 6 objectives (with “Epic being the final) to earn another title.

Once the players have completed a single campaign and earned a title, they are now known throughout the land and should be considered “unusually famous” for any urban encounter rolls.

3. TRAVEL

Before the players can begin exploring the dungeon and defeating the monsters therein, they must travel to the dungeon’s entrance. This wilderness journey may be an adventure all of its own. Players should decide beforehand on a travelling party formation, should any monsters be encountered. They should likewise plan a watch order should they have to make camp for the night.



In this formation example the party is travelling north. The Fighter (F) and the Cleric (C) make up the first rank and the Rogue (R) and the Wizard (W) bring up the rear. The party is prepared for any wandering monsters they might encounter in the wilderness.

TRAVELING TO THE DUNGEON

Use the tables below to find travel time, terrain and type of trail leading to the dungeon through the wilderness from the settlement. Follow any special terrain rules for adventuring in the wilderness, such as weather and climate. Include the

possibility that the players may become lost. Write down the generated distance, terrain and trail type for future reference. Note that players may choose to adventure in whatever season they wish.

Adjust the amount of time based on the type of terrain the players are travelling through and the trail type as described in the core rules. Players may make any adjustments for mounts or other forms travel such as magic or flight.

RESOLVING WILDERNESS MONSTER ENCOUNTERS

The probability of a wilderness encounter is described in the core rules with tables of monsters found in various types of wilderness. Find the table for the type of terrain the party is travelling through. Determine number of encounters available for the Dungeon Level of the adventure (DL). Include monsters that are also 1 CR below and 1 CR above the DL. Online generators are great for this task.

Randomly determine between what is available in that CR range to find what monsters the players encounter (i.e. If the adventure has an DL of 1 and there are two CR 1 entries, a CR 2 entry and a CR ½ entry, roll a d4 and on a 1 choose the CR ½ entry, on a 2 choose the first CR 1 entry, on a 3 choose the second CR 1 entry and finally on a 4 choose the CR 2 entry).

Table 3: Travel Distance and Time

D6	Distance	Time (Average Speed 20)
1	4 miles	(2 hours)
2	8 miles	(4 hours)
3	12 miles	(6 hours)
4	16 miles	(8 hours, 1 day)
5	24 miles	(12 hours, 1.5 days)
6	32 miles	(16 hours, 2 days)

Table 4: Terrain Type

D6	Terrain Type (d6):
1	Marsh
2	Desert
3	Forest
4	Plains
5	Hills
6	Mountains

Table 5: Trail Type

D6	Trail Type (d6):
1	Trackless
2 - 5	Road or Trail
6+	Highway

If there are monster entries which are fractions of a CR, multiply the number appearing until they make a single encounter of appropriate CR for the DL of the party for the encounter. Likewise players may choose to make the encounter an appropriate EL for the party by multiplying the number of monsters for any lower CR.

Use a blank battle grid layout for the wilderness encounter. Players must be placed using the pre-determined party formation in the center of a battle grid. Consider the **Monster's Psychology** to determine if the monsters or players are surprised, how the monsters are placed, and how the monsters attack.

(OPTIONALLY) Players may agree on any additional wilderness features to be placed or drawn depending on the terrain they are in or the time of day the encounter occurs (at night the players could be in camp with a fire and pitched tents for example).

TRAVELING BACK TO THE SETTLEMENT

Traveling back to the original settlement takes as much time as it took to get to the dungeon (the players simply "back-track" their original route). Roll for random encounters as normal.

TRAVELING TO A NEW SETTLEMENT

When travelling to a new settlement from a dungeon in the wilderness, travel is determined just like travel to the dungeon. Roll the distance, type of terrain, and trail type using the tables above.

When travelling to a new settlement from a settlement, things change. Most settlements are connected by roads and highways that see frequent travel. Add +1 to the die roll for trail type when travelling between settlements due to the increased quality of the roads. There is a decreased chance of a wandering monster while the players travel on these busy roads. Normally, while adventuring in the wilderness, the players roll every 3 hours for a wilderness encounter. While travelling between settlements players should only roll once every 9 hours during daylight and once every 6 hours during the night. Monsters and animals are more likely to stay away from these busier areas.

Once the players reach their destination, Generate the town randomly via the core rules to determine the size of settlement the players have arrived at. Players may also use the **Settlement Name Generator** found later in this supplement to name the new settlement.

(OPTIONALLY) Players may use the following rule to make travel adjustments. Players may travel farther to find larger settlements. For every 16 miles added beyond the randomly determined travel distance, add 20 to the percentile roll when generating the town randomly via the table in the core rules.

4. HOW THE DUNGEON WORKS

When the players finally arrive at the dungeon entrance, they may enter and begin exploring. Players may agree to a name for the dungeon at this time or use the **Dungeon Name Generator** section of this supplement.

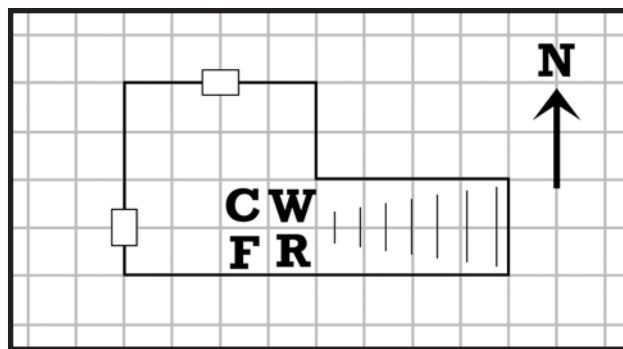
Due to the "GM-less" and random nature of this dungeon, there are some special rules regarding movement and exploration. Usually, as players progress through a dungeon, a GM is able to describe what the players can see and they may make a map. While using this supplement, players will be keeping track of their progress while the tables under the **Dungeon Generation** section and in the core rules take over the role of the GM and describe each newly explored area.

The best way to do this is to map out the dungeon as it is generated on graph paper and when an encounter occurs, move to miniatures on some sort of erase-able battle-mat or geomorphic dungeon tiles for the duration of the encounter. Players will draw (or place tiles for) each explored section of the map in standard 5-foot squares depicting the encounter.

The tables under the **Dungeon Generation** section were designed for use with geomorphic dungeon tiles in mind and are therefore easily represented by them. It would be handy to have multiple sets of tiles to accommodate a dungeon area of any size.

EXPLORING AND ENCOUNTERS

While exploring, have the players figure out their marching order and positions beforehand and then keep track of the entire party as a group moving through the dungeon in this formation. Using the **Dungeon Generation** tables, draw the first room or corridor out near the center of the graph paper.



In this above example, using the **Dungeon Generation** tables, the players draw the starting room near the center of some graph paper: 10x20 stairs leading down to a 20x20 room with two doors. They have decided to keep the same party formation they had in the wilderness with the Fighter and the Cleric in the front rank followed by the Rogue and the Wizard in the rear. They head for the door to the right of the stairs.

They can now use a single marker or token to represent the party as they explore the dungeon. When an encounter occurs they can move to miniatures on a battle mat or geomorphic tiles. Next, they will roll randomly for what kind of door they are opening from the table in the core rules. They must also resolve any traps, locks or stuck conditions on the newly-generated door before it may be opened.

(OPTIONALLY) It is possible to map out the dungeon as the players progress through it entirely on a battle-mat or by using the geomorphic dungeon tiles. While this looks great, it is time consuming and can take up a lot of space. If using tiles, place them near the center of the table. On a battle-mat, draw the starting room somewhere near the center.

The party must be able to see to explore new areas of the dungeon. Players may not enter any un-explored area and resolve it without a light-source or a way for every member of the party to see. If a party member is blinded, other party members who can see may guide them into unexplored areas.

Generated dungeon doors should be resolved as the players move to open them using the core rules. Doors may be trapped and therefore that trap should be resolved when the players open them. Traps must be dealt with before the players may pass through the door. Unopened doors should remain unresolved until the players move to open them. Make a note of any resolved but unopened door specifics (such as stuck, locked or containing an un-sprung trap).

Players should check for wandering monsters every hour (1 in 6 chance) to determine when and if any wandering monsters show up over the length of time they travel about the dungeon. The tables under **Dungeon Generation** already factor in a chance for wandering monsters while the players explore. Additionally, if the players “take 20” for any skills, make an immediate check for wandering monsters. These monsters arrive after the skill check succeeds or fails.

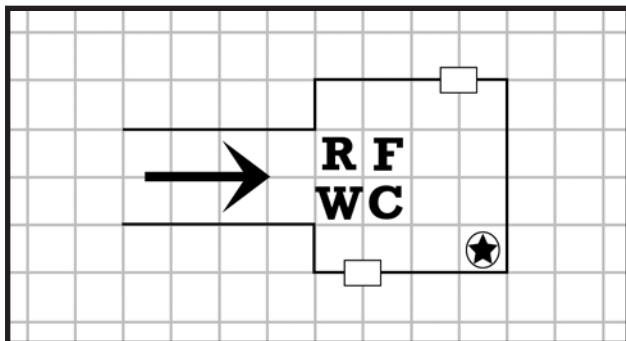
When the players enter/explore a room or chamber, determine random room contents from the table in the core rules. Dungeon features should be resolved first, followed by any traps, then any monster encounters. Once the monsters and any traps have been dealt with, the party may search for and resolve any hidden treasure or special features.

When the players trigger a monster encounter, place the party in formation fully inside the entrance to the room or chamber as if they had just entered it. Place the party formation facing the direction they moved to enter the room. If a wandering monster appears, place the party in formation doing whatever the last thing they were doing when they rolled the wandering monster (i.e. opening a door, spread around searching the room for hidden treasure, entering a corridor, etc.).

(OPTIONALLY) If the players are opening a door to generate the next unexplored area they may listen at the door first. Nominate a single party member to make the listen check at DC 15 + DL. If the check succeeds it grants the party two benefits. If the next unexplored area is a room or chamber for which the random room contents roll indicates monsters, the party may:

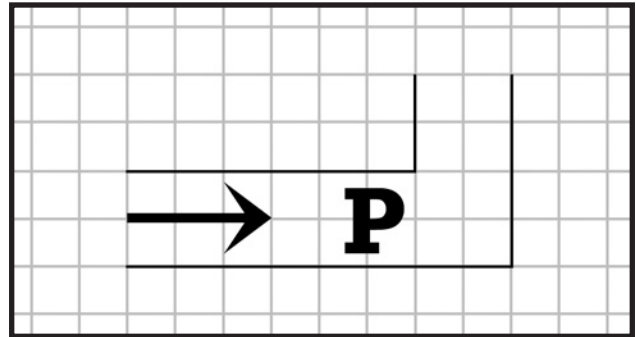
- Add +1 on the Monster Deployment table roll (max of 6) under **Monster Psychology** for surprise and monster placement.
- The party may remain outside of the room or chamber when they open the door. Place the party in formation directly outside the door of the room or chamber as if they were about to enter. Monsters placed at striking distance must still be placed as close as possible to their random targets but remain inside the newly explored dungeon room or chamber. If the room or chamber contains any traps, treat the trap as being a part of the door and resolve it when the players open the door (they may search/disable before combat begins if there are any monsters).

Generate the monsters using the core rules. Use the predetermined “Dungeon Level” of the adventure to resolve which table to roll on for encounter. Read the details for the indicated monster directly out of the bestiary it appears in. Resolve any surprise rounds, monster placement and ensuing combat using the standard combat rules and the information provided in the **Monster Psychology** section of this supplement.

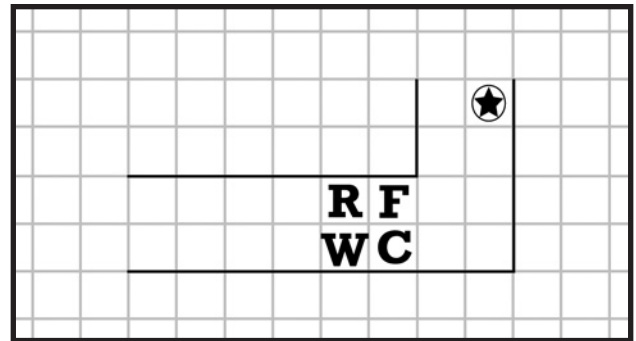


In the above example, the exploring party has left a 10x20 corridor and entered a 20x20 room with two doors. The random room contents roll indicated a monster. The party is placed in their pre-determined marching order immediately inside the new 20x20 room. Using the **Monster Psychology** rules, the monster deployment roll indicates mutual awareness and 20 feet away (or limit of area encountered) so the monster is placed as far from the players as possible in the 20x20 room.

In this next example, the party has entered a 10x20 L section with a 10x10, 90 degree left turn (entering from the 10x20 corridor). They roll to explore the next unexplored area on **Dungeon Generation** tables and the result is a wandering monster.



Since the L section is the current area where the party is, they should be placed as if they had just entered from the previous 10x20 corridor in their pre-determined formation. The players use the **Monster Psychology** section to determine if there is a surprise round and the monster’s placement. The encounter is “mutual awareness” and the monster’s placement is 20 feet (or limit of area encountered).



TRAPS

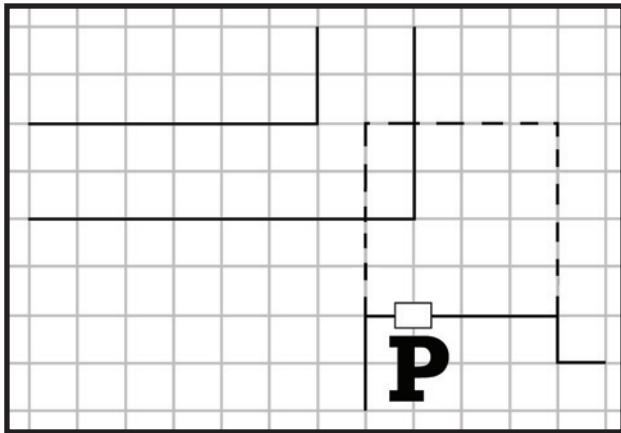
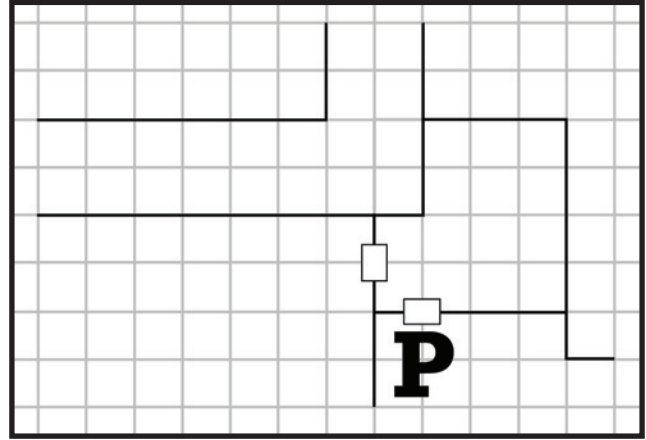
Use the sample traps found in the core rules to determine what traps are present, matching the CR of the traps to the DL of the adventure. Resolve the trap as follows: Party members may each make a single Perception check for the trap as indicated under the trap description. If the trap is found with any successful Perception check, it may be avoided. If the Perception check fails, resolve the trap’s effects and choose those who fall victim within the party randomly (area-of-effect traps will hit all party members). The party may nominate a single character to attempt to disable a found trap using Disable Device. A failed Disable Device check will always spring the trap on the player attempting the skill check and any other players foolish enough to stand near them (or close enough for a trap with an area of effect). Additionally, if a trap has an effect on the dungeon (such as a pit) or a trigger which resets and has not been disabled, place a tile (or draw it on the battle grid) to represent it as a new feature in the dungeon.

Due to the limitations of available traps in the core rules, there are special rules for traps for higher level players. Players who are above DL 10 may simply use increase all skill DC target numbers, save DC, and damage results by 10 percent for each DL above 10. For example a party with a DL of 12 would take 20 percent more damage from the trap on the table which would have a Perception DC and a save DC that is also 20 percent harder. Spell effects remain unchanged. Alternately, players may use home-grown high-level traps, or traps from other supplements.

If generated rooms or corridors were to overlap, simply replace, resize or reroll the dungeon generation table result in a way so that they cannot overlap. Doors may lead to already explored areas (perhaps they were secret from the other side). Place or draw any generated dungeon features in a manner that the players can agree makes the most sense.

After opening the door to this newly unexplored area, the **Dungeon Generation** tables indicate a 20x20 room. This new room will overlap with an already explored area of the dungeon. The players may either re-roll the table result until a result is found that fits (such as a corridor that could go left or right) or reshape the new room.

The players decide to reshape the room to fit, and place the randomly determined exit door on the left wall headed to another unexplored area of the dungeon.



Follow this process until the adventure's objective has been resolved, and/or the players decide to leave. Players may explore the dungeon further following the resolution of the objective if they wish. To exit the dungeon, the players must walk out of the original exit or use any features which lead to the surface.

Players needing rest to recover spells and heal up may do so wherever they choose. They may camp in the dungeon, outside in the wilderness or return to the relative safety of the settlement. If the players camp in an area of the dungeon that has already been explored, roll 1 on a 1d8 for a wandering monster each hour. Players may close or barricade the door(s) to a dungeon room camp site to further reduce the chance to 1 on a 1d10. In this situation, wandering monsters will always appear immediately outside the door(s) (choose randomly if there are multiple) and attempt to get in to attack the players (ignore the monster deployment location roll under **Monster Psychology**).



5. MONSTER PSYCHOLOGY

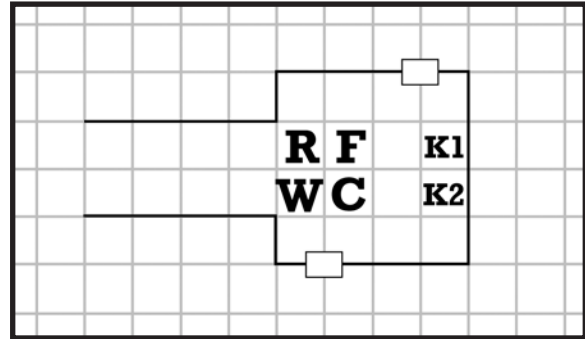
Monsters follow these simple rules. Monsters essentially “appear” in the dungeon (or wilderness location) when generated by an encounter. They can either be surprised, surprise the players or simply be taken into combat rounds. To determine the level of surprise and the deployment location use the table below.

All players (or monsters) in the party may make a single attempt at the skill check required to avoid being surprised. If any member of a party succeeds in the check, all members of that party gain the benefit and will not be surprised (they alert the others). A successful check results in “Mutual Awareness”.

For example, the party rolled a 2 on the Monster Deployment chart and may possibly be surprised by a group of monsters. They may make a Perception check to avoid being surprised. They will make a Stealth roll for the monsters being encountered. The worst Stealth check among the group of monsters is 13. Then all the player characters will make Perception checks, the best being a 16 from the party’s bard. Since the bard’s 16 Perception check is higher than the monster’s 13, the encounter changes from “Party Possibly Surprised” to a case of “Mutual Awareness”. The bard heard the attack and alerted the party.

Once the type of deployment as been determined, place and operate the monsters as follows:

- Randomly choose a party member for each monster to target when they are placed. Place the monster as close to its target as possible within the Monster Deployment restrictions. Monsters (if possible) must be placed in the area the players are currently exploring. Distribute multiple attacking monsters as evenly as possible amongst available player targets. If there are any questions about who is to be attacked, simply roll a die to determine randomly between those in question.



For example, the party is exploring this 20x20 room. They rolled a multiple monster encounter for the random room contents. 2 kobolds (K1 and K2) are to be placed at the limit of the area and at mutual

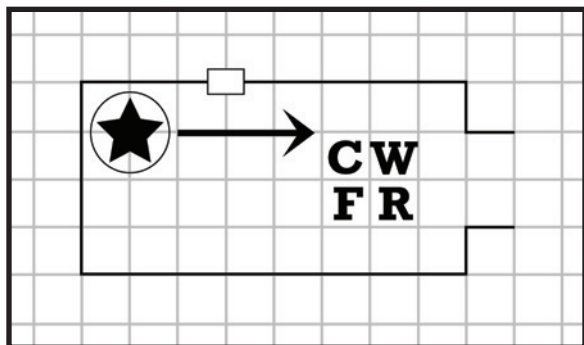
Table 6: Monster Deployment

D6	Monster Deployment
1	Party Possibly Surprised, roll Perception check to avoid*. Place monsters either at striking distance (75% of the time) or 20 feet away or limit of area encountered if it is not possible to place the monster 20 feet away and remain in the area being explored. Begin combat with a surprise round if the party’s skill check was failed, followed by standard combat rounds.
2	Party Possibly Surprised, roll Perception check to avoid*. Place monsters either at striking distance (50% of the time) or 20 feet away or limit of area encountered if it is not possible to place the monster 20 feet away and remain in the area being explored. Begin combat with a surprise round if the party’s skill check was failed, followed by standard combat rounds.
3 – 4	Mutual Awareness, Place monsters either at striking distance (50% of the time) or 20 feet away limit of area encountered if it is not possible to place the monster 20 feet away and remain in the area being explored (50 % chance) from randomly targeted party members and enter combat rounds.
5	Monsters Possibly Surprised, roll Perception to avoid*. Place monsters either at striking distance (50% of the time) or 20 feet away limit of area encountered if it is not possible to place the monster 20 feet away and remain in the area being explored. Begin combat with a surprise round if the monster’s skill check was failed, followed by standard combat rounds.
6	Monsters Possibly Surprised, roll Perception check to avoid*. Place monsters either at striking distance (75% of the time) or 20 feet away or limit of area encountered if it is not possible to place the monster 20 feet away and remain in the area being explored. Begin combat with a surprise round if the monster’s skill check was failed, followed by standard combat rounds.

* Treat as opposed Skill checks. Make an opposed d20 skill roll for the members of the party and the monsters. Compare the worst Skill check from the surprising group and compare to the best Skill check from the group being surprised to see if the surprise result succeeded or failed. In case of a tie, the higher skill modifier wins. If the scores are the same, roll again to break the tie.

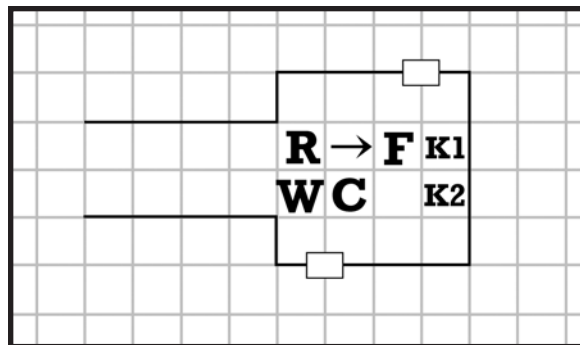
awareness (no surprise rounds). Now they select party members as targets and are placed as close to those targets as possible within the deployment restrictions. Since there are 4 players, a d4 is used to determine which player the 1st kobold will attack. The Fighter is assigned 1, the Cleric 2, the Rogue 3 and the Wizard 4. A 4 is rolled so the 1st kobold will target the Wizard for its attacks and is placed at the limit of the area being explored. Since there is already a kobold attacking the Wizard, the 2nd kobold must choose from the remaining party members for its target. A d6 will be used with the Fighter assigned 1-2, the Cleric 3-4 and the Rogue 5-6. A 5 is rolled, so the 2nd kobold will target the Rogue and is also placed at the limit of the area being explored.

- Monsters always use the deadliest attack or ability they have available. This includes any specific feats or gear. For example, a dragon may use its breath weapon, a giant crab might use its grapple attack or an ogre will charge. Players must agree on which attack is the "deadliest". A monster will attempt to hit as many players as possible with its attack but always go for its initial target first. Additionally, a monster might be considered deadliest by surviving longer. Monsters perform any self-preserving special abilities (such as a barghest's planar blink ability) when it makes the most sense for them to do so. If there is a doubt over what ability or action a monster might make, roll-off between available options randomly.
- Monsters which fight in melee will always close the distance to their target as quickly and as directly as possible.



For example, the party has rolled a single monster encounter for the random room contents in this 20x40 room. 1 Ogre (star) is placed 20 ft. away and at mutual awareness (no surprise rounds). Based on a random roll, the Ogre selects the Cleric as its target. The Ogre won initiative and acts first. The monster will charge the cleric (its deadliest action) on its initiative, moving 20 feet.

- Monsters who must make a move action to attack their target so that it causes an attack of opportunity against them will move or switch targets so that it causes no attacks of opportunity. If no such move is available, they will take the move that causes the least amount of attacks of opportunity. If any move to attack the monster's current target would cause an attack of opportunity or taking a five-foot step would not put the monster in position to make an immediate attack, they switch targets. The new target should be whoever is closest to the monster. If there are multiple targets, choose randomly but as evenly as possible.

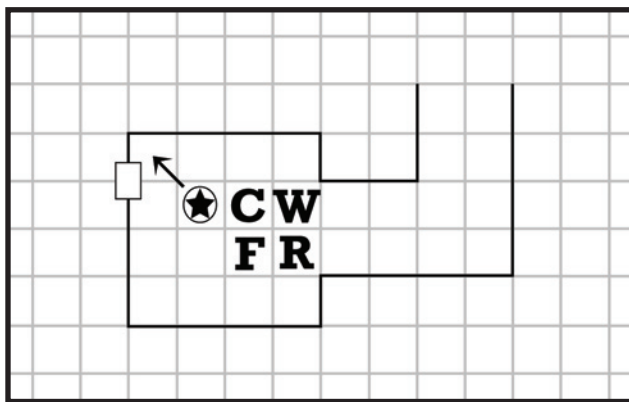


Using the above example, the kobolds have attacked their targets with ranged weapons (their deadliest attack) on their initiative. Now the players attack: the Fighter goes first and moves into position to make a melee attack. Next turn on the monster's initiative, the Fighter will cause attacks of opportunity on the kobolds if they continue to use ranged weapons (or move towards their original targets) therefore they will switch to melee weapons and attack the nearest target available (currently the Fighter).

- Monsters will continue to attack the same target throughout combat unless that target is incapacitated or reduced to 0 or less than 0 HP. If circumstances arise that either charm, put to sleep or otherwise change the awareness of a monster (generally either by ability such as a cleric's turning, by magic, or by possible attacks of opportunity), the monster then moves to attack whoever is closest. If there are multiple "closest" targets, determine between targets randomly but as evenly as possible.

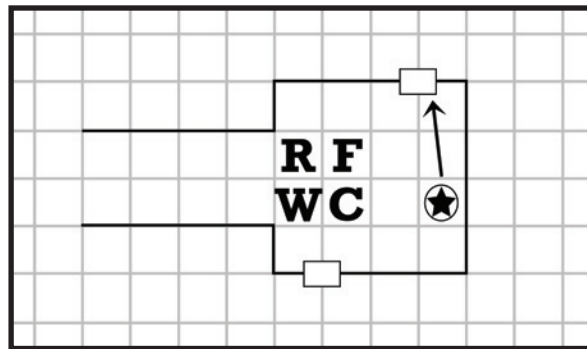


- Magic-using monsters will attempt to move away from melee combat as far away from the players yet still maintain line of sight to their target so as to cast spells. This could be as simple as a 5-foot step, as long as they can cast their spells with as little of a possibility for attacks of opportunity against them. They will move away and cast spells until their spells have been exhausted or an attack or ability which is a more deadly option than a spell is available to them. At that point they will use whatever weapons, abilities or attacks they have that are deadliest. To determine what spells the casting monster uses, the players either must decide on what is the most deadly (meaning the one that does the most harm) and have the monster cast it. If no agreement between the players on what is the most deadly can be reached, choose randomly from the spells that the monster may cast. Area-of-effect spells will always target as many players as possible but the original player target must be among those targeted.



In this example the party has encountered a spellcasting Rakshasa (star) who is targeting the Cleric (determined through random rolling). The monster will move away from melee yet still maintain line-of-sight to cast a spell on its initiative. In this case, the Rakshasa will take a 5-foot step away from the party to cast a spell. Since the Rakshasa knows several spells, the players must agree on what is the deadliest spell it can cast is. *Suggestion* is decided upon, which it casts on the player who under the spell *Suggestion* can easily do the most damage to—the *Fighter*. However, had the players been unable to agree on the spell, they could have rolled between the several spells it knows randomly (such as *Magic Missile*) and simply cast that on the Rakshasa’s original target of the Cleric.

- Monsters will never flee (or withdraw) unless reduced to 0 HP (disabled) or unless driven to flight by a spell or ability (such as turning) or factors spelled out in their monster description. They fight to the death. If monsters must flee, move them towards the nearest exit furthest away from the party in the safest manner. Monsters must resolve closed doors as players, including taking any trap effects. Door traps may not be searched for by monsters. If the door is trapped, they spring it when they try to open it. Consider them defeated if they flee into any unexplored area of the dungeon or if they outpace the party (in the wilderness for example). If they move into an explored area of the dungeon, continue moving them until on the following conditions are reached: they move into an unexplored area of the dungeon, they rally and return to the battle (spell effects wear off, etc.), they are killed, or they leave through the dungeon entrance.



In the above example the Cleric has successfully turned the Ghoul (star) causing it to flee. On its initiative the Ghoul heads for the nearest, safest route away from the players to escape. The door it heads for is unresolved. When it reaches the door, a roll is made and the door turns out to be simple, wooden and unlocked. It will continue through the door into the unexplored area of the dungeon. Had the door been trapped, it would have sprung the trap and any effects would have been resolved on the Ghoul (and anyone else in the trap’s area of effect). Once it enters this unexplored area, it is considered defeated. There is no need to resolve a new dungeon area from the **Dungeon Generation** section.

- Monsters will pursue fleeing characters until they reach any stairs or exit the dungeon entrance at which point they will return to the area where they were discovered and wait for more unfortunate victims or the players (should they decide to return). If the players return, the monsters will be at full health and have all spells and abilities at their disposal once again. Place them and resolve combat again as if they were encountered for the first time.

- Neutral monsters (such as other adventurers, dwarves, elves, halflings, etc.) should be treated as hostile and will attack as normal. The party may avoid any “friendly” monsters if they wish, or attack based on alignment or role-playing preference. They should receive no experience for avoiding such an encounter, and it doesn’t count toward the “number of encounters” for the objective.

- Monsters who are so big they out-size the room they are encountered in will “resize” the room/chamber to accommodate their larger base. Expand the size to fit the monster in with the group of players, or resize the area as the players see fit (i.e. make a 20x20 room into an 80x50 chamber to fit a huge dragon).

- Multiple-monster encounters may fill up the current dungeon area so that no more monsters may be placed within it. In this case, place the monsters in any adjacent, explored area using standard placement rules.

(OPTIONALLY) When the players encounter monsters in the wilderness, instead of placing the monsters 20 feet away from the party, they may use alternate rules for spotting/encounter distance for the particular type of terrain they are travelling in. Place the monsters at this distance and begin combat as normal. Additionally, players may wish to adjust the monster placement distance given the time of day or night and/or the visibility due to weather.

6. TREASURE

Monsters have the treasure that is listed under their entry in the bestiary. The treasure tables found in the core rules should be used for generating treasure for monsters as normal. The players may also take any gear the monsters may have been carrying under their entry in the bestiary. Random room contents or special rooms may also indicate a hidden treasure. Use the same treasure tables found in the core rules for generating this treasure once the players have successfully found it. Use the Dungeon Level (DL) of the adventure to determine which table to roll on.

For the sake of simplicity, art, gems and items need not be identified or appraised and will be their full listed description and value.

(OPTIONALLY) For a more realistic approach to finding treasure, a successful Appraise check must be made to determine the true value of art items and gems. Choose a single party member to make an appraise roll for each item that must have its value determined. Make the Appraise check at DC 10 plus the EL of the monsters who had the treasure or DC 10 plus the DL of the adventure if the treasure was found unguarded by monsters. If the skill check is successful, determine the value for the item on the table as normal. If the skill check fails, subtract 10 percent on the percentile roll for the value of the item for every number below the DC that the

skill check failed by. For example, if the Appraise DC is 11 and the appraiser rolled a 9, then 20 percent would be subtracted from the percentile roll to determine the value of the item. The appraised value is final and may not be appraised again. If the number ends up a negative percentile then the item is determined to be worthless.

(OPTIONALLY) For a more realistic approach to finding magic items: items, weapons and armor will only be known as the mundane versions of themselves until the party has a member or an NPC willing or able to cast *detect magic* or make successful DC 10 + DL Knowledge: Arcana check. This reveals to the players they have an actual magic item. If the check fails or *detect magic* is not cast, then the magic item, weapon or armor remains at this mundane level until some way to determine its magical properties is found. If the item is detected as magical it must still be identified using *identify* before they may be rolled up on the appropriate chart.

7. SETTLEMENT AND DUNGEON NAME GENERATOR

This section is strictly for fun and flavor for your adventure and is entirely optional. Players may agree to whatever name they wish for the settlement or the dungeon or they may use these tables.

Table 7: Settlement Name (Roll on Table A followed by Table B)

D20	Table A
1	Death
2	Spire
3	Rogues
4	Marsh
5	Hill
6	Hearth
7	Thieves
8	Barren
9	Hidden
10	Lake
11	Silver
12	Shadow
13	Bards
14	Crag
15	Tree
16	Water
17	Spirit
18	Mountain
19	Wood
20	Star

D20	Table B
1	City
2	Vale
3	Valley
4	Gulch
5	River
6 - 7	Ville
8	Hold
9	Cove
10 - 12	Ton or Town
13 - 14	Keep
15	Shire
16	Dwell
17	Home
18	House
19	Moor
20	Port

Table 8: Dungeon Name (“The” Roll on Table C followed by “of” Table D)

D20	Table C	D20	Table D
1	Halls	1	Peril
2	Temple	2 - 3	Horror
3	Crypt	4	Darkness
4	Tomb	5	Shame
5	Den	6	Night
6	Ruins	7 - 8	Death
7	Grave	9	Mystery
8	Chambers	10- 11	Evil
9	Portal	12	The Dead
10	Passageways	13	Pain
11	Caverns	14	Blood
12	Catacombs	15	Bones
13	Citadel	16	Chaos
14	Lair	17	Doom
15	Ancient City	18	Treachery
16	Labyrinth	19	Hate
17	Lost (roll Table C again, ignore 17-20)	20	Secrets
18	Hidden (roll Table C again, ignore 17-20)		
19	Cursed (roll Table C again, ignore 17-20)		
20	Forgotten (roll Table C again, ignore 17-20)		

8. DUNGEON GENERATION

Use the tables below to randomly draw or lay out the map as the players explore. Each dungeon will have an “objective” that can only be found after a certain number of encounters have been reached while exploring (see **Objectives**).

Represent random dungeon room features and/or doors with unique tiles, markers, coins, beads, actual models or if using a battle-mat, simply draw them. Before generating the actual dungeon map, determine the unique dungeon qualities and then begin with the starting room/entrance. The starting room/entrance area(s) and doors will always be free of any

initial encounters and traps but may contain features and wandering monsters. Generated dungeon qualities are the same and consistent throughout the entire dungeon. The dungeon ceiling is always 15ft. All room/corridor/chamber sizes are width by length in feet.

To begin mapping out the dungeon, choose an unexplored exit of the starting room/entrance and then roll on Table I. Henceforth, each time the players enter a newly unexplored area of the dungeon, roll on Table I unless instructed otherwise. Tables I-V are the main tools for random dungeon generation, used in conjunction with the tables in the core rules.

Table 9: Dungeon Features

D6	Type of Illumination	Type of Walls	D20	Type of Floors
1	Unlit, dark	Masonry	1 - 8	Flagstone
2	Unlit, dark	Superior masonry	9 - 10	Uneven Flagstone
3	Unlit, dark	Reinforced masonry	11 - 13	Hewn Stone Floors
4	Unlit, dark	Hewn stone	14 - 15	Light Rubble
5	Lit, Torches (every 30 feet, line the walls in sconces) provides torchlight (for torch life).	Unworked stone	16 - 17	Dense Rubble
6	Lit, Natural (Bioluminescent molds, ceiling contains skylights/windows) provides dim lighting as candle-light.	Special (d4)	18 - 19	Smooth Stone Floors
			20	Special (d4)

Table 10: Special Walls and Floors

D4	Special Walls	Special Floors
1	Iron	Roll again + Straw Covered
2	Packed Dirt	Roll again + Underwater (1foot submerged)
3	Wood	Roll again + Sand
4	Roll again + slime/ mold covered	Roll again + Slippery (water, slime, etc.)

Table 11: Dungeon Entrance

D6	The dungeon begins at a:
1 - 2	End of corridor* (roll on Table II.)
3 - 4	Stairs going down* (10x20)
5	Room** (roll on Table III.)
6	Chamber** (roll on Table IV.)

*which will be immediately followed by a (d6) 1-4 Room** [see Table III] or 5-6 Chamber** [see Table IV].

** must have at least 2 additional exits besides the dungeon entrance (Roll on Table V. until there are at least 2 exits).

Table I. Main Dungeon Table

D20	Area
1 - 7	Corridor, roll on Table II.
8 - 11	Room, roll on Table III.
12 - 13	Chamber, roll on Table IV.
14	Stairs going down ¹ ((d6 1-3) 10x20 or (d6 4-6) 10x10 spiral)
15 - 17	Passageway, roll on Table II. - place a door at the end.
18	Dead end ²
19	Special feature (see Special Feature , then return to Table I.)
20	Wandering Monster (Resolve the encounter then return to Table I.)

1 Stairs generated anywhere beyond the entrance lead down to a new and deeper level of the dungeon. As an exit, spiral stairs may be optionally placed inside a room. At the bottom of the stairs roll a new starting room/entrance, however this one may contain encounters or traps. (OPTIONALLY) This lower level may increase the DL by 1. This does not increase the reward for the adventure.

2 All party members may roll Search DC 15+DL for a single secret door. Each wall of the current dungeon area may be searched once by each player. Roll up the door as normal on the Random Door Type table in the DMG. It is made to look like the dungeon wall.

3 Corridors continue on Table I. Passageways end in a door, beyond the door roll a d6:1-3 continue on Table I., 4-5 Table III., 6 Table IV.

4 Roll once on Table V to determine exits. For chambers, roll on the table 1 DL higher for monsters.

5 Doors and openings are 5 feet wide and centered in a 10 foot section of a wall. Determine location on Table V.a. Continue beyond the exits on Table I.

Table II. Corridors and Passageways

D20	Corridors and Passageways ³
1 - 7	10x20
8 - 9	10x20, L bend - continue left 90 degrees at end with a 10x10 section
10 - 12	10x40
13 - 14	10x20, L bend - continue right 90 degrees at end with a 10x10 section
15 - 17	10x30
18	20x40 Hall (with optional 5ft wide pillars or statues going down the length of the hall every 10 feet on either side)
19 - 20	10x30, T section - continue 90 degrees left and 90 degrees right at end with a 10x10 section

Table III. Rooms

D20	Room ⁴
1 - 6	20x20
7 - 10	20x30
11 - 14	20x40
15 - 18	40x40
19 - 20	Special room (see Special Room , then return to Table I) or 20x20

Table IV. Chambers

D20	Chambers ⁴
1 - 14	40x50
15 - 18	80x50 (double ceiling height)
19 - 20	Special chamber (see Special Chamber and return in Table I) or 40x50

Table V. Exits

D20	Exits ⁵
1 - 8	1 door
9 - 12	2 doors
13 - 16	1 opening (10 feet wide)
17 - 18	2 openings (10 feet wide)
19	Stairs going down ¹ (10x10 spiral)
20	0 - possible Secret Door ²

Table V.a Exit Location

D20	Exit Location*
1 - 6	opposite wall
7 - 12	left wall
13 - 18	right wall
19 - 20	same wall

*Using the party's facing, the exit location(s) may be placed anywhere on the rolled wall.

Table 12: Special Feature

D20	Special Feature
1	Trap
2	Key
3	Note
4	Wall mosaic or carving
5	<i>Magic mouth</i>
6	Secret door ²

SPECIAL FEATURE

While exploring, the players have stumbled onto a special dungeon feature.

1. Trap. Roll a random trap from the core rules.

2. Key. The party must make a successful Perception check at DC 10+DL, which everyone may attempt. If any player succeeds, the party has found a single small brass key hanging on an iron hook in the dungeon wall. If they fail the check, they notice nothing and must move on as normal. The key will open a single locked dungeon door of the player's choice. Once the key has been used, it may not be used on another door. It is otherwise worthless.

3. Note. The party must make a successful Perception check at DC 10+DL, everyone may attempt the check. If any player succeeds, the party has found clutched in the hand of some skeletal remains a single small, crumbling parchment note. If they fail the check, they find nothing and must move on as normal. When the players attempt to read the note, roll a d6: 1 the note is in a language no one in the party understands, or is very badly deteriorated. 2 - 6 the note is written in a language one of the members of the party knows. Any player may attempt to make a DC 20+DL Linguistics check or use any magical means available to read an undecipherable note.

Written in a shaky hand, the note starts, "I've suffered a horrendous wound. I doubt I'll make it to the surface alive. Perhaps someone will find this and take better care than I." Successfully reading the note reveals a warning about the monsters ahead in the dungeon and/or a small map. The players get a single clue from the note (d6):

- 1 - 2 The next room or chamber the players explore may be a **Special Room** or a **Special Chamber** instead of the normal result.
- 3 - 4 The players may ignore the next roll indicating a wandering monster or random room contents indicating a monster. OR The players may reroll any wandering monster or random room contents indicating a monster of their choice. They may do either of these only once.

- 5 - 6 When the players check to see if the next encounter will be the "objective" encounter, they may add +2 to the die roll. They may add +2 each time they roll to check for the objective encounter for the rest of this adventure.

4. Wall mosaic or carving. The players notice that the wall contains an elaborate, artistic mosaic or carving. The players may attempt to decipher the meaning of the mosaic or carving. Any player may roll a Knowledge (History, Local or Religion) check at DC 15+DL to decipher the meaning of the mosaic or carving. If the check is successful the players have learned some clues about the dungeon. The players may choose one of the following options: The next monster encounter the players have will let the players surprise the monsters regardless of the **Monster Deployment** table result. OR The players may ignore any stuck/trapped/locked result of the next door they find. OR The players may add "hidden treasure" to the next random room contents roll they make regardless of the table result. It requires a Perception check at DC 20+DL to find. If the Knowledge check fails, they are unable to figure out what the mosaic or carving means and they must move on as normal.

5. Magic mouth. The dungeon wall next to the party suddenly shifts and changes shape to that of a large, magically-moving set of lips. The lips speak in common and tell the players some information about the dungeon. Roll a d6:

- 1 - 2 Nonsense. The mouth speaks some sort of elaborate poem with no discernable information of value. "Your eyes are most beautiful, and your hair most fair".
- 3 - 4 Warning. The mouth speaks and reveals a clue about the layout of the dungeon. The next monster encounter the players have will always let the players surprise the monsters regardless of the **Monster Deployment** table result. "Evil lies beyond. Beware friends, beware!"
- 5 - 6 Hidden Treasure. The mouth speaks of hidden riches in the dungeon. The players may add "hidden treasure" to the next random room contents roll they make regardless of the table result. It requires a Perception check at DC 20+DL to find. "Riches, Riches! Friends take care. Seek them beyond, seek them there!"

Once the mouth speaks, it shifts back into a plain dungeon wall and will not speak again.

6. Secret door. All party members may roll Perception DC 15+DL for a single secret door. Each wall of the current dungeon area may be searched once by each player. Roll up the door as normal based on the core rules. It is made to look like the dungeon wall.

SPECIAL ROOM

Do not roll random room contents for these special rooms, instead follow each room's specific description. All monsters and traps must be overcome before players may search or investigate any of the room's special and hidden features. Each of these rooms may only be generated once per dungeon level. Re-roll any duplicate special rooms.

1. Cave. A small 10x5 corridor leads to the center of the cave. This small 10x30 dusty cavern runs horizontally to the entrance and is covered in cobwebs and debris (the layout should look like a T). This cave contains no exits. The players may eventually search for a secret door here. All party members may roll Perception check DC 15+DL for a single secret door. Each wall of the current dungeon area may be

Table 13: Special Room

D20	Special Room
1	Cave
2	Pile of bones
3	Glowing circle
4	Rune etched floor
5	Stone obelisk
6	Pool or Fountain

searched once by each player. Roll up the door as al based on the core rule. It is made to look like the dungeon wall.

This room always triggers a monster encounter. Roll a random DL+1 monster from the monster tables. Place the party outside of the cave in the previous dungeon area as if they were about to step into the cave's entrance. The monster always begin anywhere in the back of the cave (furthest from the entrance) regardless of **Monster Deployment**. The cave also contains a hidden treasure that requires a Search check at DC 20+DL to find.

2. Pile of bones. This 20x20 room is filled with a 10x10 pile of bones in the center. This room always triggers a random monster encounter. Place the party outside of the room in the previous dungeon area leading to the room's entrance. The monster always begins on top of the pile of bones regardless of **Monster Deployment**. Roll for surprise as normal. The bone pile contains a hidden treasure that requires a Perception check at DC 10+DL to find.

3. Glowing Circle. This 20x20 room contains a large glowing circle inscribed in the center of the floor. The bluish circle illuminates the entire room. Magical writing can be seen shimmering along the outskirts of the circle. Any player may use Knowledge (Dungeoneering) or Knowledge (Arcana) at DC 15+DL to determine the properties of the circle with no potential ill effects. Otherwise, the party may nominate a player to investigate the circle. The investigating player discovers one of the following magical properties by stepping fully inside the circle (d6):

- 1 - 2 Curse. The circle casts *Bane* on any players who step inside the circle once per day. Treat the spell as if it was cast by a level 20 spellcaster. The player may make a Will save to avoid.
- 3-4 Teleportation. Determine the teleportation location. Roll a d6: 1 - 3 The circle teleports anyone who steps inside it back to the adventure settlement. 4 - 6 it teleports anyone who steps inside to a new settlement. Generate the new settlement randomly. In either location, there is a reciprocal magical circle that teleports the player back to the dungeon.
- 5 - 6 Blessed. The circle casts *Bless* on any players who step inside the circle once per day. Treat the spell as if it was cast by a level 20 spellcaster.

4. Rune etched floor. The floor of this 20x20 room is tiled with 5x5 foot stone tiles that each have a unique rune inscribed in the middle of them. The party is not placed in this room for any encounter, and it is always free of any random room contents. This room contains a puzzle that requires a successful skill check to figure out. Any player may use Knowledge (History), Knowledge (Local) or make an Intelligence check at DC 10+DL to figure out the puzzle with no potential ill effects.

If the skill check succeeds, the party may pass through the room unharmed by following the correct pattern of runes on the floor. Otherwise, the party must nominate a player to investigate the puzzle to see if they can pass safely through the room. Roll a random trap for the DL of the adventure. The investigating player must overcome this trap. If the check fails, the investigating player steps on the incorrect runes and triggers this random trap. Once the trap has been found or disabled, the party may then safely pass through the room on the correct runes.

5. Stone obelisk. This 40x40 room contains a 20x20 raised platform in the center. Centered on top of this 2 foot raised platform is a 10x10 stone obelisk that stands 4 feet tall. On each side of the obelisk there is a carved inscription. Roll random room contents for this room. When the players move to investigate the obelisk, roll a d6: 1 the inscription is in a language no one in the party understands; 2 - 6 the inscription is in a language one of the members of the party knows. Any player may attempt to make a DC 20+DL Linguistics check or use any magical means available to read an unrecognized inscription. Successfully reading the inscription reveals this information, roll a (d6):

- 1 - 2 Nonsense. The script appears to be some sort of elaborate poem with no discernable information of value. "Her eyes were most beautiful, and her hair most fair".
- 3 - 4 Warning. The script reveals a clue about the layout of the dungeon. The next monster encounter the players have will always let the players surprise the monsters regardless of the **Monster Deployment** table result. "Their hearts were cold and their intent was colder. Beware those that lay around the corner."
- 5 - 6 Hidden Treasure. The script reveals an elaborate combination switch on the obelisk that opens a hidden compartment on the platform below. Inside is a random magic item that will be of the highest type of item available for the dungeon level from the treasure tables (e.g. a DL 1 adventure would have the players finding a minor item and a DL 7 adventure would have the players finding a medium item, etc.). "For thine courage, take heart and take care, take what gifts we've come to spare."

6. Pool or Fountain. This 40x40 room contains a 20x20 pool or fountain (located anywhere, but usually in the center). Any player may use Knowledge (Dungeoneering) or Knowledge (Arcana) at DC 15+DL to determine the properties of the water with no potential ill effects. Otherwise, the party may nominate a player to drink from and investigate the pool or fountain. The investigating player will discover one of the following magical properties (d6):

- 1-2 Poison. The pool or fountain deals 1d4 points of temporary Constitution damage to the investigating player who drank from the water. The player may make a DC 10 + DL Fortitude save to avoid.
- 3-4 Transmutation. This magic effect only works once. Each player may place any amount of coins in the water. Roll a d6 for each player: 1 - 3 the water transmutes the coins to lead. 4 - 6 the water transmutes the coins to platinum.
- 5-6 Healing. Once per day, the water heals 1d8+DL hit points for each character that drinks from it.

Table 14: Special Chamber

D20	Special Chamber
1	Crypt
2	Chasm
3	Mausoleum
4	Magic laboratory
5	Stone statue
6	Monster lair

SPECIAL CHAMBER

Do not roll random room contents for these special chambers, instead follow each chamber’s specific description. All monsters and traps must be overcome before players may search or investigate any of the chamber’s special and hidden features. Each of these chambers may only be generated once per dungeon level. Re-roll any duplicate special chambers.

1. Crypt. This 40x50 chamber contains a 20x20 crypt with a 10 foot wide entrance in the center. On a d6, 1 – 3 the crypt’s entrance is sealed with large, stone double doors from floor to ceiling. On a 4 – 6 the crypt has been broken into and the stone doors lay crumbled around the entrance. The players may investigate the crypt. If the entrance is sealed, roll up the door as normal from the core rules. Replace the door type with stone but keep whatever other result the table gives. Once the players pass through the door (or if there is no door) they see a small 10x15 room beyond. Roll a d6:

- 1 – 2 Awoken Dead. The players have disturbed the undead creatures residing inside. Roll a monster from the random table in the core rules, but only roll between undead creatures that are available for the appropriate DL. Use the **Monster Deployment** rules as normal but always place the monster in the back of the small 10x15 crypt room and the party at the crypt entrance.
- 3 – 4 Empty. All that remains in the crypt are a few loosely scattered bones and cobwebs.
- 5 – 6 Coffin. An elaborately decorated 10x5 coffin rests in the back of the room. The players may investigate the coffin. Inside is skeleton and a random magic item that will be of the highest type of item available for the dungeon level from the treasure tables (e.g. a DL 1 adventure would have the players finding a minor item and a DL 7 adventure would have the players finding a medium item, etc.).

2. Chasm. This 40x50 chamber is intersected by a 10x40 chasm in the center running wall to wall. Centered and crossing over the chasm is a 10x20 wooden bridge made of old boards. The chasm seems to be a bottomless pit going down forever. Any person or monster falling into the chasm will be killed by the incredible fall to the bottom far below. Roll random room contents for this chamber as normal. The bridge will hold 500 pounds of weight at a time. When a player from the party (or a monster) attempts to cross the rickety bridge, roll a d6:

- 1-2 The player must pause to catch his balance as the bridge wavers beneath. Make a Acrobatics check

at DC 5. If the check succeeds, the player may cross the bridge as normal. If the check fails, the player must make a reflex save at DC 10 or fall into the chasm and be killed. If the save succeeds, place the player on the side of the chasm where he or she began to cross. They must try again to cross the chasm.

- 3-6 The player may cross as normal. Any player who crosses the bridge successfully receives XP as if they had overcome a CR 1/4 trap (only once).

3. Mausoleum. This dust covered 40x50 chamber contains 4 wooden coffins. The coffins are situated in a square pattern 10 feet from any wall and 20 feet from each other in the center of the chamber. Roll random room contents for this chamber as normal. The party may nominate a player to search each coffin. The coffins contain some dusty old bones plus the results below (d6):

- 1 Trap - Roll a random trap.
- 2 – 5 Nothing but dust and cobwebs.
- 6 Hidden treasure. The player must make a Perception check at DC 20 + DL to find the hidden treasure.

4. Magic laboratory. This 40x50 chamber is lit by many glowing candles. A smell of incense and old papers wafts through the air. There are two small 5x5 tables and a 10x5 desk situated around the edge of the room. Forming a triangular pattern, there are three 10x10 glowing circles inscribed in magical writing on the floor in the center of the room. Each circle has 4 lit candles around it. Roll random room contents for this chamber as normal. The party may nominate a player to investigate the desks and tables. When the player searches each, roll a D6:

- 1 Trap - Roll a random trap.
- 2 – 5 Nothing.
- 6 Hidden treasure. The player must make a Perception check at DC 20 + DL to find a hidden treasure. The treasure is a random magic item that will be of the highest type of item available for the dungeon level from the treasure tables (e.g. a DL 1 adventure would have the players finding a minor item and a DL 7 adventure would have the players finding a medium item, etc.).

The players may also investigate each of the three magical circles. Any player may use Knowledge (Dungeoneering) or Knowledge (Arcana) at DC 15+DL to determine the properties of the circle with no potential ill effects. Otherwise, nominate a single player to investigate each one. The investigating player discovers one of the following magical properties by stepping inside the circle (d6):

- 1 – 2 Curse. The circle casts *Bane* on any players who step inside the circle once per day. Treat the spell as if it was cast by a level 20 spellcaster. The player may make a Will save to avoid.
- 3 – 4 Teleportation. Determine the teleportation location. Roll a d6: 1 – 3 The circle teleports anyone who steps inside it back to the adventure settlement. 4 – 6 it teleports anyone who steps inside to a new settlement. Generate the new settlement randomly. In either location, there is a reciprocal magical circle that teleports the player back to the dungeon.
- 5 – 6 Blessed. The circle casts *Bless* on any players who step inside the circle once per day. Treat the spell as if it was cast by a level 20 spellcaster.

5. Stone statue. This 40x50 chamber contains a large stone statue in any corner. The statue platform consists of a diagonal section of stairs going 2 feet up from the floor, covering nearly 20x20 feet from one wall to the other. There is a 10x5 8-foot tall stone statue of a warrior situated in the center of the raised platform that faces the room. Roll random room contents for this chamber as normal. The party may nominate a player to investigate the statue. When the player moves to investigate, roll a D6:

- 1 Trap - Roll a random trap.
- 2 - 3 Nothing.
- 4 - 5 *Magic mouth.* The statue begins to magically speak to the players, imparting some clues about the dungeon. The players may choose one of the following options: The next monster encounter the players have will always let the players surprise the monsters regardless of the **Monster Deployment** table result. OR The players may ignore any stuck/trapped/locked result of next door they find. OR The players may add "hidden treasure" to the next random room contents roll they make regardless of the table result. It requires a Perception check at DC 20+DL to find. "Allies, come hither and listen."
- 6 Hidden treasure. The player must make a Search check at DC 20 + DL to find a hidden treasure. The statue points to a hidden alcove on the platform below. The treasure is a random magic item that will be of the highest type of item available for the dungeon level from the treasure tables (i.e. a DL 1 adventure would have the players finding a minor item and a DL 7 adventure would have the players finding a medium item, etc.).

6. Monster lair. This huge 80x50 chamber contains a large 20x20 pile of treasure heaped in the center of it. This room always triggers a monster encounter. Roll on the DL table 2 levels higher than normal for the monster. Place the monster(s) on top of the pile of treasure regardless of the **Monster Deployment** table result. Once the players have defeated the monster(s), they may loot the hoard of treasure. This treasure replaces any under the description for the monster(s). Roll 3 times on the treasure tables for the appropriate CR of the encounter. This represents the giant pile of coins, goods and items heaped in the room. (OPTIONALLY) The players have discovered a dragon's lair. Pick a dragon size and color that is at least 2 CR higher than the DL of the party and replace the monster(s) with the dragon.

9. OBJECTIVES AND THE OBJECTIVE ROLL AND ENCOUNTER

After the first 3 completed dungeon monster encounters of any kind, roll a d6 for each new random room contents roll that indicates a monster. On 4-6 the "objective encounter" has been found. This roll is the "objective roll". If the objective roll does not indicate that the objective encounter has been found, roll the random monster as normal. Make another objective roll for each new random room contents roll that indicates a monster to see if it is the objective encounter. After the 4th encounter, add +1 to the die for the next objective roll, including encounters with wandering monsters, to a maximum of +2. For example, the 5th overall random room contents roll indicating a monster would be as a +1 for the objective roll.

The objective encounter is the target of the adventure hook the players received in the settlement. It contains a

special encounter below which replaces the normal random monster for the room or chamber.

When a special room or chamber triggers an objective encounter, follow any specific instructions under the special room or chamber's description for what type of monsters might be encountered there. Apply the **Objective Monster Table** results to the encounter description for the special room or chamber.

1. RESCUE

The players have discovered the NPC they must rescue and return safely to the settlement. Place a randomly determined (or player agreed upon) NPC as determined by tables in the DMG as far as possible from the players in the current dungeon area. The NPC will be bound with simple rope bindings. The NPC will be disabled and at 0 HP. The players must defeat the monsters which will be guarding the NPC "prisoner". Roll on the **Objective Monster Table**. The monsters will ignore the NPC and attempt to slay the players. The players must safely return the NPC to the settlement they came from for their reward.

2. ITEM RETRIEVAL

The players have located the item they were searching for. Determine the type of item randomly using the treasure tables. Pick the highest type of item available for the adventure DL on the table. (e.g. a DL 1 adventure would have the players looking for a minor item and a DL 7 adventure would have the players looking for a medium item, etc.). Ignore and reroll any potion or scroll results. Any properties of the item are already known to the players and need not be discovered or appraised.

Alternately, the players may choose a more appropriate item befitting the original adventure hook (such as an heirloom, cursed item, gem or art object). This item is being guarded by monsters. The players must defeat the monsters and retrieve the item to be brought back to the settlement they came from. Roll on the **Objective Monster Table**. The players may alternately take the item in lieu of returning it, but receive no reward.

3. ERADICATION

The players have found the monsters they set out to destroy. They must defeat the monsters and return some evidence of their accomplishment to the settlement they came from for their reward. Roll on the **Objective Monster Table** and subtract 1 from the die roll to a minimum of 1.

4. FEATURE DESTRUCTION

The players have located the dungeon feature they were searching for. Determine the type of dungeon feature randomly (d6):

- 1 - 2 Candle-lit Unholy Altar (10x5)
- 3 - 4 Evil Shrine with Statue (10x10)
- 5 - 6 Dark Magical Portal (10x5)

Table 15: Object Monster Table

D6	Object Monster*
1 - 3	Roll on the DL table 2 levels higher than normal
4 - 5	Roll on the DL table 1 level higher than normal
6	Roll on the same DL table

*(OPTIONALLY) The players may choose more appropriate monsters befitting the original adventure hook.

Table 16: Feature Destruction Table

D6	Material	Hardness	HP	Topple DC
1	Iron	10	60	20+DL
2 – 3	Stone	8	50	15+DL
4 – 6	Wood	5	15	10+DL

Place this dungeon feature anywhere in the current dungeon area as far from the players as possible. This feature is being guarded by monsters. The players must defeat the monsters before they can destroy the feature. Roll on the **Objective Monster Table**. Once the monsters have been defeated the players, they may desecrate and/or destroy the dungeon feature using any means they possess such as holy water, toppling it over (STR check), smashing it or setting it on fire and burning it. Any of these features will be constructed out of a random material (see Feature Destruction Table).

The feature weighs approximately 1d6 x100 pounds and is 1d6+2 feet tall. The feature need not be completely destroyed, just defaced (10 percent of total HP) or desecrated and made useless to the denizens of the dungeon. If the players possess holy water they may use it to successfully desecrate any type of feature. The players must return a bit of the feature or other form of evidence of the feature’s destruction to the settlement for their reward.

5. DISCOVERY

The players have discovered the information they were looking for in the dungeon. The information could be documents, maps, or whatever the players choose. The players should roll a new adventure hook and objective (ignore a 5 and players may not pick 5) to represent this new “discovery” of information. They must defeat the monsters guarding this information and return with it to the settlement for their reward. Roll on the Objective

Table 17: Solo DL Table

Character Level Sum	No. Characters in Party					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	1/4	-	-	-	-	-
2	1/2	1/2	-	-	-	-
3	1	1/2	1/2	-	-	-
4	2	1	1	1	-	-
5	3	2	1	1	1	-
6	4	2	2	2	2	2
7	5	2	2	2	2	2
8	6	2	2	2	2	2
9	7	3	2	2	2	2
10	8	3	3	3	3	3

Monster Table above. Instead of rolling a new adventure hook and objective in the settlement for their next adventure, the players may pursue the “discovery” as the next adventure at 1 DL higher than normal for double the reward (players roll as normal but double the reward treasure results)!

6. EPIC (OBJECTIVE)

In addition to the 1 through 5 objective results that were determined when Epic was rolled for the adventure, there is an optional rule. (OPTIONALLY) When the party defeats the objective monster encounter they may roll up an “Epic Treasure” that the monsters were guarding. This treasure entirely replaces the reward treasure the party would normally receive in the settlement. To determine the Epic Treasure, find the highest type of item available for the adventure DL on the treasure tables and have each player choose which variety of that type of item they want to roll for (e.g. a minor magic weapon or minor magic armor, etc.). The player then rolls 3 times on the appropriate magic item sub table for that item. That player may then choose only 1 item from these 3 results for his or her Epic Treasure. This item need not be identified.

10. GOING IT ALONE

Not everyone is able to get some friends together to play sometimes, even without having to find someone to play the GM. This section is for the adventurer who wishes to set out on his or her own against the challenges of the dungeon “solo”. The tables in the core rules and this supplement were made for groups of players with a wide variety of capabilities. A low-level solo adventurer or very small party will likely lack the wide variety of skills necessary to survive in the dungeon. However, the rules and tables below attempt to accommodate the low-level solo player or small party with appropriate challenges.

The regular Dungeon Level equation for less than 4 1st level characters breaks down into a very small fraction. To accommodate smaller groups of low-level characters, there are two new “sub-levels”. These levels are DL 1/4 and DL 1/2. Multiple-player low-level parties should round to the nearest fraction of either 1/2 or 1/4 if their DL is less than 1.

Table 18: Dungeon Level 1/4 Table

D100	Dungeon Level 1/4
1 - 10	1d3 bats
11 - 15	1d3 tiny monstrous centipedes
16 - 26	1d3 rats
27 - 40	1 kobold
41 - 44	1 tiny viper snake
45 - 58	1 goblin
59 - 62	1 weasel
63 - 70	1 tiny monstrous scorpion
71 - 76	1 tiny monstrous spider
77 - 84	1 skeleton, human warrior
85 - 86	1 dire rat
87 - 88	1 hobgoblin
89 - 90	1 orc
91 - 00	roll on Dungeon Level 1/2 table

Table 19: Dungeon Level 1/2 Table

D100	Dungeon Level 1/2
1 - 10	roll on Dungeon Level 1/4 table
11 - 15	1d4 tiny viper snakes
16 - 26	1d6 rats
27 - 40	1d3 kobolds
41 - 44	1d3 small monstrous centipedes
45 - 58	1d2 goblins
59 - 62	1 badger
63 - 70	1 fiendish dire rat
71 - 76	1 zombie kobold
77 - 84	1d3 skeletons, human warrior
85 - 86	1 human commoner zombie
87 - 88	1 gnoll
89 - 90	1d2 orcs
91 - 00	roll on Dungeon Level 1 table

To calculate the DL for an unbound adventure with a single character, ignore the earlier equation under **Characters and Settlements** and follow these rules:

The solo player should simply subtract 2 levels from his or her total character level to find the DL for the adventure. The minimum DL is 1/4. For example this would make a 5th level character's adventure DL 3. Another example would be an 8th level character at DL 6. (See Solo DL Table). As there are only random monster tables in the DMG for Dungeon Level 1 through 20, included are 2 new tables for Dungeon Level 1/4 and 1/2.

Doors may never be trapped in a 1/2 or 1/4 DL dungeon. Ignore traps on door results. For stuck and locked doors, multiply the break-down DC and the Disable Device DC by the 1/2 or 1/4 DL. This should make it possible for a smaller party or solo player to open or break down such doors. Round down any fractions. If the party lacks the skill Disable Device, simply replace the locked result with a stuck result.

For DL 1/4 and 1/2 adventures, traps from the tables in the core rules are typically too difficult and will easily kill the party. For a trap resulting from a Dungeon Generation roll or random room contents, use CR 1 Trap Table instead and reasonable DCs.

For the objective monster table: Count DL 1/2 as a single higher Dungeon Level and DL 1 as the next higher. For example: an objective monster that is 2 DL higher than normal for a DL of 1/4 would use the DL 1 monster table to generate the objective monster.

For treasure and rewards: Use the bestiary entry for whatever gear the monsters may be carrying, but for treasure (including rewards), use the nearest DL table (usually 1) found in the core rules and multiply the final results of coins and art or gem values by the Solo DL. For example, a treasure coin result of 8 gp would be reduced to 2 gp for a single 1st level player (with a solo DL of 1/4). Items remain the listed value.

Use all other rules provided by this supplement and in the core rulebooks as normal.

Table 20: CR1 Trap Table

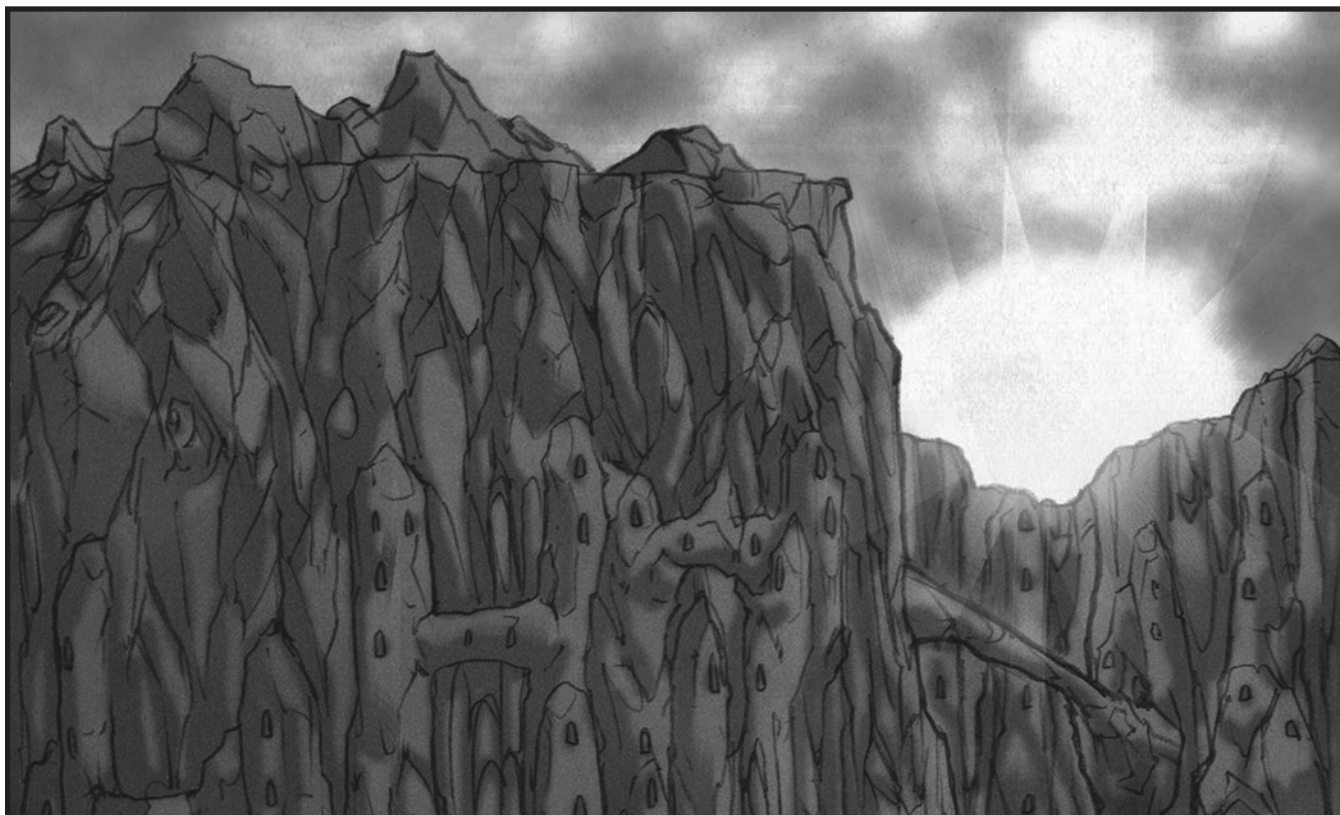
D100	Trap
1 - 15	Basic Arrow Trap
16 - 20	Camouflaged Pit Trap
21 - 25	Deeper Pit Trap
26 - 36	Fusillade of Darts
37 - 40	Poison Dart Trap
41 - 46	Poison Needle Trap
47 - 51	Portcullis Trap
52 - 61	Razor-Wire across Hallway (or Room Entrance)
62 - 71	Rolling Rock Trap
72 - 81	Scything Blade Trap
82 - 91	Spears Trap
92 - 94	Swinging Block Trap
95 - 00	Wall Blade Trap

ONE ON ONE ADVENTURES #12

JOURNEY INTO RIDDLE CANYON

BY SUZI YEE

AN ADVENTURE FOR ONE FIGHTER LEVELS 6-8



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One on One Adventures are for one player and one GM. However, they are easily modified for a traditional party of four players and one GM.

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ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

On the edge of civilization lies the Barren Steppe, a large swath of arid grassland. One lone keep along the Washbau River watches over the region for signs of barbaric humanoids from the dry wastes. While the land is mostly flat, a large rock formation juts out from the earth-Riddle Canyon. Carved out by ancient raging waters, Riddle Canyon is now graced by a seasonal river that only occasionally flows this far into the steppe.

Once called Riddled Canyon from the numerous holes and cave openings along the rock face, over time people shortened the name to Riddle Canyon. When water was more plentiful, a human civilization once called the canyon home, carving out entire subterranean cities. Even after the humans left the canyons for the plains, they would flee to the canyon during invasions, using defensive caves stashed with food and supplied with water to wait out the invaders. Now the canyon is home to creatures both natural and unnatural as well as the Shrieking Goblins, notorious lizard-riding raiders of the steppe.

Recently, the level of raiding activity from the Shrieking Goblins has dropped dramatically, and the PC has been hired (or otherwise charged) to journey into Riddle Canyon to investigate the situation. Leaders are worried that this is the calm before the storm and the goblins are reading for a full scale invasion while others worry a hardier foe has taken the goblins' territory and future security threats will be all the stronger.

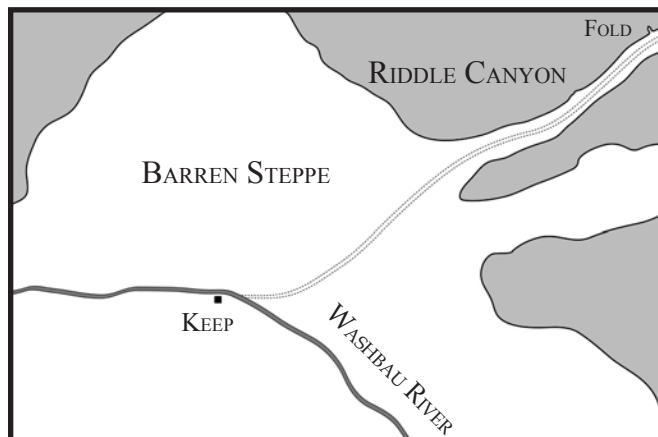
The PC knows the general layout of the area (see overview map). The exact location of their lair is unknown, but it is suspected they live among one of the caves in Riddle Canyon where the canyon wall bends back upon itself before continuing uphill. Assume that the PC has access to a city to supply himself for the mission before heading to the keep.

ADVENTURE OVERVIEW

Riddle Canyon is filled with adventure for 1 player fighter level 6-8; however this adventure is suitable for any player with strong martial skills and easily adjustable for a traditional party of 4, levels 2-4 by adding more combatants of the same type in a given area.

While many of the caves are empty and available to the PC for resting, some caves are more than meets the eye. There are 4 caves that contain ancient burial cairns, 4 caves that are home to creatures of the canyon, and 4 open defensive caves. There are 2 lookout posts on either end of the canyon fold and a stone bridges that span the fold. Lastly, there is the entrance to the ancient subterranean city that once thrived here.

OVERVIEW MAP



There are vestigial paths that suggest that at one time, a series of steep roads once connected the canyon floor to the top, but most are eroded now and only a few connections remain. Unless otherwise noted, the canyon walls can be scaled (Climb DC 15).

Unbeknownst to the neighboring tribes and civilizations, a new threat has entered the canyon, a clan of sentient mobile rocks that call themselves the grumblers. Underneath the canyon rock resides a batholith, an ancient and massive rock formation that the grumblers believe to be their fabled lost deity. Using a rock dust that acts as a narcotic to goblins, the grumblers now have control over the Shrieking Goblin tribe, who lives in the remains of the great subterranean city that lies above the heart of the batholith. Day after day, the grumblers urge the goblins to carve one word over and over again in all different scripts: Awaken.

THE KEEP

Slowly eroded by dry winds impregnated with grit, this square stone tower stands 25 feet tall with arrow slits and observation points facing the steppe. The ribbons of green following alongside the river are a stark contrast to the endless dusty horizon beyond.

The keep is 20 ft. square, housing a rotation of watchmen 10 at a time. They offer the PC shelter, food, water and boarding for his mount if he has one, but they have no supplies beyond the basics to offer.

Should the PC find himself overwhelmed, he can retreat to the keep, but the men stationed there will not venture out into the Barren Steppe, although they will defend the keep should it come under attack. Their charge is to observe and report threats from the steppe.

KEEP LIEUTENANT

Male human fighter 4/expert 2
NG Medium Humanoid (human)
Init -1; **Senses** Perception +8

CR 5
1,600 XP

DEFENSE

AC 18, touch 11, flat-footed 17 (+4 armor, +1 enhancement, +1 Dex, +2 shield)
hp 53 (4d10+16 plus 2d8+6)
Fort +7, **Ref** +2, **Will** +6 (+8 against fear)
Defensive Abilities armor training, bravery

OFFENSE

Spd 20 ft. (30 ft. base)
Melee +1 longsword +9 (1d8+5)
Ranged light crossbow +6 (1d8/19-20)

STATISTICS

Abilities Str 14, Dex 12, Con 16, Int 13, Wis 14, Cha 10
Base Atk +5; **CMB** +7; **CMD** 18
Feats Alertness, Combat Expertise, Improved Disarm, Improved Trip, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (longsword), Weapon Specialization (longsword)
Skills Bluff +4, Climb +5, Diplomacy +4, Handle Animal +4, Intimidate +4, Knowledge (engineering) +5, Profession +6, Sense Motive +8 (+10 opposing Bluff Checks), Survival +6, and Swim +4
Languages Common, Dwarven, Elven
Gear +1 longsword, masterwork large steel shield, +1 chain shirt, light crossbow with 20 bolts, silver dagger, cold iron dagger, signal whistle, 159 gp

WATCHMAN (9)

LN male human fighter 2
Init +1; **Senses** Perception +3

DEFENSE

AC 15, touch 11, flat-footed 14 (+4 armor, +1 Dex)
hp 20 (2d10+9)
Fort +5, **Ref** +1, **Will** +0 (+1 against fear)
Defensive Abilities bravery

OFFENSE

Spd 30 ft.
Melee longsword +5 (1d8+2/10-20)
Ranged light crossbow +3 (1d8/19-20)

STATISTICS

Abilities Str 14, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10
Base Atk +2; **CMB** +4; **CMD** 15
Feats Power Attack, Skill Focus (Perception), Toughness, Weapon Focus (Longsword)
Skills Climb +5, Intimidate +5, Survival +5
Language Common
Gear chain shirt, longsword, dagger, light crossbow, 20 bolts, signal whistle, 1 gem (50 gp), and 12gp

THE BARREN STEPPE

Riddle Canyon is 1 day's travel from the keep following the dried-out bed of the seasonal river and 2 days' travel if he follows the canyon's edge. A Survival DC 10 reveals watering holes along the route and if following the canyons, finds suitable caves for resting.

Getting lost is not much of a problem with such prominent geological features to guide the PC; however heat exposure is a serious concern. The barren steppe heats up quickly, reaching over 100° F by midday. Most of the vegetation (if any) is tough grass and there is very little shade except in the shadows of the canyons. Should the PC travel during the heat of the day, he must make a Fortitude save every hour (DC 15, +1 for each previous check) or take 1d4 points of nonlethal damage. Wearing heavy clothing or armor of any sort grants a -4 penalty to this save. If he takes nonlethal damage from the heat, the PC suffers from heatstroke and is fatigued until he recovers from the nonlethal damage taken from exposure to the heat.

As the saying goes, when it rains, it pours, and the Barren Steppe is no exception. Bouts of torrential rain slam into the canyon from time to time (15% during this time of year). The water makes the rocks slick (Climb DC 20). It also makes awareness of ones surroundings more difficult (-3 to Perception checks) as sheets of water make visibility more difficult and the cacophony of thunder and fat pelts of water hitting stone fill the air.

RANDOM ENCOUNTERS

Life in the steppe is sparse but resilient and usually hungry. The relentless heat of the day brings a lethargy to life in the steppe, but once the heat passes, life abounds. Roll for random encounter every 4 hours during the day and every 2 hours during the night.

CR 2 RANDOM ENCOUNTER (D8)

600 XP

1. HYENA (4)

N medium animal
Init +2; **Senses** Low-light vision, scent; Perception +7

DEFENSE

AC 14, touch 12, flat-footed 12 (+2 Dex, +2 natural)
hp 13 (2d8+4)
Fort +5, **Ref** +5, **Will** +1

OFFENSE

Spd 50 ft.
Melee bite +3 (1d6+3 plus trip)

STATISTICS

Abilities Str 14, Dex 15, Con 15, Int 2, Wis 13, Cha 6
Base Atk +1; **CMB** +3; **CMD** 15
Feats Skill Focus (Perception)
Skills Stealth +6 (+10 in tall grass); **Racial Modifiers** +4 Stealth in tall grass

2. PUMA (2)

N medium animal
Init +4; **Senses** Low-light vision, scent; Perception +5

DEFENSE

AC 15, touch 14, flat-footed 11 (+4 Dex, +1 natural)
hp 19 (3d8+6)
Fort +5, **Ref** +7, **Will** +2

OFFENSE

Spd 30 ft., climb 20 ft.
Melee bite +6 (1d6+3 plus grab), 2 claws +6 (1d3+3)
Special Attacks pounce, rake (2 claws +6, 1d3+3)

STATISTICS

Abilities Str 16, Dex 19, Con 15, Int 2, Wis 13, Cha 6
Base Atk +2; **CMB** +5 (+9 grapple); **CMD** 19 (23 vs. trip)
Feats Skill Focus (Perception), Weapon Finesse
Skills Acrobatics +8, Climb +11, Stealth +11 (+15 in undergrowth); **Racial Modifiers** +4 Stealth in undergrowth

3. VIPER SNAKE

N medium animal
Init +5; **Senses** low-light vision, scent; Perception +9

DEFENSE

AC 14, touch 11, flat-footed 13 (+1 Dex, +3 natural)
hp 13 (2d8+4)
Fort +5, **Ref** +4, **Will** +1

OFFENSE

Spd 20 ft., climb 20 ft., swim 20 ft.
Melee bite +2 (1d4-1 plus poison)

STATISTICS

Abilities Str 8, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 1, Wis 13, Cha 2
Base Atk +1; **CMB** +0; **CMD** 11 (can't be tripped)
Feats Improved Initiative, Weapon Finesse
Skills Acrobatics +9, Climb +9, Stealth +9, Swim +9

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Poison (Ex) Bite – injury; *save* Fort DC 13; *frequency* 1/round for 6 rounds; *effect* 1d2 Con; *cure* 1 save.

CR 1

400 XP

CR 2

600 XP

CR 1

400 XP

4. DESERT SCORPION

N large vermin 800 XP

Init +0; **Senses** Darkvision 60 ft., tremorsense 60ft.; Perception +4

DEFENSE

AC 16, touch 9, flat-footed 16 (+7 natural, -1 size)

hp 37 (5d8+15)

Fort +7, **Ref** +1, **Will** +1

Immune mind-affecting effects

OFFENSE

Spd 50 ft.

Melee 2 claws +6 (1d6+4 plus grab), sting +6 (1d6+4 plus poison)

Special Attacks (constrict 1d6+4)

STATISTICS

Abilities Str 19, Dex 10, Con 16, Int -, Wis 10, Cha 2

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +8 (+12 grappling); **CMD** 18 (30 vs. trip)

Skills Climb +8, Stealth +0

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Poison (Ex) Sting – injury; *save* Fort DC 17; *frequency* 1/round for 6 rounds; *effect* 1d2 Str damage; *cure* 1 save. The save DC is Constitution-based and includes a +2 racial bonus.

5. GIANT WOLF SPIDER

N Large Vermin

Init +3; **Senses** Darkvision 60 ft., tremorsense 60 ft., Perception +5

CR 3

CR 3

800 XP

DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 12, flat-footed 14 (-1 size, +3 Dex, +5 natural)

hp 32 (5d8+10)

Fort +6, **Ref** +4, **Will** +1

OFFENSE

Spd 40 ft., climb 30 ft.

Melee bite +6 melee (1d8+6 plus poison)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.

Special Attacks leaping attack (1d6+2)

TACTICS

Before Combat The giant wolf spider's tactics differ depending on where the giant wolf spider is encountered. In the Barren Steppe, the spider hides in its subterranean burrow, popping out of from its trapdoor to bite at prey. Among the rocks of the canyon, the spider likes to use its leaping attack on victims.

STATISTICS

Abilities Str 18, Dex 16, Con 15, Int -, Wis 11, Cha 3

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +9; **CMD** 22 (26 vs. trip)

Skills Acrobatics +11, Climb +16, Stealth +7; **Racial Modifiers** +8 Acrobatics, +12 Climb, +8 Stealth

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Leaping Attack (Ex) The giant wolf spider can leap and attack as a charge action, dealing an additional 1d6+2 damage to its target.

Poison (Ex) Bite – injury; *save* Fort DC 17; *frequency* 1/round for 6 rounds; *effect* 1d3 Strength damage, *cure* 1 save.

6. LARGE MONSTROUS CENTIPEDE (2)

N large vermin

Init +2; **Senses** Darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +4

CR 1

400 XP

DEFENSE

AC 14, touch 11, flat-footed 12 (+2 Dex, +3 natural, -1 size)

hp 16 (3d8+3)

Fort +4, **Ref** +3, **Will** +1

Immune mind-affecting effects

OFFENSE

Spd 40 ft., climb 40 ft.

Melee Bite +3 (1d8+1 plus poison)

Space 10 ft. **Reach** 5 ft.

Special Attacks poison

STATISTICS

Abilities Str 13, Dex 15 Con 10, Int -, Wis 10, Cha 2

Base Atk +2; **CMB** +4; **CMD** 16

Feats Weapon Finesse^B

Skills Climb +12, Stealth +6

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Poison (Ex) Bite – injury; *save* Fort DC 14; *frequency* 1/round for 6 rounds; *effect* 1d6 Dex damage; *cure* 1 save. The save DC is Constitution-based and includes a +2 racial bonus.

7. NO ENCOUNTER

8. NO ENCOUNTER

RIDDLE CANYON FOLD

A tepid breeze blows through the canyon seeming almost cool to your warm skin. Dwarfed by the giant slabs of rock, the enormity of your task sets in as you see the hundreds of holes and crevices that cover the canyon face.

The canyon wall is 100 feet tall and the fold is approximately 100 feet in depth. While there are many other caves, the map shows all the viable cave entrances on the pathway that have something of interest. Elevation is given in feet in relation to the canyon floor. The PC can use Perception to tell the viable cave entrances apart from other holes in the rock face (DC 10 within 10 ft., +1 for every 5 ft. beyond). Using a spyglass removes any distance modifiers.

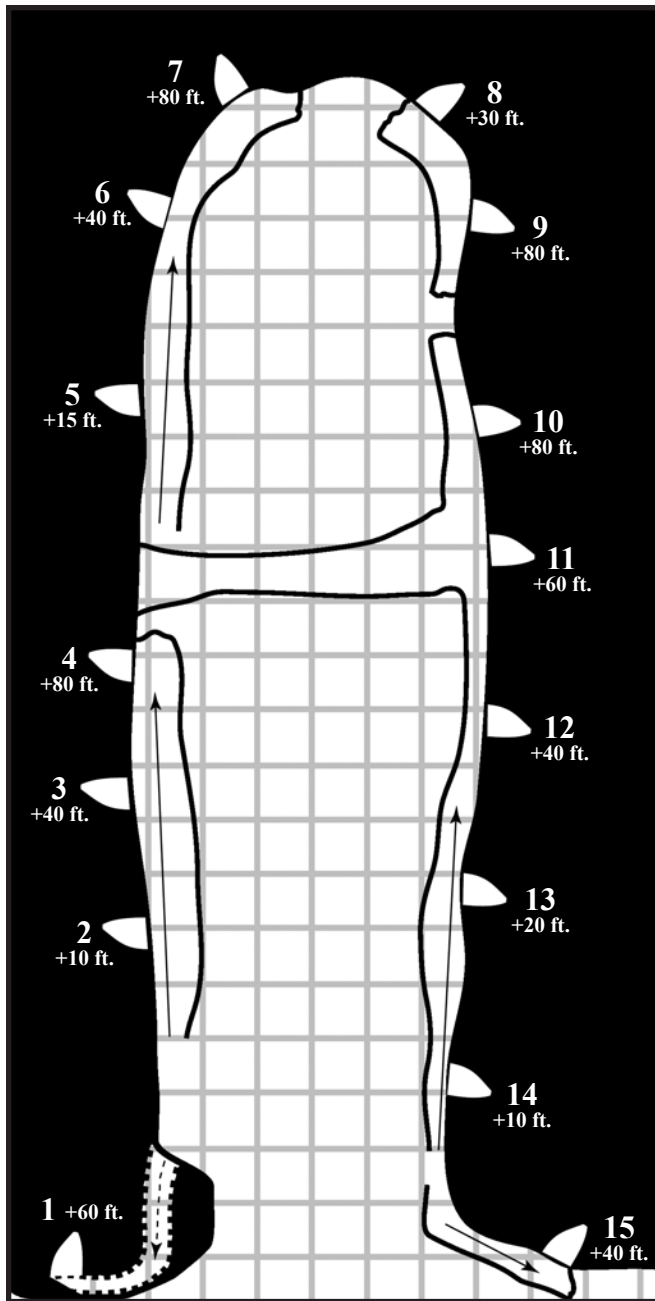
1. HOBGOBLIN LOOKOUT

This cave is actually inside of a large piece of rock that juts out of the canyon wall and serves as a lookout post for a neighboring tribe of hobgoblins.

This 20 ft. x 20 ft. cave hangs over the canyon, illuminated by beams of light shooting in from small viewing holes carved in the outer wall. A pile of trash sits in the back corner while the remains of a fire pit in the center reveal that the cave has recently been in use.

Creatures: Assignment to the canyon lookout is one of the lowest posts among the hobgoblins, and Glinrok and Thorg are enduring their punishment in stride. Glinrok challenged his war band's leader and lost, and Thorg slept with the leader's niece. Glinrok regards Thorg's company as part of his punishment.

CANYON FOLD MAP



During the day, they roam the canyons hunting for food and sport and gathering fire wood for the cold nights. While there is only a 20% chance they are in the cave during the day, the hobgoblins bed down in the cave at night with a 50% chance that they light a fire.

If approached peaceably, the hobgoblins are unfriendly, but do not attack. If the PC can turn them to Indifferent, they are willing to answer a few questions about the state of things in the canyon (notably that they have seen little of the Shrieking Goblins the past few months). If the PC can turn them to Friendly, they will offer the PC a spot by the fire in their cave. If the PC complains about orders, superior officers or women (and the trouble they can get you in), he gets a +5 empathy bonus to his Diplomacy checks.

GLINROK

LE male hobgoblin fighter 4
Medium humanoid (goblinoid)
Init +2; **Senses** Darkvision 60ft.; **Perception** +4

CR 4
1,200 XP

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 13, flat-footed 16 (+4 armor, +2 Dex, +1 dodge, +2 shield)
hp 38 (4d10+16)
Fort +7, **Ref** +3, **Will** +2; +1 vs. fear
Defensive Abilities armor training 1, bravery

OFFENSE

Spd 30 ft.
Melee +1 longsword +9 (1d8+4/19-20)
Ranged javelin +6 (1d6+3)

STATISTICS

Abilities Str 16, Dex 15, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8
Base Atk +4; **CMB** +7; **CMD** 19
Feats Dodge, Mobility, Power Attack, Toughness, Weapon Focus (longsword)
Skills Intimidate +3, Stealth +8, Survival +5; **Racial Modifiers** +4 Stealth
Language Common, Goblin
Gear cure moderate wounds potion, javelins (3), +1 longsword, masterwork chain shirt, masterwork heavy shield, rations (5), rope (hemp), waterskin, 20 gp, 50 sp, 20 cp

THORG

LE male hobgoblin warrior
Medium humanoid (goblinoid)
Init +1; **Senses** Darkvision 60ft.; **Perception** +6

CR 2
3 600 XP

DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 11, flat-footed 16 (+4 armor, +1 Dex, +2 shield)
hp 25 (3d10+9)
Fort +5, **Ref** +2, **Will** +0

OFFENSE

Spd 20 ft. (30 ft. base)
Melee masterwork longsword +6 (1d8+1/19-20)
Ranged javelin +4 (1d6+1)

STATISTICS

Abilities Str 13, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 9, Cha 8
Base Atk +3; **CMB** +4; **CMD** 15
Feats Skill Focus (Perception), Weapon Focus (longsword)
Skills Intimidate +3, Stealth +2, Survival +3; **Racial Modifiers** +4 Stealth
Language Common, Goblin
Gear chain shirt, heavy steel shield, 5 javelins, masterwork longsword, *potion of cure moderate wounds*, rations (5), waterskin, 10 gp, 30 sp, and 50 cp.

2. THE FAMILY THAT EATS TOGETHER STAYS TOGETHER

This abandoned open defense cave is home to a family of blood boulders, cleverly positioned as seats around the well.

This rough-hewn cave is 60 feet deep and 35 feet wide, carved out of the canyon itself. At the cave entrance is a notch on the side and a carved trough on the floor, slightly set inside the cave. Toward the center of the room is a 4-foot tall stone wall encircling a 10-foot-wide span. Three small boulders spaced 5 feet apart circle the well.

FEATURES

Boulders: See Creatures.

Communication Tube: In the far back corner is a 6-inch hole, once used as a means of communication between defensive caves during times of invasion. A Perception check DC 15 reveals a slight movement of air coming from the hole.

Lighting: While there are notches caved into the wall for torches and hooks for lamps, the cave has no lighting inside. Sunlight illuminates the first 30 feet from the cave entrance and moonlight illuminates the first 10 feet.

Well: At the center of the cave is a well that taps into an underground river. The water is 20 feet down and potable. A bucket attached to a winch rests beside the well. On the back side of the well is a stack of desiccated bodies.

Creatures: Blood boulders appear little more than bespeckled rock, but on closer inspection, they are covered with hideous little mouths packed with needle-sharp teeth and those speckles are actually the blood of their victims. Having no feet, blood boulders move by pushing their bodies into a rolling motion, reaching very high speeds.

BLOOD BOULDER (3)

CR 2
600 XP

N Small Aberration
Init -1; **Senses** blindsight 50 ft.; Perception +4

DEFENSE

AC 15, touch 10, flat-footed 15 (-1 Dex, +5 natural, +1 size)
hp 19 (3d8+6)
Fort +3, **Ref** +0, **Will** +2
DR 5/bludgeoning

OFFENSE

Spd 50 ft.
Melee slam +6 (1d4+4 plus grab)
Special Attacks blood drain

TACTICS

During Combat The first blood boulder attacks by slamming into the victim and knocking them to the ground. Then the rest of the pack slams into the prone victim, grabbing hold with its little mouths and blood draining grabbed prey. When they have drunk their fill, they retreat to digest their meal.

STATISTICS

Abilities Str 18, Dex 9, Con 14, Int 2, Wis 8, Cha 6
Base Atk +2; **CMB** +5 (+9 grapple, +13 overrun); **CMD** 14
Feats Power Attack, Improved Overrun
Skills Stealth +7
SA camouflage

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Blood Drain (Ex) As a standard action, a blood boulder can drink the blood of a grabbed creature with a successful grapple check, dealing 1d4 points of Constitution damage. Once a blood boulder inflicts 4 points of Constitution damage, it rolls away to digest its meal.

Camouflage (Ex) From a distance, a blood boulder's outer skin makes it appear like a small boulder. An observer must make a successful DC 20 Spot or Knowledge (dungeoneering) check to notice that a still blood boulder is actually a living creature.

3. GONE TO THE DOGS

This cave is home to a pack of hyenas that hunt the canyon.

The entrance to this cave is a 10-foot long passage little more than 4 feet wide that opens into natural cave roughly 30 feet in diameter. Parts of half-eaten corpses in various stages of decay litter the floor, and the smell coming from the cave is strong, a mixture of decay, feces and unwashed animals.

HYENA (4)

CR 1
400 XP

N medium animal
Init +2; **Senses** Low-light vision, scent; Perception +7

DEFENSE

AC 14, touch 12, flat-footed 12 (+2 Dex, +2 natural)
hp 13 (2d8+4)
Fort +5, **Ref** +5, **Will** +1

OFFENSE

Spd 50 ft.
Melee bite +3 (1d6+3 plus trip)

TACTICS

Before Combat the hyenas are very territorial, and they emit warning sounds (a low growl that turns into a high pitched yelp) as soon as they perceive someone entering the cave.

During Combat the hyenas prefer easy meals (read carrion), but they will not pass up the opportunity for a fresh meal if it is stupid enough to wander into their lair. The hyenas work together, flanking their prey as much as possible.

STATISTICS

Abilities Str 14, Dex 15, Con 15, Int 2, Wis 13, Cha 6
Base Atk +1; **CMB** +3; **CMD** 15
Feats Skill Focus (Perception)
Skills Stealth +6 (+10 in tall grass); Racial Modifiers +4 Stealth in tall grass

4. GET OFF MY LAWN!

This cave is home to a crotchety old rock reptile, a 5-foot long chameleon-like lizard that roams the canyon.

The road leads to a small cave, roughly 15 feet in diameter, and then promptly ends in a drop off. Large boulders and loose rock litter the edge, and a pile of rock rubble is mounded in the back of the cave.

FEATURES

Edge: Falling (or being pushed) off the edge is quite dangerous as the next landing is 20 feet below and climbing back up is a Climb DC 20.

Rock Rubble: The rock reptile generally sleeps hiding among the rock rubble.

Creatures: The rock reptile is typically a nocturnal hunter, preferring to spend the hottest part of the day in its lair. It suns in front of its lair in the morning and early evening.



ROCK REPTILE

N Medium Animal

Init +6; **Senses** low-light vision.; Perception +7

DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 12, flat-footed 15 (+2 Dex, +5 natural)

hp 37 (5d8+15)

Fort +7, **Ref** +6, **Will** +1

OFFENSE

Spd 20 ft.

Melee bite +8 (1d4+6)

Special Attacks ambush

TACTICS

Before Combat if the rock reptile comes home from a night of hunting and finds the PC there, he uses his ambush immediately. If the PC approaches as the rock reptile is sunning, it blends in with the rock and then attacks (using ambush) when the PC is within 20 ft. If the PC enters the cave while the rock reptile is resting inside its lair, it will attack.

Morale If the rock reptile is fighting near the road's edge and is badly injured (under 10 hp), he charges, attempting to push the PC off the edge instead of biting.

STATISTICS

Abilities Str 18, Dex 14, Con 16, Int 2, Wis 10, Cha 6

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +7; **CMD** 19

Feats Improved Initiative, Skill Focus (Perception), Weapon Focus (bite)

Skills Climb +10; Stealth +18; **Racial Modifiers** +4 to Stealth checks, +12 in rocky or mountainous terrain

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Ambush (Ex) A rock reptile is able to dart out of its hiding place with blinding speed, catching opponents by surprise. A rock reptile that attacks a flat-footed opponent gains a +4 circumstantial bonus to its attack roll in that round.

CR 3

800 XP

5. HOME SWEET HOME

This natural cave is home to a mated pair of pumas who are extremely territorial. They hunt from dawn to evening, bringing home their kill when possible.

The entrance to this cave is a 10-foot long passage little more than 4 feet wide that opens into natural cave roughly 30 feet in diameter. Toward the back of the cave are a pile of bones and bodies in various stages of decay and to the side is a shallow pool of water where water drips off a stalactite hanging from the ceiling.

FEATURES

Bodies: While most of the skeletons are from various animals, there are some goblin, hobgoblin, and orc remains in the pile.

Pool: The water in the pool is relatively fresh and potable. The pool is 5 feet wide and 1 foot deep.

PUMA(2)

N medium animal

Init +4; **Senses** Low-light vision, scent; Perception +5

CR 2

600 XP

DEFENSE

AC 15, touch 14, flat-footed 11 (+4 Dex, +1 natural)

hp 19 (3d8+6)

Fort +5, **Ref** +7, **Will** +2

OFFENSE

Spd 30 ft., climb 20 ft.

Melee bite +6 (1d6+3 plus grab), 2 claws +6 (1d3+3)

Special Attacks pounce, rake (2 claws +6, 1d3+3)

STATISTICS

Abilities Str 16, Dex 19, Con 15, Int 2, Wis 13, Cha 6

Base Atk +2; **CMB** +5 (+9 grapple); **CMD** 19 (23 vs. trip)

Feats Skill Focus (Perception), Weapon Finesse

Skills Acrobatics +8, Climb +11, Stealth +11 (+15 in undergrowth); **Racial Modifiers** +4 Stealth in undergrowth)

6. ONE MAN'S TREASURE IS ANOTHER CREATURE'S LUNCH

This cave is one of the defensive caves scattered throughout the canyon, complete with a water well, circular stone door, and communication tube, although to where the tube connects is lost with the fallen civilizations of the canyon. Read the following description when the PC can clearly see into the cave.

This rough-hewn cave is 60 feet deep and 35 feet wide, carved out of the canyon itself. At the cave entrance is a notch on the side and a carved trough on the floor, slightly set inside the cave. Toward the center of the room is a 4-foot tall stone wall encircling a 10-foot-wide span. A layer of dust and grit blankets the collective debris littering the floor: broken jars, rotting cloth, and remnants of furniture long-since used.

FEATURES

Communication Tube: In the far back corner is a 6-inch hole, once used as a means of communication between defensive caves during times of invasion. A Perception check DC 15 reveals a slight movement of air coming from the hole. If the PC yells into the hole and listens for a response, a Perception check 10 hears skittering from the other end.

Hidden Stash: While much of the food has either been taken or spoiled and the easy-to-find treasures looted, there is a well-hidden stash of gems along the back wall in a hollowed-out notch carved low to the ground (Perception DC 17). This stash is a pile of gems containing 10 25-gp gems, 5 50-gp gems, and 1 100-gp gem – all that remains of the crystal serpents’ food stores.

Lighting: While there are notches caved into the wall for torches and hooks for lamps, the cave has no lighting inside. Sunlight illuminates the first 30 feet from the cave entrance and moonlight illuminates the first 10 feet.

Well: At the center of the cave is a well that taps into an underground river. The water is 50 feet down and potable, but the bucket has long since rotted away.

Creatures: The cave is home to a brood of crystal serpents, creatures that eat and are entirely composed of gems. They use their detect gems ability while they “hunt” for their food – gems of any and all types – and they prefer to travel through the ground, as their crystalline bodies tend to refract and reflect light, attracting unwanted attention. A small crystal serpent’s body is worth 100 gp if properly cut and polished by a skilled craftsman.

CRYSTAL SERPENT (5)

N small magical beast (earth)

Init +2; **Senses** Darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, tremorsense 60 ft., Perception +3

CR 1

400 XP

DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 13, flat-footed 15 (+2 Dex, +4 natural, +1 size)

hp 15 (2d10+4)

Fort +5, **Ref** +5, **Will** +0

OFFENSE

Spd 30 ft., burrow 30 ft.

Melee bite +4 (1d6+1 plus shock)

Special Attack shock (1d4 electricity damage)

TACTICS

Before Combat The crystal serpent detects gems on the PC once it becomes aware of his presence. If the PC has gems on his person, the crystal serpents launch a coordinated attack, flanking the PC as much as possible. If the PC tries to remove the gems from the hidden stash, the crystal serpents attack.

Morale When there is only one crystal serpent remaining, it will lost heart and retreat into the earth.

STATISTICS

Abilities Str 12, Dex 14, Con 15, Int 7, Wis 10, Cha 5

Base Atk +2; **CMB** +2; **CMD** 14

Feats Lightning ReflexesB, Skill Focus (Perception)

Skills Stealth +11

SQ detect gems (at will)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Burrow (Ex) Crystal serpents can travel as easily through stone as fish travel through water. They can travel up to 30 feet per round through solid stone, dirt, or any other type of earth except for metal. The burrowing leaves no tunnel or hole, nor does it create a ripple or any other sign of its presence. A *move earth* spell cast on an area containing a burrowing crystal serpent flings it back 30 feet, stunning the creature for 1d6 rounds unless it succeeds a Fortitude save DC 16 + caster’s relevant ability bonus.

Detect Gems (Sp) A crystal serpent can locate deposits of minerals in the earth much like a *detect animals or plants*, except that stone and dirt does not affect the crystal serpent’s vision.

7. ALL THAT GLITTERS IS NOT GOLD

This cave is the final resting place of Malak, a wealthy man who could not bear to be parted with his riches, even in death. His avarice drove him to be buried with a mawler, ensuring that any who would dare rob his grave would meet with an unfortunate fate.

The entrance to the cave is near the remnants of the road, followed by a steep and sudden drop off. Carved along the cave entrance in Common are the words “Here Lies Malak; May the Dead Rest in Peace.”

FEATURES

Entrance: The cave entrance is narrow (Medium creatures must squeeze through the first 5 feet) with a gentle slope downward.

Cave: The cave itself is small (20 ft. in diameter) with the 5 ft. x 10 ft. cairn in the center. Adequate light reveals cave paintings depicting the life and times of Malak and show various scenes of life in the canyon and a majestic specimen of maleness which can no doubt be Malak himself.

Cairn: There is in fact no human remains in the cairn, just various items buried with Malak (see Treasure); however a Perception check DC 12 notices that there are small dropping in the cairn. The mawler assumes the form of a bag of coin amongst the other 3 bags of gems and coin. The PC sees through this ruse with a Perception check opposed by the mawler’s Disguise skill (+12).

Drop Off: Climbing back up the drop off is a DC 20 (DC 25 in torrential rain conditions)

Creatures: At first, the mawler didn’t mind sharing a cairn with Malak, seeing it more like a convenient buffet where one can eat all one cares to eat. However, Malak has long since been digested and the mawler is ready to leave for greener pastures and maybe catch a snack along the way. It disguises itself as a bag of coins among the other 3 bags of gems and coin, hoping someone will place a greedy little hand inside.

MAWLER

NE Tiny Aberration (Shapechanger)

Init +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +7

Aura magic aura

CR 4

1200 XP

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 16, flat-footed 15 (+3 Dex, +1 dodge, +3 natural, +2 size)

hp 39 (6d8+12)

Fort +4, **Ref** +5, **Will** +5

OFFENSE

Spd 20 ft.

Melee bite +9 (1d4+1 plus grab)

Special Attacks constrict (1d4+1), vorpal bite

TACTICS

Before Combat the mawler attacks when someone puts their hand inside. If the PC empties the bag to see the contents (rather than places his hand inside) or he sees through the mawler’s guise, the mawler attacks, even through he

cannot use his vorpal bite. If the PC places the mawler in his pack, the mawler is content to take a free ride out of the cairn and hope for a meal later.

STATISTICS

Abilities Str 13, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 5, Wis 11, Cha 11

Base Atk +4; **CMB** +3 (+7 grapple, +18 grapple if worn as an item of clothing); **CMD** 16

Feats Dodge, Skill Focus (Perception), Weapon Finesse

Skills Disguise +12, Stealth +15; **Racial Modifiers** +8 to Disguise

SQ mimic shape

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Magic Aura (Su) The mawler continuously emits a moderate aura of Transmutation magic. This ability can be negated or dispelled, but the mawler can activate it as a free action on its next turn.

Mimic Shape (Su) A mawler can assume the general shape of any object that is roughly Tiny size. A mawler's body is fleshy and pliable, but it can alter the rigidity of its body to resemble cloth, leather, metal, wood, and even stone. Most mawlers have found that taking on the shape of articles of clothing provides the most ready meals. The ruse can be detected by a Perception check opposed by the mawler's Disguise skill.

Vorpal Bite (Ex) A mawler that scores a critical hit with its bite attack while being worn severs the extremity that was inside it at the time. For example, a mawler being worn as a boot severs the victim's leg. A mawler can only use its vorpal bite while being worn.

A creature that loses a limb suffers a -4 penalty to skill checks that require the use of two limbs. Further, a creature that loses its primary weapon-wielding arm or hand suffers a -6 penalty when wielding a weapon in its offhand (unless otherwise trained to fight with their offhand). If the victim loses a foot or leg, the penalty applies to Acrobatics checks, Balance checks, and the like. Additionally, the creature's base speed is reduced to one-quarter. If the severed extremity happens to be the head, the victim dies immediately (unless it can live without its head).

8. GO FISH!

This open defensive cave is home to 3 cave fishers. The worked stone and working well makes this cave seem a virtual oasis to travelers of the canyon, and the cave fishers made short work of the last drifter than took refuge in this cave.

This rough-hewn cave is 60 feet deep and 35 feet wide, carved out of the canyon itself. At the cave entrance is a notch on the side and a carved trough on the floor, slightly set inside the cave. Toward the center of the room is a 2-foot tall stone wall encircling a 10-foot-wide span. Beside the well is an unfurled bedroll and an open backpack, but no signs of the owner are in sight.

FEATURES

Bedroll and Backpack: See Treasure.

Ceiling: The ceiling of the cave is 20 feet high.

Communication Tube: In the far back corner is a 6-inch hole, once used as a means of communication between defensive caves during times of invasion. A Perception check DC 15 reveals a slight movement of air coming from the hole.

Lighting: While there are notches caved into the wall for torches and hooks for lamps, the cave has no lighting inside. Sunlight illuminates the first 30 feet from the cave entrance and moonlight illuminates the first 10 feet.

Well: At the center of the cave is a well that taps into an underground river. The water is 40 feet down and potable, and a new rope and make-shift bucket are attached to the winch. A Perception DC 15 check reveals a floating object in the well water, and the PC can fish it out using the makeshift bucket with a DC 12 Dexterity check (see Treasure).

CAVE FISHER (3)

N Medium Vermin

CR 2

600 XP

Init +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +0

DEFENSE

AC 15, touch 11, flat-footed 14 (+1 Dex, +4 natural)

hp 22 (3d8+9)

Fort +6, **Ref** +2, **Will** +1

Immune mind-affecting effects

OFFENSE

Spd 20 ft., climb 20 ft.

Melee 2 claws +5 (1d4+3)

Ranged filament +3 (drag)

Special Attacks pull (filament, 10 feet)

TACTICS

Before Combat The cave fishers hang from the ceiling near the well. Once their prey is near the well, they shoot their filament and pull in their prey, ripping them apart with their claws.

STATISTICS

Abilities Str 17, Dex 12, Con 17, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 4

Base Atk +2; **CMB** +5 (+9 with pull); **CMD** 16 (28 vs. trip)

Feats Multiattack, Toughness, Weapon Focus (claw)

Skills Climb +11

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Filament (Ex) A cave fisher can fire a thin filament of sticky silk as a standard action. This touch attack has a range of 60 feet and no range increment. A creature struck by a cave fisher's filament becomes attached to the sticky thread. As a standard action, a creature can rip the filament free with a DC 20 Strength check. A caught creature can also attempt to escape a filament by making a DC 25 Escape Artist check. A filament is SC 14 (touch 12), has 5 hit points, and has DR 15/slashing. As application of liquid with high alcohol content (or a dose of *universal solvent*) dissolves the adhesive and releases the creature caught by the filament. A cave fisher can have only one filament active at a time.

Pull (Ex) A cave fisher has a +4 racial bonus on CMB checks made using its pull special attack.

Treasure: The backpack is full of useful survival tools, including flint and steel, hammer, pitons, hemp rope, waterskin (empty), and whetstone. Floating in the well is a *potion of cure moderate wounds*.

9. HALF-LIGHT

This large natural cave is home to a pair of ceiling divers, magical beasts that resemble large bats with long claws and a prehensile tail it uses to cling to the ceiling. The spacious ceiling and pool of water make it an idea hunting ground for the ceiling diver.

The cave quickly opens up into a large circular area, roughly 40 feet in diameter before continuing on deeper into the canyon. Compared to the other natural caves in the canyon, this is relatively wet, with ambient moisture in the air and a small pool. The walls and ceiling are covered in a slimy phosphorescent mat which bathes the cave in a dim green light.

FEATURES

Ceiling: The ceiling of the cave is dome-like, 25 feet tall at the peak and tapering to 5 feet tall at the edges.

Floor: The cave floor is littered with the typical dust and debris, but a Perception DC 12 spots deposits of fresh feces.

Lighting: The phosphorescent lichen on the walls and ceiling create low-light conditions in the cave.

Passage: The cave continues 30 feet deeper into the canyon, although the passage becomes steadily narrower until it is impossible for Medium creatures to squeeze through.

Pool: A depression in the cave floor becomes a shallow pool when it rains and the water seeps into the canyon rock. Located near the center of the cave, the pool is 10 feet in diameter and 2 feet deep. The water is relatively fresh.

Creatures: The ceiling divers are clinging to the ceiling, hiding. The recent rains have attracted many creatures to the recently filled pool, so the divers are patient for their next meal, waiting for the PC to come at least 15 feet into the cave before swooping down.

CEILING DIVER (2)

N Medium Magical Beast

Init +2; **Senses** low-light vision, electric field; Perception +6

CR 3

800 XP

DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 12, flat-footed 15 (+2 Dex, +5 natural)

hp 34 (4d10+12)

Fort +7, **Ref** +6, **Will** +3

OFFENSE

Spd fly 50 ft. (good)

Melee claw +6 (1d6+2 plus shock), tail spike +4 (1d8+2 plus shock and grab) and bite +4 (1d6+1 plus shock)

Special Attacks constrict (1d8+2), powerful charge (claw, 1d6+2), shock

TACTICS

During Combat the first ceiling diver charges while the second uses its tail spike and bite.

STATISTICS

Abilities Str 14, Dex 14, Con 16, Int 4, Wis 15, Cha 10

Base Atk +4; **CMB** +6 (+10 grappling); **CMD** 16

Feats Flyby Attack, Multiattack

Skills Fly +10, Stealth +7

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Electric Field (Ex) Ceiling divers generate an electric field that allows them to sense their surroundings. A diver's field gives it senses equivalent to darkvision out to 20 ft.

For every additional diver within 20 feet, the range of this darkvision increases by 10 feet. Thus, a group of 10 divers would have darkvision out to 110 feet.

Shock (Ex) The touch of a diver deals 1d8 points of electricity damage. This ability can only be used for one attack per round, once every three rounds; the ceiling diver requires two rounds to recharge for another shock.

10. THE ANCIENT CITY

The people of the canyon once graced these walls, hewn out of the canyon itself. A past invasion triggered certain defensive measures, and what remains accessible is now home to the Shrieking Goblins, a fierce giant lizard-riding tribe of raiders named for the hellish high-pitched warcry they let out before wading into conflict.

C1. ENTRYWAY AND CITY GATE

This was the entryway to the ancient city, crawling with defensive measures should invasion be attempted.

The entryway shifts from natural cave to man-made walls, opening into a room 30 feet deep and 20 feet wide with sconces along the walls. Scorch marks on the wall testify to past battles, and one of a pair of heavy bronze doors at the far end of the room is cracked open.

FEATURES

Bronze Doors: The doors are incredible heavy, and only one is open fully. The open door has numerous dents and bashes to hint at how it was opened. On the other side of the doors are brackets in the stone on either side of the doors, used to secure supports to brace the doors.

Holes and Slits: A Perception DC 10 notices small holes along the center swath of the ceiling and slim slits along the walls, once used as defensive measures.

Siderooms: A Perception check DC 12 reveals secret doors along the main hallway that lead into auxiliary siderooms that flank the entryway. The slits are wide enough to stab people with javelins or spears or shoot arrows through.

Stairs: There is a spiral staircase to the left of the doors, but the top of the stairs is blocked off by a giant boulder.

Creatures: There is a 25% chance that the PC encounters either Krig (see C7) or 4 Shrieking Goblin warriors (see C8) in the hallway. Krig would be bringing water or food to the giant lizards in C3, and if Krig is aware of the PC, he opens a dialogue in Common, begging not to hurt him and asking for help from "those horrible rocks." The Shrieking Goblin warriors would be fetching more water for the others in area C8 and are in a pretty good mood, thanks to the narcotic. They do not attack on sight, but they also do not respond to questioning, seeming sort of distant and spacey. However, if the PC attacks them, they do engage.

C2. OUTER WELL

This antechamber housed a well where travelers and merchants could refresh their water supplies without entering the city proper.

This room is 30 ft. square with a well in the center. A hodgepodge of ceramic pots lines the right wall, and at the far wall is an opening blocked by the broad side of large stone.

FEATURES

Blocked Passage: The doorway into the city proper is sealed with a giant circular stone, much like the stones seen in the defensive caves that dot the canyon, only bigger and heavier.

Well: The water is 50 feet down, but still there and potable. The winch mechanism is old, but the bucket is a newer piece. The ceramic pots that line the wall are empty.

Creatures: There is a 25% chance that the PC encounters either Krig (see C7) or 4 Shrieking Goblin warriors (see C8) drawing water from the well. If Krig is aware of the PC, he opens a dialogue in Common begging not to hurt him and asking for help from “those horrible rocks.” The Shrieking Goblin warriors are in a pretty good mood, thanks to the narcotic. They do not attack on sight, but they also do not respond to questioning, seeming sort of distant and spacey. However, if the PC attacks them, they do engage.

C3. STABLES

Formerly stable for traveling merchants whose pack animals were brave enough to make the upward trek, the goblins now use this area for keeping their giant riding lizards. Once the PC opens the door, read the following.

As the door opens, an acrid smell escapes the room stinging your nostrils. Five-foot tall stone walls flank the first 10 feet of the room, before revealing a larger room. In the center is a metal trough and more stalls partitioned along the walls.

FEATURES

Double Doors: The doors are closed. A Perception DC 10 hears hissing sounds from the other side of the door.

Trough: In the center of the room is a divided trough for food and water, however the trough is empty.

Creatures: Ever since the shrieking goblins fell under the sway of the grumblers, they have been neglectful of their giant riding lizards, often forgetting to give them adequate food and water, never mind cleaning out their stalls. Krig, the goblin cleric, has tried to keep up as best he could, bringing in food from the ever-diminishing supplies in the cold storage (area C5), but not enough to keep these animals sated. A few have already died, but Krig’s attempts have endeared him to the animals, and recognizing his scent, they do not attack him.

If Krig is inside the area, he is bringing food or water to the lizards and cautions the PC to move out of the area and away from the food trough. If the PC does as Krig says, the goblin cleric leads him back to C7 and opens a dialogue in Common begging not to hurt him and asking for help from “those horrible rocks.”

GIANT RIDING LIZARD (4)

N Medium Animal

Init +2; **Senses** low-light vision, scent; Perception +8

DEFENSE

AC 15, touch 12, flat-footed 13 (+2 Dex, +3 natural)

hp 22 (3d8+9)

Fort +8, **Ref** +5, **Will** +2

OFFENSE

Spd 30 ft., climb 30 ft.

Melee bite +6 (1d8+4 plus grab)

CR 2

600 XP



TACTICS

Before Combat If the PC enters bringing food or water and placing it in the trough, the giant lizards do not attack. Otherwise, they attack at the prospect of a fresh meal that doesn’t smell like Krig.

STATISTICS

Abilities Str 17, Dex 15, Con 17, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 6

Base Atk +2; **CMB** +5 (+9 grapple); **CMD** 17 (21 vs. trip)

Feats Skill Focus (Perception), Weapon Focus (bite)

Skills Climb +15, Stealth +10; **Racial Modifiers** +8 Climb, +4 Stealth

C4. GOBLIN BARRACK

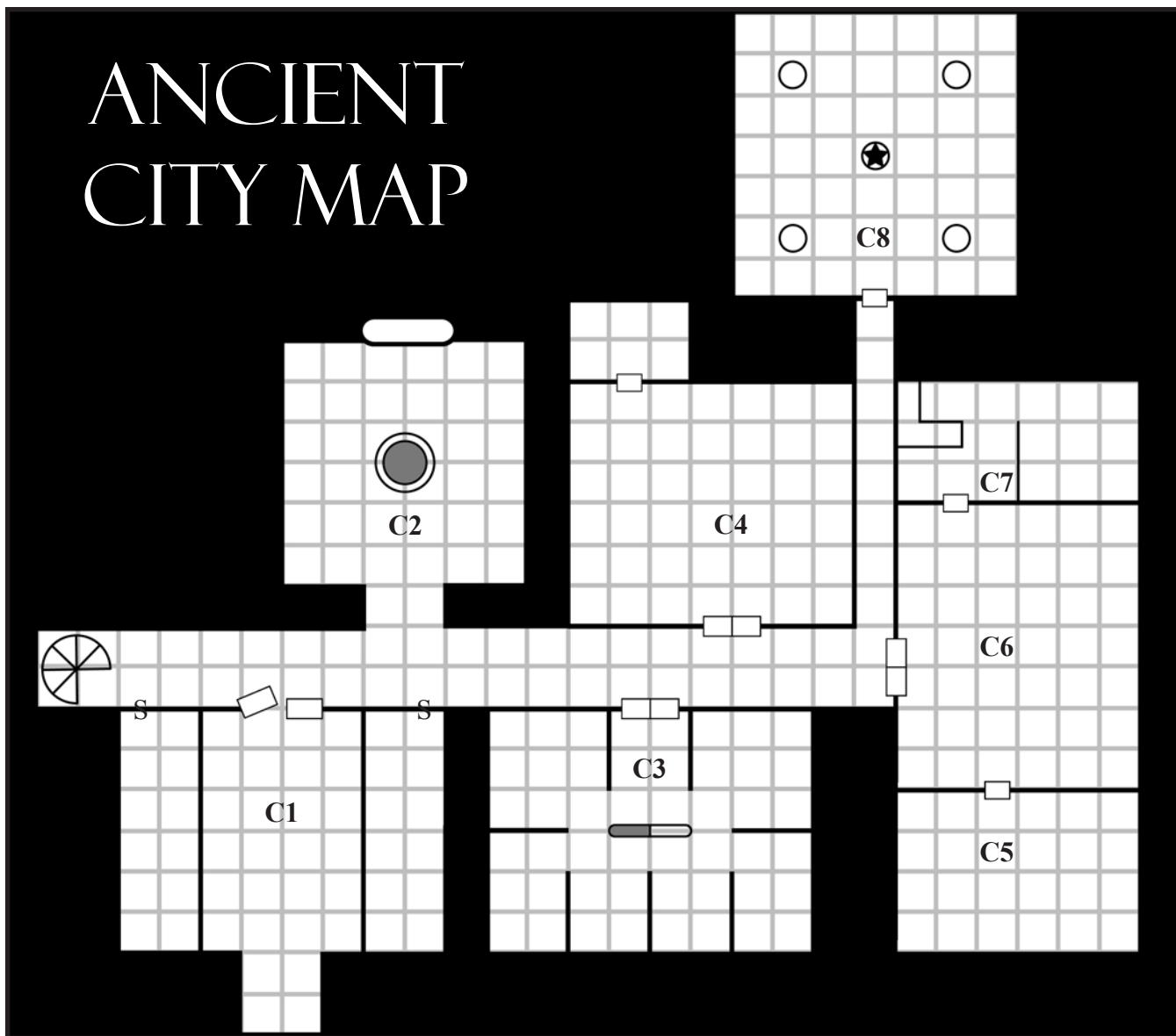
This area was once a cantina for merchants and travelers, but is now the main goblin barrack.

The room is 35 ft. wide and 30 ft. deep. Makeshift beds cover the floor with remnants of spoiling food and empty ceramic pots, but the room is eerily void of life.

Creatures: None. Ever since the shrieking goblins have fallen under the influence of the mumblor’s narcotic, they have been sleeping the C8, working non-stop on the readying the chamber and stopping only to drink more water, eat rations, and sleep when utterly exhausted.

Treasure: If the PC takes the time to rifle through the bedding, he finds 25 10-gp gems, 5 50-gp gems, 1 100-gp gem, 100 gp, 200 sp, and 400 cp. A Perception check DC 10 reveals a hidden stash containing a *potion of cure light wounds* and a +1 *morningstar*.

ANCIENT CITY MAP



C5. COLD STORAGE

This room is a part of the storage area but magically kept cold for perishable trade goods. While the settlers of the canyon have long since passed, the magic persists. Read the following when the PC opens the door.

A cold surge of air greets you as you open the door. The room is 30 feet wide and 20 feet deep and the ceiling gives a faint light overhead. There is little in this room save a few animal carcasses in the corner.

FEATURES

Lighting: Continual flame was cast on the ceiling every 10 feet, filling the room with light.

Temperature: The inner stone of the room was magically imbued to keep this room a cool 33°F.

Creatures: There is a 10% chance of meeting Krig (see C7) while he's fetching more food for the lizards (see C3). He opens a dialogue in Common begging not to hurt him and asking for help from "those horrible rocks."

C6. STORAGE

This room was once rented out to merchants when they stopped at the ancient city over night. Now is it home to the more mundane spoils of the Shrieking Goblin's raids.

This large room is lined with stone shelves that are mostly empty with a few pockets of supplies: jars of grain, bolts of cloth, and extra arms and armor. Beams of soft light shine down along the walkways between shelves.

FEATURES

Lighting: Along the walkways continual flame was cast on the ceiling every 10 feet, filling the room with light.

Creatures: There is a 10% chance of meeting Krig (see C7) while he's fetching more food for the lizards (see C3). He opens a dialogue in Common begging not to hurt him and asking for help from "those horrible rocks." There is a 25% chance that the PC encounters 3 Shrieking Goblin warriors (see C8) getting supplies for building the scaffolding. The Shrieking Goblin warriors are in a pretty good mood, thanks to the narcotic. They do not attack on sight, but they also do not respond to questioning, seeming sort of distant and spacey. However, if the PC attacks them, they do engage.

Treasure: Besides basic construction materials, there are 200 arrows, 5 bolts of cloth (20 gp each), 20 daggers, 5 hammers, 3 hemp ropes, 5 jars of grains (10 gp each), 5 pick axes, 25 pitons, 100 rations, 10 short bows, 15 short swords, and 100 torches

C7. KRIG'S QUARTERS

This office and sleeping quarters was originally used by the keeper of the storage area, for merchants would come and go at all hours of the day. Under normal conditions, this area would be the domain of the Shrieking Goblin's chief, but it is currently home to Krig, the cleric of the tribe.

A stone shelf extends from the wall 3 feet from the ground making a small L in the corner of the room. What might have been a working cubical and desk has now been made into beds, although it looks like some time has passed since anyone slept there. A wall extends on the opposite side of the room, ending prematurely leaving a 5-foot entrance that is covered with a heavy curtain. This room is lavishly decorated with skins and pillows and is completed by a proper bed with a chest at its end.

FEATURES

Built-in Desk: The stone was part of a working desk, but has been turned into bunk beds (complete with a makeshift ladder) typically used by the chief's guards. There is bedding for 4 individuals.

Chest: The wooden chest is reinforced with steel bands (hardness 5, hp 17, break DC 23). It is locked and was trapped but Krig set off the trap and has not reset it (see Treasure for contents).

Chief's Room: This area was the chief's domain before he fell under the sway of the grumblers and is now where Krig sneaks away to rest.

Door: Krig set up a crude alarm trap in which various objects clang together when the door is opened and a trip wire is broken. It takes a DC 12 Perception check to notice the wire, but it is not possible to disarm from the outside.

Creatures: Krig is the only Shrieking Goblin that is not under the effect of the grumbler's narcotic, which brings a sense of euphoria and makes the imbiber subject to influence (as *suggestion*, CL 10, Will DC 16). He has been sneaking around the lair, feeding the lizards, and pretending to be under the effects of the narcotic to see what the grumblers are up to in C8. If the PC has not met Krig earlier in the city, he finds Krig in this area. If the PC sets off the alarm, Krig hides and readies a weapon in case he is attacked.

When Krig first meets the PC, he opens a dialogue in Common begging not to hurt him and asking for help from "those horrible rocks." If the PC allows him to speak, Krig gives the PC the following information.

A few months ago, some sort of ailment came over the tribe, even the chief fell victim to its mellowing and mind-numbing effects. Krig tried all his traditional methods (*cure spells*, *remove disease*, *remove curse*), but to no avail. Then the grumblers ("big talking rocks") came in, talking to the goblins and convincing them to work and live in the great hall (area C8). One of the chief's personal guards attacked the grumblers, only to be trampled to death. Since then, Krig has kept his head low, mimicking others in order to pretend to be under the effect while uncovering what was going on.

There are 3 grumblers and they speak their own language, so Krig cannot understand what they are saying amongst themselves. The times that Krig has entered C8 with *comprehend languages* cast on himself, he's caught snippets of conversation—something about the great one waking from his long slumber. When they talk to goblins, a high pitched voice speaks through a small rock placed on their body, instructing the goblins to carve things into the rock. Most of the goblins are illiterate, but Krig recognized the words with the help of his magic. It was the same word over and over again in different languages—awaken.



Using his spells, Krig has ascertained the grumblers put something in the water. While he is capable of purifying water for himself in private, he cannot do so with the grumblers watching over all the goblins in C8. He is also fairly certain that it will take time for the substance to work through their systems before they get back to normal. Krig begs the PC for help with the grumblers. With his Knowledge (arcana) and Knowledge (religion), Krig also knows this is old magic, meaning that it takes a great time to prepare for, but is more than likely going to have devastating effects. There is a reason the old ways passed, is there not?

Krig does not wish harm to this tribe, and should the PC agree to help, Krig suggests merely subduing any wandering tribesmen they may run into before heading into C8.

KRIG

Male goblin cleric 5
NE Small humanoid (goblinoid)
Init +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +4

CR 5
1,600 XP

DEFENSE

AC 16, touch 13, flat-footed 14 (+3 armor, +1 Dex, +1 dodge, +1 size)
hp 32 (5d8+10)
Fort +5, **Ref** +5, **Will** +6

OFFENSE

Spd 30 ft.
Melee short sword +4 (1d4/19-20)
Ranged *magic stone* +7 (1d6+1)
Special Attacks channel negative energy (3d6), orisons
Spells Prepared (CL5)
3rd—*meld into stone*, *fireball**
2nd—*augury*, *cure moderate wounds*, *delay poison*, *soften earth and stone**
1st—*bless*, *comprehend languages*, *cure light wounds*, *sanctuary*, *magic stone**

0— create water, detect magic, purify food and drink, stabilize

Domain Powers (Earth/Fire)
acid dart, fire bolt

TACTICS

Before Combat Krig casts *magic stone* before combat to have ammunition for his sling, preferring to stay out of melee combat.

STATISTICS

Abilities Str 11, Dex 15, Con 12, Int 12, Wis 15, Cha 10

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +2; **CMD** 15

Feats Dodge, Improved Initiative, Lighting Reflexes

Skills Climb +3, Diplomacy +4, Heal +6, Knowledge (arcana) +5, Knowledge (religion) +5, Ride +8, Sense Motive +6, Spellcraft, +5, Stealth +10; **Racial Modifiers** +4 Ride, +4 Stealth

Languages Common, Goblin

Gear divine focus, healer's kit, studded leather armor, short sword, spell component pouch

Treasure: *potion of cure light wounds* (10), *potion of cure moderate wounds* (3), *potion of cure serious wounds*, *dust of disappearance*, 5 50-gp gems, 3 100-gp gems, 1 flawless diamond (1,000 gp)

C8. AWAKEN CHAMBER

This chamber was a sacred place to congregate outside of the city, and for a long time, it was sealed by a magical ward, preventing anyone evil from opening the doors. The Shrieking Goblins had long since given up trying to open the door, but the grumblers had little problem making egress, and work on awakening the great one began.

This 35 ft. square room is filled with light emanating from a giant crystal in the center of the room. Around the crystal are three large boulders and four columns are space around the room, ornately carved and painted in bright blue, green, and ocher. The lower sections of the walls near the door are covered with script carved into the wall. Goblins are working on the far side of the room, some carving into the wall while others are constructing scaffolding to reach higher up the wall.

FEATURES

Ceiling: The ceiling is 20 ft. tall.

Crystal: The central crystal is quartz. The top of the crystal domes on the surface of the canyon, conducting and disseminating light throughout the crystal. It reaches all the way down to the batholith, which is why the grumblers have chosen this site for their ceremony.

Goblins: The goblins are all under the effect of the narcotic, both happy and unaware of things around them. They are under the grumblers' suggestion to carve these funny figures into the rock (most goblins are illiterate and don't really know what they are carving), and they stop only to eat, drink, and sleep. If the grumblers command them to attack the PC, they get another Will save (+5 bonus if Krig is with him or otherwise notes that the PC is not a threat to them, +5 if Filnik makes his save and orders the goblins to do otherwise).

Lighting: The quartz crystal fully lights the room as the outside conditions (low-light during the evening).

Rocks: The large rocks are actually grumblers (see Creatures).

Creatures: If goblins were sent out to get supplies, the grumblers are not alarmed at the PCs approach; however their sensitivity to vibrations alerts them within 30 ft. that the creature approaching is too big to be a goblin. They will try communicating through the mumbler, saying "Halt! Who goes there?" first in Goblin and then in Common. If there is no response, they move closer to investigate.

There are a total of 20 Shrieking Goblin warriors; subtract any that the PC encountered and dealt with in other parts of the ancient city.

GRUMBLER (3)

CR 4

N Large Aberration

1200 XP

Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., tremorsense 120 ft.;

Perception +7

DEFENSE

AC 15, touch 7, flat-footed 15 (-2 Dex, +8 natural, -1 size)

hp 42 (5d8+20)

Fort +5, **Ref** +1, **Will** +4

DR 8/-; **Immune** critical hits, mind-affecting effects, poison, sneak attack, stunning; **Resist** 10 cold, 10 fire

OFFENSE

Spd 10 ft.

Melee slam +7 (2d6+4)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

Special Attacks landslide, trample (2d6+4, DC 15)

TACTICS

Before Combat If they hear spells being cast or are attacked, the grumblers attack.

During Combat The grumblers prefer to trample or slam their enemies into a bloody pulp.

Morale When one of the grumblers dies, one of the other ones uses its sway over the goblins and orders them to attack the PC.

STATISTICS

Abilities Str 16, Dex 7, Con 18, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 2

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +7; **CMD** 15

Feats Improved Initiative, Lighting Reflexes, Weapon Focus (slam)

Skills Acrobatics+10, Stealth +10; **Racial Modifiers** +6

Acrobatics, +10 Stealth

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Landslide (Ex) A group of three or more grumblers may cause a landslide, assuming they are in a position to cause a landslide and all are within 50 ft. of each other. A landslide must start on high ground and must be able to travel at least 100 feet from start to finish. The part must follow the natural slope of the terrain, and the landslide has a width equal to double the total reach of all the grumblers in the landslide. For instance, four Large grumblers, each with a reach of 10 feet, combine for a width of 80 feet.

Characters in the bury zone take 3d6 points of damage plus the slam damage of each grumbler in the landslide, or half that amount if they make a DC 15 Reflex save. They are subsequently pinned.

Pinned characters take 1d6 points of non-lethal damage per minute. If a pinned character falls unconscious, he must make a DC 15 Constitution check or take 1d6 points of lethal damage each minute thereafter until freed or dead, so long as the grumblers maintain the pin. The save DC is Strength-based.

A grumbler landslide is otherwise the same as a normal landslide. After performing a landslide, the grumblers must move back into position to repeat the maneuver with the same bury zone.

GOBLIN WARRIOR (20)

Male and Female Warrior 1

NE Small humanoid (goblinoid)

Init +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception -1

DEFENSE

AC 15, touch 12, flat-footed 13 (+2 armor, +2 Dex, +1 size)

hp 6 (1d10+1)

Fort +3, **Ref** +2, **Will** -1

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee short sword +2 (1d4/19-20)

STATISTICS

Abilities Str 11, Dex 15, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 9, Cha 6

Base Atk +1; **CMB** +0; **CMD** 12

Feats Improved Initiative

Skills Ride +10, Stealth +10, Swim +4; **Racial Modifiers** +4 Ride, +4 Stealth

Languages Goblin

Gear leather armor, short sword

GOBLIN CHIEF'S GUARD (3)

Male and Female Fighter 1

NE Small humanoid (goblinoid)

Init +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception -1

DEFENSE

AC 16, touch 13, flat-footed 14 (+3 armor, +2 Dex, +1 size)

hp 8 (1d10+3)

Fort +4, **Ref** +2, **Will** -1

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee masterwork short sword +5 (1d4+1/19-20)

STATISTICS

Abilities Str 13, Dex 15, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 9, Cha 6

Base Atk +1; **CMB** +1; **CMD** 13

Feats Improved Initiative, Weapon Focus (short sword)

Skills Ride +10, Stealth +10, Swim +4; **Racial Modifiers** +4 Ride, +4 Stealth

Languages Goblin

Gear studded leather armor, masterwork short sword

FILNIK, SHRIEKING GOBLIN CHIEF

Male Goblin Fighter 3

NE Small humanoid (goblinoid)

Init +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +0

DEFENSE

AC 20, touch 14, flat-footed 17 (+6 armor, +2 Dex, +1 dodge, +1 size)

hp 25 (3d10+9)

Fort +6, **Ref** +4, **Will** +2; +1 vs. fear

Defensive Abilities armor training, bravery

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee +1 short sword +7 (1d4+2/19-20)

STATISTICS

Abilities Str 13, Dex 15, Con 14, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 10

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +3; **CMD** 15

Feats Dodge, Improved Initiative, Mounted Combat, Weapon Focus (short sword)

Skills Climb +2, Handle Animal +4, Intimidate +5, Ride +7, Stealth +7, Survival +4, Swim +2; **Racial Modifiers** +4 Ride, +4 Stealth

Languages Common, Goblin

Gear breastplate, cure light wounds potion, cloak of resistance +1, +1 short sword

II. KAROFF FAMILY TOMB

This natural cave houses the entombed dead and all that remains of the unfortunate grave robber that tried to steal from them.

The bridge spanning the canyon fold and the remnants of the road lead to a cave entrance. The edge of the path along the canyon drops steeply while the path into the cave continues 5 feet and turns, making it impossible to see what lies beyond, although you can see there is a source of reddish light within.

FEATURES

Bridge: Spanning the canyon fold is a natural bridge. The bridge is 5 feet wide, and falling off the bridge off the edge of the path is quite painful as the next landing is 30 feet down. On the other side of the bridge is an empty cave that was clearly a residence once long ago, but has been empty for a long time.

Cave: The cave is 30 feet wide and 40 feet deep with a low ceiling (6 feet).

Lighting: The cave is lit by the bone delver's lantern, whose range and effects are the same as a normal lantern except that the light is an eerie red.

Cairns: There are three cairns along the back of the cave, one of which has been opened. On all the cairns, strategic stones on the course just under the surface are covered with a contact poison (black lotus extract—contact; *save* Fort DC 20; onset 1 minute; *frequency* 1/round for 6 rounds; *effect* 1d6 Con damage; *cure* 2 consecutive saves).

Creatures: The bone delver is the undead creature that roams this tomb, created when the grave robber died from the contact poison on the open cairn. It is still mostly human in form, although hunched over, and its face is twisted in pain and rage. The bone delver still carries his lantern, which burns with an unnatural red light. The bone delver is not physically bound to the cave, but it does not leave.

BONE DELVER

CE Medium Undead

Init +6; **Senses** Darkvision 60ft.; Perception +9

DEFENSE

AC 18, touch 13, flat-footed 15 (+2 Dex, +1 dodge, +5 natural)

hp 45 (7d8+14)

Fort +4, **Ref** +4, **Will** +6

Defensive Abilities undead traits

OFFENSE

Spd 30 ft.

Melee 2 claws +8 (1d4+2 plus disease)

Special Attacks scream of agony



TACTICS

During Combat The bone delver initiates combat with its scream of agony before moving in with its claws.

STATISTICS

Abilities Str 15, Dex 14, Con —, Int 7, Wis 12, Cha 15

Base Atk +5; **CMB** +7; **CMD** 19

Feats Dodge, Improved Initiative, Skill Focus (Perception), Weapon Focus (claw)

Skills Climb +9, Intimidate +9, Stealth +9

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Grave Rot (Ex) Claw — injury; *save* Fort DC 15; onset 1d4 days; *frequency* 1/day; *effect* 1d4 Con and 1d4 Str; *cure* 2 consecutive saves.

Scream of Agony (Su) When a bone delver screams, living creatures within 30 feet must succeed on a DC 15 Will save or be shaken as long as they remain within the radius. Creatures with more than 10 HD or those that succeed on the Will save are immune to the scream of that bone delver. This is a sonic, mind-affecting fear effect. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Treasure: The open cairn has the following: silver pendant and chain (25 gp), beaten brass torque with decorative etchings (30 gp), beaded earrings (10 gp), pieces of gold embroidered into the death shroud (25 gp total), and a jade bracelet (50 gp). One closed cairn contains a beaten brass beast plate, the remains of a badly rusted longsword with leather wrapped pommel in a bejeweled scabbard, and leather greaves (150 gp to a collector). The last cairn contains a stylized fertile female stone figurine, a string skirt weighted down with beads, gold and silver pieces, and beaded belt (100 gp to a collector).

12. TOMB OF RAQUEL

This roughly 20 ft. x 30 ft. natural cave is the final resting place of Raquel, fabled to be the most beautiful woman of the canyon. Her people have long since left the canyon, yet her cairn remains undisturbed due to the magical guardian they placed in the tomb.

The 5-foot entrance continues 10 feet before opening into a larger space. A stone figure stands where the cave balloons out, and a low moan in a passing breeze sends shivers down your spine.

FEATURES

Cairn: The cairn lies 25 feet behind the stone figurine. It is placed to the side making it impossible to see from the entrance. Placed between the cairn and the stone wall are provisions for life in the here after: ceramic jars with dried food and spirits, bolts of cloth long since eaten by insects, and a box of notions and pretties (100 gp). Within the cairn are the items listed under Treasure.

Ceiling: The ceiling is a mere 7 feet tall.

Entrance: Along the entrance hall are carvings in the stone, a strange pictographic script and runic symbols covering the walls and ceiling. A Linguistics check DC 20 reveals them to be proclamations of Raquel's beauty and sweet demeanor in life and charms to protect her spirit and body in death.

Lighting: There is no lighting in the cave.

Stone Figure: Standing 6 feet tall, this finely carved statue is a stylized form of a human with a furrowed brow and hands clenched, either in prayer or impending vengeance.

Creatures: The stone figure is in fact an ushabti, a funerary statue placed within tombs of important individuals. While they are quite valuable in the collector's market, ushabti are fierce defenders against would-be defilers, tomb raiders, and unholy creatures.

USHABTI **CR 3**
N Medium Construct 800 XP
Init +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, Perception +1
Aura permanent *hallow*, 40 ft. radius

DEFENSE

AC 15, touch 11, flat-footed 14 (+4 natural, +1 Dex)
hp 42 (4d10+20)
Fort +1, **Ref** +2, **Will** +2
DR 5/adamantine; **Immune** construct traits

OFFENSE

Spd 30 ft.
Melee 2 slams +6 (1d8+2)
Special Attacks curse, moan

STATISTICS

Abilities Str 14, Dex 12, Con —, Int —, Wis 12, Cha 12
Base Atk +4; **CMB** +6; **CMD** 17

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Curse (Su) As a standard action, an ushabti can curse a character that has invaded its resting place. A character must succeed on a DC 13 Will save or suffer a permanent -4 sacred penalty on all saving throws. The save is Charisma-based. This curse is far-reaching and also affects all the character's family members, though with only half the penalty.

Creature who take no treasure from an ushabti's tomb are freed from the curse upon departing, but those who escape with treasure continue to hear the ushabti's moaning in the back of their minds and cannot escape the guilt of their theft.

This curse can be removed with a *remove curse* or *atonement* spell cast by a cleric who is privy to the Death domain, or when all items removed from the tomb are returned along with a penance worth 10% of the value of the missing treasure. *Remove curse* and *atonement* spells are only effective if cast upon the original defiler of the tomb. Cursed family members subject to these spells discover that the curse is nullified only for a day's time, after which it returns in full force.

Moan (Su) When it notices intruders, the ushabti begins to emit a low, melancholy moan as a free action. Those within 60 feet who can hear this dirge are wracked with guilt for disturbing the rest of the dead and suffer a -1 morale penalty on initiative checks and attack rolls throughout the combat or until leaving the area. A DC 13 Will save negates this effect. A creature that succeeds on the saving throw is immune to that ushabti's moan for 24 hours. The save DC is Charisma-based. This is a sonic, mind-affecting effect.

Treasure: Inside the cairn are items precious to Raquel—a golden torque set with gems (150 gp), pearl and corral earrings (200 gp), tortoise shell combs (25 gp), and a ring (50 gp).

13. GOBLIN LOOKOUT

This room is part of a series of defensive positions used long ago by the people of the canyon, but the front door was breached and the room was abandoned. The Shrieking Goblins used this room as a look out, but they have not been back since the arrival of the grumblers.

The remains of a large circular stone are lodged into the side and bottom troughs of the cave entrance with a 3-foot-wide hole in the middle of the rock. Inside, the rough-

hewn room is 30 feet deep and 20 feet wide, carved out of the canyon itself. Layers of dust and grit blanket the debris littering the floor. Footprints and the remains of a makeshift fire suggest that the room has been used in the past few months, although there is no trace of them now. A narrow passage in the back of the cave slopes down, heading deeper into the canyon.

FEATURES

Auxiliary Supplies: Against the wall are a few crude arrows, torches, rations, a horn, and a pile of brush and wood.

Communication Tube: In the far back corner is a 6-inch hole, once used as a means of communication between defensive caves during times of invasion. A Perception check DC 15 reveals a slight movement of air coming from the hole.

Front Door: Like the other defensive caves, the entrance has a side notch and floor trough so the people inside the room could seal the room off from the outside by rolling a heavy circular stone into place. However, the middle of this stone has been breached with a hole sized for a Small creature (Medium creatures can squeeze through).

Hidden Stash: A Perception DC 10 reveals a carved notch in the wall rudely covered up with a pile of rocks (see *Treasure*).

Lighting: While there are notches caved into the wall for torches and hooks for lamps, the cave has no lighting inside. Sunlight illuminates the first 30 feet from the cave entrance and moonlight illuminates the first 10 feet.

Passage: The narrow passage is only 3 feet wide and 5 feet tall, sloping downward for 10 feet. The passage is blocked by a single smooth stone similar to the style of rock used on the front door.

Creatures: None

Treasure: The hidden stash contains 20 gp, 50 sp, and 150 cp, a masterwork dagger, and *potions of cure light wounds*.

14. TOMB OF THE WAKING DEAD

This cave is prison to the lowest of humanity—grave robbers. Captured long ago, they were placed inside this cave and walled in, left to die of thirst and starvation. The damned men tried to clear the exit, moving rock by rock until their hands were bloodied and raw. Even in undeath, they moved rock, but all in vain for the settlers of the canyon inscribed runes along the outer cave mouth that prevented the restless dead from leaving the cave.

The entrance to the cave is off a narrow and badly eroded section of the road. A symbol is carved into the rock along the sides and top of the entrance—a triangle set into a circle. The path into the cave continues 5 feet and turns, making it impossible to see what lies beyond.

FEATURES

Cave: The 5-foot cave entrance was once filled with rock, but is now cleared. Beyond that, the passage curves sharply to the left, opening up into a natural cave 20 ft. wide and 30 ft. deep. Along the side wall is a pile of rocks 5 ft. wide and 10 ft. deep. There is little light in the cave even at high sun, as the bend restricts natural light from outside penetrating the cave. During the evening or morning the cave is completely dark. The ceiling is a mere 6 ft. high.

Creatures: The waking dead now console themselves in tearing apart the living creatures that seek shelter in their cave, for leaving is not an option. The settlers left the grave robbers some of their ill-gotten treasure as a reminder of their sins (see treasure)

WAKING DEAD (2)

CE Medium Undead

Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +4

DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 12, flat-footed 15 (+2 Dex, +5 natural)

hp 32 (5d8+10)

Fort +2, **Ref** +3, **Will** +5

Defensive Abilities undead traits

OFFENSE

Spd 30 ft.

Melee 2 claws +8 (1d6+4) and bite +5 (1d4+2 plus bite of despair)

Special Attacks bite of despair

TACTICS

Before Combat the waking dead hide on either side of the passage and attack once the PC enters the cave.

During Combat the waking dead slashing attack with ferocious tenacity; however, they cannot pass beyond the cave entrance.

STATISTICS

Abilities Str 18, Dex 14, Con —, Int 8, Wis 12, Cha 12

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +7; **CMD** 19

Feats Multiattack, Toughness, Weapon Focus (claw)

Skills Stealth +4

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Bite of Despair (Su) A living creature hit by a waking dead's bite envisions itself being buried alive desperately trying to escape, suffering a -2 morale penalty to all rolls until the end of combat (DC 13 Will save negates). If a character saves, he is immune to that waking dead's bite of despair for 24 hours and receives a +4 bonus to the Will save to negate other waking dead's bite of despair.

Treasure: Buried in rock pile is the following: 10 25-gp gems, 2 golden rings (50 gp each), 1 silver locket (20 gp), 50 gp, 100 sp, and 200 cp.

15. ORC CAMP

This cave is camp to a band of orcs from the other side of the canyon who are scouting this part of the canyon for possible expansion.

Roughly 20 ft. x 30 ft., this natural cave has a good view of the canyon fold and beyond. Inside, ruffled bedrolls and food trash suggest that someone called this cave home recently.

FEATURES

Bedrolls: There are 5 unmade bedrolls on the cave floor.

There are no other personal possessions in the cave.

Creatures: The orcs do their scouting from dusk to dawn and rest inside the cave during the day. They take shifts during the day and rouse the others if they perceive the PC approaching, but there is 25% chance that the orc keeping watch has fallen asleep. They have just entered this part of the canyon, so they cannot shed any light on the Shrieking Goblins. With a

CR 3

800 XP



Perception DC 12, the PC notices that the orcs all have the same tattoo on their left shoulders—what looks like a letter “Y” bisected longways.

The orcs are a pugnacious bunch. If it looks like the PC is heading into their cave, they attack once he's in range of their javelins (30 ft.). If the barrage of javelins is not enough to scare away the PC, the orc leader attacks with his alchemist fire. The orcs prefer to fight in the cave, where the sun's bright light does not penetrate, but if forced, they will fight outside.

ORC LEADER

Male Orc fighter 2

CE Medium humanoid (orc)

Init +0; **Senses** Darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +4

CR 2

600 XP

DEFENSE

AC 14, touch 10, flat-footed 14 (+3 armor, +1 shield)

hp 16 (2d10+2)

Fort +4, **Ref** +0, **Will** -1; +1 vs. fear

Defensive Abilities bravery, ferocity

Weaknesses light sensitivity

OFFENSE

Spd 20 ft. (base 30 ft.)

Melee battleaxe +6 (1d8+3/x3)

Ranged javelin +2 (1d6+3)

Ranged Touch alchemist fire +2 (1d6 fire damage plus 1d6 fire damage the next round unless the flames are extinguished)

STATISTICS

Abilities Str 17, Dex 11, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 8

Base Atk +2; **CMB** +5; **CMD** 15

Feats Power Attack, Skill Focus (Perception), Weapon Focus (battleaxe)

Skills Intimidate +3, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +3, Knowledge (engineering) +3

Languages Common, Orc

Gear alchemist fire, backpack, battleaxe, bedroll, 4 javelins, rations (5), light wooden shield, waterskin, 20 gp

ORC (4)

Male Orc warrior 1

CE Medium humanoid (orc)

Init +0; **Senses** Darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +2**DEFENSE****AC** 13, touch 10, flat-footed 13 (+3 armor)**hp** 6 (1d10+1)**Fort** +3, **Ref** +0, **Will** -1**Defensive Abilities** ferocity**Weaknesses** light sensitivity**OFFENSE****Spd** 30 ft.**Melee** falchion +4 (2d4+4/18-20)**Ranged** javelin +1 (1d6+3)**STATISTICS****Abilities** Str 17, Dex 11, Con 12, Int 7, Wis 8, Cha 6**Base Atk** +1; **CMB** +4; **CMD** 14**Feats** Skill Focus (Perception)**Skills** Intimidate +2**Languages** Common, Orc**Gear** backpack, bedroll, studded leather armor, falchion, 4 javelins, rations (3), waterskin, 10 sp**CONCLUSION**

Once the PC discovers what has happened to the Shrieking Goblins, he can choose to resolve the adventure in number of ways. He can work with Krig to rid the area of the grumblers. He can kill everything in the cave and ask questions later. He can retrieve a sample of the water, hoping to uncover a way to subdue troublesome goblinoids. The only certainty is if the PC does nothing to stop the grumblers, the great one will waken and rise in a month's time, essentially destroying the canyon and triggering earthquakes and tremors for hundreds of miles away.

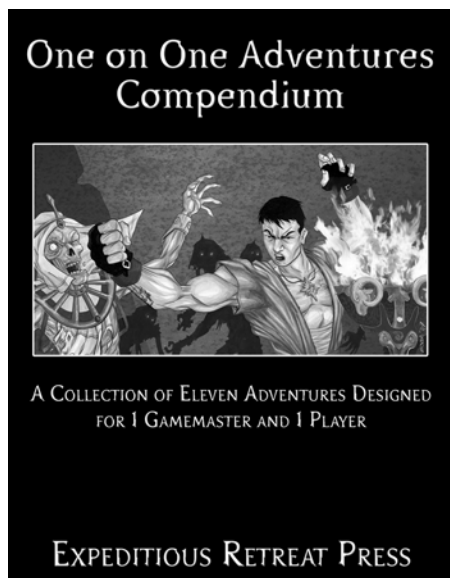
CR 1/3
135 XP**PRE-GENERATED CHARACTER****Beryon Valtar CR 7**

Male human fighter 7

LN Medium Humanoid (human)

Init +1; **Senses** Perception +4**DEFENSE****AC** 23, touch 13, flat-footed 21 (+6 armor, +1 enhancement, +1 Dex, +1 deflection, +1 dodge, +1 natural, +2 shield)**hp** 64 (7d10+21)**Fort** +8, **Ref** +4, **Will** +4; +2 vs. fear**Defensive Abilities** armor training 2, bravery +2**OFFENSE****Spd** 30 ft.**Melee** +2 *longsword* +15/+10 (1d8+9/19-20), masterwork warhammer +12/7 (1d8+4/x3)**Ranged** masterwork longbow +9/+4 (1d6/x3)**STATISTICS****Abilities** Str 18, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 10**Base Atk** +7; **CMB** +11; **CMD** 22**Feats** Blind-Fight, Cleave, Dodge, Mobility, Power Attack, Spring Attack, Vital Strike, Weapon Focus (*longsword*), Weapon Specialization (*longsword*)**Skills** Climb +7, Handle Animal +5, Intimidate +5,Knowledge (*dungeoneering*) +4, Knowledge(*engineering*) +4, Ride +6, Survival +8, Swim +7**Languages** Common**SQ** weapon training 1 (heavy blades)

Gear +1*breastplate armor*, masterwork heavy steel shield, *amulet of natural armor* +1, *ring of protection* +1, +2 *longsword*, masterwork warhammer, cold iron dagger, masterwork longbow, arrows (20), *cloak of resistance* +1, *handy haversack*, potions [*cure light wounds* (10), *cure moderate wounds* (2), *cure serious wounds*, *darkvision*, *heroism*, *invisibility*], heavy horse (combat trained), bedroll, blanket, chalk, climber's kit, crowbar, fishhook (10), flask, flint and steel, grappling hook (5), ink, ink pen, lamp, manacles, oil (3), paper (10), miner's pick, pitons (5), 10-foot pole, rations (10), rope (silk), sack (2), saddle, sealing wax, sewing needle, shovel, spyglass, torch (3), waterskin, whetstone, 10 25-gp gems, 50 gp clothing, 1 family ring (50 gp), 50 gp, 100 sp, 150 cp



Don't forget to check out the One on One Adventures Compendium and upcoming titles in the 1 on 1 Adventures Line, now powered by The Pathfinder Roleplaying Game!



ONE ON ONE ADVENTURES #13

THE PEARLS OF POHJOLA

BY SUZI YEE

AN ADVENTURE FOR ONE SORCERER LEVELS 10-12



CREDITS

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One on One Adventures are for one player and one GM. However, they are easily modified for a traditional party of four players and one GM.

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AUTHORIAL NOTE

We at Expeditionary Retreat Press had the pleasure of attending Ropecon 2009 in Helsinki, and this adventure is in part a thanks to all the coordinators, attendees, and especially the guest of honor team who made our visit unforgettable. While this adventure is inspired by Finnish mythology, it is far from being true to it, but as always, it should prove to be a good roleplaying romp.

INTRODUCTION

This adventure takes place in the Northland, a place of hard winters, rugged people, epic tales, and a streak of the wild. It can easily be dropped into a pre-existing campaign or world. While it is designed for 1 gamemaster and 1 player (sorcerer level 10-12), with some modification, it can be run for a traditional party of 4, level 6-7. If a GM wishes to do such, allow the entire party to enter the *pearls of Pohjola* and generally increase the number of combatants. In specific, in the second pearl, make the shadow a greater shadow and in the final pearl, add 3-4 hell hounds.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

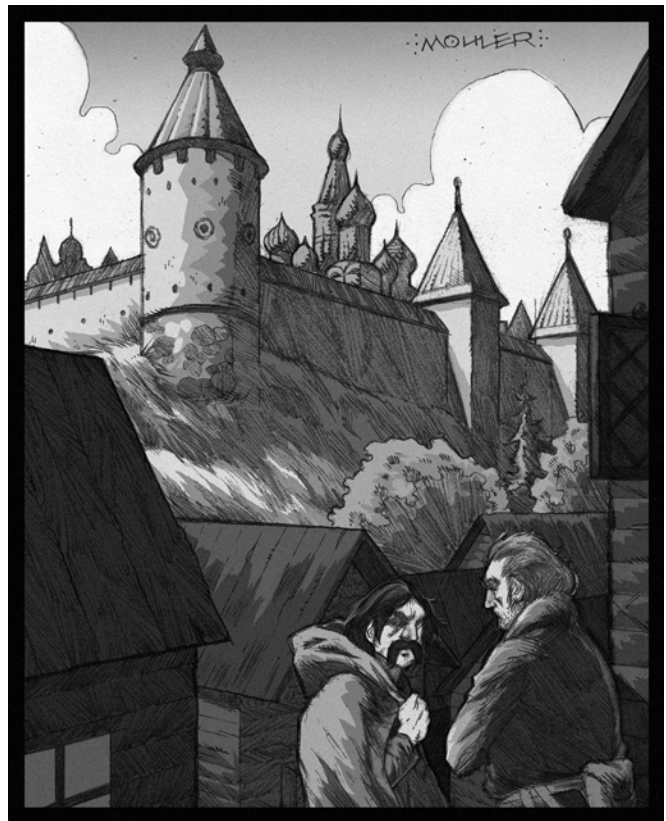
Long ago when titans walked the earth and great beasts ruled the wild places, there was Pohjola, a land ruled by a great chief of the same name. To him was born 3 daughters. At first he cursed his fate—oh to be left heirless!—but in his greatest moment of grief he was given a sign from the gods that his daughters were not curses but treasures as a sea bird dropped into his beseeching hands a coral necklace with a pendant of pearls.

To each of his daughters he entrusted something sacred, so that they may protect Pohjola in their own fashion according to their own temperament. To his eldest, who was the most maternal of the three, he entrusted the people. To his middle daughter, who was the most single-minded in devotion, he entrusted the *chalice*, an artifact most revered by the people of Pohjola. To his youngest, who was the most precocious, he entrusted their culture, ensuring the physical legacy of Pohjola was found and preserved.

And so life went, each to their own duty until the youngest daughter ventured too far in her search for scrapers and nets, for she skirted too close to the gates of the underworld and was turned to stone by Surma, a large dog with a snake-like tail that guards the underworld.

The great chief consulted wise men, priests and men of the world but none could bring the warmth back to his youngest's flesh. Overcome by despair, Pohjola sought the counsel of the hag of the bog who followed in the path of Louhi. She threw the bones and therein laid their fate. To save the one, the sisters three—the very gems of Pohjola—must go into the pearls of the coral necklace, each with their wards. Only in that auspicious place could the youngest be freed from the great power of Surma's gaze. The apparent wisdom of this council hid the true intentions of the hag—once placed inside the necklace, the hag could enter the necklace herself and gain possession of the *chalice* of Pohjola! What the hag failed to grasp was just how strong of a boon the gods bestowed upon the sisters three, for when the ritual was complete and the hag revealed her true intentions, she found herself trapped in the necklace, more victim than victor.

Seeing the great avarice and trickery of the hag, the chief did the only thing he could do—hide away the necklace behind a spellgate until the ages produced a hero or heroine great enough to free his daughters from the necklace. Until then they wait, frozen in ever-summer with the blush of youth destined to repeat the tale of the old songs until a champion navigates the pearls and frees the precocious Outi from her stony form.



ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS

Upon entering the northland, there is a lone tavern that serves the area, a popular place to stay for those who are seeking audience with the Jukkas, a clan of intelligent bears who regard the great forest as their domain. During the night, the lycanthropes of the far north make a clandestine raid for provisions, and the PC must prove herself capable and fierce, or at very least, manage to survive. Many of the tavern guests are also petitioning the Jukkas for various rights, and the PC can opt to attain permission or avoid detection by the Jukkas in her search for the spellgate. From there she must find the mythic *Pearls of Pohjola*, enter the artifact, and pass a series of tests to prove her worthiness before facing the chalice bearer and ultimately freeing the daughters of Pohjola.

ADVENTURE SET UP

There are numerous ways to attract the PC into adventuring in the far north. Perhaps the PC is in search of the fabled *chalice of Pohjola*, rumored to grant a boon to those who wield the wild magic or is tempted by the treasure said to be hidden with the *pearls of Pohjola*. Maybe the PC is from the area hunting down myths in children's songs or is merely passing through, stopping for the night at the tavern on some other business when the bard's song lures the PC into weaving herself into the tales of old.

Regardless which hook is used, by the time the PC leaves the Tallinn Tavern, she is aware of the basic tale of Pohjola: that it is a place and family of legend, that there were three daughters set to protect its treasures, that fate locked the daughters and their wards away until such a time passed that a worthy hero should free them. The PC is also aware the northlands are covered in snow and ice for most of the year. The adventure area is on the northern edge of the wilderness and the nearest city is a week's travel by foot. The pre-generated PC has gear with the cold in mind, but if the player is creating their own character, be sure to mention the weather conditions so they can properly equip themselves before venturing north.

WANDERING ENCOUNTERS

The wilderness is a dangerous place. There are no wandering encounters in the immediate area around the Tallinn Tavern and the Petitioning Grove of the Jukkas, but when traveling through all other areas, roll on a d6 once every 8 hours in the day and every 4 hours in the evening.

1. OGRE (2)

CE large humanoid (giant) **CR 3**
800 XP
Init -1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +2

DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 8, flat-footed 17 (+4 armor, -1 Dex, +5 natural, -1 size)
hp 30 (4d8+12)
Fort +6, **Ref** +0, **Will** +3

OFFENSE

Spd 30 ft. (40 ft. base)
Melee greatclub +7 (2d8+7)
Ranged javelin +1 (1d8+5)
Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

STATISTICS

Abilities Str 21, Dex 8, Con 15, Int 6, Wis 10, Cha 7
Base Atk +3; **CMB** +9; **CMD** 18
Feats Iron Will, Toughness
Skills Climb +7, Perception +2
Languages Giant
Gear hide armor, greatclub, and 4 javelins

Treasure Wrapped tightly in a woman's white linen shift is a badly tangled necklace [149 gp] that is the grey and fiery red of smoldering charcoal (polished irregular chips of hematite and rhodochrosite); a delicate tiara of silver [63 gp], set with a clear blue quartz and decorated with black ribbon; a beaded choker [bone and iron, 30 gp] in a pattern of tiny, staggered black and white, triangular beads lies within the tiara; a wooden statue [15 gp], carved to fit into the palm of a hand, of an amazingly detailed owl with human hands; a pair of obsidian arrowheads [50 gp], etched with symbols and tied together with golden thread; a lightweight red wool cloak [5 gp] pinned with a small platinum broach [60 gp] of a woman in a long dress holding a cup; a short steel mace [68 gp] with the bronze head of a snarling dog is wrapped in a triangular blue and orange battle flag [4 gp]; a tiny silver box [20 gp] holding a polished oval tigereye [22 gp] and a small silver key [3 gp]; and a black leather pouch [1 gp] filled with silver and copper coins [82 sp, 116 cp]. [Total 499.36 gp]

2. RAVEN, GIANT (2)

N large magical beast **CR 3**
800 XP
Init +3; **Senses** Low-light vision; Perception +15

DEFENSE

AC 15, touch 12, flat-footed 12 (+3 Dex, +3 natural, -1 size)
hp 26 (4d10+4)
Fort +5, **Ref** +7, **Will** +3
Defensive Abilities evasion

OFFENSE

Speed 10 ft., fly 80 ft. (average)
Melee 2 claws +7 (1d8+4), bite +7 (1d6+4)
Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.

STATISTICS

Abilities Str 18, Dex 17, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 15, Cha 11
Base Atk +4; **CMB** +9; **CMD** 22
Feats Alertness, Flyby Attack
Skills Fly +8, Perception +15, Sense Motive +4; **Racial Modifiers** +4 Perception
Languages Auran (can't speak)

3. GRIZZLY BEAR (2)

N large animal **CR 4**
1,200 XP
Init +1; **Senses** low-light vision, scent; Perception +6

DEFENSE

AC 16, touch 10, flat-footed 15 (+1 Dex, +6 natural, -1 size)
hp 42 (5d8+20)
Fort +8, **Ref** +5, **Will** +2

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.
Melee 2 claws +7 (1d6+5 plus grab), bite +7 (1d6+5)
Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.

STATISTICS

Abilities Str 21, Dex 13, Con 10, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 6
Base Atk +3; **CMB** +9 (+13 grapple); **CMD** 20 (+24 vs. trip)
Feats Endurance, Run, Skill Focus (Survival)
Skills Perception +6, Survival +5, Swim +14; **Racial Modifiers** +4 Swim

4. TROLL

CE large humanoid **CR 5**
1,600 XP
Init +2; **Senses** Darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, scent; Perception +8

DEFENSE

AC 16, touch 11, flat-footed 14 (+2 Dex, +5 natural, -1 size)
hp 63 (6d8+36); regeneration 5 (acid or fire)
Fort +11, **Ref** +4, **Will** +3

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.
Melee bite +8 (1d8+5), 2 claws +8 (1d6+5)
Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.
Special Attack rend (2 claws, 1d6+7)

STATISTICS

Abilities Str 21, Dex 14, Con 23, Int 6, Wis 9, Cha 6
Base Atk +4; **CMB** +10; **CMD** 22
Feats Intimidating Prowess, Iron Will, Skill Focus (Perception)
Skills Intimidate +9, Perception +8
Languages Giant

Treasure A large iron cooking pot [5 sp] with the lid tied to the pot with a chain [10 feet; 30 gp] serves as a makeshift treasure chest. Inside is a mass of coins [147 gp, 335 sp, 558 cp] with a few useful items: a magnifying glass with its lens is intact and in good shape, if dirty, but the handle is cracked [90 gp]; a small lens contained in a round, wooden frame [jeweler's eye loupe, 45 gp]; and a small leather drawstring bag [5 sp] containing a handful of platinum pieces [12 pp] and a number of small gemstones, each one cut and polished. Four are small, white and irregular [freshwater pearls, 5 gp each]. Another five are a lustrous blue and are semi-transparent [blue quartz, 10 gp each]. Three little silver-black stones [hematite, 10 gp each] and one larger yellowish stone with a white band [chrysoberyl, 50 gp] complete the collection. [Total 622.08 gp]

5. DIRE WOLF

N large animal

Init +2; **Senses** Low-light vision, scent; Perception +10

DEFENSE

AC 14, touch 11, flat-footed 12 (+2 Dex, +3 natural, -1 size)

hp 37 (5d8+15)

Fort +7, **Ref** +6, **Will** +2

OFFENSE

Spd 50 ft.

Melee bite +7 (1d8+6 plus trip)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.

STATISTICS

Abilities Str 19, Dex 15, Con 17, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 10

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +8; **CMD** 20 (24 vs. trip)

Feats Run, Skill Focus (Perception), Weapon Focus (bite)

Skills Perception +10, Stealth +3, Survival+1 (+5 scent tracking); **Racial Modifiers** +4 Survival when tracking by scent

WOLF (3)

N medium animal

Init +2; **Senses** Low-light vision, scent; Perception +8

DEFENSE

AC 14, touch 12, flat-footed 12 (+2 Dex, +2 natural)

hp 13 (2d8+4)

Fort +5, **Ref** +5, **Will** +1

OFFENSE

Spd 50 ft.

Melee bite +2 (1d6+1 plus trip)

STATISTICS

Abilities Str 13, Dex 15, Con 15, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 6

Base Atk +1; **CMB** +2; **CMD** 14 (18 vs. trip)

Feats Skill Focus (Perception)

Skills Perception +4, Stealth +6, Survival+1 (+5 scent tracking); **Racial Modifiers** +4 Survival when tracking by scent

6. NO ENCOUNTER

TALLINN TAVERN

The Tallinn Tavern sits on the edge of the forest offering shelter, food, and warmth to those who seek audience with the Jukkas. As the PC approaches the tavern, read the following.

The biting cold nips at your extremities as the wind kicks up flurries from the loose snow, encasing another layer of white on your person. All is quiet except the crisp crunch that sounds as you take another step through the white landscape, stark and uniform save the wheel ruts and horse hoofprints that the snow is already trying to erase and reclaim. All hope of warmth might be lost if it weren't for the ribbons of smoke on the horizon marking the way out of the snow.

The main house is 2 stories tall while the wagon tracks lead to the barn in the back. In the main house, the ground floor is a common area with a large roaring fire where food and drink can be had while the upper floor has private rooms for lodgers as well as the living quarters for the proprietor and his family. The cellar is stuffed with provisions as supply runs are often interrupted by inclement weather.

CR 3

800 XP

While Otto, the owner of tavern, is quite terse, his wife Olli is more gregarious, welcoming the PC to the tavern and giving her a place by the fire and a cup of strong drink to warm her up. Food, drinks, and lodging for the night are available at the standard rates listed in the Pathfinder Core Rulebook.

Being that right mix of curious and talkative, Olli tries to engage the PC in conversation, hoping to get her name and story. In turn the PC can glean some basic information from the mistress of the tavern. They don't get too many visitors, but the tavern is more full than usual due to the Petitioning tomorrow, including "a curious fellow with some sort of instrument and a strapping lad from the east." Should the PC engage in a little chatter or girl talk (Diplomacy DC 10), Olli expounds on what she knows, "not that she gossips." The fellow with the instrument goes by Sysikuu and he wants to wander the domain of the Jukkas to gain more inspiration for his song. The strapping lad from the east is called Stefan, and while Olli can attest to his brooding disposition and deep cerulean eyes, she has yet gotten a satisfactory answer as to why he's actually in the area.

If the PC mention Pohjola or the *chalice* to Olli, read the following.

"You're one of those, are you? Suppose you are looking for the gate that has no walls?" Olli lets out a snort and slaps her dishtowel across her thigh. "Every few years we get someone with the same notion, and if they are lucky, they return to us empty handed. The unlucky are never seen again, chasing phantom leads in the snow no doubt." The doughty matron shakes her hand knowingly and continues, "well, if it's Pohjola you're seeking, at least you'll like the evening's entertainment."

With that Olli leaves the PC be. She is free to rent a room and retreat there until supper or socialize with the other tavern guests. Stefan is a solemn drinker and starts as indifferent to the PC. If the PC is female, add a +2 bonus to her Diplomacy checks and if the PC buys him a few rounds, add an additional +3 circumstantial bonus to her Diplomacy checks. If the PC can get Stefan to Friendly, she discovers that Stefan is far from home and is seeking asylum in the Jukkas realm until the political turmoil in his homeland settles down. Stefan doesn't know anything about Pohjola, dismissing such things as "superstitious nonsense people tell to children before bed."

Sysikuu, on the other hand, is a pleasant fellow with an easy going manner (starts as Friendly). His bardic bent and the fact he is from the area means he can provide the PC some basic information about the history of Pohjola (see Adventure Background). The PC can probe him for more information on the following topics.

The Chalice of Pohjola: An artifact as old as Pohjola, crafted by the gods and used to anoint the first chief of Pohjola. There are many tales surrounding the *chalice* from granting a simple boon to full-blown resurrection powers. The hag of the bog, being a follower of Louhi, sought the *chalice* to heighten her prowess with the wild magic, but it is doubtful that is all the *chalice* can do. Some think the *chalice* may be no more than a chameleon, echoing those that come before it.

The Daughters of Pohjola: The three daughters of Pohjola, a great chief who ruled a land by the same name, thought to be the progenitors of the contemporary people of the north. The sisters three are the guardians of Pohjola, locked away in the *Pearls of Pohjola* until someone of strength and valor frees them.

The Gate That Has No Walls: A cryptic line from the old song said to be the resting place of the sea necklace that holds the daughters of Pohjola.

The Hag of the Bog: A follower of Louhi, the goddess of sorcery who was renowned for her avarice and underhandedness. In her own desire for the *chalice of Pohjola*, the hag bound the daughters of Pohjola into a necklace given to their father as a boon (see *Pearls of Pohjola*), only to be trapped in it as well.

The Pearls of Pohjola: The necklace dropped into Pohjola's hands by a seabird, a sign from the gods that his three daughters were not a curse but indeed a blessing. Strung with coral, the necklace bears a pendant of pearls and the old song suggests the daughters of Pohjola reside in the pearls, placed there by magics long ago by the hag of the bog in her attempt to possess the *chalice of Pohjola*.

What Happened Next?: The old song does not say, only that the daughters and that which they guard wait in the pearls, hidden away by their father. Some regard the tale as myth, while others think there really is a gate with no walls, and some worthy hero will free the daughters and Pohjola will be made whole once again.

Does Sysikuu think it is real?: "I am just the shepherd of the old song. It is not for me to believe or not believe. Regardless if it is real or not, I must tend to it."

OTTO, THE TAVERN KEEPER **CR 5**
LN Male medium humanoid fighter 4/expert 2 1,600 XP
Init +4; **Senses** Perception +8

DEFENSE

AC 17 touch 10, flat-footed 17 (+6 armor, +1 enhancement)
hp 57 (4d10+16 plus 2d8+6)
Fort +7, **Ref** +1, **Will** +5 (+7 against fear)
Defensive Abilities armor training 1, bravery

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.
Melee masterwork longsword +9 (1d8+4)
Ranged masterwork heavy crossbow +6 (1d10/19-20)

STATISTICS

Abilities Str 14, Dex 11, Con 16, Int 13, Wis 12, Cha 10
Base Atk +5; **CMB** +7; **CMD** 17
Feats Alertness, Combat Expertise, Improved Disarm, Improved Initiative, Improved Trip, Weapon Focus (longsword), Weapon Specialization (longsword)
Skills Climb +6, Handle Animal +7, Intimidate +6, Perception +8, Profession (tavern keeper) +8, Ride +5, Sense Motive +8, Survival +7, Swim +6
Languages Common, Dwarven, Elven
Gear +1 *breastplate*, masterwork longsword, masterwork heavy crossbow, silver dagger, cold iron dagger, +1 *crossbow bolts* (17), gold ring (50 gp), 30 pp, 200 gp, 500 sp, 1000 cp, Tallinn Tavern and all its contents

STEFAN **CR 2**
CN Male medium humanoid (human) rogue 2 600 XP
Init +3; **Senses** Perception +5

DEFENSE

AC 16, touch 13, flat-footed 13 (+3 armor, +3 Dex)
hp 18 (2d8+6)
Fort +2, **Ref** +6, **Will** +0
Defensive Abilities evasion

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.
Melee masterwork rapier +5 (1d6+2/18-20)
Ranged dagger +4 (1d4+2/19-20)
Special Attacks rogue talent (bleeding attack), sneak attack +1d6

STATISTICS

Abilities Str 14, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 12, Wis 11, Cha 10
Base Atk +1; **CMB** +3; **CMD** 17
Feats Weapons Finesse, Point Blank Shot
Skills Appraise +6, Bluff +5, Climb +7, Disable Device +8, Disguise +5, Escape Artist +8, Perception +5, Sense Motive +5, Sleight of Hand +8, Stealth +8
Languages Common, Dwarven
SQ trapfinding
Gear masterwork studded leather armor, masterwork rapier, daggers (4), silver dagger, masterwork thieves tools, backpack, bedroll, winter blanket, cold-weather outfit, torches (5), flint and steel, rations (6), rope (hemp), waterskin, 5 10-gp gems, 1 50-gp gems, 25 gp, 50 sp, 100 cp

SYSIKUU **CR 5**
CG Male medium humanoid (human) bard 5 1,600 XP
Init +2; **Senses** Perception +8

DEFENSE

AC 15, touch 12, flat-footed 13 (+2 armor, +1 enhancement, +2 Dex)
hp 35 (5d8+10)
Fort +3, **Ref** +6, **Will** +4 (additional +4 vs. bardic performance, sonic and language-dependant effects)
Defensive Abilities well-versed

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.
Ranged masterwork light crossbow +6 (1d8/19-20)
Melee masterwork longsword +4 (1d8/19-20)
Special Attack bardic performance 15 rounds/day (countersong, distraction, fascinate, inspire courage +2, inspire competence +2), cantrips
Spells Known (CL5)
2nd (3/day) – *invisibility*, *sound burst* (DC 15), *suggestion* (DC 15)
1st (5/day) – *charm person* (DC 14), *comprehend languages*, *cure light wounds*, *expeditious retreat*, *sleep* (DC 14)
0 – *daze* (DC 13), *detect magic*, *lullaby* (DC 13), *mage hand*, *prestidigitation*, *summon instrument*

STATISTICS

Abilities Str 11, Dex 15, Con 14, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 17
Base Atk +3; **CMB** +3; **CMD** 15
Feats Far Shot, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot
Skills Bluff +9, Diplomacy +11, Knowledge (Geography) +8, Knowledge (Nobility) +8, Knowledge (History) +8, Knowledge (Local) +9, Linguistics +7, Perception +8, Perform (String) +11, Perform (Oratory) +11, Sense Motive +11, Spellcraft +9, Use Magic Device +11
Languages Celestial, Common, Dwarven, Elven, Sylvan
SQ bardic knowledge (+3 on all other knowledge checks), lore master 1/day, versatile performance (Oratory)
Gear +1 *leather armor*, masterwork light crossbow, +1 *crossbow bolts* (17), masterwork longsword, *scroll of identify* (4), leather journal, scroll case, pen, ink (3 vials) and paper (20 sheets), fine dulcimer (150 gp), mahogany flute with ivory and obsidian inlay (100 gp), backpack, winter blanket and clothing, rations (5), waterskin, pewter flask filled with whisky, sunrods (5), gold ring with amber stone (50 gp), 5 10-gp gems, 2 25-gp gems, 20 cp, 20 sp, 10 gp

EVENING MEAL AND ENTERTAINMENT

The evening meal is served family style with a little fanfare as serving girls present petite plates and shallow platters of various dishes: saffron pickled vegetables, gingered turnip, baked smoked sauerkraut, rye bread and herbed nut bread, cured salmon, fresh herbed cheese, stewed rabbit in white wine sauce, boar bear and elk sausage, cooked spelt, spiced lentils, and tall jugs of mulled wine and honeyed beer followed by a dish of rose pudding dressed with fragrant petals. Olli beams with pride as the feast is laid out before the unsuspecting guests who were told that dinner would be “nothing fancy, just simple nourishing food.”

If the PC has not had a chance to talk to the other guests, she may do so now over food and drink; otherwise dinner table discussion is left to casual topics and (as the liquor flows more freely) story telling. Besides talking to Stefan and Sysikuu, the PC will have the opportunity to talk to Otto who is a bit more gregarious thanks to the mulled wine. Otto starts as Indifferent, sharing basic information about the area like weather trends and where the Jukkas hold their council. If the PC can bring Otto to Friendly, the tavern keeper speaks more freely, telling stories about others who have petitioned the Jukkas in the past from disastrous blunders to grand gestures. From this, the PC can glean helpful information that gives a +3 to Diplomacy checks when petitioning the Jukkas. If Otto becomes Helpful, he hints a little at his background as a soldier before settling down and running the tavern and offers the PC what he considers the most useful piece of advice: “This is an old land with old secrets. It’s best to never underestimate it.”

As food, drink, and the fire start to dwindle, Sysikuu takes up his dulcimer at Olli’s instigation, singing sections from the old song for the evening’s entertainment, including Lament for the Daughters of Pohjola.

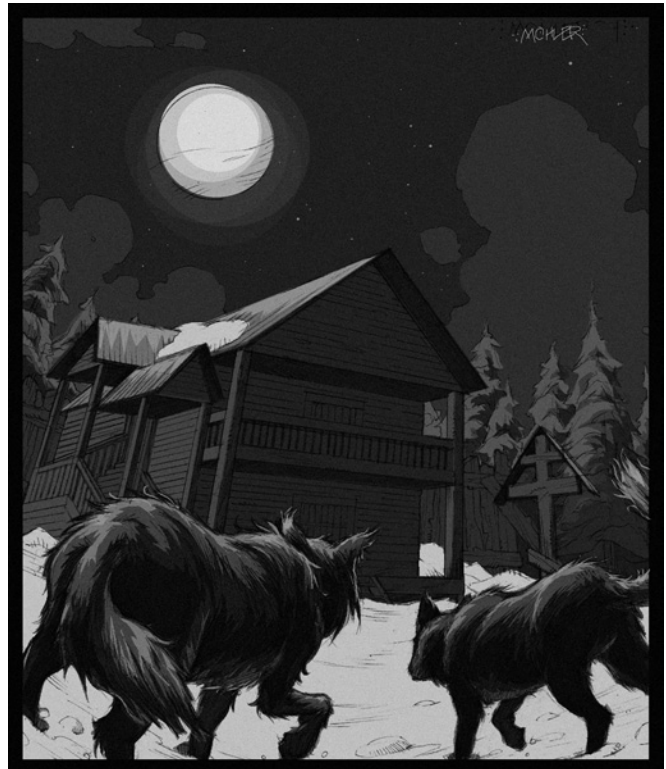
Oh daughters, where have you gone,
My gems within pearls?
Oh Marjatta, who will watch over the people?
Oh Katri, who will guard the *chalice*?
Oh Outi, who will preserve our legacy?

A king without a kingdom,
A father without heirs.
Will Louhi’s touch never end?
Will I ever see your blush again?

In the Pearl will you stay
Ever-summer, ever-young
Until one day a hero arises
To free Pohjola from its ivory cage.

Where the greatest worry is Wizzu’s quest
Where the greatest sickness is from within
Where no man can walk the thousand-fold field
Where the greatest virtue is bravery
Where the son that wrought stony misery once slain will free
my precious three

There will you wait,
Through the gate with no walls,
Hidden in the way it was before it was made
Until one day a hero arises
To free Pohjola from its ivory cage.



A HOWL IN THE NIGHT

As the PC and the other people in the tavern are feasting by the fire, a fierce howl pierces the winter wind. From the far north crossing the frozen lands travels a group of werewolves lead by their fearless leader Timo, in search of neither food nor finery, but of drink. Long are the winters and deeply have Timo and his kin dipped into *Skoda’s liquor cabinet* that its shelves are nearly bare! Their hope is to fill its shelves at the tavern and retreat to the north before the Jukkas know of their intrusion.

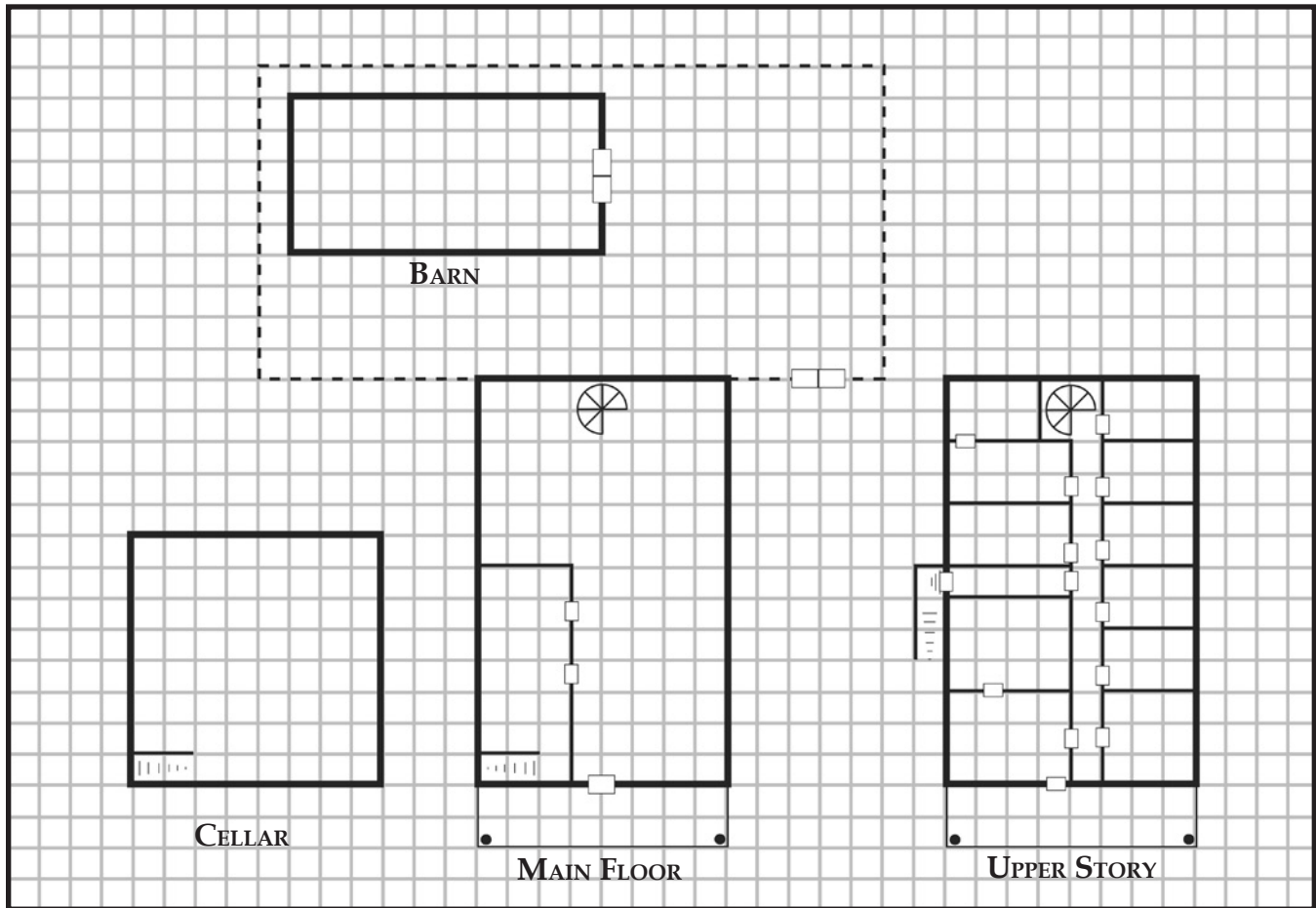
They engage a local troop of wolves lead by a dire wolf in their scheme. Led by 1 werewolf in wolf form, they attack the horses in the barn, drawing out the fighting men from the tavern. Timo and the second werewolf then circle around and enter the tavern, loading all the stores of strong drink they can find (10 rounds once inside the tavern). While the werewolves are not interested in killing for food, the local wolves are quite hungry and do not turn their nose up at an available meal. The werewolf leading the wolf pack decoy retreats after 12 rounds of combat, figuring that Timo has had enough time to get the liquor and get out of the tavern.

All stated NPCs and the PC make a Perception check DC 20 to hear Timo’s howl pierce through the noise of the night’s wind and the evening’s carousing. Two rounds later the local wolves howl back, this time closer (Perception DC 15). Three rounds later, a Perception DC 10 allows them to hear the barn dog barking and the horses whining. The dog barks for 1 round before being silenced.

Once Otto hears the wolves or the dog, he grabs his weapons from behind the bar (he has his breast plate on under his clothing) and tells Olli to gather the girls and bar themselves upstairs. To the guests, he cautions that wolves are coming and he would gladly take any help in fending them off.

Both Stefan and Sysikuu ready themselves for battle and the PC can choose whether to go outside or not. If the PC goes out with the men, a Perception check DC 20 reveals that the tracks circle back to the front of the tavern (-5 to the check if she is still in the heat of battle). If the PC decides to stay with the women and children, 2 rounds after the men leave, she hears someone (Timo and another werewolf) enter the tavern and climb down to the cellar.

TALLINN TAVERN MAP



TIMO

Human natural werewolf fighter 3
 CE medium humanoid (human, shapechanger)
Init +5; **Senses** Low-light vision, scent; Perception +8

DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 11, flat-footed 16 (+6 armor, +1 Dex)
hp 26 (3d10+6)
Fort +5, **Ref** +2, **Will** +3 (+4 vs. fear)
Defensive Abilities armor training 1, bravery +1

OFFENSE

Spd 30 ft.
Melee masterwork longsword +7 (1d8+4/19-20)
Ranged masterwork light crossbow +5 (1d8/19-20)

STATISTICS

Abilities Str 17, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 12, Wis 14, Cha 10
Base Atk +3; **CMB** +6; **CMD** 17
Feats Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Initiate, Power Attack
Skills Climb +6, Intimidate +6, Perception +8
Language Common, Sylvan
Special Qualities change shape (human, hybrid, and wolf; *polymorph*), lycanthropic empathy (wolves and dire wolves)
Gear masterwork chainmail, masterwork longsword, masterwork light crossbow with 20 bolts, velvet cape with a brooch of shielding (20 points left), *Skoda's liquor cabinet*

CR 3
 800 XP

TIMO (HYBRID FORM)

CE medium humanoid (human, shapechanger)
Init +5; **Senses** Low-light vision, scent; Perception +8

DEFENSE

AC 22, touch 12, flat-footed 20 (+6 armor, +2 Dex, +4 natural)
hp 29 (3d10+9)
Fort +6, **Ref** +3, **Will** +3 (+4 vs. fear)
Defensive Abilities armor training 1, bravery +1; **DR** 10/silver

OFFENSE

Spd 30 ft.
Melee masterwork longsword +8 (1d8+6/19-20), bite +2 (1d6+1 plus trip and curse of lycanthropy)
Ranged masterwork light crossbow +6 (1d8/19-20)

STATISTICS

Abilities Str 19, Dex 15, Con 17, Int 8, Wis 14, Cha 8
Base Atk +3; **CMB** +7; **CMD** 19
Feats Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Initiate, Power Attack
Skills Climb +6, Intimidate +6, Perception +8
Language Common, Sylvan
Special Qualities change shape (human, hybrid, and wolf; *polymorph*), lycanthropic empathy (wolves and dire wolves)

SKODA'S LIQUOR CABINET

Aura moderate conjuration; **CL** 9th

Slot —; **Price** 2,500 gp; **Weight** 15 lbs.

DESCRIPTION

This four paneled wooden liquor cabinet is handsomely stained a rich red with simple beveling and clean lines. While its outer dimensions are a mere 2 feet wide, 3 feet tall, and 9 inches deep, it stows more than meets the eye. Created by a wizard of the north who was fond of his drink, Skoda's Liquor Cabinet was specifically designed to hold spirits, but can hold other items up to 30 cubic feet or 250 pounds. When opened, the cabinet holds numerous deep shelves designed for bottles of alcohol and fixtures for holding various crystal and drinking vessels. Regardless how many spirits are loaded in the cabinet, it weighs a fixed amount. Retractable leather strap allow the cabinet to be carried or strapped on one's back for easy transport.

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, *secret chest*; **Cost** 1,250 gp

WEREWOLF (3)

Human natural werewolf fighter 2

CE medium humanoid (human, shapechanger)

Init +5; **Senses** Low-light vision, scent; Perception +4

CR 2

600 XP

DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 11, flat-footed 16 (+6 armor, +1 Dex)

hp 19 (2d10+4)

Fort +5, **Ref** +1, **Will** +2 (+3 vs. fear)

Defensive Abilities bravery +1

OFFENSE

Spd 30 ft. (20 in armor)

Melee masterwork longsword +6 (1d8+4/19-20)

Ranged light crossbow +3 (1d8/19-20)

STATISTICS

Abilities Str 17, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 8, Wis 14, Cha 8

Base Atk +2; **CMB** +5; **CMD** 16

Feats Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Improved Initiate, Power Attack

Skills Climb +3, Intimidate +4, Perception +4

Language Common

Special Qualities change shape (human, hybrid, and wolf; *polymorph*), lycanthropic empathy (wolves and dire wolves)

Gear chainmail, masterwork longsword, light crossbow with 20 bolts, fur cape (50 gp), small gold chain bracelet (55 gp), silk bag (10 gp) filled with 3 10-gp gems, 2-40 gp gems

WEREWOLF (HYBRID FORM)

CE medium humanoid (human, shapechanger)

Init +5; **Senses** Low-light vision, scent; Perception +4

DEFENSE

AC 22, touch 12, flat-footed 20 (+6 armor, +2 Dex, +4 natural)

hp 21 (2d10+6)

Fort +6, **Ref** +2, **Will** +2 (+3 vs. fear)

Defensive Abilities bravery +1; **DR** 10/silver

OFFENSE

Spd 30 ft. (20 in armor)

Melee masterwork longsword +7 (1d8+6/19-20), bite +1 (1d6+1 plus trip and curse of lycanthropy)

Ranged light crossbow +4 (1d8/19-20)

STATISTICS

Abilities Str 19, Dex 15, Con 17, Int 8, Wis 14, Cha 8

Base Atk +2; **CMB** +6; **CMD** 18

Feats Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Improved Initiate, Power Attack

Skills Climb +3, Intimidate +4, Perception +4

Language Common

Special Qualities change shape (human, hybrid, and wolf; *polymorph*), lycanthropic empathy (wolves and dire wolves)

THE JUKKAS AND THE GREAT NORTHERN WOODLANDS

The Jukkas are a clan of intelligent bears who, much to the consternation of those outside of the clan, are all called "Jukka." They are the masters of the Great Northern Woodlands, keeping a relative balance between chaos and order. Each month when the moon is full, the head Jukkas from across the woodlands trek to the stone pillars and hold council. The day after each council, they allow audience to outsiders for various petitions.

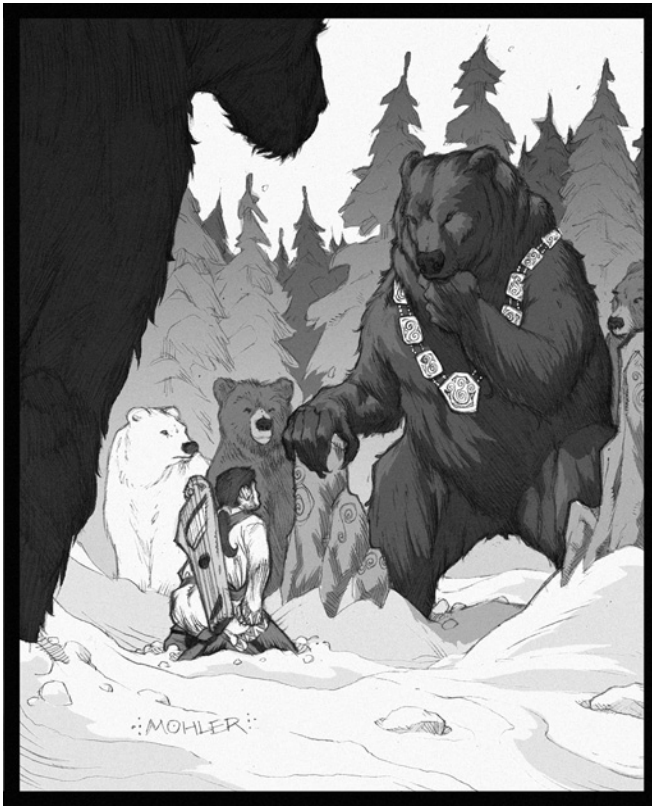
Through the natural flow of conversation in the tavern, the PC gathers than obtaining permission from the Jukkas before roaming the Great Northern Woodlands is, while not compulsory, a good idea. All of the NPCs in the tavern know the way to the petitioning grove (an hour's hike away) and share that information with the PC if she asks. The petition grove is a clearing marked by 2 large stones jutting out from the snow and covered with runic carvings. The Jukkas form a ring with the head Jukka standing between the stones, presiding over the petitioning, and petitioners come into the circle. The petitioning grove is under a permanent *zone of truth* (Will save DC 20 to lie). As such, the Jukkas let the petitioners do most of the talking, remaining silent except to ask questions, give instruction, and deliver decisions.

Simple requests are easy to adjudicate, but as the requests become more involved or taxing, the Jukkas reserve the right to conducts trials to weigh the merit of the petitioner and his or her specific request. Thus, petitioning the Jukkas is not necessarily for the faint of heart. Read the following text when the PC approaches the petitioning grove.

The trees thin into a clearing marked with the passing of many a bear and person in the well-trodden snow. A ring of tall fur-covered bodies lies in the center of the grove while a line forms of those waiting for an audience. A deep rumbling comes from within the circle, more felt than heard at this distance, and the ursine ring opens, making way for the next petitioner.

The guests of the tavern are not the only people here to petition the Jukkas; a line of people forms early in the morning, some locals, others that have traveled from afar. They mostly keep to themselves and wait their turns. Assuming both survived Timo's raid, both Stefan and Sysikuu seem eager to petition and are willing to go before the PC if she offers.

The Jukkas know the location of the spellgate, but the Jukkas do not meddle in the affairs of the old ones lightly and revealing this information requires the PC to succeed a Diplomacy check DC 25. The Diplomacy check is made at the end of the PCs interaction with the Jukkas and comprises of all the factors in table on the following page. If the PC succeeds on her Diplomacy check, the Jukkas agree to take her to the spellgate, only if she agrees to be blindfolded so that the path remains a mystery.



If the PC asks for permission to roam the Great Northern Woodlands, the Jukkas ask the reason. If the PC answers truthfully or mentions searching for Pohjola-oriented things in her initial petition, there is no effect to her Diplomacy check. However, if the PC is caught in lying through a Sense Motive check, the Jukkas take that into consideration when rendering their final judgment (-5 to her Diplomacy check). If the PC talked to Otto earlier at the tavern and got him to Friendly, she gains a +3 to her check as she incorporates and avoids behaviors from past petitioners. If the PC killed a werewolf in the raid and truthfully tells of her involvement in the tale, the Jukkas look favorably on such action (+5 to Diplomacy). If the PC observes Stefan and/or Sysikuu, she gains a +1 to her check (up to +2).

For GMs that like to act out roleplaying encounters, insert the idea that the Jukkas are a straightforward clan, often using the fewest words possible to convey information. Although some people misinterpret this terseness as rude, to the Jukkas, it is a virtue to be direct. The GM may award up to a +5 circumstantial bonus to the Diplomacy check based on the PC's performance, with high marks for being direct and using the fewest possible words in answering questions.

Additionally, there are trials which the PC can undergo to prove her mettle. The Jukkas use 2 traditional trials: the trials of strength and the trial of constitution. The trial of strength is a wrestling match (best 2 out of 3) where the goal is to maintain one's stance while throwing off one's opponent from their stance. Facing each other, the wrestlers put their right front foot forward with the outside of the feet touching each other. The left foot is planted in back. The wrestlers grip each other's right hands with the referee placing their hands on top. Once the referee removes his hands, the match begins and whoever moves their feet from the starting stance first loses the round. Mechanically, treat the trial of strength as each

CONDITION	DIPLOMACY MODIFIER
Caught lying	-5
Otto Friendly	+3
Killed a werewolf in raid	+5
Petitions after Stefan	+1
Petitions after Sysikuu	+1
Good roleplaying	up to +5
Trial of strength (win)	+5
Trial of strength (lost)	+1
Trial of Constitution (win)	+5
Trial of Constitution (lost)	+1
Caught cheating in a trial	-10

wrestler performing a Combat Maneuver. If both succeed, the one with the higher initiative succeeded first and is therefore the winner of that round.

The trial of constitution is a contest of drink. Two bottles and two glasses are presented and whoever throws up, passes out or concedes first is the loser. Mechanically, the drinking contest is treated as a series of Fortitude checks that get increasingly more difficult. The first few drinks (equal to the PC's Constitution score) do not require a save. However, after that point has been breached, each subsequent drink requires a Fortitude save to finish the drink, keep it down, and not pass out. The first save is a DC 15, but the DC increases by +1 with each subsequent save.

If the PC wins a trial, give them a +5 to Diplomacy for each trial they win. While the Jukkas hold strength and constitution in high regard, they also view those attempting to match themselves in the traditional tests in a favorable light (+1 to Diplomacy for each trial attempted, cannot attempt a trial more than once per petition). However, if the PC gets caught cheating during the trials, it is viewed as poor sportsmanship, a serious character flaw to the Jukkas (-10 to Diplomacy).

In total, there are 20 Jukkas at the petitioning. There should be no need for combat involving the Jukkas, but if some twist of fate deems it necessary, use the stat blocks for grizzly bears (12) and dire bears (8) with an Intelligence score of 10+. For the purposes of social interaction and the trials, the Jukkas have a **Sense Motive** +9; **Initiative** +1, **CMB** +9, **CMD** 20; **Constitution** 19, **Fortitude** +8.

If the Jukkas will not help the PC locate the spellgate, all is not lost. Unbeknownst to the Jukkas, Otto once stumbled upon the spellgate while exploring the Great Northern Woodlands in his adventuring days. Being a respectful and cautious man, Otto left the old ones be and doesn't not share such information haphazardly. However, if the PC helps fight off the werewolves or saves Olli and the girls, he is willing to help a dejected PC whose petition was denied by the Jukkas. Otto does not personally show the PC the way; he dares not risk getting caught by the Jukkas. Rather the tavern keeper gives the PC a map with geographic markers of finding the spellgate. There is a 10% chance that the PC fails to follow the map and instructions and a Survival check DC 12 to get back on track.



JF

THE SPELLGATE

The spellgate is nestled deep in the Great Northern Woodlands (2 days travel). If the Jukkas are taking the PC to the spellgate, the GM need not roll for random encounters, however, a PC following Otto's map and instructions is subject to them. As the PC nears the spellgate, the first thing she'll notice is a change in climate. The snow thins out until there is none, the temperature warms up to a temperate 60 °F, and the vegetation becomes more deciduous and green. If the Jukkas have brought the PC to the spellgate, they leave her at the edge of the snow with the spellgate barely in sight. Read the following as the PC nears the spellgate.

The crisp crunch of snow seems a distant memory as your foot steps on a soft tuft of grass shaded by the vast green canopy of an ancient tree. Nestled into the tree is a doorway carved from the tree itself, although it seems to lead nowhere. Large pieces of stone are stacked framing the door and fused into the tree as if they were just another growth from the thick knotted trunk. There are shapes and symbols carved into the lintel, but you cannot make them out from this distance.

Carved into the lintel is a riddle which illuminates in a soft glow when a spellcaster comes within 10 feet. The carving is magical, designed to befuddle lay readers, give them terrible headaches, and leave them with the distinct desire to leaving the area. However, if it is read by someone under the effect of *read magic*, the message is in Common—*If you can read me, you can enter*. Once one is able to read the message on the lintel, that person can pass through the doorway to the other side.

The other side is a similar doorway coming from a palm tree at the center of a tropical island. A Spellcraft craft DC 20 or Knowledge (arcana) check DC 15 leads the PC to believe she is still on the material plane, merely very far from the Northland. If the PC tries to pass back through the doorway, she finds she cannot. There is another carved magical message on this door's

lintel with similar lay reader effects but a different message to those reading with *read magic*—*hidden in the way it was before it made*. If the player does not recall the line from the Lament for the Daughters of Pohjola, an Intelligence check DC 15 means the PC remembers that is a line from the old song.

The island itself is not very large, less than half a mile in diameter and the waters immediately beyond the shores are quite shallow and home to thriving coral reefs. An initial exploration of the island (4 hours) reveals a small pool of potable water, coconut trees, fish and other edible creatures in the sea, and plenty of trees for wood. Rotted out woven mats, battered lean-tos, the remains of a net that once served as a hammock and a few skeletons suggest others have been here but not in a long time. The PC also discovers a remote cave on the SE section of the island.

HOME SWEET HOME

The cave is home to a clutch of giant crabs. They wander the island and its surrounding waters for food but come back to the cave at night for safety. The crabs are territorial and aggressive, especially in the cave. If the PC enters the cave at night, she'll find up to 10 irate giant crabs ready to make her a midnight snack, and they only retreat into the sea when half their numbers are killed. When they roam the island they are no less aggressive or hungry. They tend to roam in groups of 2 or 3, and there is a 25% chance of running into a group of giant crabs while exploring the island or the waters and reefs surrounding the island. If the PC kills any giant crabs, subtract that number from the total.

GIANT CRAB

N Medium vermin (aquatic)
Init +1; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +4

CR 2

600 XP

DEFENSE

AC 16, touch 11, flat-footed 15 (+1 Dex, +5 natural)
hp 19 (3d8+6)
Fort +5, Ref +2, Will +1
Immune mind-affecting effects

OFFENSE

Spd 30 ft., swim 20 ft.
Melee 2 claws +4 (1d4+2 plus grab)
Special Attacks constrict (1d4+2)

STATISTICS

Abilities Str 15, Dex 13, Con 14, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 2
Base Atk +2; CMB +4 (+8 grapple); CMD 15 (27 vs. trip)
Skills Perception +4, Swim +10
Special Qualities water dependency

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Water Dependency (Ex) Giant crabs can survive out of the water for 1 hour per point of Constitution. Beyond this limit, a giant crab runs the risk of suffocation, as if it were drowning.

Within the cave are the skeletal remains of a past visitor to the island. While most of his gear has spoiled, rotted or rusted, his magic items are intact and relatively undisturbed by the giant crabs.

Treasure: *boots of levitation*, *bracers of armor* +2, *ring of protection* +1, *robe of useful things* with 8 patches (mirror, 10 ft. pole, hempen rope, sack, 10 100-gp gems, 24 ft. long wooden ladder, bag of 100 gp, scroll of *detect magic*), *potion of water breathing* (CL 5)

COASTAL WATERS

The *pearls of Pohjola* are indeed hidden in the way it was before it was made, stashed in a giant clam in the coral reef. Unfortunately, there are many clams of various sizes littering the seafloor and among the coral. Clams naturally open and close their shells, and there is a 50% chance that the giant clam holding the necklace is open when the PC is investigating that portion of the reef. If the clam is open, the PC can use *detect magic* to find which giant clam holds the necklace; otherwise the closed shell blocks the spell's radius.

The giant clam that holds the *pearls of Pohjola* sits in a patch of colorful coral. The giant clam is not a vicious foe, but it has a strong grip on creatures caught in its closing shell. If the clam is open, magical means of moving the necklace do not trigger the giant clam's snap shell attack, however using physical objects (like a stick, a 10 foot pole, or an arm) does. Regardless the result of the grapple attempt, the PC must succeed on a Reflex save DC 17 to move the necklace out of clam. If the clam is closed, it is very difficult to pry it open (Strength check DC 20), and the clam uses snap shell once it's been forced open. The giant clam weighs over 500 pounds and is anchored by its strong muscle, so any attempt on the PC's part to move the clam is futile.

While the giant clam seems an easy enough foe, there are more dangerous creatures swimming in the reef. Iridescent coral hunt these waters and if the PC becomes wounded in her struggle with the giant clam, they attack sensing weakened prey. When the PC first touches the necklace, the last pearl in the pendant starts to glow, awakened by the sorceress' touch.

GIANT CLAM

N Large vermin (aquatic)
Init +1; **Senses** tremorsense 60 ft.; Perception +4

CR 6

2,400 XP

DEFENSE

AC 20, touch 10, flat-footed 19 (+1 Dex, +10 natural, -1 size)
hp 42 (7d8+7)
Fort +6, **Ref** +3, **Will** +2
Immune mind-affecting effects

OFFENSE

Speed 0 ft., swim 5 ft.
Melee snap shell (1d8+4 plus grapple)
Size 10 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.
Special Attacks Snap Shell (1d8)

STATISTICS

Abilities Str 18, Dex 12, Con 12, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 2
Base Atk +5; **CMB** +10 (+12 grapple); **CMD** 21 (23 vs. grapple)
Feats Improved Grapple^B
Skills Perception +4, Swim +12
Special Qualities water dependency

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Snap Shell (Ex) Giant clams reflexively snap their shells shut, and a creature with an appendage in or around may be caught in the closing shell. A giant clam deals 1d8+4 damage to the creature and the creature is considered grappled. Each round that the creature remains grappled, the giant clam deals an additional 1d8 damage.
Water Dependency (Ex) Giant clams can survive out of the water for 1 hour per point of Constitution. Beyond this limit, a giant clam runs the risk of suffocation, as if it were drowning.

IRIDESCENT CORAL (2)

N Small plant (aquatic)
Init +3; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +4

CR 2

600 XP

DEFENSE

AC 18, touch 14, flat-footed 15 (+3 Dex, +4 natural, +1 size)
hp 19 (2d8+10)
Fort +8, **Ref** +3, **Will** -4
Defensive Abilities Regeneration 3 (fire and acid deal normal damage); **Immune** plant traits

OFFENSE

Speed 0 ft., swim 10 ft.
Melee 2 stinging tendrils +5 (1d3+1 plus poison)
Special Attacks shimmering shell

STATISTICS

Abilities Str 12, Dex 16, Con 20, Int —, Wis 2, Cha 19
Base Atk +1; **CMB** +1; **CMD** 14
Feats Weapon Finesse^B
Skills Perception +4, Swim +9, Stealth +7; **Racial Modifiers** +10 Stealth when resting among ordinary coral
Special Qualities water dependency

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Poison (Ex) Stinging tendril—injury; *save* Fortitude DC 16; *frequency* 1/round for 3 rounds; *effect* 1d3 Dex; *cure* 1 save
Shimmering Shell (Ex) An iridescent coral can activate its shell as a free action. The colorful shell rotates through a spectrum of colored lights and creates an aura of light which functions as a *rainbow pattern* spell (CL 10), affecting a 50 ft. radius around the iridescent coral. All creatures within range must succeed on a DC 18 Will save or become fascinated by the display for 2d6 rounds. This is a mind-affecting effect. The save DC is Charisma-based.
Water Dependency (Ex) Iridescent corals can survive out of the water for 1 hour per point of Constitution. Beyond this limit, an iridescent coral runs the risk of suffocation, as if it were drowning.

THE PEARLS OF POHJOLA

Within the pearls is a world frozen in time, and the PC can enter that world by casting a spell upon the necklace. If the PC is having difficulty figuring that out, there are a few ways to gently nudge her in that direction. Any attempt to use *identify* or *detect magic* to examine the necklace reveals no magical properties per se, but leads the PC to think that casting a spell on it opens it, much like reading the door lintels with *read magic*, is a sort of key or trigger. Alternately, taking the necklace to the doorway in the palm tree does not open the doorway, but changes with words on the lintel to “magic made it and magic will open it”.

MOVING THROUGH THE PEARL WORLD

When the bog hag's spell placed the three sisters and their wards in the pearls, the artifact partitioned the world throughout the entire pearl pendant, and each pearl contains one thing, be it a daughter of Pohjola, a location, a theme, or a challenge. The first pearl is a bustling town filled with people ruled by the eldest sister Marjatta, where the citizens are preparing for a great festival. The second pearl opens further north to rural environs, leading to the third pearl that contains the thousand-fold field. The fourth pearl contains Katri, the chalice-bearer, and the final pearl contains Outi, the youngest daughter frozen into stone by Surma's gaze, as well as the bog hag, trapped so close to the chalice yet unable to leave.

Each pearl is locked, barring entry to the subsequent pearl until the PC has sufficiently fulfilled the rite, completed the old song, or otherwise proved herself worthy to move on. When the PC enters the pearl, she is in the first pearl and cannot move outside of the first pearl's environs as the PC can only move through the pearl linearly, entering the second pearl only after she completes the task from the first pearl. Moving down the pendant is moving northward in the pearl's geography.

There are actions (or inactions) that can lead to dismissal from the pearl, described in each pearl's description. Should that happen, the PC appears at the doorway in the palm tree. The lintel reads "so the sisters three wait for another," and the PC is free to leave through the spellgate, appearing back in the Great Northern Woodlands. The pearls of Pohjola are gone, placed in another giant clam, and if the PC tries to find them again, she cannot.

There are hints to the pearls in the old song about how to proceed through the pearls. Allow the player to use any notes she may have taken during the Lament for the Daughters of Pohjola, and if the player does not remember, a Intelligence check DC 15 will jar the PC's her memory at crucial times.

THE PEARLS OF POHJOLA

Aura overwhelming conjuration; **CL** 30th

Slot neck; **Weight** 1 lb.

DESCRIPTION

This delicate-looking necklace is made of polished coral with a six-pearl pendant hanging from the middle, each getting progressively larger down the pendant. Created by the gods as a boon to Pohjola, the necklace is nigh indestructible. When worn by others, it is merely a very pretty bauble; however when worn by a member of the Pohjola family, it grants the wearer a number of effects:

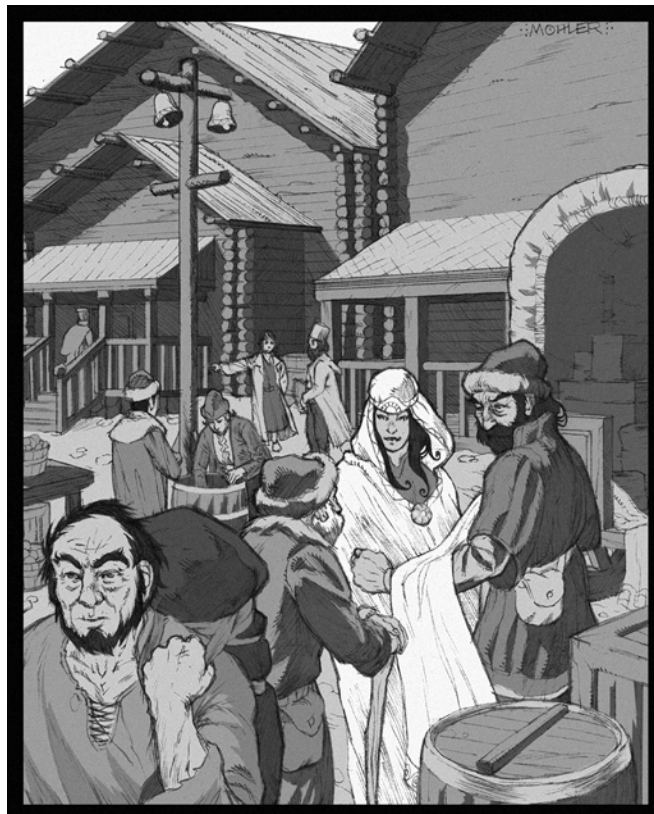
- +5 natural armor
- +4 enhancement bonus to Charisma, Intelligence, and Wisdom
- Spell Resistance 20
- Immunity to disease (including magical disease)
- Immunity to poison, although poisons active when the necklace is first donned still run their course

Through the machinations of the hag of the bog, the pearls hold the three daughters of Pohjola and that which they were charged to protect. In the ritual that bound them, the hag placed a condition that only one who follows Louh's pathi could enter the pearl, and only characters with at least 1 level of sorcerer can enter the pearls. The *pearls* are sensitive to this condition, and the last pearl in the pendant lights up when touched by a sorcerer. If that sorcerer casts a spell on the *pearls*, they enter the world within the pearls, a world that remains in a state of stasis until someone from outside enters. If the sorcerer fails to affect the world or free the daughters, the world resets and awaits a new outsider. As a protective measure, the *pearls* placed their own condition: a sorcerer may only enter the *pearls of Pohjola* once. If a character fails to achieve her goals in their one entry, she cannot enter again.

Once the daughters of Pohjola are free from the *pearls*, the hag's spell has run its course, and the *pearls* no longer contain a world within, but all the other attributes remain. If the *pearls* are destroyed (see Destruction) before the daughters are freed, they and all within perish.

DESTRUCTION

If the *pearls of Pohjola* are placed in the *chalice of Pohjola*, it instantly crumbles to dust.



I. PEARL OF THE HEARTH

When the PC casts a spell on the *pearls*, she arrives in the middle of the market in the early morning, carrying whatever she had on her person when she cast a spell. Read the following after she casts her spell.

Your vision goes white, and your ears pop as you travel through the twists of time and space warped through magic. Suddenly, you stop moving and you're standing still. Faint murmurs and the sound of sweeping bristles form a backdrop of sound pierced by the calls for goods and food stuffs of high quality for bargain prices. The white of your vision begins to flood with color, first in broad strokes and then filling in with detail. Standing still in a sea of moving goods and people, you see a bustling market in morning ritual. A man sells pickled fish from an open barrel while another shows a fine bolt of cloth to a woman with raven hair draped in white.

The pearl of the hearth is home to Marjetta, the eldest daughter of Pohjola who watches over the people. The first pearl's environs encompass the town, where everyone is preparing for a great festival, and the western hills, home of the giant bees. If the PC tries to go beyond that, she hits an invisible force barrier that prevents her from venturing farther. In order to go to the second pearl, the PC must help Wizzu, the town's cheese maker, in procuring some bee's wax and honey for his big cheese, a staple of the upcoming festival to be presented to Marjetta herself.

The town has all the typical amenities: a few inns and taverns, shops, craftsmen, the butcher, the baker, and the candlestick maker. It is relatively easy for the PC to gather what is on everyone's mind: the Feast of Plenty! It takes place in a week's time, and there hardly seems enough time for craftsmen and artisans to finish their offerings, made to Marjetta herself in her spiraled and domed estate.

It is clear to the locals that the PC is a stranger, but many come into the town to celebrate the Feast of Plenty, and they are patient with visitors who seem a little confused or overwhelmed. After all, not everyone is accustomed to the bustle of urban life. If the PC gets the idea to go to Marjetta directly, she is kindly but firmly rebuffed by guards at the estate's gate. The PC is informed that the lady is extremely busy preparing for the festival and cannot grant an audience to anyone. If the PC tries to sneak onto the estate, she encounters an invisible force shield that prevents her further intrusion.

BUSY AS A BEE

There are a few ways to get the PC in contact with Wizzu. Perhaps she didn't have any coin on her person when she cast her spell on the *pearls* and is in need of work to pay for food and lodging. Maybe Wizzu is consoling himself over a mug of ale in the same tavern as the PC or the PC overhears townspeople talk about Wizzu's predicament and how the Feast won't be the same without the cheese maker's spread. Alternately, the PC may remember the name Wizzu from the old song, and seek Wizzu's shop in town. Regardless how the PC finds Wizzu (or how Wizzu finds the PC), the mission is clear: he needs giant bees' wax and honey to finish his offering for the Feast of Plenty. For her eleventh hour efforts, Wizzu gives the PC a generous portion of his finest aged cheese as a reward.

The western hills are not far outside of the town's walls, just an hour's walk. They nest in the trunk of a giant tree surrounded by flowering meadows and groves of fruit trees. The town relies on the giant bees to pollinate their crops, and the townspeople give the insects a wide berth. While they are not naturally aggressive, they defend their nest fiercely.

The nest is huge, filling most of the 30-foot-tall tree and burrowing into the ground. There is an opening 15 feet up that is big enough for a Small creature to enter (or Medium creature to squeeze) as well as an opening at the top of the tree large enough for a Large creature to pass through.

If the PC is adjacent to the nest opening on the side of the tree, three bee swarms exit the opening and attack outright while 3 giant bees exit from the top opening and attack in 2 rounds. If the PC is adjacent to the nest opening on the top of the tree, the giant bees attack immediately, and the bee swarms take 2 rounds to appear and attack. Once a giant bee has stung the PC, it flies away to die; however every round after the initial attack, a new giant bee comes out from the nest to attack. Bee swarms keep attacking until killed, and after the initial attack, every 2 rounds a new bee swarm comes out from the nest and attacks.

Like most bees, giant bees are calmed by smoke. A DC 15 Knowledge (nature) check or a Diplomacy DC 20 with traveling honey seller in town gathers that a smoke application for 10 minutes before extraction ensures that the bees do not attack as long as the extraction is gentle. While the smoke may lull the bees, it irritates a canopy kraken in a nearby tree. Its mottled coloration and the leaf-like protrusions on its tentacles help it blend in as it brachiates from tree to tree. Five rounds after the PC starts smoking the bees, the kraken attacks. The canopy kraken has 10 tentacles, and severing a tentacle requires precision (+4 to the appropriate AC, dealing at least 5 points of damage). The canopy kraken retreats to neighboring trees when it loses 4 tentacles or is reduced to 20 or less hp.

Regardless if the PC gathers the honey and wax by hand or by magic, it takes 20 rounds to fill the requisite jars for Wizzu. Once the PC returns with the filled jars to Wizzu, the PC can pass through the barrier into the second pearl which leads away from the town to the north.

GIANT BEE

N Large vermin

Init +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +9

CR 1

400 XP

DEFENSE

AC 14, touch 10, flat-footed 13 (+1 Dex, +4 natural, -1 size)

hp 17 (2d8+8)

Fort +8, **Ref** +2, **Will** +2

Immune mind-affecting effects

OFFENSE

Spd 20 ft., fly 60 ft. (good)

Melee sting +6 (1d8+6 plus poison)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.

STATISTICS

Abilities Str 18, Dex 12, Con 18, Int —, Wis 13, Cha 11

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +8; **CMD** 19

Skills Fly +3, Perception +9; **Racial Modifier** +8 Perception

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Poison (Ex) Sting — injury; *save* Fort DC 18; *frequency* 1/round for 6 rounds; *effect* 1d2 Dexterity damage; *cure* 1 save. The save DC is Constitution-based, and includes a +2 racial bonus. A giant bee stings only once, then flies away to die.

BEE SWARM

N Diminutive vermin (swarm)

Init +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +9

CR 3

800 XP

DEFENSE

AC 15, touch 15, flat-footed 14 (+1 Dex, +4 size)

hp 31 (7d8)

Fort +5, **Ref** +3, **Will** +3

Defensive Abilities swarm traits; **Immune** weapon damage

Weaknesses swarm traits

OFFENSE

Spd 5 ft., fly 40 ft. (good)

Melee swarm (2d6 plus poison)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 0 ft.

Special Attacks distraction (DC 13), poison

STATISTICS

Abilities Str 1, Dex 13, Con 10, Int —, Wis 12, Cha 9

Base Atk +5; **CMB** —; **CMD** —

Skills Fly +11, Perception +9; **Racial Modifier** +8 Perception

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Poison (Ex) Swarm — injury; *save* Fort DC 13; *frequency* 1/round for 4 rounds; *effect* 1 Dexterity damage; *cure* 1 save. The save DC is Constitution-based.

CANOPY KRAKEN

N Large magical beast

Init +5; **Senses** low-light vision, darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +13

CR 6

2,400 XP

DEFENSE

AC 20, touch 10, flat-footed 19 (+1 Dex, +10 natural, -1 size)
hp 85 (9d10+36)

Fort +8, **Ref** +7, **Will** +5

Immune disease and poison

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft., climb 20 ft.

Melee 2 tentacles +13 (1d8+5), 2 tentacles +13 (1d8+5) and bite +11 (2d6+5)

Size 10 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft. (15 ft. with tentacles)

Special Attacks Constrict (1d8+7)

STATISTICS

Abilities Str 20, Dex 13, Con 18, Int 12, Wis 15, Cha 10

Base Atk +9; **CMB** +15; **CMD** 26

Feats Improved Initiative, Improved Natural Attack (tentacle), Improved Natural Attack (bite), Lightning Reflexes, Multiattack

Skills Acrobatics +12, Climb +18, Perception +13, Stealth +13;

Racial Modifier +8 Climb, +4 Stealth

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Constrict (Ex) With a successful grapple check, the canopy kraken deals 1d8+7 damage.

2. PEARL OF SICKNESS

As the PC leaves town, read the following.

The packed wooden homes and bustle slowly fade as you leave town. The sound of chatter and progress gives way to bird song and town homes are traded for farms and the neat ridge and furrow of fields. The meadows are a lush carpet of soft grass dotted with colorful wild flowers. Every so often you see carved statues sitting along the path or in the middle of a field, some small others as tall as a man. A large hill climbs before you, and just as you anticipate the sprawling views from the top, you are stopped fast.

The second pearl's environs are just beyond the town into the northern fields ending at a large swelling hill. The PC cannot see what is on the other side of the hill, hitting an invisible force barrier before reaching the apex. However, a Perception check DC 15 hears a great cry from one of the statues in the meadow, leading the PC to her next challenge.

The bog hag's taint has seeped into this bucolic scene, infecting one of the local farmers, and he is the one crying out in great pain. His wife took him to the statue in the meadow, as they are thought to be protective charms by the locals (radiates *protection from evil* and *bleed* within 20 ft. of the statue). Knowing the old craft, she can draw out the evil from her husband, but she knows she is not strong enough to slay it. The farmer's wife can only describe it as a shadowy figure that radiates evil. It takes 2 rounds for the farmer's wife to force the shadow out of her husband, and in order to keep it out, she must concentrate and cannot help in battle.

Once the PC slays the shadow, the barrier to the third pearl opens up. The farmer and his wife don't have much in the way of material goods, but the farmer's wife gives the PC a loaf of bread for her journey, and if the PC needs a place to rest, the grateful farmer and his wife put the PC up for the night.



SHADOW

CE Medium undead (incorporeal)

Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +8

CR 3

800 XP

DEFENSE

AC 15, touch 15, flat-footed 12 (+2 deflection, +2 Dex, +1 dodge)

hp 19 (3d8+6)

Fort +3, **Ref** +3, **Will** +4

Defensive Abilities incorporeal, channel resistance +2;

Immune undead traits

OFFENSE

Speed fly 40 ft. (good)

Melee incorporeal touch +4 (1d6 Strength damage)

Special Attacks create spawn

STATISTICS

Abilities Str —, Dex 14, Con —, Int 6, Wis 12, Cha 15

Base Atk +2; **CMB** +4; **CMD** 17

Feats Dodge, Skill Focus (Perception)

Skills Fly +11, Perception +8, Stealth +8 (+12 in dim light, +4 in bright light); **Racial Modifier** +4 Stealth in dim light (-4 in bright light).

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Create Spawn (Su) A humanoid creature killed by a shadow's Strength damage becomes a shadow under the control of its killer in 1d4 rounds.

Strength Damage (Su) A shadow's touch deals 1d6 points of Strength damage to a living creature. This is a negative energy effect. A creature dies if this Strength damage equals or exceeds its actual Strength.



3. PEARL OF THE THOUSAND-FOLD FIELD

Read the following as the PC crosses the barrier.

From the top of the hill spills forth a verdant valley covered with tall grasses waving in the breeze. Wild horses graze in the shade of a stand of trees, and the meadow stretches as far as the eye can see.

This pearl holds the thousand-fold field, an endless meadow that serves as a natural barrier from the people and the chalice bearer. As the crow flies, it is a day's travel across the field, however a person trying to cross the field on foot finds themselves in a loop—when they reach the middle of the field, any movement forward or backward sends them back toward the farms.

There are a number of ways the PC can successfully get to the other side of the field, and the key to moving through this pearl and onto the next is hidden in the old song: "Where no man can walk the thousand-fold field." If the PC employs any method of travel except on foot, be that flying, levitating and pushing along with a pole against the ground, riding a horse, or any other creative ideas the player has, she can cross the field. If the PC is stuck, a Perception check DC 20 notices that

the wild horses seem to have no problem crossing the middle of the field. The PC can attempt to coax a wild horse to carry her across, and a failed attempt results in the horses running away from the PC. The horses tend to travel in herds of 6-10 and do not attack the PC unless attacked first (use the horse stat block minus the docile special ability).

4. PEARL OF THE CHALICE-BEARER

On the other side of the thousand-fold field is a wooded area with a grove. This grove is home to Katri the middle daughter of Pohjola and the bearer of the *chalice of Pohjola*. Read the following when the PC can see the grove.

Beyond the trees and overgrowth is a clear circular patch of ground 40 ft. across. Ringing the clearing are six equidistant large stone statues, stoic in face and primitive in design. A seasoned warrior kneels beside one of these statues in a posture of reverence while the youthful warrior beside him stands, his longsword and chest held proudly. A raven-haired woman moves towards them with a regal gait, carrying a golden goblet on a small platter. The coins in her hair and strung along her hips sound as she moves. She stops in mid-step and turns to you with a serious gaze. "We were expecting you," she says in a level tone. "Are you going to join us?"

The PC has triggered the fourth pearl's test, a test of valor. As shown by the 2 warriors already in the circle, regardless one's age or posture, valor is the willingness to fight when called upon. Katri allows the PC to ask her a few questions about the upcoming task, but always redirects back to the crucial question, "Are you going to join us?" Below are the general questions Katri answers.

What lies before of us? Ahead is the final pearl where my sister waits with her wards to once again feel the sun and breeze on her cheek.

How do we free Outi? To restore her, send the son of Surma to his wretched father. (i.e. kill it)

Is there anything we should know about the son of Surma? He is a hound of the underworld, consumed with fiery rage.

What happens then? The old song has been sung for the last time.

Who are those guys? They are men of valor who aim to free the sisters three.

What of the hag bog? Long has she desired the *chalice* and only death will end her longing.

What if I don't join? Then you have chosen your path and the old song lives on.

The PC is free to leave the pearls at this point, simply by deciding that she does not want to join the party; however this course of action means the PC cannot partake of the chalice. If the PC means to join the party, she simply steps into the circle and the rite (see below) continues. If the PC tries to take the chalice, both warriors move to defend Katri and the statues (stone golems) awaken and attack the PC.

The rite is pretty simple. Katri asks each person (first the seasoned warrior, then the younger warrior, then the PC) the same question: Who steps forth to free the sisters three? Once answered, the chalice bearer says an incantation over the *chalice* and a curl of steam rises from the cup as if liquid spontaneously boiled forth within. She then brings forth another platter and allows the three to place any food they have so that they may feast before battle. While there is no penalty for not contributing, those that offer food to the platter gain the benefits as the spell *heroes' feast* (CL 11th). The seasoned warrior presents links of black sausage. The young warrior presents tar candy. If the PC presents either the cheese or bread acquired in the previous pearls, she also gains those benefits. The stat blocks below do not reflect the affects of *heroes' feast*.

After they have eaten, Katri holds the chalice and pours a little of the liquid into each person's mouth uttering the phrase "to protect you from Surma's wrath." She'll do this in the same order as the names were given and drinking from the chalice grants *resist energy* (fire, CL 5th). As soon as the PC drinks from the chalice, all three are teleported into the final pearl.

PETRI

LG male human, paladin 6
Init +1; **Senses** Perception +5

CR 6

2,400 XP

DEFENSE

AC 20, touch 12, flat-footed 18 (+7 armor, +1 enhancement, +1 Dex, +1 dodge)

hp 43 (6d10+6)

Fort +7, **Ref** +4, **Will** +7

Defensive Abilities aura of courage, divine grace, divine health; Immune disease (all), fear

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft. (base 30 ft.)

Melee +1 *longsword of frost* +11/+6 (1d8+4 plus 1d6 cold, 19-20)

Ranged masterwork heavy crossbow +8 (1d10/19-20)

Special Attacks channel positive energy, detect evil, smite evil 2/day, spells

Spells Prepared (CL 3rd)

1st – *protection from evil*

STATISTICS

Abilities Str 16, Dex 13, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 12

Base Atk +6; **CMB** +9; **CMD** 20

Feats Cleave, Dodge, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (longsword)

Skills Diplomacy +5, Handle Animal +5, Heal +6, Knowledge (nobility) +4, Knowledge (religion) +4, Perception +5, Ride +4, Sense Motive +7

Languages Common

SQ aura of good, lay on hands (4/day, 3d6), mercy (fatigued, staggered), divine bond (frost weapon)

Gear +1 *banded mail armor*, +1 *longsword of frost*, masterwork heavy crossbow, 20 bolts, golden torc (100 gp), signet ring (150 gp), fine woolen cape (50 gp), 2 brass clasps (50 gp), *potion of cure moderate wounds*, *potion of cure light wounds* (2), *potion of bless*, mundane gear (200 gp)

ANTTI

CN male human, barbarian 4

CR 4

1,200 XP

Init +3; **Senses** low-light vision, darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +7

DEFENSE

AC 14, touch 13, flat-footed 11 (+3 Dex, +1 natural)

hp 47 (4d12+16)

Fort +5, **Ref** +4, **Will** +4

Defensive Abilities uncanny dodge, trap sense +1

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.

Melee masterwork longspear +7 (1d8 +3, x3), masterwork longsword +7 (1d8+3, 19/20)

Special Attacks rage, rage power, rage power

STATISTICS

Abilities Str 15, Dex 17, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 11, Cha 11

Base Atk +4; **CMB** +6; **CMD** 19

Feats Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Mobility

Skills Acrobatics +7, Climb +6, Handle Animal +5, Intimidate +7, Knowledge (nature) +4, Perception +7, Ride +8, Survival +7, Swim +7

Languages Common

SQ fast movement

Gear masterwork longspear, masterwork longsword, torque (functions as *amulet of natural armor* +1), *potion of cure moderate wounds*, (mundane gear 200 gp)



5. PEARL OF THE OUTI

When the PC drinks from the *chalice*, she, Petri and Antti are teleported into the final pearl. Read the following.

You find yourself and your companions inside a large room 30-feet wide and 40-feet long, flanked by glass cases filled with various displays from fishing nets and scrapers to jewelry, costumes and hair combs. The room is dark save three candles lit at the far end of the room, where a scantily-clad woman sits petulantly upon a throne. She takes a bite from the heart on her dagger and her blood-stained lips smile.

The bog hag has cast *disguise self* to make her appear as a beautiful woman and pretends to be Outi, the youngest daughter of Pohjola, come back to life but still trapped in the pearl. However, the PC and her compatriots see through this glamour on a successful Will save (DC 13).

One of the far darkened corners contains Outi in her stony form, while in the other sits the son of Surma, stalking his new prey. The fiery hound is unaware that the bog hag was the one that trapped him in this pearlescent prison, and they have reached an odd sort of alliance in their mutual hope to escape.

If the PC and her companions approach or attack from afar, the bog hag uses *pyrotechnics* on the candles, creating a smoke cloud around herself and the near-by son of Surma. If the PC or either of her companions have a torch, lantern, or other form of fire with them, the bog hag uses *pyrotechnics* on their light source, saving her candles in case they are needed for another casting. Once *pyrotechnics* is cast, that signals the son of Surma to attack, starting with his breath weapon and then closing with his bite.

BOG HAG

CE Medium monstrous humanoid
Init +1; **Senses** darkvision 90 ft.; Perception +15

CR 5
 1,600 XP

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 11, flat-footed 18 (+1 Dex, +8 natural)
hp 58 (9d10+9)
Fort +6, **Ref** +7, **Will** +7
SR 16

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., swim 30 ft.
Melee 2 claws +13 (1d4+4 plus weakness)
Spell-like Abilities (CL 9th)
 Constant—*pass without trace, tongues, water breathing*
 At will—*dancing lights, disguise self* (DC 13), *ghost sound* (DC 12), *invisibility, pyrotechnics* (DC 14), *tree shape, whispering wind*

STATISTICS

Abilities Str 19, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 15, Wis 13, Cha 14
Base Atk +9; **CMB** +13; **CMD** 24
Feats Alertness, Blind-Fight, Combat Casting, Deceitful, Great Fortitude
Skills Bluff +13, Disguise +13, Knowledge (arcana) +11, Perception +15, Sense Motive +9, Stealth +13, Swim +18
Language Abyssal, Common, Infernal
SQ mimicry

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Weakness (Su) The bog hag's claws sap strength from those she strikes. Each time the bog hag hits a foe with her claw attack, the victim takes 2 points of Strength damage unless he resists the weakness with a DC 16 Fortitude save. Alternately, a bog hag can attempt to inflict even greater weakness on a foe by making a touch attack—this variant requires a standard action, and cannot be attempted in the same round the bog hag makes claw attacks. The opponent touched must succeed on a DC 16 Fortitude save or take 2d4 points of Strength damage. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Mimicry (Ex) A bog hag can imitate the sounds of almost any animal found near its lair.

SON OF SURMA

LE Large outsider (evil, extraplanar, fire, lawful) 6,400 XP
Init +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., scent; Perception +12

CR 9

DEFENSE

AC 24, touch 11, flat-footed 22 (+6 armor, +2 Dex, +7 natural, -1 size)
hp 126 (12d10+60)
Fort +13, **Ref** +10, **Will** +5
Immune fire
Weaknesses vulnerability to cold

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.
Melee bite +20 (2d6+12/19-20 plus 2d6 fire)
Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.
Special Attacks breath weapon (30-ft. cone, once every 1d4 rounds, 10d6 fire damage, Reflex DC 21 half)

STATISTICS

Abilities Str 27, Dex 15, Con 21, Int 4, Wis 12, Cha 6

Base Atk +12; **CMB** +21; **CMD** 33 (37 vs. trip)

Feats Alertness, Improved Critical (bite), Improved Initiative, Skill Focus (Stealth, Survival), Weapon Focus (bite)

Skills Acrobatics +16, Perception +12, Stealth +21, Survival +13; **Racial Modifiers** +5 Stealth

Language Infernal

CONCLUSION

Killing the son of Surma breaks the ancient petrification, effectively casting *stone-to-flesh* on the statuesque Outi in the corner. In turn, this breaks the bog hag's magic, reuniting the sisters three outside of the pearls of Pohjola. Once reunited, the sisters leave to join their father in some mythic realm where titans go when the mortal realms have relegated them into myth and song, taking with them all their wards. However, if the bog hag is still alive when the son of Surma is slain, she remains trapped in the pearls, and before they leave, Katri allows the PC to place the necklace in the *chalice*, destroying the *pearls of Pohjola* and the bog hag. The PC is free to leave through the spellgate, and once she returns to the ancient tree in the Great Northern Woodlands, she notices that the ground is losing its warmth as the snow collects by her feet.

PRE-GENERATED CHARACTER

RESSONA

Female sorcerer 11

CG medium humanoid (elf)

Init +3; **Senses** Low-light vision; Perception +5

DEFENSE

AC 21, touch 15, flat-footed 16 (+4 armor, +3 Dex, +2 deflection, +2 natural)

hp 71 (11d6+33)

Fort +6, **Ref** +8, **Will** +10 (+12 vs. enchantment spells and effects)

Immune magical sleep effects

OFFENSE

Spd 30 ft

Melee +1 *longsword* +6 (1d8+1/19-20)

Ranged +2 *longbow* +10 (1d8+2/x3)

Special Attacks bloodline powers (*laughing touch*, *woodland stride*, *fleeting glance*), cantrips, elven magic (+2 racial bonus to overcome spell resistance), spells

Spells Known (daily casting 5/6/7/8/at will)

5th — *cone of cold*, *summon monster V*, *tree stride*

4th — *charm monster* (DC 19), *poison* (DC 19), *shout* (DC 19), *stoneskin*

3rd — *deep slumber* (DC 20), *dispel magic*, *fireball* (DC 18), *fly*, *hold person* (DC 20)

2nd — *blur*, *detect thoughts*, *eagle's splendor*, *hideous laughter* (DC 19), *knock*, *scorching ray*

1st — *entangle* (DC 16), *expeditious retreat*, *hypnotism* (DC 18), *magic missile*, *shield*, *shocking grasp*

0 — *daze* (DC 17), *detect magic*, *detect poison*, *ghost sound*, *light*, *mage hand*, *prestidigitation*, *open/close*, *read magic*

STATISTICS

Abilities Str 10, Dex 16, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 13, Cha 20

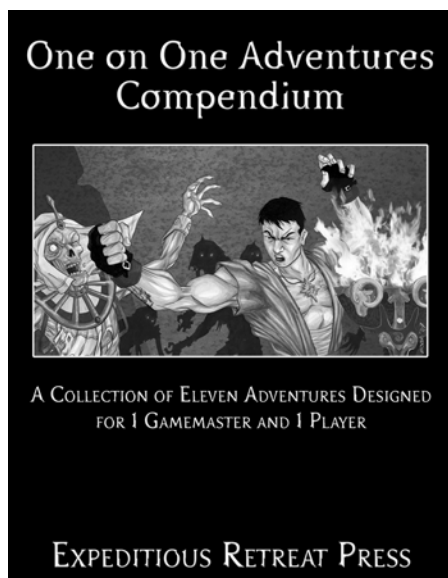
Base Atk +5; **CMB** +5; **CMD** 18

Feats Eschew Materials, Point Blank Shot, Quicken Spell, Silent Spell, Spell Focus (Enchantment), Spell Penetration, Still Spell, Toughness

Skills Appraise +7, Diplomacy +5, Bluff +8, Fly +10, Intimidate +8, Knowledge (arcana) +11, Knowledge (nature) +9, Sense Motive +3, Spellcraft +15, Use Magic Device +14; **Racial Modifiers** +2 Spellcraft checks made to identify properties of magic items

Language Celestial, Common, Elven, Sylvan

Gear *amulet of natural armor* +2, backpack, *bag of holding* (type I), bedroll, winter blanket, *boots of the winterlands*, *bracers of armor* +4, case containing scrolls of *identify* (4) and *break enchantment*, chalk, *cloak of resistance* +2, cold-weather outfit, crowbar, dust of dryness, flint and steel, *headband of alluring charm* +4, holy water (3), hooded lantern and oil, ink, *longbow* +2, *longsword* +1, pen, paper (10), *potion of cure light wounds* (10), *potion of cure moderate wounds* (3), *potion of cure serious wounds* (2), *potion of neutralize poison* (750 gp), rations (10), *ring of protection* +2, *ring of sustenance*, rope (silk), *salve of slipperiness*, *slippers of spider climbing*, sunrods (5), thunderstone (3), tanglefoot bag (3), twindertwig (3), waterskin, platinum and pearl earrings, black opal ring, 5 50gp gems, 10 10gp gems, 50 gp, 100 sp, 100 cp.



Don't forget to check out the One on One Adventures Compendium and upcoming titles in the 1 on 1 Adventures Line, now powered by The Pathfinder Roleplaying Game!



ONE ON ONE ADVENTURES #14
A SICKNESS IN SILVERTON
BY JOSEPH BROWNING
AN ADVENTURE FOR ONE DRUID LEVELS 3-5



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One on One Adventures are for one player and one GM. However, they are easily modified for a traditional party of four players and one GM.

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ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

Deep in his wooded subterranean home, a mad svirfneblin is conducting alchemical experiments, much to the dismay of all that live in a nearby small underground forest. The water that flushes his laboratory clean so pollutes the water that the flora and fauna are changing; even the trees twist and turn an unhealthy hue. The sick trees are secreting a phosphoric liquid that's draining into the river, causing a debilitating sickness among the Halflings downstream but which does not affect other races. Unfortunately, Silverton is populated with mostly Halflings and the hamlet is crippled right before harvest.

ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS

Upon entering Silverton, the Band of Three ask the PC for help. There are numerous clues that lead to the water as the source of the illness that has befallen the settlement, prompting the PC to move upriver through the Flaming Forest, where a grove sacred to the druidic people lies. There the PC can consult with nature and discover she must travel to the great falls and head underground to end the plight of Silverton.

SILVERTON

The malaise has left its mark not just on Silverton, but on the outlying farms. Read the following as the PC approaches the hamlet.

The sound of harvest that greeted you a few miles back is eerily absent. Meadows have not been mowed, the gardens are choked with weeds, and the passing breeze ruffles the overripe grain in the fields. A pair of large oaks on either side of the road cast an umbrella of shade beside a dusty sign that reads "Silverton, home to 98 souls." A high-pitched voice comes from behind the tree, "I don't suppose you are any good with a scythe, because there's work to be done."

Behind one of the oak trees is Pearl Bracegirdle, the leader of the Band of Three, a militia that guards the hamlet. If the PC engages in conversation, Pearl informs the PC that all farmers are too sick to work the fields, and she is hiring any willing hands to help with harvest. If the PC shows any interest in the illness or if Pearl sees any hint that the PC has any healing or spell-casting abilities, she asks the PC if she can do anything about the illness.

Upon investigation, the illness is intriguing. The hamlet is mostly Halflings, and the lone dwarf in the hamlet seems unaffected. A Halfling PC that drinks the water must make a DC 15 Fortitude save or suffer -2 Con damage and is immediately exhausted, and she must make that save each time she drinks the water; if the PC is not a Halfling, she is not affected. *Delay poison*, *neutralize poison* and *remove disease* has no effect, and *cure* spells do not lift the weakness or lethargy. The water does not detect as magic or poison, but if brought into a dark environment, it gives off a faint green glow. *Purify food and drink* removes the glow from the water and makes it safe to drink. Rest eases the exhaustion and subsequent fatigue, and the Con damage is restored with a *lesser restoration*, but too many villagers are too far in their sickness. They don't have time to wait out the illness or the wealth to spend on magic, and harvest will not delay its arrival.

Most of the hamlet is bedridden and while the PC can examine them, they are not much help in gathering information or answering questions. However, the PC can interact with the following villagers of note.



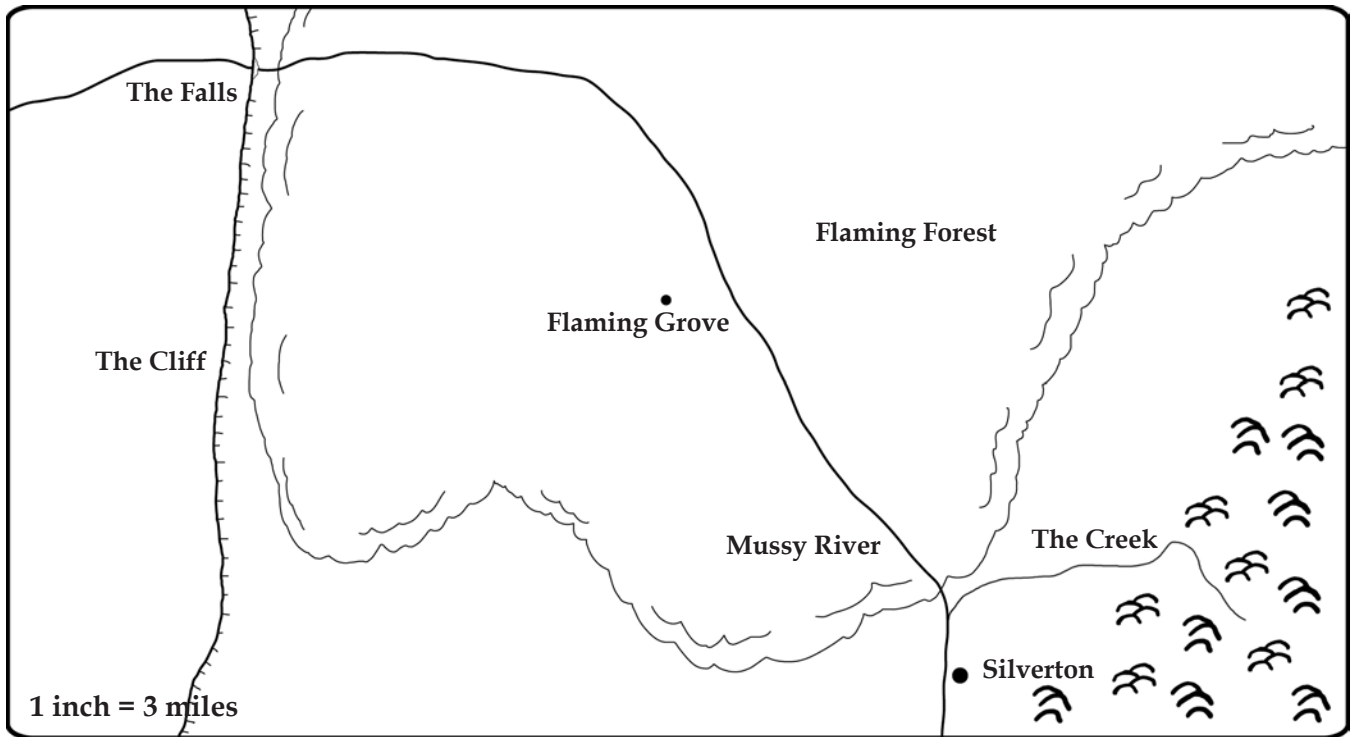
Pearl Bracegirdle (LG Female Halfling warrior 4): Pearl is the leader of the Band of Three (Pearl, Violet, Holman) and her opinion is highly regarded by all in the hamlet even if her lighthearted demeanor would belie her wisdom. Pearl is still weakened, but she is better than most of Silverton's inhabitants. Pearl has her own theories, believing it's something in the water. She has been boiling hers and has experienced a slight recovery, but she had difficulties convincing the rest of the hamlet to follow her suggestion to boil all their water before they fell sick.

Violet Chubb (LG Female Halfling warrior 3): Violet is a quiet and demur Halfling. She prefers to let Pearl do the talking and follows the will of the group. She has followed Pearl's lead and started boiling her water and she is recovering slowly. She spends most of her time in the field making a small dent in the overgrown fields.

Holman Burrows (NG Male Halfling rogue 2): Holman is an excellent farmer with a knack for picking up items that aren't his. The hamlet knows of his predilection and when anything of value goes missing, Holman's usually found to be the "borrower." He's a good-natured fellow and often returns things before their missed. He tried the life of the adventurer, but his paralyzing fear of the undead quickly nixed that choice. Holman is working the fields with the others, much to his frustration as he is the only real farmer in the bunch.

Bofgrim Dwjyr (LG Male Dwarf expert 4): Bofgrim's been in the hamlet for over 3 years, prospecting the nearby hills for the silver that must have once been here to provide the hamlet's name. He doesn't believe that the hamlet was named after Otho Silverleaf and is convinced that silver lies somewhere in the area. The Halflings think him a bit daft, but he's harmless, strong as an ox, and willing to help any in need. That said, he's not looking for adventure - he's looking for a mine. Bofgrim believes it his dwarven hardiness that's prevented any sickness and thinks that Alton's immune because he's more pickle than Halfling by now.

SILVERTON OVERLAND MAP



Alton Greenlock (CN Male Halfling bard 1): Alton is the oldest, and most worthless, of the 6 children of Minto and Daisy Greenlock. He's a wastrel that spends his time drunk and rowdy. He swears that not a drop of water has passed his lips in 10 years.

If the PC chooses to try and help the harvest using muscle and magic, she can get a few more farmers up and on their feet and all together they'll manage to get about 3/4 of the harvest in. It'll be a lean year for Silverton, but they'll survive. Doing this will take a week's time, during which the river becomes even more polluted, so much so that tiny flecks of phosphorus within the water are seen glowing at night.

The PC can certainly use her magic to stay and alleviate the suffering in Silverton, but as long as the source of the water is contaminated, the problem will not end and could spread further downriver. If that train of thought does not naturally occur to the player, one of the NPCs can bring up such thought to nudge the PC upriver through the Flame Forest to the falls.

If asked about what's upriver, the locals will gladly tell the PC of the Flame Forest (a place where some trees bear flame-like sigils upon them) and they will tell her to be wary of goblins in the forest, as they sometimes roam within the green boughs. In addition, the PC can learn that the river is navigable up to the grand fall and that behind the fall is some sort of abandoned dwarven dwelling. The Halflings never go in, so the PC can gain no information concerning what lurks within. If Holman's around when discussing the old dwarf-hole, he'll insist that there's undead within, "Those evil things are everywhere, you know."

THE GREATER SILVERTON AREA

There are several geographical features of note near Silverton. Below are brief descriptions of each.

SILVERTON

Hamlet Conventional; **AL** NG
GP Limit 100 gp; **Assets** 980 gp

DEMOGRAPHICS

Population 98
Type isolated (Halfling 98%, dwarf 1%)

AUTHORITY FIGURES

Pearl Bracegirdle, LG female Halfling warrior 4

IMPORTANT CHARACTERS

Violet Chubb, LG female Halfling warrior 3; **Holman Burrows**, NG male Halfling rogue 2; **Bofgrim Dwjyr**, LG male Dwarf expert 4; **Alton Greenlock**, CN male Halfling bard 1

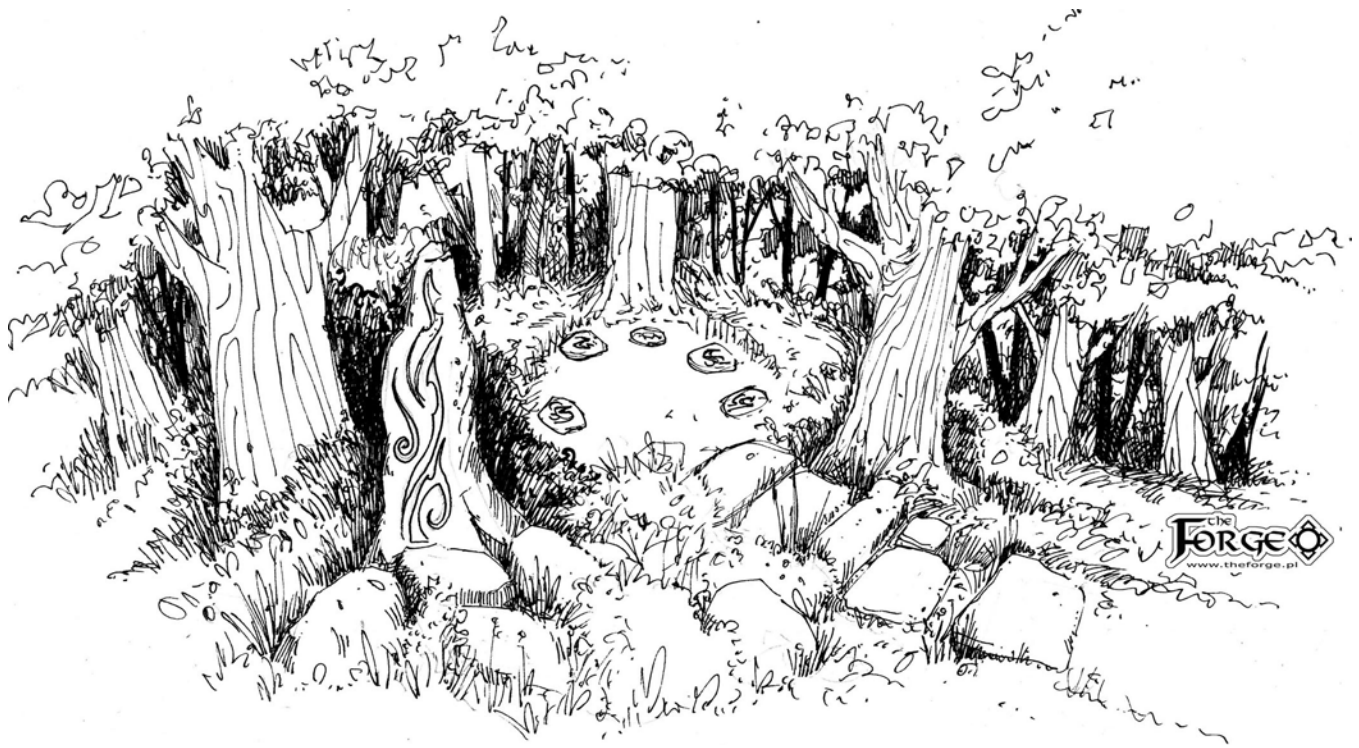
OTHERS

Hamlet militia, warrior 1 (x10), expert 1 (x5), commoner 1 (x78)

THE MUSSY RIVER

The Mussy gains its name honorably, as it tends to rise over its banks with yearly regularity, mussing up the nearby lands, but providing the rich soil upon which the Halflings of Silverton rely. It's an ambling river, favoring slow speeds over fast and there are only a few places where crossing it could be considered dangerous as long as one can swim. Traveling along the banks of the Mussy is an easy affair, its regular flooding keeping the shores clear, until one enters the Flaming Forest.

A small feeder rill flows out of the Silverton Hills into the Mussy. The Halflings have no real name for it, but many a young Halfling has snuck away against the wishes of his elders to hunt crayfish in the slow waters of the stream. It's known as "the creek."



THE FLAMING FOREST

A forest of obvious age, the Flaming Forest is filled with tall, ancient trees. The Halflings of Silverton rarely fell trees from the forest, but they do journey into the edges to harvest falling limbs and for the occasional tree. They've focused on the part of the forest along the banks of the Mussy because floating wood downstream is a lot easier than dragging it across the ground.

Within the Flaming Forest is an ancient abandoned Druidic shrine. It's likely the PC will discover it and it's described later. The Halflings, nor the goblins that occasional scout within the woods for that matter, know nothing about the place as it's warded to keep non-Druids out.

THE SILVERTON HILLS

These craggy and rough mounds east of Silverton bear the same name as the settlement. There's little of value here - the lands too inclined for crops, no metals or quality stones abound, and even goats would be a bad idea due the wolves that are sometimes heard baying within. The Halflings rarely enter the hills, but the dwarf Bofgrim Dwjyr is rather familiar with them. He believes there's silver in them thar hills, but he has yet to find any.

THE CLIFF

The Halflings are not masters of naming, obviously. This tall cliff (over 70 feet in some places) rears up in the lands west of Silverton. It travels for miles in all directions and it commonly considered the boundary point between the barbaric and the civilized. Upon the plateau, goblins and other foul beasts are more common and none of the Halflings have ventured up the cliff.

ON THE ROAD AGAIN

More than likely, the PC sets off upriver with only her trusted Mushroom at her side. There's a slight chance she could convince one of the NPCs to go with her, but the offer would have to be a good one given the state of the hamlet at the moment. Read the following text when she sets off.

Silverton grows small behind you, its fields dappled with sunlight. The fording of the Mussy River is a no-nonsense affair and you're quickly headed upriver, the edge of the Flaming Forest clearly visible. There's a path, of sorts, along the west bank. Upon your arrival, deer hoof prints identify the path as an animal trail.

Traveling along the bank of the Mussy, she'll reach the first encounter by mid-afternoon.

EIGHT UP, TEN DOWN

Read the following text when the PC approaches the area.

You work your way along the west bank of the Mussy. The tall trees heavily bend over the river here, forming a latticework completely filled in by at least 4 different types of creeper vine. The vines are drinking in the light and their late-blooming flowers fill the air with just the slightest scent.

Hidden in the boughs over the river is a giant spider. This spider has an unusual method of hunting. It strings a thin strand of web across the path along the western side of the river and attaches the other end to one of its rear legs. The wire is of strong, non-sticky web, and the spider anchors the wire to the shoreline with a sticky bulb. Whenever it feels a strong tug along the line, the spider anchors itself to a stout tree limb with a new silken thread, jumps off its bough towards the water, and pulls the sticky silk bulb against the triggering creature. The victim is then stuck to the web and the web is stuck to the spider that just jumped off a tree. Typically, the victim is pulled up over the water and right into the clutches of the spider dangling from the other end of the silken thread.

The PC will need to make a DC 20 Perception check to notice the almost-invisible spider silk trip wire across the pathway. A failure means the PC continues on and triggers the trap, ending the round hanging upside down over the river right next to a hungry giant spider.

If the PC avoids the trap, the spider ignores the PC. If the PC triggers the trap however, read the following text.

You feel a slight pressure against your shin, a quick wet popping noise to the left and you're suddenly pulled out over the river by some invisible force straight towards a dark shadow descending from the boughs above the water. Upside down now, you see the blurry shadow clearer - eight legs attached to a body as big as you and two fangs searching for vital juices.

The giant spider has surprise against the PC. It will attack at a -1 do the odd circumstances of the trap. However, the PC will attack at a -3; hanging upside down by a silken thread dangling over a river isn't where most would choose combat. The fight will continue until the spider has fewer than 6 hit points, at which point it will flee into the boughs above, dropping the still stuck PC into the Mussy. If the PC kills the spider, its weight still acts as a counterweight, leaving up to the PC how to determine the best way to extricate herself from the predicament.

Falling into the Mussy at this point is a poor choice, regardless the reason. Many successful hunts have brought a giant crab to the river bottom here, feeding off the shells of the drained spider victims. Falling into the water brings the attention of the crab which swims/crawls to the surface and attacks in two rounds after a splash. If brought to lower than 10 hit points, the crab flees back under the surface, hiding in the muck at the bottom of the Mussy.

GIANT SPIDER

N Medium vermin

Init +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; tremorsense 60 ft.; Perception +4

CR 1

400 XP

DEFENSE

AC 14, touch 13, flat-footed 11 (+1 armor, +3 Dex)

hp 16 (3d8 +3)

Fort +4, **Ref** +4, **Will** +1

Immune mind-affecting effects

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., climb 30 ft.

Melee bite +2 (1d6 plus poison)

Special Attacks web (+5 ranged, DC 12, hp 2)

STATISTICS

Abilities Str 11, Dex 17, Con 12, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 2

Base Atk +2; **CMB** +2; **CMD** 15 (27 vs. trip)

Skills Climb +16, Perception +4 (+8 in webs), Stealth +7 (+11 in webs); **Racial Modifiers** +4 Perception, +4 Stealth (+8 in webs), +16 Climb

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Poison (Ex) Bite — injury; save Fort DC 14; frequency 1/round for 4 rounds; effect 1d2 Strength damage; cure 1 save.

GIANT CRAB

N Medium vermin

Init +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +4

CR 2

600 XP

DEFENSE

AC 16, touch 11, flat-footed 15 (+1 Dex, +5 natural)

hp 19 (3d8 +6)

Fort +5, **Ref** +2, **Will** +2

Immune mind-affecting effects

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., swim 20 ft.

Melee bite 2 claws +4 (1d4+2 plus grab)

Special Attacks constrict (1d4+2)

STATISTICS

Abilities Str 15, Dex 13, Con 14, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 2

Base Atk +2; **CMB** +4 (+8 grapple); **CMD** 15 (27 vs. trip)

Skills Perception +4, Swim +10; **Racial Modifiers** +4 Perception

SQ water dependency

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Water Dependency (Ex) Giant crabs can survive out of the water for 1 hour per point of Constitution. Beyond this limit, a giant crab runs the risk of suffocation, as if it were drowning.

DON'T CROAK

About a mile and a half upriver from the spider's trap, the Mussy flattens out into a marshy area. Within the marsh, in a pit specifically dug by the occupying giant toad, waits the large bufonid for passing prey. The toad's not picky in the least about what it puts in its belly, and the PC looks like she'll do just fine.

Read the following when the PC enters the marshy area.

The trail becomes easier to follow as the land softens beneath your feet - the animal tracks deepening in the earth. The Mussy is out of sight just east of you, but it must spread out into the trees in this area, for not only is the soil damp, but patches of standing water glisten beneath the trees. A few minutes later, you're looking over a marshy area of no more than a half-mile's width. The trail you trod meanders through the terrain, following the more solid ground as it makes its way across and back towards the Mussy.

In the middle of the marsh waits the great toad. It's dug a deep pit next to the path and waits, only its eyes above the mucky green water. Detecting the toad requires a DC 15 Perception check. Failure results in the toad achieving surprise.

GIANT TOAD

N Medium Animal

Init +1; **Senses** low-light vision, scent; Perception +3

CR 1

400 XP

DEFENSE

AC 12, touch 11, flat-footed 11 (+1 Dex, +1 natural)

hp 15 (2d8+6)

Fort +6, **Ref** +6, **Will** -1

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., swim 30 ft.

Melee bite +3 (1d6+2 plus grab) or tongue +3 touch (grab)

Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft. (15 ft. with tongue)

Special Attacks pull (tongue, 5 feet), swallow whole (1d4 bludgeoning damage, AC 10, 1 hp), tongue

STATISTICS

Abilities Str 15, Dex 13, Con 16, Int 1, Wis 8, Cha 6

Base Atk +1; **CMB** +3 (+7 grapple); **CMD** 14 (18 vs. trip)

Feats Lightning Reflexes

Skills Acrobatics +9 (+13 jumping), Perception +3, Stealth +5, Swim +10; **Racial Modifiers** +4 Acrobatics (+8 jumping), +4 Stealth

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Tongue (Ex) A giant toad's tongue is a primary attack with reach equal to three times the toad's normal reach (15 feet for a Medium giant toad). A giant toad's tongue deals no damage on a hit, but can be used to grab. A giant toad does not gain the grappled condition while using its tongue in their manner.

FLAMING SIGILS

Half a mile from the northern edge of the marshy area are three strange trees featuring flaming sigils upon their trunks. These signs are mystic anchors for the magic of the druidic grove further within the forest. The signs, placed right next to flowing water, draw magical energy from the river, feeding the flaming trees within the grove with opposite energy. This provides them with their magic.

When the PC approaches the trees read the following text.

You come around a small bend in the river and are confronted by three flaming sigils etched upon the bark of three oak trees. The sigils shift and change shape with the rapidity of living flame.

The sigils provide light, but no heat. A successful DC 15 Knowledge (nature) or Spellcraft check provides the PC the following information concerning the signs.

You think you've identified the purpose of the three flaming signs. It appears that they're draining mystic power from the nearby river and, if you're reading them correctly, sending that power deeper into the woods behind them. They look ancient, so are probably not the cause of the recent sickness in Silvertown, but you've a niggling sensation on the back of your neck that you've heard tell of signs such as these before.

If the PC succeeds on another DC 15 Knowledge (nature) or Spellcraft check read the following text.

You've got it! These signs were used by the ancient druids of Vurnoxep who had mastered the art of protecting their groves from the ravages of fire. Somewhere in the forest, a circle of stones awaits - perhaps one not having felt the tread of druidic feet in ages. There is great knowledge within a hedge of stone; knowledge that may help Silvertown.

A SCOUT

If the PC chooses to investigate the forest interior she'll be forced to trail blaze her own direction, as there are no trails or animal paths. About a mile into the forest she'll stumble upon a goblin scout called Baggle. This creature has come down off the plateau to look at the Flaming Grove and then head down towards Silvertown to check on the readiness of the hamlet. Perhaps he'll get a chance to steal a chicken or goat or something of more value. As always, he's trying to move quietly as he goes (DC 24 Perception to detect).

Baggle's just moved on from the Flaming Grove - he periodically visits, remaining outside the effects of the druidic magic. He likes to watch the flaming sigils on the trees; they seem to speak to him on a very basic level. He does this about once a month, but lately he's been thinking of just walking into the circle to see if he'll be obliterated. Part of him thinks that the trees like him and would accept his care, but part thinks that he's a loathsome worm not worthy of such an honor.

If Baggle detects the walking PC and her Mushroom (DC 20 Perception check at 100 feet if the PC is taking no precautions, and which reduces by 1 per every 10 feet the PC comes closer), he'll quickly find the best hiding space and wait for the PC to pass by. Baggle's not looking for a fight, he'd rather a knife in the back or a quick pilfer. If the PC detects Baggle, he'll bolt in the opposite direction as fast as possible - an armed individual with a fierce critter in tow is not his idea of a fair fight. After fleeing for a while, he'll hide and listen for pursuit. If none seems forthcoming, he'll try to sneak back and locate the PC to follow her.



However, if the PC doesn't notice him, Baggle becomes intrigued by her and her animal companion because it looks like they're heading towards the Flaming Grove. Once the PC is out of sight, he'll pace her, following far enough back where he can hear her, moving as quietly as possible.

What Baggle eventually chooses to do is up to the GM. There's the chance he'll shadow the PC, waiting for a moment of weakness to attack or steal, but there is also the chance that, if the PC enters the stone circle, that he'll reveal himself and ask to be trained in the ways of druidic magic. Which one occurs is left up to the GMs discretion on which aspect the player would find most enjoyable.

BAGGLE

Goblin rogue 3
NE Small humanoid (goblinoid)
Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +8

DEFENSE

AC 15, touch 13, flat-footed 13 (+2 armor, +2 Dex, +1 size)
hp 19 (3d8 +6)
Fort +2, **Ref** +5, **Will** +1
Defensive Abilities evasion, trap sense +1

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.
Melee short sword +5 (1d4/19-20)
Special Attacks rogue talent (bleeding attack), sneak attack +2d6

STATISTICS

Abilities Str 11, Dex 15, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 11, Cha 6
Base Atk +2; **CMB** +1; **CMD** 13
Feats Alertness, Weapon Finesse
Skills Acrobatics +8, Bluff +4, Disable Device +8, Escape Artist +8, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +4, Sense Motive +8, Sleight of Hand +8, Stealth +14; Racial Modifiers +4 Ride, +4 Stealth

CR 3
800 XP

Language Common, Goblin
SQ trapfinding
Gear leather armor, shortsword, belt pouch with 25gp and a tourmaline (100gp)

THE FLAMING GROVE

Built by the ancient druidic cult of Vurnoxep, the Flaming Grove was one of their holiest sites. A fire cult, the druids of Vurnoxep found a way of making trees immune to that most horrible enemy. By drawing the power of water from water, trees could be made to flame without damage. When the PC is within sight of the circle, read the following text.

Coming over a slight hill, the trees give way a bit and you look down upon the site you were searching for: a circle of stones. More of the flaming runic sigils decorate the trees around the stone circle, and each stone has a similar rune placed upon it as well. It looks as if you've found all that remains of the ancient druidic cult of Vurnoxep.

If the PC succeeds on a DC 15 Knowledge (nature) or Spellcraft check read the following text.

You can see the flaming runes here are very similar to the ones on the trees near the banks of the Mussy. However, these runes are end points, rather than starting points. It seems as if all the power of the river's mystic essence is transferred here and you suspect the glade is warded in some manner.

If the PC succeeds on another DC 15 Knowledge (nature) or Spellcraft check read the following text.

The dancing fires of the flaming sigils seem to speak to you in a primal tongue. You believe that the sigils are wards against non-druidic creatures. Apparently, those of the cult of Vurnoxep brooked no false feet upon their holy ground.

Within the circle, the PC is not only on consecrated ground, she is safe from any missile attack; a launched missile seems to hit an invisible barrier and drop to the ground next to the stone ring. Thankfully for the PC and Mushroom, neither of them are subject to the magical trap in the area (The Fires of Nature, see below), but other creatures are, and this has proven the area the ideal home to a group of fire beetles living underground in the circle. They have created a trap-door, much like that of a trapdoor spider, directly in the center of the circle, and rush out if the door is trod upon. Their hole is small (barely big enough for them all) and serves as their den during the day.

The druids of Vurnoxep used this small circle for divination purposes. If the PC casts any spell within the circle it turns into a *commune with nature* spell. If the PC is not suspecting such, she is overwhelmed by the flooding knowledge of all the land within 10 miles, and suffers a -2 to attacks and AC for the next round until she recovers. Through this, the PC gains knowledge that the source of Silverton's sickness lies in the dwarf hold behind the waterfall, but it lies at some depth beyond what is detectable with the spell. She also learns its location perfectly as well as how to travel to avoid any dangerous woodland creatures, such as wolves. In addition, she learns of Baggle's presence. What she chooses to do with that knowledge, and where exactly Baggle is (and what he's up to) at the moment is the GM's choice.

FIRE BEETLES (4)

N Small vermin 135 XP
Init +0; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +0

DEFENSE

AC 12, touch 11, flat-footed 12 (+1 natural, +1 size)
hp 4 (1d8)
Fort +2, **Ref** +0, **Will** +0
Immune mind-affecting effects

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., fly 30 ft. (poor)
Melee bite +1 (1d4)

STATISTICS

Abilities Str 10, Dex 11, Con 11, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 7
Base Atk +0; **CMB** -1; **CMD** 9 (17 vs. trip)
Skills Fly -2
SQ luminescence

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Luminescence (Ex) A fire beetle's glowing glands provide light in a 10-foot radius. A dead fire beetle's luminescent glands continue to glow for 1d6 days after its death.

THE FIRE OF NATURE

CR 10

Type magic; **Perception** DC 29; **Disable Device** DC 29

EFFECTS

Trigger location; **Reset** automatic (resets in one round)

Effect when any creature but an animal, vermin, druid, or nature bonded creature enters the circle of stones (10d8 fire damage, DC 17 Reflex save for half damage); multiple targets (any within the stone circle); the flames do not damage plants nor non-living matter.

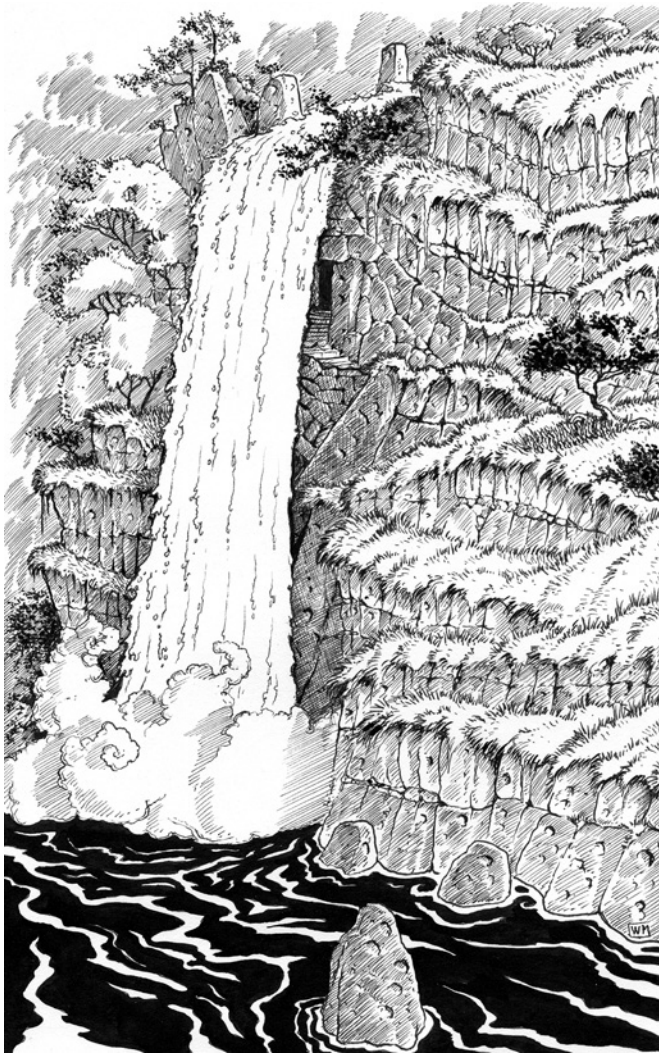
OUTSIDE THE DWARF-HOLE

About seven miles from The Flaming Grove, the Mussy falls off the plateau in a great waterfall. Behind the falls is an entrance to the old dwarf hold.

Read the following when the PC approaches.

You heard the low roar of a waterfall long before you see it, but now it stands before. The Mussy roars down out of the sky in a fall at least 70 feet tall, forming a pool around the cliff before flowing down towards Silverton. You can see slight hints of phosphorescence in the water near the base of the waterfall, but it seems that the waterfall is clear of any contaminants. Behind the falls, an opening leads into the stone. There are some steps near the opening, but if there were any more, they've fallen into the waters below. It looks like climbing is the only way in.

Climbing up to the entrance is surprisingly easy. The stone cliff provides many hand-holds and is made of solid stone. A few places are tricky, but the PC needs only climb 20 feet, before reaching a grassy area that snakes around up to the steps. The climb is a DC 13.



THE DWARF HOLD

Years ago, a clan of dwarfs tunneled under the river and created a small hold. They lived there for several generations and then disappeared. What happened is unknown, but the dwarf-hold has been vacant of intelligent life for almost a century. Vacant, that is, until recently. The normal cavern opportunists (stirges, giant centipedes) moved in fairly quickly and established small nests, but it was only a decade ago that a small family of mites found the hold through the escape and moved it.

A few years later, a svirneblin names Fosli Jaspergetter also discovered the hold. Fosli, a loner from his people, outcast because of his strange experiments, had many harrowing adventures before eventually reaching the surface. Disliking the bright light of the sun, he stumbled upon the dwarf hold's escape exit after only a week upon the surface. Crawling through, he worked his way into the hold proper and encountered the mites within. A fight ensued and after a few mites perished, they fled before him.

Fosli explored further, always being cautious about the lurking mites, and discovered the underground forest and an abandoned alchemical laboratory. He knew he was home, and he knew he needed to get on the good side of the mites. He went out of the hold and killed a nearby deer he lured close with his wild empathy. Returning with the dead deer, he made offerings of peace to the mites, and they have since built a close relationship even though they are traditional enemies - the mites' natural inclination to betray Fosli kept in check by the benefits he brings to their growing family.

Inside the hold there are several common features that are

repeated throughout the entire excavation. If a particular area does not specify different information, use the below.

- **Ceilings:** Rough-cut and lightly arching. The ceilings are low, rarely higher than 7 feet. The ceilings are the least-finished aspect of the hold as dwarven inclination is first the ground than the sky.
- **Floors:** The floors are the only part of the hold completely finished and up to proper dwarven standards. They are completely level and well polished. Most feature ornamental inlays of non-native stone in geometric patterns.
- **Walls:** Walls are in the last stage of construction, they are smooth and perpendicular to the floors, but lack any ornamental features.
- **Doors:** Doors in the hold are solid stone, a good 4 inches thick and quite heavy. They are finished and each door features a different image from dwarven myth and legend. The doors are cunningly constructed and open both inward and outward.
- **Light:** There is no natural light source in the hold except in areas 1 (light from entrance), 2 (light through arrow slits), 13 (phosphorous), area 16 (fires from the lab). All the creatures within the hold are capable of dealing with darkness and the slight chill does not bother them.

RECENT GOINGS ON

Although Fosli and the mites have a friendly relationship, lately things have been strained. He has spent all his time in the laboratory and his experiments have obviously affected the underground forest for the worse. The mites have been trying to get him to stop his experiments, but Fosli's overridden their arguments by saying that any damage done to the forest (from which the mites get most of their food) can easily be undone once he's finished with his grand elixir - a draught that ends aging, hunger and of which the merest drop cures all poisons and diseases. The mites were unhappy with this, but they're too afraid to challenge him directly.

However, all of this has recently changed with the emergence of what they call the "purple worm" and the "bug dragon." These two creatures have recently appeared in the underground forest and the mites have lost a few of their own to their predations. Because of this, they're packing up and preparing to move to a small cave several miles away to the North. They expect to move back in a few months, perhaps a year at most, because they're certain Fosli will be killed by his own creations. When the PC enters the hold, the mites are in the midst of such preparation, with the expectation of leaving the next day.

I ENTRANCE CHAMBER

The light from the doorway floods through the misty air illuminating this chamber in an almost surreal light. The room before you is carved from the very stone of the earth itself, 25 feet North-South and 20 East-West. The ceiling is barrel vaulted to a height of 15 feet and the wall opposite the entrance features two carved stone doors; one on in the Northwest corner, the other in the Southwest. Both of them are closed. All the walls, excepting that opposite you, feature stone benches carved directly into them. The floor has a beautiful geometric inlay featuring stone of a different color than that of the main stone. In the center of the chamber lie two skeletons, dressed in what at first glance appears to be goblin garb.

Opposite the PC are three arrow slits detectable with a successful DC 10 Perception check.

The change of light in the room caused by the PC standing in the entranceway rouses the interest of 3 stirges nesting in area 2. They will rise up, fly through the arrow slits and attack on the second round after the PC first disturbs the light coming into the hold.

The two skeletons are a pair of goblin scouts who decided to investigate the old hold a few years ago only to meet a grisly fate at the proboscises of stirges. Lying next to them are three stirge skeletons - casualties of the fight. The goblins each wear leather armor and a light wooden shield. They're armed with a short sword, short bow, and 15 arrows. In pouches at their waist is a combined 25cp, 55sp, and 33gp.

STIRGE (3)

N Tiny magical beast

Init +4; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, scent; Perception +1

CR 1/2

200 XP

DEFENSE

AC 16, touch 16, flat-footed 12 (+4 Dex, +2 size)

hp 5 (1d10)

Fort +2, **Ref** +6, **Will** +1

OFFENSE

Speed 10 ft., fly 40 ft. (average)

Melee touch +7 (attach)

Special Attacks blood drain

STATISTICS

Abilities Str 3, Dex 19, Con 10, Int 1, Wis 12, Cha 6

Base Atk +1; **CMB** +3 (+11 grapple while attached); **CMD** 9 (17 vs. trip)

Feats Weapon Finesse

Skills Fly +8, Stealth +16

SQ diseased

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Attach (Ex) When a stirge hits with a touch attack, its barbed legs latch onto a target, anchoring it in place. An attacked stirge is effectively grappling its prey. The stirge loses its Dexterity bonus to AC and has an AC of 12, but holds on with great tenacity and inserts its proboscis into the grappled target's flesh. A stirge has a +8 racial bonus to maintain its grapple on a foe once it is attached. An attached stirge can be struck with a weapon or grappled itself – if its prey manages to win a grapple check or Escape Artist check against it, the stirge is removed.

Blood Drain (Ex) A stirge drains blood at the end of its turn if it is attached to a foe, inflicting 1 point of Constitution damage. Once a stirge has dealt 4 points of Constitution damage, it detaches and flies off to digest the meal. If its victim dies before the stirge's appetite has been sated, the stirge detaches and seeks a new target.

Diseased (Ex) Due to the stagnant swamps in which they live and their contact with the blood of numerous creatures, stirges are harbingers of disease. Any creature subjected to a stirge's blood drain attack has a 10% chance of being exposed to filth fever, blinding sickness, or a similar disease. Once this check is made, the victim can no longer be infected by this particular stirge, though attacks from different stirges are resolved normally and may result in multiple illnesses.

2. GUARD CHAMBER

This plain chamber is 10 feet East-West and 15 North-South. Along the Eastern wall are three slight alcoves featuring arrow slits. Sunlight streams through the slits providing dim, barely adequate lighting. Along the western wall a row of stone wardrobes are carved into the wall. All are closed excepting the one in the northeast corner.

This chamber was the guard chamber through which dwarven warriors could unload their crossbows onto foes in area 1. The wardrobes once held extra ammunition as well as additional suits of chainmail and melee weapons. They are currently empty excepting the open one, which has become a nest for the 3 stirges the PC encounters in area 1.

The stirges have acquired a small treasure of shiny bits brought back to their nest: 6cp, 4sp, 12gp and a small garnet worth 25gp.

Like area 1, the mites make sure the door to this chamber is kept closed. The mites could drive the stirges away, but then they would have to guard the main entrance and they'd rather leave that up to the stirges. The bloodsuckers easily drive away any animals that could make their way up the cliff and they have, so far, done a smashing job against the few plateau goblin scouts that have entered the hold.

3. DWELLING

A practical dwelling place reveals itself behind the opened door. Two 10 by 10 rooms are linked by a short 5 foot long hallway. Cut out of the stone is what were once a table, a bookshelf, and two cupboards.

There is nothing of interest in this room, having been long abandoned. The interior room contains a stone-carved bed and a wardrobe.

4. DWELLING

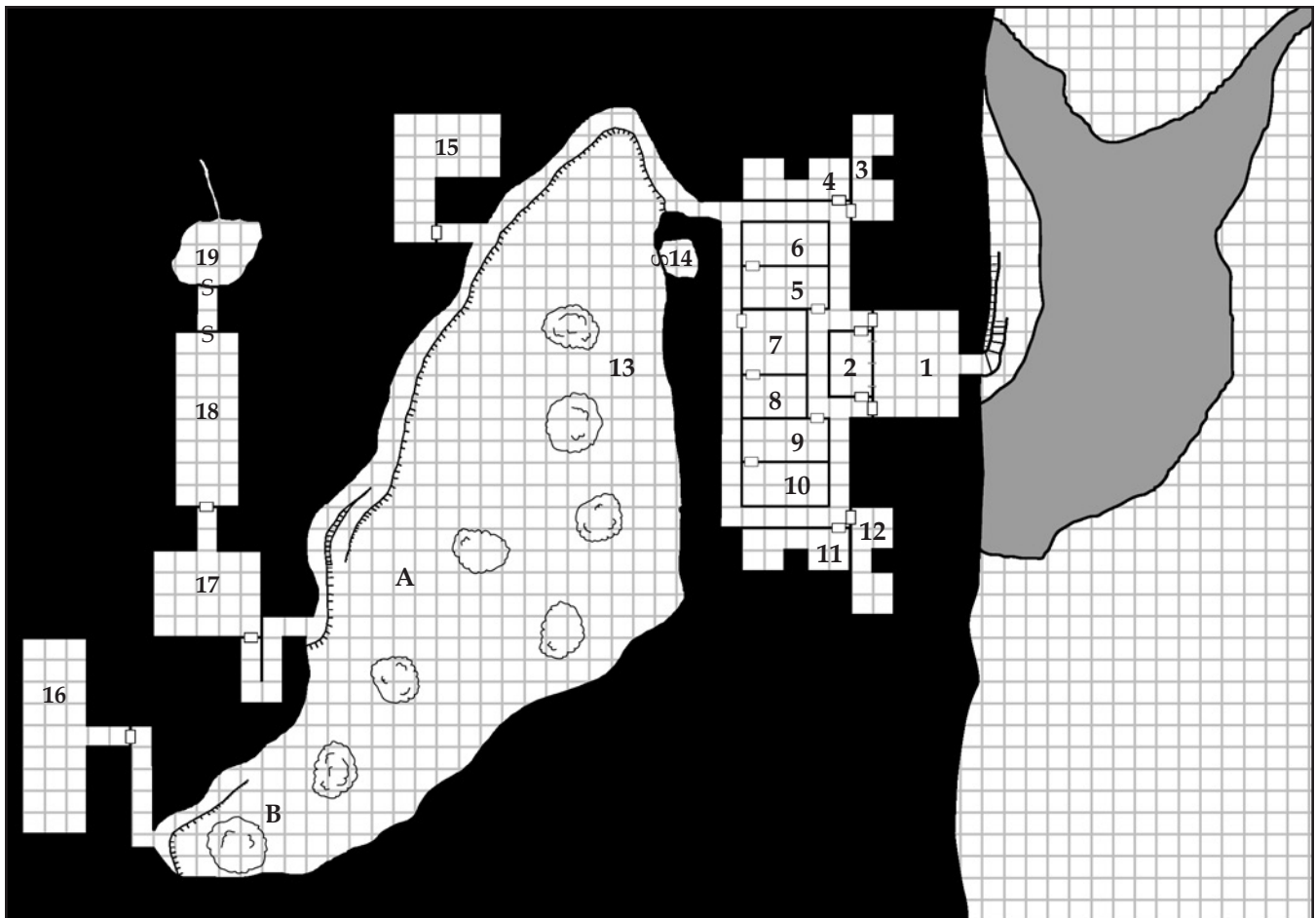
A practical dwelling place reveals itself behind the opened door. Two 10 by 10 rooms are linked by a short 5 foot long hallway. Cut out of the stone is what were once a table, a bookshelf, and two cupboards.

The cupboard has a false bottom (Perception DC 15 to detect). Within is a beautiful pearl necklace, once the prized possession of an elderly dwarven matron. The necklace is worth 275gp. The interior room contains a stone-carved bed and a wardrobe.

5. LARGE DWELLING

The door to this room opens slowly, being at least an inch thicker than most of the other doors. Within you see a 20 feet East-West and 10 North-South dwarven dwelling. As with all the dwelling rooms you've encountered, traditional dwarven furniture is carved out of the solid rock - a table, two cupboards, and the long dwarven bench filling in the open places along the walls. The furniture here is intricately carved by a dwarf of obvious skill. There is a door on the northern wall at the west end of the chamber.

There is nothing of interest in this room, having been long abandoned.



6. INTERIOR ROOM

This inner chamber features two large, carved dwarven beds. Along the walls are several wardrobes and the benches along the walls are extended outward, creating a long sleeping area around the room. This interior room is the same dimensions as the main room preceding it. A smashed stone chest lies in the northeast corner - its broken lid in several pieces on the floor.

There is nothing of interest in this room, having been long abandoned.

7. STORAGE ROOM

This area was obviously once a storage room. Upon all of the walls are carved shelves and below the shelves are stone chest after stone chest. Both features are carved directly from the stone and all of the chest lids are open. A door is in the southwest corner on the southern wall of this 15 foot square room. There is a whiff of excrement in the air here.

This room once held all of the dwarven communal property. Anything of value was either removed or looted after they left.

8. GRAIN HOLD

Along the southern wall of this 15 foot East-West and 10 foot North-South room are a series of deep bins carved out of stone. Each bin is roughly 5 by 5 and about 4 feet deep. In front of one bin is a small stepladder, built out of wood. The smell of excrement is very strong in this room.

This room once held all of the dwarven communal grain. Each bin was piled high in times of plenty and drawn down in times of want. It now serves as the mites' toilet. They climb upon the stepladder and do their business into one of the bins. After a bin is filled, they move on to another bin. When the final bin is halfway filled, they take the refuse from the oldest bin and transport it to area 13, to help feed and support the underground forest.

The PC can easily tell the room has been used within the past day, if not more recently.

9 LARGE DWELLING

The door to this room opens slowly, being at least an inch thicker than most of the other doors. Within you see a 20 feet East-West and 10 North-South dwarven dwelling. As with all the dwelling rooms you've encountered, traditional dwarven furniture is carved out of the solid rock - a table, two cupboards, and the long dwarven bench filling in the open places along the walls. The furniture here is intricately carved by a dwarf of obvious skill. There is a door on the southern wall at the west end of the chamber.

There is nothing of interest in this room.

10 INTERIOR ROOM

This inner chamber features two large, carved dwarven beds. Along the walls are several wardrobes and the benches along the walls are extended outward, creating a long sleeping area around the room. This interior room is the same dimensions as the main room preceding it. A stone chest lies in the southeast corner.

There is nothing of interest in this room.

II- 12. MITE LAIRS

Note: this following description is for either area 11 or area 12, depending upon which area the PC explores first.

An explosion of action greets you as you open this door. Within, several small, misshapen humanoids scurry and screech as they busy arming themselves.

The mites are surprised for 1 round and then they are ready to engage in combat. They immediately call for their pet giant centipede from the back room and it arrives 1 round later. Once it engages in combat, the PC has 4 rounds to dispatch her opponents before a mite from room 12 (or room 11, if the PC opened room 12 first) opens the door to see what the ruckus is about. Once an intruder is discovered, more mites and another giant centipede surge out of the other room in 3 rounds.

In total there are 8 mites and 2 giant centipedes, evenly distributed between the two areas. Both areas are as those described in areas 3 and 4 excepting that the mites have made small bed/nests out of grasses gathered from the surface and that there are small cooking fires in the corners of the most interior room. The mites here are poor, being neither strong nor numerous enough to gather much wealth, but what treasure they do have is stored in a hidden compartment (Perception DC 15 to detect) in room 12. Within is 221cp, 129sp, 73gp, a garnet (200gp,) and a sardonyx (50gp).

MITE (4)

LE Small Fey

CR 1/4

100 XP

Init +1; **Senses** darkvision 120 ft., low-light vision, scent; Perception +5

DEFENSE

AC 12, touch 12, flat-footed 11 (+1 Dex, +1 size)

hp 3 (1d6)

Fort +0, Ref +3, Will +3

DR 2/cold iron

Weaknesses light sensitivity

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft., climb 20 ft.

Melee dagger +0 (1d3-1/19-20)

Ranged dart +2 (1d3-1)

Special Attacks hatred

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 1st)

At will – prestidigitation

1/day – doom (DC 10)

STATISTICS

Abilities Str 8, Dex 13, Con 11, Int 8, Wis 13, Cha 8

Base Atk +0; CMB -2; CMD 9

Feats Point-Blank Shot

Skills Climb +7, Handle Animal +0, Perception +5, Ride +2,

Sleight of Hand +9, Stealth +13; Racial Modifiers +4

Sleight of Hand, +4 Stealth

Languages Undercommon

SQ vermin empathy +4

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Hatred (Ex) Mites receive a +1 bonus on attack rolls against humanoid creatures of the dwarf or gnome subtype due to special training against these hated foes.

Vermin Empathy (Ex) This ability functions as a druid's wild empathy, save that a mite can only use this ability on vermin. A mite gains a +4 racial bonus on this check. Vermin are normally mindless, but this

empathic communication imparts on them a modicum of implanted intelligence, allowing mites to train Medium vermin and use them as mounts. Vermin empathy treats swarms as if they were one creature possessing a single mind – a mite can thus use this ability to influence and direct the actions of swarms with relative ease.

GIANT CENTIPEDE (2)

N Medium vermin

CR 1/2

200 XP

Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +4

DEFENSE

AC 14, touch 12, flat-footed 12 (+2 Dex, +2 natural)

hp 5 (1d8+1)

Fort +3, Ref +2, Will +0

Immune mind-affecting effects

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft., climb 40 ft.

Melee bite +2 (1d6-1 plus poison)

Special Attacks poison

STATISTICS

Abilities Str 9, Dex 15, Con 12, Int –, Wis 10, Cha 2

Base Atk +0; CMB -1; CMD 11 (can't be tripped)

Feats Weapon Finesse^B

Skills Climb +10, Perception +4, Stealth +10; Racial

Modifiers +4 Perception, +4 Stealth

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Poison (Ex) Bite – injury; save Fort DC 13; frequency 1/round for 6 rounds; effect 1d3 Dex damage; cure 1 save. The save DC is Constitution-based and includes a +2 racial bonus.

13. UNDERGROUND FOREST

This unusual forest has an equally unusual origin. Long ago, a wizard's experiment with dimensional travel went horribly awry and he found himself, and a goodly chuck of the forest he was within, inside a mountain. Try as he might, he could not find an exit out of his predicament and he perished after living in the magic forest for many years.

The forest here exists without sunlight, only a dim glow permeates the entire area. Until recently, it was a pleasant and almost unchanging place where the mites scavenged for small insects and ate the fruits from the fruit bearing trees. Within the large cavern was an apple, a cherry, and a pear tree. All of this has changed in the past year, as Fosli's experiments altered the pleasant nature of the underground forest for the worse.

Read the following text when the PC first sees the underground forest.

A truly unusual sight unfolds before you. Out of the carved order of a dwarven hold springs a very large natural cavern, misty with a glowing green and purple mist. The floor of the cavern is at least 20 feet down a sharp cliff and within the shifting haze you can see what you swear are trees; or at least were once trees. They now all appear without leaves as if a phosphorescing winter were upon them. A 5-foot-wide path hugs the northern end of the cavern. Directly across the cavern from you to the west is a short hallway ending with a dwarven door and you believe the cliff path continues south on the opposite side of the cave. It becomes very misty there, but it looks like the path there splits, with one section descending to the floor of the underground forest while the other continues hugging the side of the cave at your current height.

The cave here is rather immense and the PC's sight is limited to about 30 to 40 feet, due the mist and haze. It plunges over 25 feet down and the surface of the cave is spongy with years of accumulated leaf shedding. There are two encounter areas within the large underground forest: A indicates where the "purple worm" is located while B is the location of the "bug dragon" and the poisoning tree (the tree that is the cause of the sickness in Silverton). Each of these sub-areas are detailed below.

13A: LAIR OF THE "PURPLE WORM"

Read the following text when the PC descends from the upper track along the underground forest to the floor of the cave.

You follow the sloping ledge to the bottom of the underground forest and the mist and haze here seems as dense as pea soup. It doesn't smell nearly so good, however, and your druidic nose understand that the natural smell of decay has been replaced by something entirely unnatural. The floor is spongy from years of detritus and slightly moist. Suddenly, you hear a slithering sound and an intake of breath.

The PC hears the "purple worm" breathing in preparation to blast her with his icy breath. She has one round to react before it attacks from 30 feet away.

The "purple worm" is a giant mutated earthworm. It has been horribly altered by the phosphorous leaking from the poisoning tree and turned into something that is entirely unrecognizable. It is the only of its kind, although there is the chance that another may be created given enough time. If so, they could be the progenitors of a brand new species of monster. It is rather hungry and will fight to the death.

The breath of the "purple worm" clears out some of the mist and haze in the underground forest and the PC can detect an increased level of phosphorescence towards the south where the poisoning tree and the "bug dragon" await.

"PURPLE WORM"

N Medium magical beast

Init +0; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +1

DEFENSE

AC 14, touch 10, flat-footed 14 (+4 natural)

hp 14 (2d10+3)

Fort +3, **Ref** +3, **Will** +0

Resist cold 5

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee bite +2 (1d4)

Special Attacks breath weapon (10-ft. cone, once every 1d4 rounds, 1d8 cold damage, Reflex DC 13 for half)

STATISTICS

Abilities Str 10, Dex 10, Con 10, Int 1, Wis 8, Cha 6

Base Atk +2; **CMB** +2; **CMD** 12

Feats Toughness

Skills Stealth +5

CR 2

600 XP



13B: THE "BUG DRAGON" AND THE POISONING TREE.

Read the following text when the PC approaches the area.

The phosphorescence increases as you move south and soon a single tree looms large in your vision. It is the obvious source of the strange liquid as it oozing from sores upon its bark. The tree has been horribly corrupted, but by what is not apparent. As you look at the tree branches, you see a small pair of glistening eyes upon one of its higher branches.

The eyes, of course, belong to the "bug dragon." This strange creature is all that remains of a once-tiny lizard who drank too many times of the goo from the poison tree. It is hungry and is sizing up the PC to see if she is prey or predator. If the PC is with her Mushroom, the "bug dragon" will not attack as Mushroom is too fierce for its liking. If the PC is alone, there is a 75% chance that it will attack, driven by hunger.

"BUG DRAGON"

N Tiny magical beast

Init +4; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, scent; Perception +2

DEFENSE

AC 16, touch 16, flat-footed 12 (+4 Dex, +2 size)

hp 13 (2d10+2)

Fort +3, **Ref** +7, **Will** +2

OFFENSE

Speed 10 ft., fly 40 ft. (perfect)

Melee +7 (1d4)

Special Attacks caustic blood

STATISTICS

Abilities Str 5, Dex 18, Con 12, Int 3, Wis 14, Cha 10

Base Atk +2; **CMB** +4; **CMD** 12 (16 vs. trip)

Feats Weapon Finesse

Skills Fly +17, Stealth +16

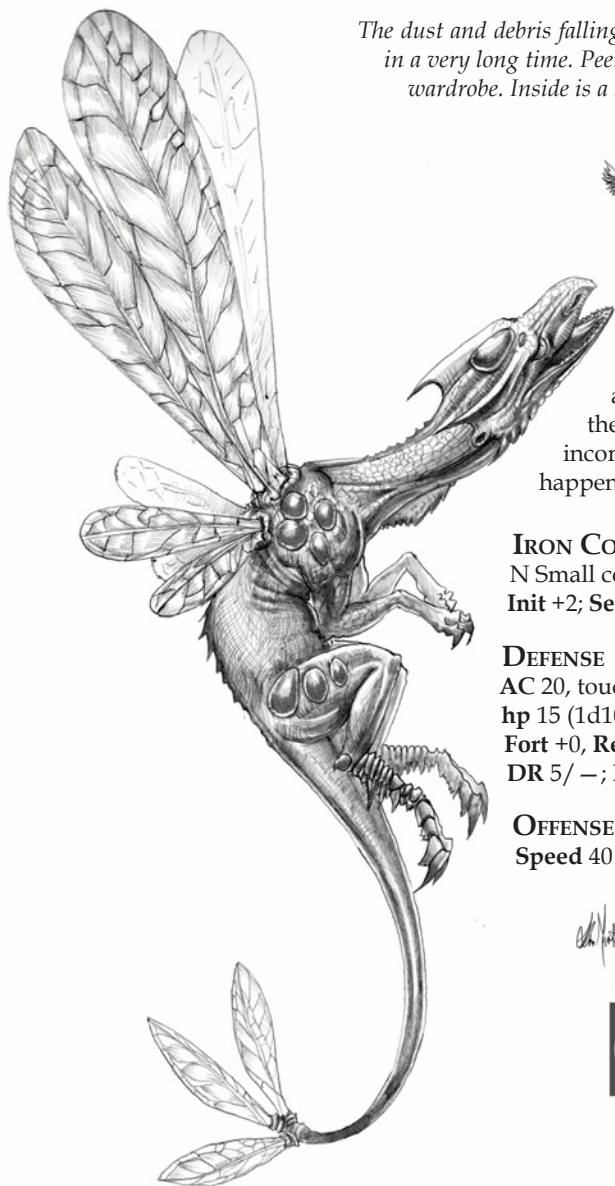
SPECIAL ABILITIES

Caustic Blood (Ex) If damaged by melee attack, the attacker must succeed on a DC 12 Reflex save or be hit by the spray of the wound, dealing 1hp of acid damage.

CR 1

400 XP

The dust and debris falling from the hidden door as you open it suggests it has not been opened in a very long time. Peering through the dust, you see a small chamber, no bigger than a large wardrobe. Inside is a skeleton in tattered clothing, a wooden chest, and more importantly at giant snake seemingly made of iron!



The iron cobra was the guardian of the poor trapped wizard and it still performs its duties. It immediately attacks and will pursue the PC down to the underground forest unless destroyed.

On the skeleton is a *ring of sustenance*, a *wand of magic missiles* (15 charges - 5th level caster) and an old leather pouch that has managed to survive containing 76gp. In the chest is a pile of desiccated leaves. Upon them is faded writing, but if they are touched, they immediately crumble to dust. If the PC reads them before touching paraphrase the wizard's story in broken and incomplete sentences. The wizard attempted to record his life and what happened to him, but his medium of record proved temporary.

IRON COBRA

N Small construct

Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +0

DEFENSE

AC 20, touch 13, flat-footed 18 (+2 Dex, +7 natural, +1 size)

hp 15 (1d10+10)

Fort +0, **Ref** +2, **Will** +0

DR 5/—; **Immune** construct traits; **SR** 13

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.

Melee bite +3 (1d6+1 plus poison)

John T. ... 02/20



STATISTICS

Abilities Str 12, Dex 14, Con —, Int —, Wis 11, Cha 1

Base Atk +1; **CMB** +1; **CMD** 13 (can't be tripped)

Skills Stealth +12; **Racial Modifiers** +6 Stealth

SQ find target

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Find Target (Su) Once per day, an iron cobra's creator can order it to find and kill a specific creature within 1 mile, which it does as if guided by discern location. The creator must have seen or be holding an item from the specified creature for this order to function.

Poison (Ex) An iron cobra's bite injects poison from a hidden reservoir within its body. Because it is a construct, the cobra does not naturally produce this poison, and its creator must refill this reservoir manually. The reservoir holds enough poison for 3 successful bite attacks, after which the creature merely deals bite damage. Refilling the reservoir takes 5 rounds and provokes attack of opportunity. The creator can fill the reservoir with any injury poison (typically black adder venom), though acid, alchemical substances, and even stranger liquids have been used.

Black Adder Venom: Bite—injury; *save* Fort DC 11, *frequency* 1/round for 6 rounds; *effect* 1d2 Con damage; *cure* 1 save.

15. FORGE

This L-shaped room was obviously a forge for its prior inhabitants. Carved out of stone and against every wall are a series of small forging fireplaces and a single, giant anvil sits upon a short stone platform. Its size and weight is impressive. Next to each small forging fireplace is a stone-carved tool cabinet which once would have housed the countless implements used in the art of metalworking.

Curing the poisoning tree (and the entire underground forest for that matter) depends upon ending Fosli's mad experiments in area 16. There will be an almost immediate effect when the drain no long runs with the foul liquid from the lab. Within seconds, the underground forest becomes less hazy. After a few minutes, the haze is completely gone. It will take several days for the forest to return to normal (as its magic reasserts itself), but after only 5 minutes the poisoning tree stops oozing. The waters of the Mussy run clear within a week.

14. WIZARD'S CACHE

The cave of the underground forest has a secret area high (about 20 ft from ground level) upon its eastern wall. The area was never discovered by the dwarves who carved their hold as it was placed there long ago by the very wizard who created the underground forest. It was his last living action. During the ages since his passing, the forest floor has progressively sunk deeper and deeper into the earth, so this area has risen higher and higher upon the wall. Climbing the cave wall requires a successful DC 15 Climb check.

Read the following text if the PC discovers (DC 25) and opens the hidden door.

Within the chimney of the first fireplace is a choker. It's been using the chimney as a home for a few days now. It's been cautiously examining the underground hold and, having found almost no threats in the vicinity, has decided to nest here, foraging on the surface at night. Eventually it will settle back into its preferred subterranean life if it can find enough prey on which to survive.

As it is in the chimney, it will not be detected by the PC unless she explicitly looks up through the vent holes. As stealthily as it can, the choker will poke its head out of a chimney (DC 23 to detect) and gauge the PC. If it decides she is prey, it will make a slight natural-sounding noise to draw her attention to its lair and pounce when appropriate.

CHOKER

CE Small aberration

Init +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +1

DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 13, flat-footed 15 (+2 Dex, +4 natural, +1 size)

hp 16 (3d8+3)

Fort +2, **Ref** +3, **Will** +4

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft., climb 10 ft.

Melee 2 tentacles +6 (1d4+3 plus grab)

Space 5ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

Special Attacks constrict (1d4+3), strangle

STATISTICS

Abilities Str 16, Dex 14, Con 13, Int 4, Wis 13, Cha 7

Base Atk +2; **CMB** +4 (+8 grappling); **CMD** 16

Feats Improved Initiative, Skill Focus (Stealth)

Skills Climb +16, Stealth +13

Language Undercommon

SQ quickness

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Strangle (Ex) Chokers have an unerring talent for seizing their victims by the neck. A creature that is grappled by a choker cannot speak or cast spells with verbal components.

Quickness (Su) A choker is supernaturally quick. It can take an extra move action during its turn each round.

16. LABORATORY

When the PC opens the door to this area read the following.

About 15 feet away, the short hallway you stand in open into a well-illuminated room. Within you can hear the sounds of flames and bubbling. The light is not only that of flickering flames, but much of it is that green phosphorescent color you have come to remove from the waters of the Mussy.

When the PC is able to see the room as a whole, read the following.

This large room is obviously a laboratory of some sort. Alembics, balances, beakers and vials are scattered throughout the chamber. Three separate fireplaces are carved out of the stone along with multiple cabinets for storage. In the southwest corner, his back to you, is a small figure you immediately recognize as a svirfneblin. His entire focus is upon the large bubbling cauldron filled with a phosphorescent green liquid. On the floor next to his feet is a drain, through which the liquid that bubbles out and over the cauldron travels into the earth.

Fosli is too engaged in his work to turn and look at the PC. He assumes she's one of the mites come to annoy him again about how the underground forest is being hurt by his tremendously vital alchemical activities. He's tired of that argument and purposely chooses to ignore the PCs presence until he becomes aware that she's not a mite.

Once he realizes that it's not a mite behind him, he flares into a terrible rage and attacks as strongly as possible. He will fight to the death rather than surrender his work to the hands of anyone other than himself.

Destroying the contents of the bubbling cauldron is a simple affair. After the cauldron is removed from heat it congeals and hardens as strong as stone. At the end of this process it ceases phosphorescing and is no longer poisonous.

FOSLI

Svirfneblin ranger 2

N Small humanoid (gnome)

Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 120 ft., low-light vision; Perception +6

DEFENSE

AC 15, touch 15, flat-footed 11 (+2 Dex, +2 dodge, +1 size)

hp 22 (2d10+7)

Fort +7, **Ref** +7, **Will** +2

SR 13

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft. (15 ft. in armor)

Melee heavy pick +4 (1d4+1/x4)

Ranged light crossbow +5 (1d6/19-20)

Special Attacks favored enemy (dwarf +2), +1 to attack vs. dwarven and reptilian humanoids

Spell-like Abilities (CL 2nd)

Constant – *nondetection*

1/day – *blindness/deafness* (DC 12), *blur*, *disguise self*

STATISTICS

Abilities Str 13, Dex 15, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 8

Base Atk +2; **CMB** +2; **CMD** 16

Feats Point Blank Shot, Toughness

Skills Craft (alchemy) +7, Heal +5, Knowledge

(dungeoneering) +5, Knowledge (nature) +5, Perception

+6, Stealth +12 (+14 underground), Survival +5 (+6

tracking); **Racial Modifiers** +2 Craft (alchemy), +2

Perception, +2 Stealth (+4 Stealth underground)

Language Gnome, Undercommon

SQ stonemasonry, track, wild empathy +1

Gear heavy pick, light crossbow, 20 bolts, *potion of cure light wounds*, 5 10-gp gems

17. TEMPLE

This ornate chamber is 25 feet East-West and 20 North-South and filled with pews facing the west. The western side of the chamber features a dais upon which an ornately carved lectern rests. Behind the lectern, the entire wall is carved in bas-relief; a giant illustration of the great dwarven god forging his people out of the metal of the mountains.

The temple here is a small one, but the community it served was small. There is nothing of value in this room but the giant carved relief and that is far from portable.

18. GREAT HALL

This grand chamber is 15 feet East-West and 40 North-South. The northern side of the chamber features a dais upon which an ornately carved throne rests. The sides of the chamber feature blind arcades and benches while the center has a great firepit - empty and cold now, but which at one time would have made a goodly blaze.

Any guest allowed past area 1 eventually found their way to his room for an audience with the clan chief and elders. Many stories were told here and disputes settled, but now all is dark and cold. In the fire pit, under the ashes of the final fire, the PC can find a giant piece of melted copper worth 10gp. The dwarves of this clan would throw a copper penny into the fire at full blaze, hoping for a wish to come true. When the fire pit was clogged by the amount of thrown copper, the metal would be removed and taken to the forge, returning to the community based upon which family has the greatest need - ensuring that the well wishes of those casting the pennies would at least result in the continued strength of the clan as a whole.

There is a secret door behind the throne requiring a DC 20 Perception check to detect. It leads to a small passageway that also ends in a secret door, DC15 to detect from this side.

19. SECRET ESCAPE

This roughly-carved cave is about 15 feet square. There is a very small passageway, no more than 4 feet high and only 18 inches wide exiting north.

This chamber was only roughly hollowed out and a small passage through which a dwarf would need to squeeze leads out to a concealed exit upon the surface of the plateau. This was the "postern gate" for the dwarven hold. It is through this area that the mites and Fosli entered the hold. The secret door connected to area 18 is only a DC 10 to detect from this side as some of its concealments have worn away with age.

CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

If the PC is successful in cleaning the Mussy, she'll be hailed as a hero by the villagers of Silvertown. They'll offer to build her a small house and provide a fee-free lease to some tillable land if she would like to stay in the hamlet. Other than that, the villager will provide the PC with 100gp and all the free meals she likes if she seems to be one looking for a different reward.

PRE-GENERATED CHARACTER

BESH

Gnome druid 4

CG Small female humanoid (gnome)

Init +3; **Senses** Low-light vision; Perception +10

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 14, flat-footed 16 (+3 armor, +1 enhancement, +2 Dex, +1 dodge, +1 natural, +1 size)

hp 33 (4d8+12)

Fort +6, **Ref** +2, **Will** +3 (+5 vs. illusion spells and effects)

Defensive Abilities defensive training (+4 dodge to AC vs. giant), resist nature's lure (+4 saves vs. spell-like and supernatural abilities of fey and effects utilizing and/or targeting plants)

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft

Melee masterwork quarterstaff +5 (1d6+1)

Ranged masterwork sling +6 (1d4+1)

Special Attacks hatred (+1 to attack vs. reptilian and goblinoid), orisons, spells, spell-like abilities, wild shape (1/day)

Spell-like Abilities (CL 4th)

1/day—*dancing lights* (DC 11), *ghost sound* (DC 11), *prestidigitation*, and *speak with animals*

Spells Known (CL 4th)

2nd—*barkskin*, *bull's strength*, *flame blade*

1st—*cure light wounds*, *entangle*, *magic stone*, *shillelagh*

0—*detect magic*, *know direction*, *light*, *stabilize*

STATISTICS

Abilities Str 12, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 16, Cha 12

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +3; **CMD** 15

Feats Brew Potion, Dodge

Skills Climb +5, Fly +6, Handle Animal +6, Heal +7,

Knowledge (geography) +4, Knowledge (nature) +6,

Perception +10, Profession (herbalist) +9, Ride +7,

Spellcraft +5, Stealth +6, Survival +9, Swim +5; **Racial**

Modifiers +2 Craft, +2 Perception, +2 Profession

Language Common, Druidic, Gnome, Sylvan

SQ Nature bond (badger), nature sense, wild empathy, woodland stride, trackless step, wild shape (1/day)

Gear amulet of natural armor +1, backpack, blanket, divine

focus (25 gp), healer's kit, masterwork quarterstaff,

masterwork sling, bullets (10), potion of cure light

wounds (2), ring of protection +1, rope (hemp), +1

studded leather armor, waterskin, 5 torches, 2 25gp

gems, 10 gp, 25 sp, 50 cp.

MUSHROOM (so named for his predilection for fungi)

Badger, nature bond

N Medium animal

Init +3; **Senses** low-light vision, scent; Perception +8

DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 13, flat-footed 14 (+4 natural, +3 Dex)

hp 34 (4d8+16)

Fort +6, **Ref** +6, **Will** +2

Defensive Abilities evasion

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., burrow 10 ft., climb 10 ft.

Melee bite +5 (1d6+2), 2 claws +5 (1d4+2)

Special Attacks rage (as a barbarian for 6 rounds per day)

STATISTICS

Abilities Str 15, Dex 16, Con 17, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 10

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +5; **CMD** 17 (21 vs. trip)

Feats Skill Focus [Perception], Toughness

Skills Acrobatics +7, Climb +6, Escape Artist +7, Perception +8

SQ link, share spell, tricks (attack, heel, down, come)

ONE ON ONE ADVENTURES #15

CIPACTLI'S MAW

BY ANDREW HIND AND SUZI YEE

AN ADVENTURE FOR ONE WIZARD LEVELS 4-6



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One on One Adventures are for one player and one GM. However, they are easily modified for a traditional party of four players and one GM.

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Cipactli's Maw is an adventure for one GM and a single PC wizard level 4-6, and as such encourages the use of magic as opposed to strength to overcome problems. Characters should make certain to have skill points in Decipher Script, various Knowledge skills, Spellcraft and Use Magic Device. That being said, the adventure is certainly playable by characters of other classes with little alteration. Indeed, sorcerers, clerics and rogues will have plenty to challenge their abilities.

It's important to remember that a single PC faces unique and dangerous challenges. Unlike within a party concept, a single character has no one to rely on in time of need, and their range of abilities will remain limited. The GM should keep this fact in mind when running the adventure; running a single-player adventure requires forethought, care, and flexibility. Likewise, the player should bear in mind the limitations of a single character in terms of skill and combat ability.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

Moldering texts tell of a coastal necropolis rich in ancient treasures. No one knows where the necropolis might be, but you've come to believe that it lies beneath a citadel that was once situated atop a bluff overlooking the seas, a citadel which has long since collapsed into the surf below and been swallowed by sea water. Known today as Blood Brine Ruins, the crumbled edifice seems to bleed from its gaping wounds and turn the surrounding seas crimson. It's a location generally avoided, with whispered legends of vengeful ghosts and ravenous sea serpents serving to keep all but the bravest or most fool-hardy away. You believe that within this necropolis you'll find an artifact of great value—the Ruby Ring. This ring has a long and troubled past.

In ancient times, a daring thief stole from the Queen Huehaatl's legendary vault of riches. Though what he managed to filch was but the merest fragment of her inestimable wealth, Huehaatl was enraged because her vault was deemed to be impenetrable. The thief was captured but even under the pain of death he refused to reveal how he had managed the feat. His resistance to torture angered Huehaatl even more than she already was, since it meant that her treasures would never be returned to her vaults. The only item recovered was the single ruby ring the thief had been wearing at the time of his capture. This ring was later gifted to one of Huehaatl's lovers, Tlatloc, a general in her armies, and was later buried with him and sealed within his necropolis, the location of which has been lost to the mists of time. Mages have long sought the tomb, in the hope of finding the ring and using it as a divination focus to locate Huehaatl's fabled treasure and the means to bypass its many traps and wards.

What no one knows is that Tlatloc's necropolis contains more than his moldering corpse and a piece of jewelry. It also contains the fell taint of a dark religion, the worship of the bat-god Camazotz. The necropolis in which he was eventually laid to rest served as the center of his blood piety until his death, and it was here that Tlatloc performed dark rituals in his deity's name. As a consequence, the tomb is a place of great evil and a dire threat to anyone who deigns to enter it.

ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS

The Wizards of the Four Winds, an order dedicated to exploring distant lands across the chartless oceans, requests that the PC locate the lost treasure vault of Queen Huehaatl, a renowned monarch of the people. If the player character should be successful where so many before him have failed, his acceptance into the ranks of this esteemed order would be assured, and along with it access to powerful magic and great influence. In addition, he would certainly be granted a share of the vast wealth sure to lay secure in the queen's vaults.

To aid the PC, the Wizards provide a scroll bearing a powerful divination spell. Armed with this, the character's first objective is to locate the Ruby Ring, said to be buried with its owner, the general Tlatloc, within a necropolis below the submerged Blood Brine Ruins. This ring had at one time been stolen from Huehaatl's treasure vaults, and by using the scroll on it, the secrets of how the thief located the horde and overcame its wards can be obtained.

From the Blood Brine Ruins, the PC makes his way inland through inhospitable jungles to Cipactli's Maw, an ancient monument that appears as a 60-foot tall, vine-choked crocodile's head bursting forth from the earth. It's beneath this remnant that the adventurer must go, since the morbid landmark is the location of the queen's vault. Unfortunately, Cipactli's Maw is closely guarded by a primitive tribe that regards the stone edifice as sacred, and only the worthy can enter without defiling it and angering the gods (and the tribe). The PC can prove his worth by entering the Caves of Darkness and dispatching the clutch of darkmantels to gain honorary membership to the tribe and enter Cipactli's Maw without interference from the tribe or the gods.

SETTING THE STAGE

The adventure begins with the player character standing atop a bluff overlooking the drowned remnants of a crumbled fortress, the Blood Brine Ruins. He is accompanied by a pair of natives, Barranca and Satipo, hired by the Wizards of the Four Winds to serve as the adventurer's porters and guides (see appendix for more details on these hirelings). Exactly how the character got to this stage is left purposefully vague so as to ease integration of the adventure into a game master's campaign. The GM may choose to flesh this out, perhaps including an ocean voyage and an overland trek. Otherwise, he could simply begin the adventure using the pregenerated character ready to enter the legendary ruins and begin what promises to be an epic quest.

PART ONE: BLOOD BRINE RUINS

Centuries ago, the cliff-side fortress Tachiquetzal tore from the land and fell into the sea, taking its garrison with it. The trembling earth and surging sea destroyed the once mighty bastion. Known today as the Blood Brine Ruin for the crimson colored waters that surround it, the fortress is little more than a desolate expanse of toppled buildings and rubble mounds. Somewhere within lies Tlatloc's forgotten necropolis.

CONDITIONS

Footing: The expanse of crumbled masonry makes for unsteady footing. Characters must make a Balance check (DC 12) for every ten-feet traversed. A failed check indicates the character trips and makes no progress. A rolled failed by more than five indicates that a slab of masonry below the character shifts, dumping her into a water-filled cavity ten-feet deep. Getting out requires a successful Climb (DC 13) or Swim check.

Water Depth: The water is two-feet deep in most cases, though in depressions and cavities it can be much deeper.

Reeds: Stands of tall reeds have taken root throughout much of the ruins. A stand of reeds offers concealment to anyone who ventures 5-feet into them, and total concealment to anyone who has ten-feet or more of reeds between them and the viewer. It costs two squares of movement to enter a square of reeds.

Murky Waters: The bloodied waters surrounding the ruins make it difficult to see objects below the surface. Add a +5 circumstance penalty to any Perception checks.

ENCOUNTERS

For every hour spent in the ruins, roll 1d20 on the following table to determine encounters.

D20	Encounter
1	Driftwood
2	Stingray
3-4	Light Surf
5	Heavy Surf
6-7	Shark
8-20	No Encounter

ENCOUNTER DESCRIPTIONS

Driftwood: Logs and wreckage from sunken vessels wash up in the ruins, gathering in sprawling heaps against stone walls and mounds of rubble. It is treated as difficult terrain, costing an extra square of movement to cross driftwood, and driftwood provides cover as a low wall.

Stingray: A stingray has burrowed itself into the sand, providing a +7 circumstantial racial bonus to Hide. Anyone who fails to notice the stingray accidentally steps on the creature, resulting in a reflexive lash of its venom-tipped tail barb. The stingray makes a single attack (+4 melee), causing 1d3-1 points of damage. Stingray poison is very painful; fortitude DC12, nauseated 1d4 hours/1d3 Dex. A character that makes its saving throw against the poison's initial damage is instead sickened for 1d6 rounds.

Light Surf: Light surf has surging water 1-foot in depth. It costs 2 squares of movement to enter a square of light surf, and characters must succeed on a DC 6 Strength or Balance check or fall prone.

Heavy Surf: Heavy surf consists of violently surging water about 4-feet in depth. It costs 4 squares of movement to enter a square of surf, and characters must succeed on a DC 12 Strength or Balance check or fall prone.

Shark: The blood-tinged waters attract the attention of small sharks capable of hunting in the shallows. A lone shark attacks anyone found wading in the water, but retreats in search of easier prey if reduced to half its hit points.

SHARK

N Large animal (aquatic)

Init +5; **Senses** blindsense 30 ft.; keen scent; Perception +8

CR 2

600 XP

DEFENSE

AC 14, touch 10, flat-footed 13 (+1 Dex, +4 natural, -1 size)

hp 22 (4d8+4)

Fort +7, **Ref** +5, **Will** +2

OFFENSE

Speed swim 60 ft.

Melee bite +5 (1d8+4)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.

STATISTICS

Str 17, **Dex** 12, **Con** 13, **Int** 1, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 2

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +7; **CMD** 18

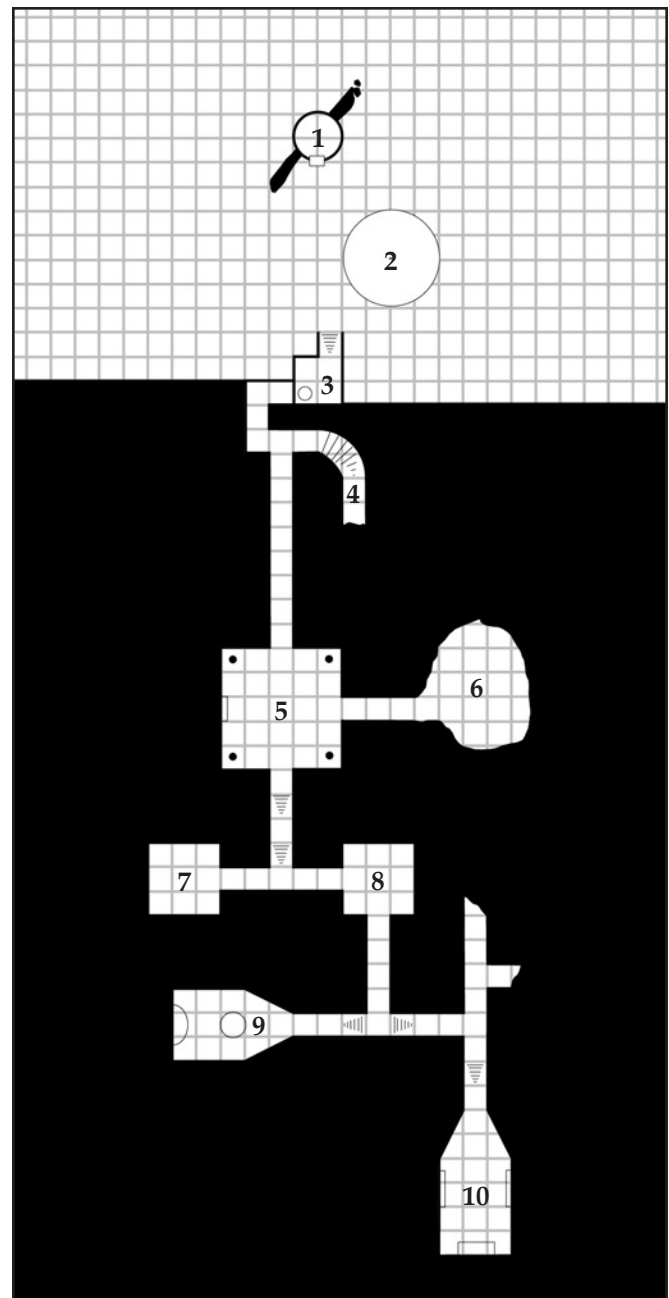
Feats Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative

Skills Perception +8, Swim +11

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Keen Sense (Ex) A shark can notice creatures by scent in a 180-foot radius underwater and can detect blood in the water at ranges up to one mile.

BLOOD BRINE RUINS MAP



AREA 1

This old, two-storey tower is flanked by stretches of crumbling wall. Most of the mortar on the tower has cracked or sloughed away, leaving stone to grind on stone. From their perches atop the tower parapets, seagulls watch your approach through black eyes, squawking nervously as you draw near. The battered door swings with the movement of the waves and looks as though it is barely hanging on its hinges.

The upper floor of this tower has fallen in, leaving the interior of the tower little more than a tangled mound of stone and wood. If the PC enters, the seagulls suddenly take flight with a cacophony of panicked cries. With a successful Perception check (DC 12), a character notices a submerged skeleton pinned beneath the rubble. This triggers a ghostly recreation of the poor fellow's demise which, though illusory, nonetheless poses very real danger.

First, the ground begins to heave and buckle underneath, forcing PCs to make a DC 15 Balance check to remain standing; anyone being thrown off his feet is considered prone. The character then believes he sees the ceiling above collapsing, just as it did when the fortress was destroyed ages ago. He suffers 2d6 points of damage from falling timber and stone, or 1d6 points with a successful DC 12 Reflex save. In addition to suffering damage, a prone character may be pinned beneath the rubble and begin to drown in the salt water. A DC 16 Strength or Escape Artist check is required to extricate himself. Every round after the illusory ceiling collapses an affected character can make a DC 12 Will save to snap out of the waking nightmare. Any damage suffered, however, remains.

AREA 2

A large round, flat-topped stone monument, 20-feet in diameter and eight-feet in height, stands amidst the crimson waters. Carved stone reliefs of naked men engaged in mortal combat against warriors resplendent in ornamental armor and helms shaped like jaguars and eagles adorn the monument's sides. An iron ring has been driven into the center of the stone.

This monument was erected for gladiatorial sacrifices. The victim was tied to its centre and forced to fight against elite noble-born warriors. The carvings around the sides depict enemy kings conquered by Tlatloc in the name of Queen Huehaatl. Characters making a Knowledge (History) check at DC 16 recognize the significance of the monument.

AREA 3

A flight of stairs, strangled by vines and weeds, leads down into the cloudy waters of a submerged chamber partially filled with rubble. Broken crates float lazily on the surface, and occasionally a bubble percolates up from the depths.

The water is 6-feet deep. A DC 15 Perception check of the pool reveals a ringed metal handle partially obscured by the silt at the bottom. A character making a DC 10 Knowledge (dungeoneering) or Knowledge (engineering) realize that the ring will be attached to a plug, providing access to unseen areas below. Unfortunately, getting into these areas is somewhat problematic. First, the prying open the plug requires a DC 15 Strength check. Secondly, it is protected with a magical ward (see below) designed to deter tomb-robbers. And finally, the dark waters are now the hunting ground of a giant water spider that lurks behind the rubble and attacks once potential prey enters the water. A DC 20 Perception check gains the PC a partial action during the surprise round – otherwise, he is completely caught off guard by the spider's assault.

GIANT WATER SPIDER

N Medium Vermin **CR 1**
400 XP
Init +3; Senses darkvision 60 ft., tremorsense 60ft.; Perception +4

DEFENSE

AC 14, touch 13, flat-footed 11 (+1 armor, +3 Dex)
hp 16 (3d8+3)
Fort +4, Ref +4, Will +1
Immune mind-affecting effects

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.
Melee bite +2 (1d6 plus poison)

STATISTICS

Str 11, Dex 17, Con 12, Init –, Wis 10, Cha 2
Base Atk +2; CMB +2; CMD 15 (27 vs. trip)
Skills Climb +16, Perception +8, Stealth +11

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Poison (Ex) Bite—injury; save Fort DC 14, frequency 1/round for 4 rounds; effect 1d2 Strength damage; cure 1 save.

Trap: The plug to the catacombs below is trapped by a pair of magical wards. The first, an *alarm* spell that sounds in a guard room now reduced to foundations, is of little consequence. That said, PCs may hear it echoing upon the night breeze (DC 12 Listen check) and become concerned; encourage that to add atmosphere and set the players on edge. The second ward, a *hold person* spell, is far more troubling. Characters that touch the plug and become paralyzed are easy prey for the water spider, and because they must be submerged to grip the handle, run the risk of drowning.

HOLD PERSON TRAP

CR 3

Type magic; Perception DC 28; Disable Device DC 28

EFFECTS

Trigger touch; **Reset** automatic; **Bypass** evil alignment

Effect spell effect (*hold person*, paralyzed for 3 rounds, Will save DC 15 negates, victim allowed new save every round)

Development: If the character is standing in the pool when the plug opens, he must succeed at a DC 10 Acrobatics check or be swept through the drain and down into the tunnels below, resulting in 1d6 points of falling damage. A metal rung ladder that descends into the tomb allows anyone to enter or exit the tombs at will, though it is slick with moisture and algae and requires a DC 5 Climb check to safely climb.

Treasure: The crates floating in from a sinking warship collected here recently. Searching them uncovers three flasks of alchemist's fire, intended for use against enemy vessels but equally valuable in the hands of a dungeon-delving adventurer. A DC 20 Perception check also reveals a vial containing wisps of gloom that coil and uncoil like black snakes. The vial is unnaturally cold to the touch. The gloom is actually the trapped essence of a dying shadow. If the seal is broken, the shadow essence instinctively aims for the nearest source of living heat within 5 feet and deals 1d6 points of Strength damage before dissipating forever.

NECROPOLIS FEATURES

Once removed, the plug gives the PC access to the necropolis, an unsettling place to explore. It gives off a necrotic chill that cuts through clothes and gnaws away at the very soul. Breath mists before ones mouth, and while the temperatures do not dip low enough to be dangerous, characters will nonetheless find the location uncomfortable. Water with the coloration of blood seeps from the walls and collects in floor, cracks, and puddles.

All necromantic spells cast within the barrow are empowered, their numeric effects increased by 50%. Healing spells, on the other hand, have their numeric effects decreased by 50% as the shroud of necromantic energy that hangs over the locale dampens such life-giving magic.

The tunnels and rooms within the necropolis are handcrafted and hewn from solid rock. Tunnels are arched and a uniform 6-feet wide and 8-feet high. The entire necropolis is unlit. All the doors are made of heavy stone and are unlocked.

AREA 4

A curved staircase descends further into the darkness, framed by faded frescoes of bearing arcane symbols. Unnerving rivulets of blood seep from the symbols, trailing down the walls.

Thirty feet down, just beyond the curve, the stairs end abruptly in an impassable cave-in. Most of the water from Area 2:1 (and with it the giant spider, should it still be alive) will have settled here if the plug sealing the necropolis has been removed. In time, this water will slowly drain through the rock into the halls beyond, but such drainage is measured in hours. The rivulets of blood are the remnants of an ancient and malfunctioning necromantic trap, which characters making a DC 15 Spellcraft check will realize.

Trap: Though it no longer works as it should, the trap still has an unnerving effect, and any character that steps foot on the stairs triggers it.

MALFUNCTIONING TRAP

CR 1

Type magic; **Perception** DC 34; **Disable Device** DC 34

EFFECTS

Trigger touch; **Reset** automatic

Effect All characters within 20-feet must make a DC 15 Will save or be shaken for 1 hour as waves of intangible terror course through their bodies.

AREA 5

Pillars in the corners of the chamber hold aloft a double-vaulted ceiling of cracked frescoes. This once ornate room has been reduced to faded paint, crumbling plaster, and moldy tapestries. Blood-red water seeps through the walls and collects in ankle-deep puddles on the floor. A low altar of stone stands against the west wall.

This chamber once served priests as a place to prepare the dead for burial in areas 7 and 8. Though the painting that once adorned the altar is badly faded, characters making DC 10 Knowledge (religion) check will recognize that it served an evil deity. Similarly, it radiates evil if *detect evil* is cast upon it.

Trap: A DC 20 Perception check reveals that the top of the stone altar can be pushed aside (Strength DC 12), revealing a hollow within occupied by a mummified priest whose teeth have been filed down to needle-points resting on a layer of human skulls. The mummy's arms and legs are bound together by leather cords, and a pouch filled with gravedirt rests within his mouth, indications that the people who laid him to rest were concerned he would rise as a vampire. A golden ceremonial necklace carved to resemble a string of bats hanging around his neck looks valuable. Unfortunately, the air within the sarcophagus is thick with ancient disease. When opened, a cloud of dust blooms from within, filling a 10-foot-radius area. All creatures within this area must make a DC 12 Fort save or succumb to the mummy dust.

MUMMY DUST TRAP

CR 5

Type mechanical; **Perception** DC 21; **Disable Device** DC 21

EFFECTS

Trigger touch; **Reset** none

Effect Mummy dust (Curse and disease; **save** Fort DC 12; **onset** 1d3 days; **frequency** 1/day; effect 1d3 Con and 1d3 Cha; **cure** 2 consecutive saves; targets all within 10-foot-radius)

Treasure: The golden necklace is an *amulet of necromancy*, which has the same properties as a *staff of necromancy*. The sarcophagus also holds 200gp in loose coins, and a bone scroll case containing a piece of skin parchment. A DC 20 Spellcraft or Linguistics check allows a character to read the arcane text on the parchment, conjuring a bat familiar loyal to the caster (for good-aligned characters the familiar would be a flying fox; for neutral characters, a normal bat; and for evil characters the familiar would be a vampire bat).

A flying fox (use stats of a raven), is a large species of fruit bat that, despite its 5-foot wingspan and frightening appearance, is actually almost harmless. Rare among bats, it does not use echolocation. It is considered to be wise, and omens are read from its flight. As a familiar, it grants the use of *fox's cunning* once per day and +1 caster level for divination spells.

Vampire bats (use stats of a normal bat) are dark-natured and evil, the source of superstition and legend. A vampire bat familiar provides a bonus +1 caster level for necromantic spells and the use of *vampire touch* once per day.

AMULET OF NECROMANCY

Aura strong (necromancy); **CL** 13th

Slot neck; **Price** 82,000 gp; **Weight** 0.5 lbs

DESCRIPTION

This golden amulet shaped into a string of bats allows the use of the following spells (like a staff):

Cause fear (1 charge)

Ghoul touch (1 charge)

Halt Undead (1 charge)

Enervation (2 charges)

Waves of fatigue (2 charges)

Circle of death (3 charges)

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, *cause fear*, *circle of death*, *enervation*, *ghoul touch*, *halt undead*, *waves of fatigue*; **Cost** 41,000 gp

AREA 6

This chamber is rough cut, designed to resemble a natural cave. In this, however, the stalactites and stalagmites are covered with runes and carvings of bat-headed fiends. The floor is covered in a slick creamy-colored film, and the ceiling far above seems to roil in a seething mass. Several small chimneys have been carved into the ceiling and disappear into darkness. Standing in the midst of the room is a large drum of carved wood and animal skin, atop which rest a pair of humanoid femur bones.

This room held great significance to worshippers of Camazotz, since it is a roostery for hundreds of bats. The film that covers the floor is bat guano. It's so slick that moving beyond standard speed or attempting to fight within this chamber requires a DC 12 Acrobatics check to retain ones footing. The bats are harmless, though if disturbed they will take flight, swirling around the cavern before heading out of one of the chimneys—anyone in the cavern caught in the whirl suffers 1d6 points of damage must make a DC 11 Fortitude save or be nauseated for one round

Monster: Lurking within one of these chimneys is a Camazotz faithful, a worshipper who enjoyed the taste of warm blood and human flesh so much that upon death he returned as a ghoul. This ghoul has bat-like head and vestigial (though useless) wings that flap from its emaciated arms. It clambers along the walls and ceiling effortlessly, stealthily approaching from above. Have the PC make a DC 15 Perception check in order to see the ghoul before it springs its attack.

GHOUL

CE Medium Undead

Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +7**DEFENSE****AC** 14, touch 12, flat-footed 12 (+2 DEX, +2 natural)**hp** 13 (2d8+4)**Fort** +2, **Ref** +2, **Will** +5**Defensive Abilities** channel resistance +2, undead traits**OFFENSE****Speed** 30 ft**Melee** bite +3 (1d6+1 plus disease and paralysis) and 2 claws +3 (1d6+1 plus paralysis)**Special Attacks** paralysis (1d4+1 rounds, DC 13, elves are immune to this effect)**STATISTICS****Str** 13, **Dex** 15, **Con** —, **Int** 13, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 14**Base Atk** +1; **CMB** +2; **CMD** 14**Feats** Weapon Finesse**Skills** Acrobatics +4, Climb +6, Stealth +7, Swim +3**Languages** Common**SPECIAL ABILITIES****Disease (Su)** Ghoul Fever. Bite— injury, **save** Fort DC 12, **onset** 1 day; **frequency** 1/day; effect 1d3 Con and 1d3 Dex damage; **cure** 2 consecutive days. The save DC is Charisma based.**Tactics:** If the ghoul is spotted, it screeches in frustration, causing the bats roosting above to take flight and hoping the frightening bats will distract their intended prey.**Treasure:** The drum was used in ritual sacrifices done in Camazotz's name and has great symbolic importance to the dark religion. The skin stretched across the drum head is that of a dire bat, and the bones are indeed human femurs. A worshipper would beat upon the drum with these bones, creating a deep, ominous thrum that built to a wild crescendo as the ritual was completed in an orgy of blood and gore. The drum can also be used once per day, to cast *summon swarm* (bats only) or *summon monster V* (1d4+1 dire bats only).

AREA 7

The walls of this chamber are lined nooks, each one with a skeleton lying within. Moisture and the passage of time have left the bones blackened, brittle, and in many cases broken. Large roaches scurry among bare ribs and into eye sockets and gaping jaws, agitated by your sudden appearance and the disturbance it represents.

This room is an ossuary where the bones of the deceased were laid to rest. There is nothing of interest to player characters here.

AREA 8

Water drips from the double-vaulted ceiling and trickles down the walls to pool on the floor. Bone shards of a hundred skulls litter the room and crunch underfoot. On the south wall, an open doorway gapes, a carved relief depicting horrifying bats and yawning human skulls filling the archway over the door. The rest of the walls are filled floor to ceiling with nooks that house ancient, but drenched, skeletal remains and the moldering remains of their former finery.

CR 1
400 XP**Monster:** Three zombies begins to stir as soon as PCs enter the room, and they then crawl forth from their burial nook a round later. Have the PC make a DC 18 Perception check in order to see the creatures begin to rustle with unlife; a success allows the PC to act in the round before the zombies emerge and attack. The zombies are wrapped in the yellowed remains of funerary shroud and have a withered, husk-like appearance, giving them the appearance of far more dangerous mummies. The zombies are ever vigilant for those that would desecrate their sacred tomb and relentlessly pursue any enemies throughout the tomb but not beyond.**ZOMBIE**

NE Medium Undead

Init +0; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +0**CR 1/2**
200 XP**DEFENSE****AC** 12, touch 10, flat-footed 11 (+2 natural)**hp** 12 (2d8+3)**Fort** +0, **Ref** -1, **Will** +3**DR** 5/ slashing; **Immune** undead traits**OFFENSE****Speed** 30 ft (can't run)**Melee** slam +4 (1d6+4)**STATISTICS****Str** 17, **Dex** 10, **Con** —, **Int** —, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 10**Base Atk** +1; **CMB** +4; **CMD** 14**Feats** Toughness**SQ** Staggered**Trap:** Several of the skulls above the door to the south are magical traps. When someone passes beneath the archway, a chilled mist seeps forth from their open mouths and envelopes the unsuspecting character.**Treasure:** A DC 15 Perception check finds a +1 heavy flail lain to rest with its wielder in one of the nooks. A DC 15 Knowledge (religion) check reveals the relief on the south wall depicts imagery of Camazotz, an ancient bat-god, and his countless human victims.**CHILL TOUCH TRAP****CR 2****Type** magic; **Perception** DC 26; **Disable Device** DC 26**EFFECTS****Trigger** touch; **Reset** automatic; **Bypass** evil alignment**Effect** spell effect (*chill touch*, 1d6 points of negative energy drain, plus DC 11 Fortitude save or take 1 point of Strength damage).

AREA 9

A huge statue of a humanoid with bat head and expansive bat-wings stands along the west wall. His gaping and fanged mouth is open wide enough to hold several human skulls. A crumbled well sits in the middle of the room under the statue's malign gaze.

The well in this room connects to the gore-choked rivers of Camazotz's fiendish realm, allowing unholy blood water to fill it on a continual basis. Since the earthquake that shattered the necropolis, fissures in the rock has allowed sea water to seep into the well and abyssal blood-water to leach out into the ocean, tainting both. As a result, the magical fluid within the well is not as potent as it once was.

The fissures opened up by the earthquake allowed more than sea-water to seep into the well: also slithering through these fissures was a gibbering moulder that hunts in the necropolis when hunger strikes, usually feeding on bats and other vermin. Because of prolonged exposure to the well's evil-fouled water, the gibbering moulder was corrupted, losing some of its martial prowess and Constitution. It appears to be a mass of intestines, swollen veins, flaccid organs, and blood-filled cysts interspersed by countless ravenous maws. Anytime the gibbering moulder suffers more than 5 points of damage in a single attack, it must make a Fortitude save (DC 10+ 1 per point of damage) or suffer a grievous wound that sees blood and organs spill from its amorphous body, inflicting an additional 5 points of damage.

CORRUPTED GIBBERING Moulder **CR 4**
 N Medium Aberration 1,200 XP
 Init +3; **Senses** all-around vision, darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +12

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 13, flat-footed 16 (+3 Dex, +6 natural)
 hp 34 (4d8 + 16)
 Fort +5, Ref +4, Will +5

Defense Abilities amorphous; DR 5/bludgeoning; **Immune** critical hits and precision damage

OFFENSE

Speed 10 ft., swim 20 ft.
 Melee 6 bites +7 (1d4 plus grab)
 Special Attacks blood drain, gibbering, ground manipulation, spittle (+6 ranged touch)

STATISTICS

Str 10, Dex 17, Con 18, Int 4, Wis 13, Cha 12
 Base Atk +3; CMB +3 (+7 grapple); CMD 16 (can't be tripped)
 Feats Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (bite)
 Skills Swim +8; Racial Modifiers +4 Perception
 Language Aklo

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- All-Around Vision (Ex)** A gibbering moulder sees in all directions at once. It cannot be flanked.
- Amorphous (Ex)** A gibbering moulder's body is malleable and shapeless. It is immune to precision damage (like sneak attacks) and critical hits, and can move through an area as small as one-quarter its space without squeezing or one-eighth its space when squeezing.
- Blood Drain (Ex)** On a successful grapple check after grabbing, several of the creatures mouths attach to its target. Each round it maintains its grapple, its mouths automatically deal 1d4 points of bite damage as it drains its victim's blood.
- Gibbering (Su)** As a free action, a gibbering moulder can emit a cacophony of maddening sound. All creatures other than gibbering moulders within 60 feet must succeed on a DC 13 Will save or be confused for 1 round. This is a mind-affecting compulsion insanity effect. A creature that saves cannot be affected by the same moulder's gibbering for 24 hours. The save DC is Charisma-based.
- Ground Manipulation (Su)** At will as a standard action, a gibbering moulder can cause stone and earth under its body to grow soft and muddy. The ground remains muddy for 1 minute after the moulder moves off of the location. A gibbering moulder can move through these areas with ease, but other creatures treat them as difficult terrain.

Spittle (Ex) Each round as a free action, a gibbering moulder can emit a stream of acidic spittle at one target within 30 feet. On a successful attack, the target is blinded for 1d4 rounds unless he succeeds on a DC 15 Fortitude save. The save DC is Constitution-based.

AREA 10

With the frequency of storm waves approaching the shore, salt water erupts from cracks in the floor of this chamber. Foamy, blinding spray jumps in every direction, then drains from calf-height to ankle-deep before the next wave hits. Occasionally a length of black-brown seaweed shoots in and adds one more strand to a room that already appears draped in long, wet hair. On each wall stands a dais topped by a stone sarcophagus.

The wave action that periodically spouts into this chamber adds an extra complication for combat. Once every 1d3 rounds, the water spout shoots into the chamber. Each person in the room must make a DC 12 Reflex save when the wave comes in or be blinded by the spray until the end of their next action (-2 AC, lose Dex bonus to AC, -4 penalty on most Strength- and Dexterity-based skill checks and on opposed Perception checks, DC 10 Acrobatics check to move faster than half speed, 50% chance miss).

A few rounds after the PC enters the room, the lid of the sarcophagus on the south wall slides aside with the sound of a grinding millstone. Out climbs Tlatloc dressed in rotting finery and with a small bat idol carved from jade resting within his hollowed out chest cavity. A jaguar tooth tusk pierces his lower lip, a status symbol denoting Tlatloc as a general, and he carries a turquoise-inlaid shield decorated with the tattered and threadbare remnants of a feather fringe. Each of his fingers is capped with a razor-sharp golden fingernail, but he wears only one ring—an ornate gold piece resplendent with a stunning red ruby.

TLATLOC, WAKING DEAD **CR 3**
 LE Medium undead 800 XP
 Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +9

DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 12, flat-footed 15 (+2 Dex, +1 shield, +4 natural)
 hp 25 (4d8+4)
 Fort +1, Ref +3, Will +7
 DR 5/—; **Immune** undead traits

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.
 Melee 2 claws +8 (1d6+4) and bite +7 (1d4+2 plus bite of despair)
 Special Attacks bite of despair

STATISTICS

Str 18, Dex 14, Con —, Int 8, Wis 15, Cha 11
 Base Atk +3; CMB +7; CMD 19
 Feats Toughness, Weapon Focus (claw)
 Skills Climb +11; Perception +9, Stealth +9

SPECIAL ABILITIES:

Bite of Despair (Su) A living creature bit by Tlatloc's bite must succeed on a DC 14 Will save or envision itself lying in a coffin/sarcophagus desperately trying to escape. The victim falls to the ground and lies perfectly still in a helpless catatonic state and begins suffocating under the delusion of being trapped in an airtight coffin. Characters



in this predicament can hold their breath for 2 rounds per point of Constitution and afterward must make a DC 12 Constitution check each round to continue holding their breath. The check DC increases +1 each round.

When the character fails a Constitution check, he lapses into unconsciousness on the first round, falls to =1 hp on the second round and then feigns death on the third round. Fortunately, the character's associates can revive him from this state in the same manner as the sleep spell. The effect spontaneously ends four minutes later if neither of the other conditions occurs. Characters previously affected by this illusion receive a +4 bonus to their Will save to resist the bite of despair for the remainder of combat. This is an enchantment and compulsion effect. The DC's are Wisdom-based.

Treasure: The golden fingernails worn by Tlatloc are worth 10gp each, but the remainder of his ornamentation is long since rotted and mouldered into worthlessness. The following treasures lie within the sarcophagus: a gold-plated, ceremonial macuahuitl sword (worth 300gp); stone tablets detailing Tlatloc's victories (worth 600gp to collectors with the lost historical knowledge they impart); the ruby ring (worth 250gp); and an ivory bowl stained black inside with dried blood and decorated with grotesque imagery of Camazotz (worth about 140gp, but since it's a relic of an evil religion finding a buyer may run the risk attracting unwanted attention).

DIVINING THE RUBY RING

After recovering the Ruby Ring from Tlatloc, the character may use the scroll given him by the Wizards of the Four Winds to determine that Huhuetl's treasure vault lies within Cipactli's Maw and how the thief managed to bypass its wards. It shows a night of the full moon, when the pale light illuminates a staircase down the gullet-like shaft of Cipactli's Maw. At the

base of the maw, the ring reveals the location of the secret door leading to the vaults and the pressure-plated brick that (when pressed) causes the door to swing open. Once inside, the thief uses a scroll of *command undead* to ensure safe passage through the corpse wall. Ignoring the trapped door that is the centerpiece of the lethal pilferer's bane door trap, the thief instead goes through the real door craftily concealed at the end of the tunnel, and then steps on the appropriate rune-tiles to bypass the animated statue trap that was the final obstacle.

While the divination certainly assists the PC infiltrate the vault, it does not ensure success; some things have changed since the thief performed his near-miraculous heist. At the time of the theft, the Olman priest was not yet dead, so his undead spirit did not haunt the ancient monument; the magical bonds securing the fire elemental were still strong, ensuring the outsider never emerged from its confinement beneath the queen's regenerative blood pools; and Queen Huhuetl's vain attempts to extend her life had not yet transformed her into a ghost eternally protective of her valuables.

PART TWO: THE JUNGLE EXPANSE

An ancient road of massive flagstones cuts straight through the jungle undergrowth, and while the jungle has reclaimed some stretches, it nonetheless allows for faster and more effortless movement than going overland. Barranca and Satipo strongly encourage the PC to take this route, pointing out that unimaginable dangers lurk within the darkened forest.

The journey to Cipactli's Maw takes 3 days utilizing the remains of the ancient road and, when the road succumbs to the jungle, the savvy of the native guides. Even with the relative safety of the ancient road, travel in the jungle always carries a risk. The GM may insert the following encounters to extend the action on the way to Cipactli's Maw or simply use them as wandering encounters.

D6	Encounter
1-2	Pool of Chalchihuitlicue
3-4	Late-night Snack
5	Corpse Dust Cloud
6	None

THE POOL OF CHALCHIHUITLICUE

You emerge into a clearing, at the center of which lies a pool of water that seems to be fed from a spring below. Standing amidst the water is the stone statue of beautiful woman wearing nothing for a skirt of green scales. Her hands are cupped together and seem as if they should be holding something, but at present they are empty. At one time, you've no doubt that the statue was exquisite and the pool crystalline, but the statue has become cracked and the pool itself overgrown with weeds and lily pads.

The pool is perfectly round, spanning 15 feet across with a gradual slope leading to its deepest point in the middle, a mere 5 feet deep. The pool detects as magic, and a Knowledge (history) check DC 20 reveals much about it and the statue at its center. This pool has been touched by Chalchihuitlicue, the goddess of water, and is considered a holy place. The water, though choked with weeds, in fact acts as a *potion of cure light wounds* and *cure disease*. Water taken from the well retains its curative powers for 1d4 days.

Originally, the pool was blessed with even greater powers. Unfortunately, in ages past, the jade fish once held in the statue's outstretched hands was stolen. This defilement angered Chalchihuitlicue, who punished her worshippers for their apparent lack of vigilance by robbing the water of much of its healing power. Should the PC succeed in a Knowledge (arcana) check DC 18, the PC would also surmise that the return of the jade fish may rejuvenate the pool's magic potential and the returner may garner the blessing of Chalchihuitlicue.

The jade fish lies within the darkmantle lair, Area 13b in the Caves of Darkness. If the jade fish should be returned, the pool would *heal serious wounds* and, in addition to curing disease, would also serve as a *potion of restoration*. The individual who returns the relic would be blessed by Chalchihuitlicue forever, allowing him to cast *purify water* and *create water* at 10th level of ability once per day each.

Monsters: The pool is home to an aquatic-version of the assassin vine; it appears as a mass of lily-pads, with lethal vines hanging out of sight below the water.

AQUATIC ASSASSIN VINE

CR 3

N Large Plant

800 XP

Init +0; **Senses** blindsight 30 ft.; low-light vision; Perception +1

DEFENSE

AC 15, touch 9, flat-footed 15 (+6 natural, -1 size)

hp 30 (4d8+12)

Fort +7, **Ref** +1, **Will** +2

Immune electricity, plant traits; **Resist** cold 10 and fire 10

OFFENSE

Speed – (bound to pool bottom)

Melee slam +7 (1d8+7 plus grab)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

Special Attacks constrict (1d8+7), entangle

STATISTICS

Str 20, **Dex** 10, **Con** 16, **Int** –, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 9

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +9 (+13 grapple); **CMD** 19 (can't be tripped)

SQ camouflage

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Camouflage (Ex) Since an assassin vine looks like a normal plant when at rest, a DC 20 Perception check is required to notice it before it attacks for the first time. Anyone with ranks in Survival or Knowledge (nature) can use either of those skills instead of Perception to notice the plant.

Entangle (Su) An assassin vine can, as a free action, cause plants within 30 feet of it to animate and grasp at foes. This ability is otherwise similar to *entangle* (CL 4th, DC 13). The save DC is Wisdom-based.

Tactics: The aquatic assassin vine is anchored to the pool's bottom by the statue, giving it access to attack creatures that approach the pool at any side. It uses entangle once potential prey approaches the water, and then slams the creature, hoping to grab and drag its victims into the pool in order to drown it.

LATE-NIGHT SNACK

From dusk to dawn, the dire bat combs the jungle for food. It is looking for an easy meal and will flee if brought down to less than half hit points. Also, if any of the pieces from the Necropolis bearing Camatzotz image are visible, the dire bat is shaken for 1 round.

DIRE BAT

CR 2

N Large Animal

600 XP

Init +2; **Senses** blindsense 40 ft; Perception +12

DEFENSE

AC 14, touch 11, flat-footed 12 (+2 Dex, +3 natural, -1 size)

hp 22 (4d8+4)

Fort +5, **Ref** +6, **Will** +3

OFFENSE

Speed 20ft., fly 40 ft. (good)

Melee bite +5 (1d8+4)

STATISTICS

Str 17, **Dex** 15, **Con** 13, **Int** 2, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 6

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +7; **CMD** 19

Feats Alertness, Stealthy

Skills Fly +9, Perception +12, Stealth +4; Racial Modifiers +4

Perception when using blindsense

CORPSE DUST CLOUD

A yellow-hued dust cloud coils in from the surrounding jungle, engulfing all before it. Leaves curl up at its touch, birds drop lifeless from above, and a scorpion rolls onto its back in thrashing death throes.

The dust cloud moves at 40-feet, as if driven by a strong breeze that simply isn't there. It measures 60-feet high and over a mile in width. PCs making a DC 10 Knowledge (arcana) roll recognize it as the storied Corpse Dust Cloud, said to be dust blown off the desiccated body of the god of death that periodically sweeps through the region. Characters making a Knowledge (arcane) roll note evidence of necrotic magic at work within the dust cloud. Additionally information can be gained with higher success rolls:

- DC 10 This phenomenon is known as the Corpse Dust Cloud, which leaves death and desiccated corpses in its wake.
- DC 13 Death comes painfully and quickly from inhaling the dust.
- DC 15 The Corpse Dust Cloud is carried by the wind, and legend says that those with a control of this element can control the movements of the cloud.

The PC and his guide(s) have 3 rounds from sighting the cloud before it is upon them. They have little chance of outrunning the phenomenon, and they are subjected to a Corpse Dust Cloud for five rounds. Anyone holding his breath that long is unharmed. Otherwise, the PC must rely on magical means to survive, such as water breathing to submerge himself below water, wind wall or gust of wind to deflect the dust cloud, or gaseous form. Inhaling the dust requires the character make a DC 20 Fortitude save or suffer 2d6 Con damage.

APPROACHING CIPACTLI'S MAW

A massive stone crocodile head seemingly erupting from the earth, jutting out from the dense canopy early on the third day. The immediate area (100 feet) surrounding the edifice is meticulously cleared, kept by the Hovitos tribe who regard Cipactli's Maw with equal parts awe and fear. They are charged to protect the sacred monument from defilement for only the worthy may approach Cipactli's Maw. The village shaman divined the PC's arrival, and a party awaits him hidden among the foliage just outside of the clearing (detectable by a DC 25 Perception check).

As soon as the PC breaks from the jungle foliage and emerges into the clearing, the ground begins to vibrate underfoot, slowly building to become an earthquake of considerable intensity. The PC must make a DC 15 Reflex save each round or fall down. Fissures open in the ground, and every creature has a 25% chance to fall into one (Reflex DC 20 to avoid a fissure). Such a fissure is 10+d20 feet deep. The earthquake lasts for 1d4+1 round and then just as suddenly as it began, it fades away to a low rumble in the ground below that hints at Cipactli's agitation. Read the following after the earthquake has ended.

As the earth stills, a tall figure immerses from the greens – a tall, striking woman with a pair of brightly colored wings like those of a macaw jutting from her back and a thick mane of red-gold feathers instead of hair and the taloned feet of a bird of prey. Not wholly woman, nor wholly bird, she delivers her message with poise and quiet resolve. “Know this stranger of the jungle – only the worthy can enter the mouth of the gods.”

This is Xaatxlitl (loosely translated as ‘Peregrine’ in Common), wise woman of the Hovitos, and she is initiating first contact with the PC in order to gauge his mettle. Should the PC attack her, she will turn into a bird and fly away as the hidden Hovitos warriors in the brush engage the PC and provide cover. If the PC seems interested in parleying, he can learn the following. None but a member of the Hovitos tribe is permitted to even venture near Cipactli's Maw. It displeases Cipactli and therefore the Hovitos. However, Peregrine offers a mutually beneficial solution. The Hovitos have been plagued of late by unseen creatures that strike by night and drag off chickens, dogs, even children and the elderly. The screams of the victims can be followed to a nearby cave, but no one dares go any further for the cavern is said to be the entryway to the subterranean hell ruled over by the bloodthirsty bat god,

Camazotz. Should the PC dispatch the creatures plaguing the Hovitos, Peregrine offers to bless the PC, bestowing honorary membership to the tribe for his service, which would allow him to enter Cipactli's Maw.

Peregrine will not accompany the PCs, mostly out of stubborn respect for traditions—it is her duty to remain with her people and tend to their spiritual needs as best she can. Yet she is comfortable answering questions about the history and legends surrounding the Caves of Darkness and Camazotz.

HOVITOS WARRIOR (12)

Male human fighter 1
N Medium humanoid
Init +2; **Senses** Perception +2

CR 1/2
200 XP

DEFENSE

AC 13, touch 13, flat-footed 10 (+2 Dex, +1 dodge)
hp 11 (1d10+6)
Fort +4, **Ref** +2, **Will** +1

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft
Melee spear +3 (1d8+2)
Ranged javelin +3 (1d6+2)

STATISTICS

Str 15, **Dex** 15, **Con** 14, **Int** 10, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 8
Base Atk +1; **CMB** +3; **CMD** 14
Feats Dodge, Toughness, Weapon Focus (spear)
Skills Perception +2, Survival +5
Languages Hovitos
Other Gear Spear, javelin (6)

TACTICS

During Combat: These warriors will attack from the brush if the PC attacks Peregrine. They will start by launching javelins and close with spears.

Morale: If reduced to 1 hit point or lower, they either flee into the jungle or fling down their weapons and surrender. They melt away if reduced to 8 combatants or less.

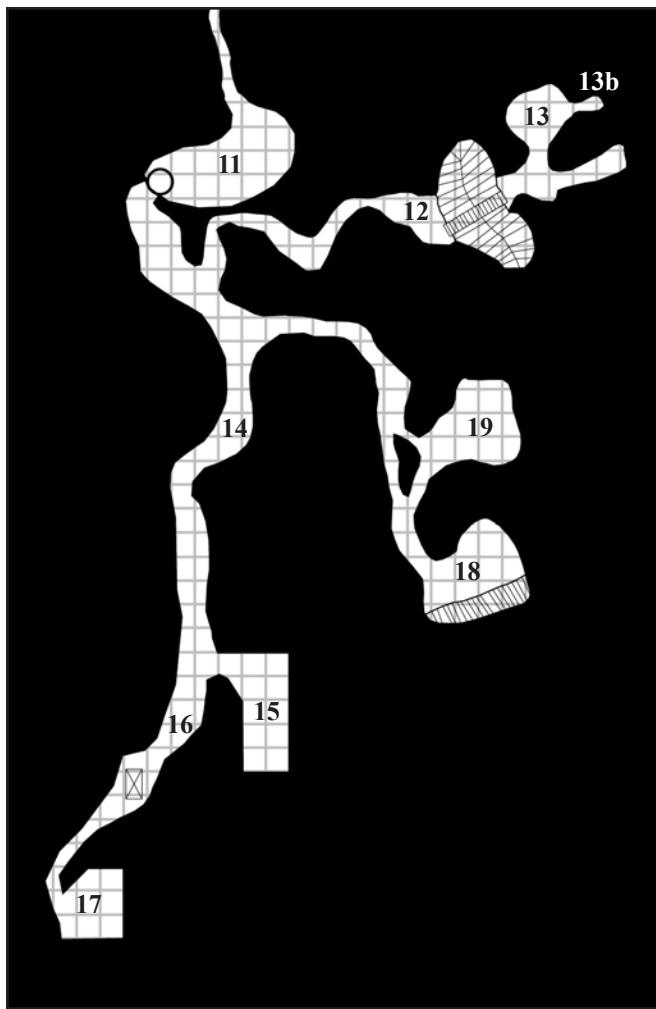
PART THREE: CAVES OF DARKNESS

Deep underground, within caves fearfully avoided by the Hovitos, an abandoned shrine to a twisted deity has become home to horrors that represent a new and deadly threat. Long silent, the shrine once again begins to quaver with the screams of innocents.

BACKGROUND

These caves include a former shrine to Camazotz, the god of bats, murder, and darkness. Centuries ago the shrine was a hive of mind-twisting depravity, but its caves eventually fell silent, no longer playing witness to gruesome tortures and senseless sacrifices. But while the society that worshipped the deity may have collapsed, Camazotz's essence remained behind and called out to other subterranean denizens. In time, a colony of darkmantles began to roost within its terror-stained confines. Perhaps tainted by Camazotz's unholy aspect, one of the darkmantles began to develop preternatural intelligence and frightening powers. This creature has spread her will over the other darkmantles, lording over them as an aberrant queen. Led by this cunning female, their numbers and appetite growing, the darkmantles are no longer merely a nuisance to the subterranean communities but are now a growing danger.

CAVES OF DARKNESS MAP



GENERAL FEATURES

The tunnels within the shrine are all natural caves with uneven floors and rough walls. Slaves were used to carve out chambers and refine existing chambers, so that with the exception of areas 11, 12, and 18, all walls, ceilings, and floors are of hewn stone. Unless otherwise stated, the ceilings are uniformly 10 feet high. There is no light within the complex aside from what the characters bring with them. Because of the unholy presence of Camazotz, the effective radius of light sources (including spells and items magical in nature) is halved, and shadows always seem to encroach upon the edges the edges of one's vision (-2 to sight-based Perception checks). Sound travels twice as far within the caves (+2 to sound-based Perception checks).

AREA 11: HIDDEN ENTRANCE

This naturally hewn cave appears empty, save for a scattering of cracked bones that lie upon the ground and a 10-foot wide shaft in the ground that drops away into utter darkness.

Permanent *darkness* and *silence* spells have been cast on the shaft to make it appear as a bottomless hole, when in fact it is no more than 6-feet deep. At the bottom of the shaft, a four-foot tall opening leads into the shrine proper.

Monster: A lone darkmantle lies pressed against the ceiling, waiting or prey to come into range.

DARKMANTLE

N Small magical beast

Init +6; **Senses** blindsight 90 ft. (echolocation); Perception +4

CR 1

400 XP

DEFENSE

AC 13, touch 11, flat-footed 13 (+2 natural, +1 size)

hp 15 (2d10+4)

Fort +5, **Ref** +3, **Will** +0

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft., fly 30 ft. (poor)

Melee slam +6 (1d4+4 plus grab)

Special Attacks constrict (1d4+4)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 5th)

1/day—*darkness*

STATISTICS

Str 11, **Dex** 15, **Con** 14, **Int** 2, **Wis** 11, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +2; **CMB** +4 (+8 grapple); **CMD** 14 (can't be tripped)

Feats Improved Initiative

Skills Fly +2, Perception +4, Stealth +9; **Racial Modifiers** +4

Perception, +4 Stealth

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Grab (Ex) A darkmantle can use its grab attack against a foe of any size.

Tactics: The darkmantle casts *darkness* and then drops down upon the smallest victim. If it successfully grapples a creature, it drags the unfortunate victim into the shaft to feast.

AREA 12: DARKMANTLE AERIE

You emerge into a large cavern. Before you is a seemingly bottomless void spanned only by a narrow bridge constructed entirely of bones. On the opposite side of the sinister span is another tunnel mouth, leading further into this world that knows no light.

The ceiling is 60-feet above and is studded with stalactites. Characters of medium-size or greater who walk upon the bridge cause it to creak and crack ominously, as if the bones were about to give way at any moment. Generally speaking the bridge is quite sturdy and safe to walk over. Taking the time to secure themselves with rope or prepare spells to safeguard their passage is not time wasted, however, because the cavern does indeed pose a threat. But rather than originating underfoot, the danger comes from above

Monster: This cave is home to a colony of darkmantles that roost from the ceiling, hanging upside down and pulling their flaps among themselves to almost perfectly resemble stalactites (they gain a +4 Stealth bonus in this form).

Darkmantles (6): see area 11

Tactics: The darkmantles wait until a potential victim has made its way out onto the bone bridge before attacking. Then, almost as one, they attack. The darkmantles begin their assault by casting *darkness* to envelope the entire cavern in murky, impenetrable blackness, then drop from the ceiling and fly en masse towards the unsuspecting and now-blinded victim(s).

Development: Walking across the bone bridge requires a DC 8 Acrobatics check each round. In darkness, the difficulty increases to DC 12. Fighting, performing complex maneuvers, or moving beyond standard speed increases the difficulty by a further 4. The void is 50 feet deep. Characters falling from the bridge suffer 5d6 damage.

Treasure: Darkmantles keep no treasure of their own. However, the broken bodies of several of their past victims lie on the cave floor far below, and with them their worldly possessions. These include 150gp, a masterwork great axe, and a *cloak of resistance* +1.

AREA 13: TEMPLE

Slender, glistening trails of slime weave around this damp, dome-ceiling cave. Flaky white lichen grows in a thick carpet across the cool, wet stone walls. In the center of the room is a 12-foot tall statue of a powerfully built bat-headed figure. The statue's eyes are shiny red gems that gleam with malicious intent, while his bare-chested torso is a mass of scars and wounds. Coiled around the stone edifice is a two-headed centipede, one head located on either end of its eight foot long body. It swings its grotesque heads around to face you and snaps vise-like mandibles in obvious agitation.

Characters making a DC 16 Knowledge (history or religion) check determine that the figure is Camazotz, the god of bats, darkness, and murder. Scrapping away the lichens from the walls reveal grisly paintings done in blood revealing scenes of torture and mutilation, providing a +3 circumstance bonus for identifying the statue.

The slime trails along the floor are made by darkmantle hatchlings, which resemble grubs slick with mucus. A Survival check DC 10 allows the PC to follow the trails back along the floor, up the eastern wall, and into an alcove 12-feet off the floor where the darkmantle nest lies hidden (see area 13b). This alcove is difficult to see from the ground; characters must make a DC 16 Perception check, while those having made a succeeded the Survival roll notice the alcove on a DC 12 Perception check. From atop statue the alcove is plainly visible (DC 10 Perception check).



Monster: Other than having two heads, the centipede is a standard specimen of its monstrous species. It has just happened upon the cave and eagerly devoured several of the helpless larvae. The centipede is angered at the sudden intrusion and willing to fight to protect its meal from what it perceives to be rival predators.

MONSTROUS AMPHISBAENA CENTIPEDE **CR 2**
N Large Vermin **600 XP**
Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +4

DEFENSE

AC 14, touch 11, flat-footed 12 (+2 Dex, +3 natural, -1 size)
hp 18 (4d8)
Fort +4, **Ref** +3, **Will** +1
Immune vermin traits

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft., climb 40 ft.
Melee 2 bites +3 (1d8+1 plus poison)
Special Attacks poison (Fort DC 11, 1d3 Dex)

STATISTICS

Str 13, **Dex** 15, **Con** 10, **Int** —, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 2
Base Atk +3; **CMB** +5; **CMD** 16 (can't be tripped)
Feats Weapon Finesse (Bite)^b
Skills Perception +4; **Racial Modifiers** +4 Perception

Tactics: The centipede remains coiled upon the statue, striking at those who come into range. Because the centipede is wrapped around the statue and therefore only a portion of its length is exposed from any given angle, it's considered to have partial cover. The creature won't pursue the PCs beyond the cave and will beat a hasty retreat if reduced to 10 hit points.

Treasure: Camazotz's eyes are bloodstones, extremely red and valuable gems that are of particular significance to this bloodthirsty deity. Each is worth 800gp. Climbing the statue requires a DC 12 Climb check.

AREA 13B: ALCOVE

The alcove is 12-feet off the ground, measures 3-feet wide and 5-feet deep. Its floor is covered in bloated, moist grubs that leave trails of mucus in the wake. At the rear of the alcove are two dozen darkmantle eggs. The eggs are about the size of a chicken's, but their soft, grayish shells allow them to blend against the stone surface. As a result, characters need to make a DC 12 Perception check to notice them at distances greater than 3-feet; a failed check leaves the character with the impression the alcove is empty.

Several of the eggs have recently hatched, and others are about to. If the PCs watch for a length of time, they'll notice one or more of the eggs warping and buckling as squirming larvae inside struggle for release. Finally, the slug-like creatures tear through the membranes and, still covered in the slime of its egg, slide out into the cave. Unless killed, the larvae will grow into mature darkmantles within 6 months.

Characters making a DC 15 Knowledge (arcana) check know that darkmantle larva can be used as a substitute spell component for the darkness spell. Obscured by the mass of eggs is a holy relic called *Camazotz's Ire* (see below) and a small carved jade fish (worth 200 gp).

CAMAZOTZ'S IRE

Camazotz's Ire is a scourge—a multi-tailed, barbed whip—infused with a deep malevolence. The barbs themselves are crudely fashioned jagged pieces of bone, each one carved with

the image of a screaming face. Gore clings to the barbs and will return even if wiped away. The handle is also bone, and the whips themselves finely wound strands of humanoid hair.

A +2 *wounding weapon*, it provides the wielder a +4 bonus on opposed attack rolls when trying to disarm an opponent (including the roll to keep from being disarmed if the attack fails). Whenever a critical hit is struck, the weapon gives off a scream of sheer agony, a cry maddening in its intensity. All creatures within 100 ft. must make a DC 20 Will save or be shaken and suffer 1d4 points of Wisdom damage. Characters who wield the weapon gain blindsight, allowing them to see effortlessly in even magical darkness.

In addition, *Camazotz's Ire* grants the wielder the following spell-like abilities at CL 5th: *darkness* 2/day, *fear* 2/day, *fly* 1/day, *inflict serious wounds* 1/day.

AREA 14: SILENCED HALLWAY

This tunnel appears to be nondescript, save for the occasional trail of dried blood that stains the ground underfoot. But suddenly, you realize you no longer hear your tentative footfalls, the ragged breath that comes with tension, or the faint rattle of your gear that seems to occur no matter how carefully you arrange it upon your body. You can't hear anything, not even the beating of your own heart.

This corridor has been subjected to a permanent *silence* spell. Its intended purpose was to block the ear-splitting screams emanating from the torture chamber (area 15), which would echo throughout the tunnels and perhaps give away the shrine's carefully concealed location. The *silence* spell provides the PCs with a haven for rest and recuperation since darkmantles, which are effectively blinded if their echolocation-based blindsight is eliminated, will not enter the hallway under any circumstance.

AREA 15: TORTURE CHAMBER

Clearly, this room was once a torture chamber, based upon the macabre menagerie of racks, screws, branding irons, and assorted other sinister devices that lie scattered about the chamber. The walls, floor, and even the ceiling are stained with dried, splattered blood. Most of the devices are empty, but a few hold remains of past victims.

AREA 16: PIT TRAP

The cultists built a pit trap here to ensure prisoners attempting escape didn't get far. The pit has long since filled one-third full with murky water seeping in from an aquifer. The moisture has made the walls slick with mold and dampness, making attempts to climb out of the pit very difficult (DC 20). An explorer who happened upon the shrine decades ago fell prey to the trap and, burdened by his heavy armor, drowned in the water below. Fortunately, a PC with a light source can clearly see and avoid the sprung trap.

However, if the PC should fall into the pit, the warrior, now little more than a skeleton and still tormented by the fear he experienced during his final moments, desperately clings to the PC as his only lifeline. Once the PC hits the water, he feels strong hands grabbing hold of his legs, threatening to pull him under. The added weight of the struggling undead and his gear means Swim checks made by the PCs to stay afloat are doubled; a failed check means the character is dragged under. A character can hold his breath for a number of rounds equal to twice his Constitution score. After that, he must make a Constitution check to avoid drowning (DC 10 +1

PIT TRAP

CR 1

Type mechanical; **Perception** DC 20; **Disable Device** DC 20

EFFECTS

Trigger location; **Reset** manual

Effect 30-ft.-deep pit (2d6 falling damage); DC 20 Reflex avoids; multiple targets (all targets in a 10-ft.-square area).

per previous check).

There are several ways for a trapped PC to escape. He can break the skeleton's grip with an opposed grapple check or squirm from his grasp with a DC 15 Escape Artist check. He can destroy the skeleton, or sunder his arms (hardness 10, hit points 5). Or he can attempt to climb out or be pulled out by companions, dragging the dead-weight of the armored skeleton with him.

Because of the murky water, the skeleton enjoys total concealment (50% chance to miss). Characters in the water suffer a -4 circumstance penalty on all Reflex saves, Dexterity based checks, and Initiative rolls, and a similar penalty to all attack and damage rolls except when using piercing weapons. Shields are not usable underwater, and neither are non-piercing ranged weapons.

HUMAN SKELETON

CR 1/2

NE Medium Undead

200 XP

Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; **Perception** +0

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 11, flat-footed 20 (+8 armor, +1 enhancement)

hp 7 (1d8)

Fort +0, **Ref** +0, **Will** +2

DR 5/bludgeoning; **Immune** cold, undead traits

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.

Melee broken scimitar +0 (1d6), claw -3 (1d4+1) or 2 claws +2 (1d4+2)

STATISTICS

Str 15, **Dex** 14, **Con** —, **Int** —, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +0; **CMB** +2; **CMD** 14

Gear Full-plate +1, broken scimitar

Tactics: Unaware that he has already perished, the skeleton desperately clings to the PC as his hope for rescue. He only grapples, unwilling to let go of his salvation. That he may in the process drown another doesn't register.

AREA 17: PRISON

A door made of bones banded together with silver banding hangs limply from its hinges. Within the room, rusted chains hang from the walls. Several of them still contain skeletal arm fragments; beneath them lay the remains of splintered skeletons. Small beetles scurry into darkened recesses upon your entry.

This area was quite obviously a prison in ages past. Scratched into the walls is an inscription that reads in common: "The suffering never ends. In this dark world the passage of day and night has no meaning, so I track the loss of my companions. I too pray to be released from my mortal coil." Beside the inscription are eight vertical lines, each one representing a friend taken from the prison and never returned.

AREA 18: GRAND TEMPLE

A yawning abyss dominates the southern part of this room, its sheer walls descending into darkness below. The north wall features a screaming skull that has been painstakingly, if crudely, carved from the rock wall. It stands as tall as the room is high. Shrouded figures, bound into the fetal position, have been placed within the cavities that form the skull's eyes. The floor of the room is uneven and studded with rocks, some as big as 4-feet in diameter. At first glance, the floor seems to move, roiling and swaying with life-like motion. Then you realize the floor doesn't move, but rather is covered in a blanket of small brown bats that pull themselves about on their fragile forearms, a mass of tiny but vicious teeth and wrinkled faces that snap at one another with ravenous fury.

The pit is 100 feet deep and connects with the void in area 12. A layer several feet deep of shattered bones lies at the bottom, representing hundreds of victims who were cast into the abyss.

The bats that cover the cavern floor number in the thousands. Despite the fact that bats are Camazotz's favorite creatures (or perhaps because of it; one never knows with the sadistic and quite possibly insane deity), he has rendered those that inhabit his temple flightless. They survive primarily through cannibalism, which no doubt amuses Camazotz, and spend most of their time shuffling about pitifully, getting underfoot and impeding movement. Characters moving beyond cautious or attempting to fight must make a DC 12 Reflex save each round to avoid riling the bats underfoot; failure results in 1d4 bats attacking them.

The shrouded figures lying in repose within the skull's cavities are former priests of Camazotz, now little more than desiccated corpses. PCs making a Perception check (DC 15) notice that the throats of each have been cleanly cut, evidence of having had their throats slit. Such is the fate of any priest who grows too wise or too powerful with the divine arts—Camazotz loves feasting on the blood of his most ardent worshippers above all else, and so inevitably all of his priests become willing sacrifices. All three have been laid to rest with their holy symbols.

Monster: This chamber is the lair of Xamatlotl, the cunning darkmantle 'queen'.

FLIGHTLESS BATS (1000s) **CR 1/8**
N Diminutive Animal 50 XP
Init +2; **Senses** blindsense 20 ft., low-light vision; Perception +6

DEFENSE
AC 16, touch 16, flat-footed 14 (+2 Dex, +4 size)
hp 2 (1d8-2)
Fort +0, **Ref** +4, **Will** +2

OFFENSE
Speed 5 ft.
Melee bite +6 (1d3-4)

STATISTICS
Str 1, **Dex** 15, **Con** 6, **Int** 2, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 5
Base Atk +0; **CMB** -2; **CMD** 3
Feats Weapon Finesse
Skills Perception +6

XAMATLOTL **CR 1**
N Small magical beast 400 XP
Init +6; **Senses** blindsight 90 ft. (echolocation); Perception +5

DEFENSE
AC 13, tough 11, flat-footed 13 (+2 natural, +1 size)
hp 24 (2d10+4)
Fort +5, **Ref** +3, **Will** +0

OFFENSE
Speed 20 ft., fly 30 ft. (poor)
Melee slam +6 (1d4+4 plus grab)
Special Attacks constrict (1d4+4)
Spell-Like Abilities (CL 5th)
1/day—desecrate, greater darkness, summon swarm

STATISTICS
Str 11, **Dex** 15, **Con** 14, **Int** 10, **Wis** 11, **Cha** 10
Base Atk +2; **CMB** +4 (+8 grapple); **CMD** 14 (can't be tripped)
Feats Improved Initiative
Skills Fly +3, Perception +5, Stealth +10; **Racial Modifiers** +4 Perception, +4 Stealth

SPECIAL ABILITIES
Grab (Ex) A darkmantle can use its grab attack against a foe of any size.

Tactics: Xamatlotl masquerades as one of the rocks studding the cave floor by wrapping her membrane around her body. She casts *deeper darkness* and *summon swarm* as soon as potential opponents enter the chamber, and then under the cover of darkness cover begins to stalk the distracted enemy. When she's been reduced to 10 hit points or less, she attempts to drop into the void and fly away to safety. Once healed, she'll begin stalking the PCs once more, intent on retribution for the injury and insult.

FLIGHTLESS BAT SWARM **CR 2**
N Diminutive Animal 600 XP
Init +2; **Senses** blindsense 20 ft., low-light vision; Perception +15

DEFENSE
AC 16, touch 16, flat-footed 14 (+2 Dex, +4 size)
hp 13 (3d8)
Fort +3, **Ref** +7, **Will** +3

OFFENSE
Speed 5 ft.
Melee swarm (1d6)
Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 0 ft.
Special Attacks distraction (DC 11), wounding

STATISTICS
Str 3, **Dex** 15, **Con** 11, **Int** 2, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 4
Base Atk +2; **CMB** —; **CMD** —
Feats Lightning Reflexes, Skill Focus (Perception)
Skills Perception +15; **Racial Modifiers** +4 Perception when using blindsense
SQ swarm traits

SPECIAL ABILITIES
Wounding (Ex) Any living creature damaged by a bat swarm continues to bleed, losing 1 hit point per round thereafter. Multiple wounds do not result in cumulative bleeding loss. The bleeding can be stopped by a DC 10 Heal check or the application of a cure spell or some other healing magic.

Treasure: One of the corpses has a sealed clay vial hidden among the folds of his rotting robes, which can be found with a DC 12 Perception check. Inside is a pale paste-like substance that has a heady smell to it. Characters making a DC 10 Knowledge (nature) check can identify the substance as some sort of bat guano, which characters making a DC 15 Knowledge (arcana) check know that cultists of Camazotz make magical healing salves with bat guano as a principle component. This salve serves as a *potion of cure light wounds*, but is used externally on a wound and each dose can only heal damage suffered from that one particular wound. The clay vial holds two doses. If the salve is ingested, the character must make a DC 12 Fort check to avoid suffering 1d3 Con damage.

AREA 19: PRIEST'S CHAMBERS

A simple bed, its sheets discolored and wet with mildew, its mattress stained and lumpy, sits within this room. Beside it is a low, flat rock covered with black candles, its surface caked with melted wax. The western wall of the room consists of a fine-meshed cage, the floor of which is littered with tiny bones.

This chamber was formerly home to the shrine's resident priest, a devoted cleric of Camazotz who has long-since joined his patron. Characters making DC 12 Survival checks realize that the cage mesh is made from spider silk, and that the bones lying within belong to a dozen or more bats. The priest reared these bats both to supply the guano that priests of Camazotz use to make their hair stand erect and as foci for various rituals (many of Camazotz's rituals require the caster to bite-off the head of still-living bats).

Treasure: The candles are made of human fat, sputter uncontrollably, and give off tendrils of inky smoke. Their usefulness as light sources is therefore minimal. While most of the candles are mundane, one is actually a chaotic evil *candle of invocation*. A *potion of expeditious retreat* lies inside the moldy mattress; finding it requires a DC 10 Perception check.

PART FOUR: CIPACTLI'S MAW

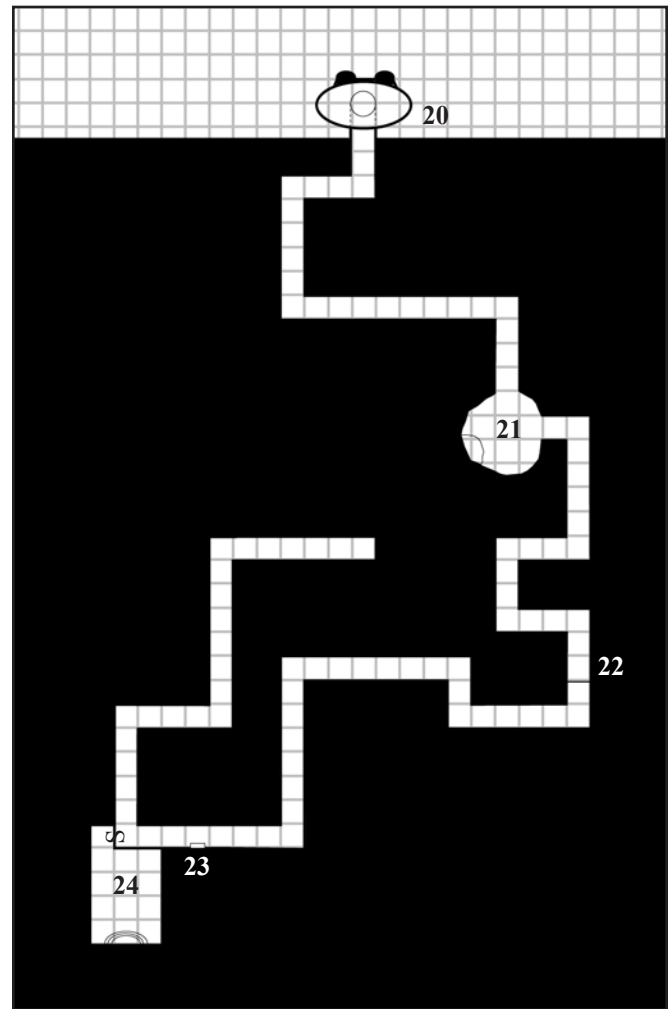
Bursting from the earth juts a 60-foot-tall, vine choked sculpture of a gigantic crocodile's head. With jaws wide open to snap at the air above, this highly-stylized remnant holds the entrance to a deep shaft which drops into the ground like a stone gullet. More than 100-feet below, bones choke this passage—countless bodies that fill a space of unknown depth. While the Maw is little more than a morbid landmark by day, it is said that at night a spectral priest haunts the site, performing rites and guarding a crypt temple hidden deep below.

The monument is a representation of Cipactli, also known as the world lizard, a massive, crocodilian creature of myth that dwells beneath the earth. In depictions, its body is colored like the earth and its scales seem like great slabs of stone. The colossal monstrosity hibernates for centuries, then wakes up and spreads terror for a few weeks, feasting and causing earthquakes with every laborious step taken, before returning to hibernation once again. It spends its brief waking period gorging on humanoids, animals, trees, buildings, rivers, and even mountains—the awakening of Cipactli is quite literally an earth-shattering event.

DAY

Even during the day, Cipactli's Maw is ominous somehow. No monkeys clamber over its stone surface, birds refuse to fly overhead, and the constant buzzing of mosquitoes falls silent

CIPACTLI'S MAW MAP



as one approaches. While the spectral priest cannot materialize once the sun rises above the horizon, its unnatural aura is still sensed by animals, both wild and domesticated (no animal will come within 30 feet of the Maw and will panic if forced to do so unless a master succeeds at a DC 25 Handle Animal, Ride, or wild empathy check).

The priest's presence can be felt in another way as well: when within 30 ft. of the maw, character must make a DC 16 Will save or feel the sensation of invisible hands dragging him toward the precipice, as the blood-curdling chanting of a primitive ritual echoes in his skull. The character is helpless as he is dragged towards the edge of the shaft and held on the precipice. A final DC 16 Will save is made; if this one fails as well, the character screams in abject agony as his still-beating heart is ripped from his chest only moments before he is thrown into the gullet of the stone crocodile. Anyone falling into the maw suffers 12d6 damage.

NIGHT

Under the pale blue light of the moon, the specter of a priest appears atop Cipactli's mouth, pantomiming the ritual sacrifice of a victim. The priest wears a shirt fringed with feathers, a headband consisting of skulls crafted from jade, and an ornamentally painted human jaw bone that hangs from the headband and fits over his own jaw. He carries a small stone-headed axe in one hand, and a severed human head in the other. The sudden appearance of the undead fiend and the grisly sight of the rotting head serves as *cause fear*, CL 5th.



GHASTLY PRIEST (HUECUVA)

CE Medium Undead

Init +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception 5

Aura faithless (30 ft.)

DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 12, flat-footed 15 (+2 Dex, +5 natural)

hp 20 (3d8+3)

Fort +2, **Ref** +3, **Will** +4

DR 5/magic or silver; **Immune** undead traits

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee 2 claws +4 (1d6+1 plus disease)

Spell-like Abilities (CL 3rd)

3/day — *disguise self*

STATISTICS

Str 13, **Dex** 14, **Con** —, **Int** 4, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 12

Base Atk +2; **CMB** +3; **CMD** 14

Feats Improved Initiative, Weapon Focus (claw)

Skills Perception +5, Stealth +7

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Disease (Ex) Claw; **save** Fort DC 12; **frequency** 1d3 days/1day; **effect** 1d3 Dex damage and 1d3 Con damage; **cure** 2 consecutive saves. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Faithless (Su) The huecuva and all undead creatures within 30 feet receive a +2 profane bonus on Will saves made to resist channeling energy and any effects based off that ability. This bonus stacks with channel resistance.

CR 2

600 XP

ACCESSING THE VAULTS

Getting to the bottom of the 120-foot shaft is problematic. The light of the full moon reveals a staircase that winds its way down the shaft, allowing access to the treasure vault below. Unfortunately, this materializes only a few evenings every month and requires tomb raiders to brave the undead priest. Short of that, the PC must use skills (climb), equipment (rope and spikes), spells (*fly* or *spider climb*, for example), or some combination thereof, to get to the bottom and access the vaults.

AREA 20 SHAFT BOTTOM AND SECRET DOOR

The pit floor is a tangle of bones and broken bodies. Centipedes, beetles, and maggots swarm over the bodies, picking at the flesh until only bones remain.

Some of the bodies are relatively fresh, the remains of fortune hunters and occasional sacrifices offered up by the Hovitos. Others are centuries old, their bones preserved by a *gentle repose* spell that covers the entire shaft. Neither the skeletons nor the vermin pose any danger to characters.

The divination spell cast on the ruby ring reveals the location and password which opens the portal; otherwise, finding the secret door in the wall requires a DC 20 Perception check, and opening the door requires a *knock* spell at CL 10th or ability or other similar unconventional methods.

AREA 21 CHAMBER OF YOUTH

The walls in this room are rounded—hard angles have been polished away to smooth corners. With no hard lines defining where walls meet floor and ceiling, the place seems subtly alien and is difficult to gaze upon. A rack of scrolls stands in the room, casting a shadow over a steaming pool set into the chamber's floor.

Queen Huehaatl was stunningly vain, and sought all manner of means, many of them debased and inhumane, to retain her youth and legendary beauty. While she managed to prolong her life well past when it would have naturally run its course, in the end, she could not find a way to cheat death. This chamber represents the sum of her attempts.

The pool is actually boiling blood. Immersing oneself in the scalding fluid results in 1d4 points of damage, but serves as *greater restoration* (its life-extending properties can only be gained by immersing oneself on a routine basis, once a month at a minimum). The restorative blood can be taken from the pool and used as a potion. It retains its magical properties for 1d4 days, but it must be heated for ten minutes before use. Ingesting the steaming fluid inflicts 2d4 points of damage.

A small fire elemental bound to the pool heats the fluid. The passage of time has weakened the binding magic, however, allowing the elemental to emerge from the water for short periods. Now virtually insane from centuries of confinement, the elemental lashes out at anyone who enters the chamber. It cannot leave the room, however, and after 3 rounds must make a Willpower save (DC 15) each round to resist the magic pulling back to its crimson prison.

SMALL FIRE ELEMENTAL

C Small outsider (elemental, extraplanar, fire)

Init +5; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +4

DEFENSE

AC 16, touch 13, flat-footed 14 (+1 Dex, +1 dodge, +3 natural, +3 size)

hp 11 (2d10)

Fort +3, **Ref** +4, **Will** +0

Immune elemental traits, fire

Weaknesses vulnerability to cold

OFFENSE

Speed 50 ft.

Melee slam +4 (1d4 plus burn)

Special Attacks burn (1d4, DC 11)

STATISTICS

Str 10, **Dex** 13, **Con** 10, **Int** 4, **Wis** 11, **Cha** 11

Base Atk +2; **CMB** +1; **CMD** 13

Feats Dodge, Improved Initiative^B, Weapon Finesse^B

Skills Acrobatics +5, Climb +4, Escape Artist +5, Intimidate +4, Knowledge (planes) +1, Perception +4

The shelves contain dozens of stone tablets written in a mixture of ancient common and magical scripture that is collectively a massive manuscript called *The Origins of Eternity*. Anyone reading the text who makes a DC 15 Knowledge (religion) or Knowledge (arcane) check realizes that it is essentially an incomplete and fragmentary exploration into the various methods by which one can extend one's lifespan, including legends of youth-restoring pools, magical spells, lichdom, vampirism, lost artifacts, and a host of other possibilities. The book can be used as a springboard for adventure or magical research, or can be sold for 5,000gp.

While much of the research is far too obscure and challenging for low-level characters to pursue, one discarded avenue of research jumps out: the recipe for a potion that would deprive the ingesting individual of the need to sleep and immunity to sleep effects. The character would still, however, require 8 hours of uninterrupted rest for spell preparation. The

drawback is that dark rings form around the characters now-sunken eyes, resulting in a -1 Charisma penalty. This potion requires crushed gems worth 5,000 gp, powdered mummy, the casting of a *sleep* spell (minimum CL 4th, and a successful DC 20 Craft (alchemy) check).

AREA 22 CORPSE WALL

The hallway abruptly ends before a crude wall constructed of rotting corpses and rubble. You recoil in horror from the vile edifice, shaken by the callous disregard for the sanctity of life that the wall represents.

Characters must make a Will save (DC 13) to approach the wall; failure indicates that the character is unable to overcome his repulsion to move any closer than 10 feet; he cannot make another save attempt for 24 hours. When approached by Queen Huehaatl, the corpses—the remains of monarchs whose kingdoms were subjugated by Huehaatl and her general Tlatloc—would disentangle themselves and part to allow passage. For all others, the wall represents a considerable barrier.

Corpse Wall: 3 ft. thick, Hardness 5; 60 hp; Break DC 28

There are several means by which the PC can pass through the wall. First, he may elect to break it down, though it should be noted that the wall does not idly sit by while it is destroyed. Instead, it fights back with 1d3 Slam attacks per round (+2 melee, 1d6+1 damage, Fort save at DC 12 or also suffer 1 point of Strength damage) any one involved in the demolition effort. Slain characters are dragged into the wall to reinforce its structure. If ranged spells are employed to damage the wall, the wall responds in kind by throwing 1d3 large chunks of rock each round (range increment 20 feet, -1 to hit, 1d8+1 damage).

Alternatively, the PC might attempt to force a passage using *command undead*. If the attempt is successful in turning four or more zombies, a 3-foot wide opening is made in the wall. This breach lasts for only 10 rounds (1 minute) before reforming. Clerics can use turn/rebuke undead in a similar fashion.

AREA 23 INSIDIOUS TRAP

A large stone door studded with dozens of colorful gemstones and with an image in jade of a beautiful woman sitting atop a throne stands before you. Although the door has no latch, there is a fist-sized hole in middle of the decorative throne.

This door is in fact in trap intended to lure would-be pilferers to their death. The actual entrance to the vault is hidden at the end of the corridor, revealed to the PC in the divination of the Ruby Ring. Otherwise, locating the secret door requires a DC 30 Perception check.

Trap: The door is actually nothing more than a thick block of stone set in the wall. It has a non-functioning fake lever within the fist-sized hole, completing the illusion that it is in fact a real door. The stone block is attached to a piston in a recessed area behind it. When any part of the fake door is touched, the piston thrusts forward with incredible force, smashing everything in its path against the opposite wall. A chamber behind the block houses complex counterweights and gears that retract the piston and resets the trap.

Treasure: The precious stones embedded within the fake door are worth 500gp in total.

PILFERER'S BANE DOOR TRAP**CR 10****Type** mechanical; **Perception** DC 28; **Disable Device** DC 24**EFFECTS****Trigger** touch; **Reset** automatic**Effect** crush (12d10 bludgeoning, DC 24 Reflex save to avoid); multiple targets (all creatures within four adjacent 5-ft. squares).**AREA 24 TREASURE VAULT**

Decorative braziers illuminate this chamber. The floor and walls are covered in colorful jade tile, while the ceiling is made of lustrous stone that reflects the orange glow of the dancing flames. The floor tiles differ from those on the wall in that each is etched with alien runes. At the far end of the room, three steps lead up a dais atop which lays gold and riches beyond your wildest dreams, an overflowing mound of greed. There are urns of gems, decorative furnishings inlaid with gold, a large jade crocodile statue with onyx eyes, bejeweled weapons, scroll cases, and countless coins spilled across the tile.

The floor to this room represents a dangerous trap. A single path passes safely through the rune-etched tiles; stepping on even one wrong tile causes the jade crocodile to animate and attack. Characters who previously divined the Ruby Ring know how to bypass this trap, otherwise doing so requires 6 consecutive DC 20 Perception checks.

ANIMATED OBJECTS TRAP**CR 3****Type** magic; **Perception** DC 31; **Disable Device** DC 31**EFFECTS****Trigger** touch (floor); **Reset** automatic; **Bypass** correct path**Effect** spell effect (*animate objects*, CL 11th)**JADE CROCODILE****CR 3**

N Medium Construct

800 XP

Init +0; **Senses** Darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; **Perception** -5**DEFENSE****AC** 18, touch 10, flat-footed 18 (+8 natural)**hp** 40 (3d10+20)**Fort** +1, **Ref** +0, **Will** -4**OFFENSE****Spd** 30 ft.**Melee** Bite +5 (1d8+3)**STATISTICS****Str** 16, **Dex** 10, **Con** —, **Int** —, **Wis** 1, **Cha** 1**Base Atk** +3, **CMB** +5; **CMD** 15**SQ** stone

This trap isn't the only thing guarding the treasure; Queen Huehueatl, though long dead, refuses to release her iron grip on her horde and lingers as an allip. In her final days, at an age reputed to be well in excess of 200, the queen found that while her body remained vibrant and youthful, her mind was unraveling with senility and decay. In a fit of madness she took her own life here, surrounded by all she held dear. Huehueatl materializes as soon as her treasure is touched and attacks until destroyed, unwilling to relinquish any portion of her wealth. "Mites, you are not worthy of my treasure....my treasure, my precious treasure," she babbles between sobs.

QUEEN HUEHUEATL ALLIP**CR 3**

CE Medium undead (incorporeal)

800 XP

Init +5; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; **Perception** +7**Aura** babble (60 ft., DC 15)**DEFENSE****AC** 14, touch 14, flat-footed 13 (+3 deflection, +1 Dex)**hp** 30 (4d8+12)**Fort** +4, **Ref** +4, **Will** +4**Defensive Abilities** incorporeal, channel resistance +2;**Immune** undead traits**OFFENSE****Speed** fly 30 ft.(perfect)**Melee** incorporeal touch +4 (1d4 wisdom damage)**Special Attacks** touch of insanity**STATISTICS****Str** —, **Dex** 12, **Con** —, **Int** 11, **Wis** 11, **Cha** 16**Base Atk** +3; **CMB** +3; **CMD** 17**Feats** Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes**Skills** Fly +16, Intimidate +14, Perception +7, Stealth +8**SQ** Madness**SPECIAL ABILITIES**

Babble (Su) An allip constantly mutters and whines to itself, creating a hypnotic effect. All sane creatures within 60 feet of the allip must succeed on a DC 15 Will save or be fascinated for 2d4 rounds. While a target is fascinated, the allip can approach without breaking the effect, but at attack by the allip breaks the effect. This is a sonic, mind-affecting compulsion effect. Creatures that successfully save cannot be affected by the same allip's babble for 24 hours. The save DC is Charisma based.

Madness (Su) Anyone targeting an allip with thought detection, mind control, or telepathic ability makes direct contact with its tortured mind and takes 1d4 points of Wisdom damage.

Touch of Insanity (Su) The touch of an allip deals 1d4 points of Wisdom damage. A successful critical hit causes 1d4 points of Wisdom damage and 1 point of Wisdom drain. On each successful attack, an allip gains 5 temporary hit points.

Treasure: The treasure here is vast, almost beyond measure. Its contents are not detailed here, since by the agreement under which the player character began the adventure the wealth herein belongs to the Wizards of the Four Winds, and the PC is merely to locate the treasure. Additionally, the Hovitos will not respond favorably to seeing anyone loot Cipactli's Maw, something tantamount to stealing from the gods in their minds. However, a discreet PC can comfortably hide the following on his person without drawing the attention of the Hovitos or Wizards of the Four Winds: 2000gp worth of gems, jewels, or coins; two potions of his choice; a scroll with any combination of arcane spells totaling ten caster levels; and one of the following magical items: *staff of spell storing*, *minor ring of energy resistance (fire)*, *wand of summon summoning III*, or *cape of the mountebank*.

Upon return, the player character is also welcomed into the brethren of the Wizards of the Four Winds. The exact benefits are up to the GM and the nature of his campaign, but should include a +2 circumstance bonus on all Knowledge checks made in their libraries and the services of an unflinchingly loyal follower (2nd level human expert) to serve as personal chronicler and servant. Less tangible but no less valuable is the benefit of having such as a powerful order as patrons and allies.

APPENDIX

The following are the natives hired to guide the PC and a sample PC for fast and convenient play; however, players are welcome to create their own PCs.

BARRANCA AND SATIPO

Barranca and Satipo are twin brothers who serve as porters and guides for the player character. Somewhat shifty, they will involve themselves in whatever activity will make them money: they've traded with natives, hunted and trapped, prospected for jade and silver, guided expeditions into the jungle, and even turned to banditry on occasion. But as long as the money holds out and they are treated well, they remain loyal to their current client

Barranca and Satipo are virtually indistinguishable from one another. They both sweat profusely and their black, straight hair is always matted to their heads. Their clothes are always stained with sweat and dirt, and rumpled. Superstitious and fearful, they often have a worried look about them, and their dark eyes always seem crushed together with anxiety. They will under no circumstance enter a ruin, cave, or other place of looming danger....they're paid to guide and carry trapping, they will plaintively point out, not die in some gods forsaken hole. Barranca and Satipo begin play as Friendly, but their attitude worsens by one each time the player character compels them through Diplomacy or Intimidation to do something against their better judgment. When they become Hostile, they begin to plot against their client, looking for an opportunity to rob him or, if that seems unlikely, to abandon him to the jungle.

BARRANCA AND SATIPO

Male human rogue 1

Init +2; **Senses** Perception +5

DEFENSE

AC 13, touch 13, flat-footed 10 (+2 Dex, +1 dodge)

hp 8 (1d8)

Fort +1, **Ref** +4, **Will** +1

OFFENSE

Speed 30ft.

Melee machete +1 (1d6+1)

STATISTICS

Str 12, **Dex** 15, **Con** 11, **Int** 11, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 9

Base Atk +0; **CMB** +1; **CMD** 13

Feats Dodge

Skills Appraise +2, Bluff +2, Climb +5, Profession (Trapper) +2, Profession (Prospecting) +2, Sense Motive +5, Stealth +5, Survival (Jungle) +5, Swim +2

Languages Common

SQ trapfinding

Gear Packs, machete, coil of rope

SAMPLE PLAYER CHARACTER

BARAEL FULLIS

Male human Wizard 5

CG Medium humanoid

Init +3; **Senses** Perception +6

DEFENSE

AC 16, touch 12, flat-footed 15 (+4 armor, +1 dex, +1 deflection) *

hp 30 (5d6+10)

Fort +3, **Ref** +4, **Will** +6

* Includes bonus from mage armor spell

OFFENSE

Spd 30 ft./x4

Melee Quarterstaff +3 1d6+1 20/x3

Ranged Crossbow, light +3 1d8 19-20/x2

Special Attacks cantrips, divination specialist bonus

Spells Prepared (CL 5)

3rd—*arcane sight, dispel magic*

2nd—*continual flame, invisibility, protection from arrows, see invisibility*

1st—*detect secret doors, identify, mage armor, magic missile, shield*

0—*arcane mark, detect magic, detect poison, light, mage hand, read magic*

School Powers *forewarned, diviner's fortune*

STATISTICS

Str 12, **Dex** 12, **Con** 14, **Int** 15, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +2, **CMB** +3; **CMD** 15

Feats Arcane Strike, Lightning Reflexes, Magical Aptitude, Scribe Scroll, Self-sufficient, Spell Mastery

Skills Appraise +8, Heal +6, Knowledge (arcana) +8, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +6, Knowledge (geography) +8, Knowledge (local) +6, Perception +6, Profession (cartographer) +8, Spellcraft +8, Stealth +6, Survival +6, Use Magic Device +8

Languages Common, Draconic, Dwarven

SQ arcane bond (amulet), scribe scroll, traits [Courageous (Combat), Dangerously Curious (Magic)]

Combat Gear Quarterstaff, light crossbow, *ring of protection* +1

Other Gear Explorer's Outfit, Spell component pouch, Waterskin, Spyglass, *Wand of scorching ray* (50 charges), Handy Haversack, Block and Tackle, Chain (10 ft.), Rope, silk (100 feet), Grappling hook, Bucket, Shovel, Hammer, Crowbar, Empty sack (x5), Tent, Bedroll, Pot, iron, Rations, trail (5 days), Tindertwig x20, Inkpen x3, Parchment (10 sheets), Vial of ink x4 (black, red, blue, green), Climber's kit, Healer's kit, Vial of antitoxin x3, Sunrod x5, Smokestick x2, Tanglefoot bag, Flask of acid x2, Flask of alchemist's fire x2, Flask of holy water x2, Thunderstone x2, Tindertwig x20, *Potion of cure light wounds* x4, *Potion of cure moderate wounds* x1

Spellbook (opposition schools—necromancy, enchantment): 0—*acid splash, arcane mark, dancing lights, detect magic, detect poison, flare, ghost sounds, light, mage hand, mending, message, open/close, prestidigitation, read magic*; 1st—*detect secret doors, identify, mage armor, magic missile, protection from evil, shield*; 2nd—*continual flame, invisibility, protection from arrows, see invisibility*; 3rd—*arcane sight, dispel magic*

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Courageous (Combat) +2 saves vs. fear effects

Dangerously Curious (Magic) +1 to Use Magic Device checks. Use Magic Device is always a class skill for you.

ONE ON ONE ADVENTURES #16

THE LOST CITY OF BRANSIK

BY JEFFREY TADLOCK

AN ADVENTURE FOR ONE ROGUE LEVELS 6-8



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One on One Adventures are for one player and one GM. However, they are easily modified for a traditional party of four players and one GM.

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In *The Lost city of Bransik*, the PC is approached by Neekolist Rauveen to recover the spellbook of the powerful mage, Herinack Dersuni. The mage's library/workshop was in the Lost City of Bransik which was swallowed up in an earthquake centuries ago. Offering a handsome reward, plus spoils from the recovery operation, Neekolist Rauveen wants the PC to find this lost city, descend into its ruins and find the library.

The library is well protected by numerous traps and challenges, the PC must also race a rival wizard clan's rogue to the spellbook to keep it out of the Gray Scorpion's hands. *The Lost city of Bransik* is an adventure for one GM and a single PC rogue level 6-8.

It's important to remember that a single PC faces unique and dangerous challenges. Unlike within a party concept, a single character has no one to rely on in time of need, and their range of abilities will remain limited. The GM should keep this fact in mind when running the adventure; running a single-player adventure requires forethought, care, and flexibility. Likewise, the player should bear in mind the limitations of a single character in terms of skill and combat ability.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

Centuries ago the city of Bransik was a small, but thriving city in the grasslands. Though the area was difficult for bountiful farming, the city served as an excellent first stop for miners coming down from the mountains a day's ride away.

The city provided an out of the way location for Herinack Dersuni, the wizard, to dabble in his studies of shadow magics. The population provided access to materials he needed in his studies, but privacy from those who might intrude. In return he maintained a small library in his home that he allowed certain city folk to visit.

A violent earthquake rocked the city swallowing large portions of the city into chasms which were nearly as quickly sealed up again as the trembling subsided. Much of the city lay destroyed, resting precariously in underground caverns. Herinack Dersuni's library and workshop survived the plummet due to the powerful magics with which he had laced the structure.

Several years ago a young wizard by the name of Neekolist Rauveen discovered an ancient map showing the location of Bransik. His curiosity piqued, Neekolist researched the city and learned of Herinack's workshop and library and more of the dangerous shadow magics he was learning to work with. Desiring this knowledge, Neekolist Rauveen has narrowed down the location of the lost city of Bransik close enough to front a recovery operation to retrieve the spellbook of Herinack from his library. Not skilled in such recovery and fearing he is being watched by the local Gray Scorpions wizard clan, Neekolist has decided to hire an individual to recover this spellbook for him.

SCALING THE ADVENTURE

This adventure is designed for a single rogue character. Due to the nature of the adventure a rogue character is strongly recommended. The adventure can be easily scaled upwards to be played with a party of characters of approximately 6th to 8th level.

Encounter Area 1: Cave Entrance: Add 1 Ankheg

Encounter Area 2: Raven's Roost: Add 1 Giant Black Widow Spider

Encounter Area 4: Cave Tunnel: Advance x2 Bat Swarm

Encounter Area 5: Warehouse: Add 2 Cave Fishers

Encounter Area 7: Garden: Add 2 Yellow Musk Creepers

Encounter Area 12: Advance (x1) both of the Guardian Phantom Armors

Encounter Area 17: Remove Young Template, Add Advanced Template

Encounter Area 18a: (Fake Spellbook Room): Add 1 Advanced (x1) Shadow Wolf

Encounter Area 18b: (Real Spellbook Room): Add 2 Shadow Conjured Babau Demons

THE OFFER

Moving through the streets of the city under early evening skies you watch as people pass by in the street. People rush home to dinner, market stalls close, and drunken men stumble from one tavern to another as the sun lowers in the sky. The long shadows of the city pass across the street. The alleys grow darker as the night sets in and a new class of citizen takes up residence there, ready to earn their illicit wages in the shadows.

A young girl runs up the street, weaving her way through the people. She draws close to you and thrusts a rolled parchment towards you, nodding her head as she does so. Dropping the parchment she twists away, hurriedly moving through the crowd, before cutting down a side street.

Neekolist Rauveen paid the young girl to deliver the parchment. She was chosen for the fact she is especially nimble and for the fact she is deaf and mute. Should the girl be caught as she delivers the parchment, she will be unable to answer any questions.

The rolled parchment is heavier than expected and sealed with a wax seal depicting a spiral with a vertical staff intersecting it. Within the parchment are two coins attached with melted wax at either end. One coin is a platinum piece, the other a polished silver coin with the same spiral pattern intersected by a staff on one side, an open tome on the other. The following is written on the parchment in flowing script:

Greetings,

Please forgive the circumstances in which I had this letter delivered to you. I trust you understand the need for discretion when appropriate.

Your reputation is not unknown to me and it is for that I seek out your services. However, there is much too much to discuss in this correspondence.

I would request to meet with you later this evening. I have made arrangements for a private booth at the Silver Tankard just outside the market district. Order a Red Tailed Ale at the bar and pay for it with the silver coin attached to this parchment. The barkeep will seat you at the booth I have set aside. The platinum piece is to help pay for your troubles.

*Regards,
NK*

THE MEETING

The Silver Tankard is a wide, three-storied building that sits across the street from several elaborate manor houses, many four stories in height with stone walls enclosing each. Two rare Elven Shapewith trees are potted in front of the Tankard.

Inside the Silver Tankard is a great common room crowded with people. A heavily lacquered cedar bar sits on the left side of the room with mugs hanging from a rack above. The back wall has a row of curtained booths for customers demanding a more private dining experience. On the right wall of the

common room a fieldstone fireplace casts a warming light on the near tables.

Provided the character buys a Red Tailed Ale and uses the silver coin to pay for the drink, the barkeep, Singrid Blacketter, will lead the character to the second private booth from the left side and draw the curtain shut.

After the character has sat for several minutes a rapping sound comes from the side panel of the booth along the wall.

Sitting in the booth a soft rapping sound comes from the side panel. Moments later the panel slides open revealing a robed servant beckoning you to follow him into a dark passage.

The booth has a false panel granting access to a tunnel that leads beneath the street to one of manors on the other side of the street. Neekolist takes many precautions to try to keep his meetings private. This is one of them.

The PC will be led through a tunnel lit magically by smokeless lanterns. The tunnel leads a short distance to a set of steep stairs descending to another tunnel crossing beneath the street.

The tunnel leads to an iron door the robed guide unlocks. The foyer room has a small sitting bench carved of oak in it and an oaken door, banded in iron, to the west. The servant disables the wards on the door by holding a ring on his finger to three different points on the door and then raps twice on a particular spot on the door.

Beyond the open door a well-furnished sitting room is stocked well with plentiful and comfortable seating and a wall lined with shelves containing many tomes. A chandelier with flickering flames in its small lanterns light the room. Two other doors leave this room, both wooden, stained a dark brown with brass workings adorning them.

Several minutes pass before Neekolist Rauveen arrives via the western door. PCs searching this room before the wizard arrives find the room's furnishings of high quality, costing more than many common people could hope to make in years of labor. The bookshelf contains numerous volumes ranging from stories of legend to reference books containing maps of far off lands.

Read the following when Rauveen enters the room.

The western door of the room swings open on well-oiled hinges as a slender, young man wearing a long blue robe enters, gold and silver rings adorning his fingers as his gaze falls upon you. He closes the door behind him and offers a nod as he greets you.

"It is a pleasure to meet you finally," the man opens. "My name is Neekolist Rauveen and it is I who had the message delivered to you that brought you to my residence. My apologies for the series of actions required to actually meet in person."

"Allow me to discuss why I requested your presence." Neekolist continues, "Some time ago I discovered a map that labeled the location of a city named Bransik in a remote grasslands region some distance from here."

"I began seeking out maps from many sources, trying to find this city marked on them but was unsuccessful. My search then turned to learning more of this city which consumed much of my time before finally finding several pages describing the city in a tome I found in an estate of an elderly book collector."

"There I learned more of this city that was said to have been claimed by the earth in a chasm opened by an earthquake and as quickly covered again, gone from the face of the planet. Living within this city was a powerful mage, strong with the arts and a spellbook detailing many



secrets of the art thought long lost to those of us who practice in the weave. I desire this spellbook."

"I fear my research has not gone unnoticed and I must recruit another to find this lost city and retrieve this book for me. This is why I requested audience with you. I believe you are capable of retrieving this spellbook for me."

"I will provide you with a rough map of the region and this pendant I have enchanted with magics to help you find the entrance to this lost city." Neekolist says, holding a gold-chained pendant with a swirling red ruby in the center.

"Your efforts will be great, I am certain this wizard protected his library and workshop with wards that would have survived the most catastrophic of events. Your stealth and skills at bypassing such wards will surely be put to the test." Neekolist states. "But I offer you compensation to make your troubles worthwhile."

Neekolist will happily answer questions he can. He will answer questions about who might be watching his movements, but in this area he intentionally remains vague.

Compensation: Neekolist offers a 3,000gp reward for return of the spellbook he desires. Upon acceptance of the arrangement he offers 500gp, 2 potions of cure moderate wounds, and 1 potion of neutralize poison.

POSSIBLE QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

What else do you know about the lost city of Bransik?

Neekolist can tell the PC he has learned the city was swallowed up in an earthquake many centuries ago. The city was of smaller size, and facilitated the trading of the mined resources from the hills a day's ride out. The surrounding land was too rocky to sustain any serious farming. A small group of scholars also made the city their home with a small school based in the city.

The city is said to have been swallowed up in a large chasm opened by the earthquake and sealed in when the chasm shifted shut. Some pages from an obscure explorer's journal seems to indicate parts of the city structurally survived partially intact.

The city is about two days away in a remote section of grasslands

How will I identify the spellbook?

The manuscripts describe it as a large book, nearly 2 feet by 3 feet in dimensions with a soft black leather cover mottled with dark toned red swirls. Under shadowy light it appears the swirls actually move across the book. The book is just shy of six inches thick and the edges of the pages in the book are gilded in silver.

Who is watching you?

Neekolist believes the Gray Scorpion sect of wizards have become interested in the research he has been doing. He knows the spellbook he seeks is likely to unlock secrets of magic lost to the years, the Gray Scorpions appear to want the tome as well. He does not know how much they know of his goal of obtaining the spellbook.

How will the pendant help me find the lost city?

Neekolist has enchanted the pendant to help find the entrance based on his research. He advises the ruby set in the center will begin to glow and pulsate more quickly as the PC nears the entrance. He suspects the powers will fade once in the city or at the wizard's library due to stronger magics.

AFTER THE MEETING

When the PC's questions have been answered Neekolist will summon the servant and have the PC escorted back to the Silver Tankard and returned to the private booth. The PC will be free to leave from the tavern.

Additional Knowledge Gathering: After the meeting the PC may wish to learn more about his new employer. Allow the character to make Knowledge (local) or Diplomacy checks to gather information.

DC 10: Rauveen is known as a wealthy individual who most believe inherited his wealth from his parents upon their unfortunate death.

DC 15: Neekolist is said to be a gifted wizard and learning his craft quickly. Though not seeking the public spotlight, he seems to be thought of favorably by those who know him.

DC 20: Neekolist has spent a large amount of time in the past year or so seeking out maps and leaving the city on trips to seek out larger libraries. Some say he is on the verge of a great discovery.

DC 25: Since Neekolist has returned to the city several months ago he has rarely been seen in public. Most of his interactions have been through messengers and agents on his behalf.

DC 30: Neekolist is believed to have caught the attention of the Gray Scorpions for his rumored discoveries.

LEAVING THE CITY

How the PC leaves the city will influence how far behind the rogue hired by the Gray Scorpions will be. If the PC makes efforts to spot a tail or seeks to leave the city quietly he will be able to elude the rogue sponsored by the Gray Scorpions.

The city gates are only opened during the daylight hours. There are two sets of city gates, one to the east and one to the west. Each gate is closed during the night and guarded by eight city guards. The city walls stand 40-feet high and could be scalable. The walls are patrolled by two groups composed of four city guards each.

Passing through the gates during the day is easy. However if the PC passes through the gates during the day, the Gray Scorpions rogue has informants who will report this to the rogue, putting her closer to the PC's trail.

The PC could choose to scale the walls of the city and leave under cover of darkness. The PC must make efforts to avoid the roaming patrol to avoid detection. Avoiding the patrol is not difficult for an observant (DC 10 Perception) PC taking the time to learn the pattern.

If a PC is caught scaling the wall, the city guard will attempt to arrest the individual. They will not question the PC extensively and will lock them in the city dungeon for 3 days before being released.

The PC could also attempt to bribe a guard at the gate to allow them through in the evening. A small door does exist that a guard could allow the PC to pass through. By asking questions the PC could learn there is one guard on the night shift at the East gate particularly susceptible to bribes named Keldric Raumtom.

Attempting to bribe a guard other than Keldric can result in the PC spending one night in jail for attempting to bribe a city guard.

GRAY SCORPIONS ROGUE

The Gray Scorpions have hired a rogue to watch Neekolist and his interactions. The rogue is wise to the ways of Neekolist and has been using a hat of disguise to monitor the Silver Tankard. Familiar with the private booth, the rogue will have determined the PC is the one tasked with Neekolist's mission. The Gray Scorpions rogue will attempt to determine where the PC is going. If the PC fails to take precautions to hide their exit from the city, the Gray Scorpion rogue will be able to follow the PC more easily. If the PC takes precautions to hide their exit, the Gray Scorpion rogue will need to make full use of their contacts to learn the PC has left the city.

These early decisions by the PC affect the Gray Scorpion rogue's actions during the course of the adventure. There are several key locations where this comes into play over the course of this adventure. The Gray Scorpions rogue is crafty and realizes she needs the PC to find the spellbook. She will only move against the PC when she deems it appropriate.

TO THE LOST CITY OF BRANSIK

Once beyond the city walls, travel to the region indicated on the rough map Neekolist provided is not extraordinarily difficult as it is long. A GM is welcome to add in an environmental hazard such as torrential rains or anything of the like to further complicate the PC's journey beyond the encounters noted here.

The journey to the region indicated on the map takes two days to reach by horse.

Gray Scorpion Rogue: If the Gray Scorpion's rogue knows the PC left the city, she will be lurking a short distance from the PC's first camp. Unless the PC is particularly careless she will be content to simply watch the camp during the night. If the PC is careless and leaves camp, leaves things behind, the rogue might approach to search the PC's belongings. This affords the Gray Scorpion rogue a chance to find the rough map or pendant depending on where the PC has kept them. The Gray Scorpion rogue has an invisibility potion to assist with this subterfuge.

If the PC was able to leave the city unnoticed by the Gray Scorpion rogue, she will be 4 to 6 hours behind the PC and will not be near the camp.

TRAVEL ENCOUNTER

The route to the lost city's entrance is not without its own dangers. There is a 25% chance (increasing by 10% per day of travel) of a random encounter. A GM can also choose one of the encounters below if it seems warranted.

Encounter	CR
1 Lycanthrope, Wereboar	2
1 Ogre	3
1d2 Aurochs	2
2d4 Elk	1

THE LOST CITY OF BRANSIK

Centuries ago the city of Bransik was swallowed up by a large chasm caused by an earthquake. The city tumbled into a chasm and the last tremblings of the earth closed fallen city to the light of day.

The ruined city now rests in two main caverns surviving the earthquake. The majority of buildings in the city collapsed, turning into rubble in this natural disaster. Several buildings did survive the natural disaster intact.

There are two major caverns the ruined city resides in. The remains of the city in the first cavern were the hardest hit, the majority of the buildings left in ruin. Another precarious slope leads to the second cavern. The majority of buildings have been reduced to rubble here as well, though several structures survived the plummet more successfully.



A portion of the city lies underwater in a third chamber, fed by a waterfall from the surface. Some buildings remain intact in the flooded cavern, though exploration of those buildings is very difficult due to darkness and cold waters of the underground lake. The third cavern is an area of potential expansion should a GM wish.

The side-view map of the underground city included in this adventure is designed more to help orient the GM's top-level description of the environment rather than to act as a literal this-is-what's-here visual description. There are several described encounters in this adventure that can appear in any location in the city and the GM is encouraged to place them along whatever path the character chooses. Were the encounters placed in a single fixed location via a detailed, low-level map, there is a high likelihood that the player would bypass most (if not all) of them on the way to the library because the city is a large environment.

ENVIRONMENT

The caverns are dark and a light source is needed for PCs without darkvision. Most of the terrain is strewn with rubble making travel difficult. Ruined building encounters in these caverns are dangerous. The rubble is often poorly balanced and poses the threat of rock slide or collapse to those working through it.

The majority of buildings in the caverns are severely damaged. Many are collapsed completely and others in such precarious position that casual observation reveals them much too unsteady to venture into.

Should a PC decide to enter a near-collapsed building they risk triggering a complete collapse for each round spent in the building. The GM should make this threat readily apparent by describing shifting rubble, small collapses near the PC, and sounds of falling rock before rolling chances for total collapse. There is a 10% chance of collapse per round, increasing by 5% each round the PC remains in the building. Severity of the collapse ranges from 1d6 to 12d6 at the GM's discretion (or roll a 1d12 to determine how many d6 to roll). If building rubble collapses on a PC he or she can make a strength check to escape (DC 20). Each round spent trapped deals an additional 1d6 damage.

I: ABOVE THE LOST CITY

Tall grasses move in the light breeze as the crunchy soil at your feet is replaced by broken, weathered cobblestones. The ancient, worn stones cross the area, barely visible due to the overgrowth.

The cobblestones from the ancient streets of the lost city of Bransik still dot the grasslands near the entrance. The cobblestoned streets show their age with rounded, weathered corners, splitting stones and weeds growing in the gaps.

The streets run in a grid pattern, disappearing for short gaps where stones have crumbled into the soil itself. At the center of this area a small hole exists, choked with overgrown weeds (DC 20 Perception).

An ankheg has made the entrance to the lost city of Bransik its home. It hunts many of the Aurochs roaming the area by lurking beneath the surface before preying on them. It lies in wait ready to attack any unsuspecting victims wandering near its lair.

Besides the obvious danger of the ankheg, descending into the hole can be a challenge. Clearing away the weeds obscuring the hole reveals a dark passage descending

vertically for fifteen feet, before the wall undercuts the surface and reaches a loose slope of rubble nearly beyond the angle of repose. Securing a rope can be a challenge in this region, with little to attach it to at the top. A prepared character with pitons or similar objects can secure a rope for the descent. (DC 20 Climb or DC 5 Climb with rope).

If the character does use a secured rope to descend and leaves it in place, the NPC rogue will have an easier time of finding the character rogue. The NPC rogue may even sabotage any ropes left behind by the PC, relying on her own rope of climbing to facilitate their own exit.

Once the PC descends the near vertical portion of the hole leading into the caverns, there is a slope requiring steady feet to descend successfully (DC 20 Acrobatics). A rope could be set to make this descent safer.

Gray Scorpion Rogue: If the rogue is close behind, she will watch as the PC battles the Ankheg making use of the scrubby grasslands to stay concealed. She will not interfere with the PC entering the city. Once the PC descends, she will allow 30 minutes to pass and then approach the entrance and sabotage any means the PC used to descend remaining on the surface. This includes partially cutting the rope to weaken it significantly, loosening a piton to secure the rope, etc.

If the Gray Scorpion rogue is further behind she will have a more difficult time finding the entrance once the PC descends. Movement will be slower for her as she attempts to follow the PC's trail.

Provided the PC startles the bats while underground (Encounter Area 4), this will signal to the following rogue where the entrance to the city is. When she reaches it, she will sabotage the equipment left on the surface as above.

ANKHEG

N Large magical beast

Init +0; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, tremorsense 60 ft.; **Perception** +8

CR 2

800 XP

DEFENSE

AC 16, **touch** 9, **flat-footed** 16 (+7 natural, -1 size)

hp 28 (3d10+12)

Fort +6, **Ref** +3, **Will** +2

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., burrow 20 ft.

Melee bite +5 (2d6+4 plus 1d4 acid and grab)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.

Special Attacks spit acid

STATISTICS

Str 16, **Dex** 10, **Con** 17, **Int** 1, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 6

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +7 (+11 grapple); **CMD** 17 (25 vs. trip)

Feats Skill Focus (Perception), Toughness

Skills Climb +8, Perception +8

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Spit Acid (Ex) Once every 6 hours, an ankheg can spit a 30-foot line of acid. Creatures struck by this acid take 4d4 points of acid damage (Reflex DC 14 halves). Once an ankheg uses this attack, it must wait 6 hours before using it again. Additionally, during this time period, its bite attack does not inflict any additional acid damage. As a result, an ankheg does not use this ability unless it is desperate or frustrated, most often spitting acid when reduced to fewer than half its full normal hit points or when it cannot not successfully grab an opponent. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Treasure: The worn leather backpack of a lone adventurer slain years ago is lodged into the side of the hole. It contains 2 *potions of cure light wounds*, alchemist fire, 43gp, and 12sp.

CAVERN ONE

Opening before you is a large cavern littered with the rubble ruins of a once prosperous city. Darkness permeates the quiet cavern. The piles of stone spill into what were once streets, the feel of cobblestones beneath your feet.

In the shadows some buildings appear to have partially survived the tumble into the chasm; walls with cracks running through them, window shutters shattered, and buildings knocked from their foundations. Other buildings appear much too fragile to enter even if they are still standing; cracks spidering through walls and splinters of wooden doorways heavy with the weight of stone above.

The light from the pendant Neekolist provided fades in intensity as you reach the floor of the cavern though it continues to pulsate in an accelerating manner.

The first cavern is the smaller of the two and contains the fewest buildings having survived the catastrophic earthquake. With the majority of the cavern filled with collapsed portions of the city, there are two buildings remaining intact enough for safe exploration. For each 30 to 60 minutes the character spends exploring this chamber, allow them to discover one of these buildings.

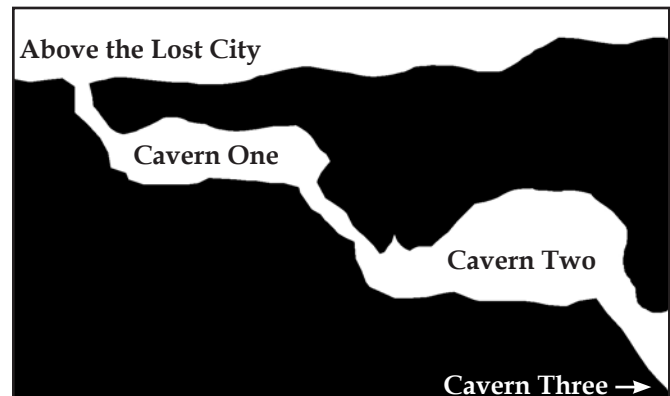
Exploration: The caverns containing the ruined city are enormous. To assist with determining what area the PC will encounter roll a d3 for this area. The result indicates which encounter area the PC find during their exploration. The GM is welcome to determine without random roll what area the PC discovers as well. Assume 30 minutes of in-game time or more pass between each exploration area.

- 1: The Raven's Roost (Area 2)
- 2: Hexham Hall (Area 3)
- 3: Tunnel to Second Cavern (Area 4)

Gray Scorpions Rogue Progress: If the rogue has been on the PC's tail, the rogue will also descend into the first cavern after one hour passes. Once the rogue descends allow the PC perception checks (DC 30) to notice being followed. It could be noise of rocks moving, a hint of light as the rogue tries to pick their way through the ruins, etc.

If the rogue is still several hours behind, she will descend into the cavern, though the PC may have already moved to the

LOST CITY SIDE-VIEW



second cavern by this point. If that is the case, the PC does not get perception checks to discover they are being followed. The Gray Scorpions rogue will have an opportunity to detect the PC by perception checks for sounds of combat, rockfall the PC might trigger, and any other action causing undue noise or light.

If the Gray Scorpion rogue has been in the first cavern for 4 hours and unable to find the PC in that time, she will retreat back to the surface. She will set up an ambush for the PC when he returns to the surface.

2: THE RAVEN'S ROOST

Amongst the piles of rubble you make out the remnants of a building appearing mostly intact. An adjacent wall leans heavily against the structure ahead of you. Several large gaping holes dot the wooden roof of the two-story building

Piles of rubble litter the path to the web covered entrance of the building. A wooden sign hangs lopsided from one chain with the words 'The Raven's Roost' carved into the sign, a faded picture of a large nest with black bird barely visible.

The entrance has several strands of thick web covering it. The webs are easily cut through, revealing a main taproom with tables and chairs along the right wall of the room due to the fall during the earthquake. The upper floor is all but destroyed with portions of the roof and interior walls collapsed.

A giant black widow spider has made this structure its home and lurks in the debris of the tables and chairs on the right wall.

GIANT BLACK WIDOW SPIDER

N Large vermin

Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., tremorsense 60 ft.;

Perception +4

DEFENSE

AC 15, touch 11, flat-footed 13 (+2 Dex, +4 natural, -1 size)

hp 37 (5d8+15)

Fort +7, **Ref** +3, **Will** +1

Immune mind-affecting effects

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., climb 30 ft.

Melee bite +6 (1d8+6 plus poison)

Space 10 ft.; Reach 5 ft.

Special Attacks web (+4 ranged, DC 19, 5 hp)

STATISTICS

Str 19, **Dex** 15, **Con** 16, **Int** —, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 2

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +8; **CMD** 20 (32 vs. trip)

Skills Climb* +20, Perception +4, Stealth* +2 (+6 webs); Racial

Modifiers +8 Climb, +4 Perception, +4 Stealth (+8 webs)

SQ strong webs

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Poison (Ex) Bite—injury; save Fort DC 17; frequency 1/round for 6 rounds; effect 1d3Con and staggered; cure 2 saves. Save DC is Con-based with a +2 racial bonus.

Strong Webs (Ex) A black widow's webs gain a +4 bonus to the DC to break or escape.

Treasure: A skeleton garbed in a ripped and worn robe is tangled within the webs. Tarnished bracers or armor +1 encircle its skeletal wrists and coins weigh heavy in one of the robe's pockets. The pocket contains 94gp, 9sp, and 3cp.

3: HEXHAM HALL

The white marbled walls of this building stand out amongst the dingy gray stone of the other ruins about you. Covered with centuries of dust, the building appears to have survived the plummet into the chasm well. Small cracks run through the exterior walls of the building, but the structural integrity of the building appears intact.

A heavy iron door lays sundered open between two wide pillars. The words, Hexham Hall, are deeply carved into the marbled stone above this open doorway, darkness yawning beyond.

This was a court building in the city's past. It is a two-story building with a central courtroom, several meeting chambers and temporary offices as well as a gallery that overlooked the courtroom from the second floor. If the GM desires, Hexham Hall is in good condition and would serve as a good location for camping or a home-base if additional explorations of the lost city are planned.

4: TUNNEL

At the rear of the first cavern is an oversized tunnel slanting steeply down towards a second cavern. The first half of the tunnel can be descended without aid by a cautious person (DC 12 Climb).

Halfway down the tunnel's angle of descent turns more sharply downwards. Near this section a large colony of bats makes their home. Anyone passing through this tunnel will disturb the bats and cause them to wake. The bats will flee towards the surface, flying up through the tunnel to the first cavern and out the entrance.

A PC caught in this bat exodus must endure the attacks of the bats as they swarm out. It takes four rounds for this large number of bats to leave the tunnel. A PC can attempt to move downwards, but will take severe penalties on their climb checks (-10 to their rolls) as they are buffeted by the terrified fleeing bats.

A secondary effect of the bats fleeing the cavern complex is as a signal to the Gray Scorpions' rogue following the PC. If she has not found the PC, the darkening of the sky from the bats exiting the caverns will signal the PC's location.

BAT SWARM

N Diminutive animal (swarm)

Init +2; **Senses** blindsense 20 ft., low-light vision;

Perception +15

DEFENSE

AC 16, touch 16, flat-footed 14 (+2 Dex, +4 size)

hp 13 (3d8)

Fort +3, **Ref** +7, **Will** +3

Defensive Abilities swarm traits; Immune weapon damage

OFFENSE

Speed 5 ft., fly 40 ft. (good)

Melee swarm (1d6)

Space 10 ft.; Reach 0 ft.

Special Attacks distraction (DC 11), wounding

STATISTICS

Str 3, **Dex** 15, **Con** 11, **Int** 2, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 4

Base Atk +2; **CMB** —; **CMD** —

Feats Lightning Reflexes, Skill Focus (Perception)

Skills Fly +12, Perception +15; Racial Modifiers +4 Perception when using blindsense

SQ swarm traits

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Wounding (Ex) Any living creature damaged by a bat swarm continues to bleed, losing 1 hit point per round thereafter. Multiple wounds do not result in cumulative bleeding loss. The bleeding can be stopped by a DC 10 Heal check or the application of a cure spell or some other healing magic.

CAVERN TWO

Upon reaching the floor of this cavern you find yourself before another expansive portion of ruined city. Much like above, rubble choked cobblestone roads branch off from where you stand in several directions in this large cavern.

Darkness makes it difficult to gauge the size of the cavern; the soft sounds of your feet on the ground make it sound larger than the previous cavern.

The light from Neekolist's pendant ceases to pulsate as its light grows dark.

Though many of the buildings of the city are in ruin, there are several that survived the plummet beneath the earth intact. Some of the intact buildings include a warehouse, blacksmith's shop, a rubble strewn city garden, and the building the PC seeks, the wizard's library and workshop.

Many buildings are in a precarious state of near collapse. The GM should make it obvious to the PC these are near collapse. If the PC insists on entering one, use the guidelines noted above to handle the potential chance for collapse. To assist with determining what area the PC will encounter roll a d4 for this area. The result indicates which encounter area the PC finds during their exploration. The GM is welcome to determine without random roll what area the PC discovers as well. Assume 30 minutes of in-game time or more pass between each exploration area encounter.

- 1: Warehouse (Area 5)
- 2: Blacksmith (Area 6)
- 3: Garden Park (Area 7)
- 4: Wizard's Library (Area 8)



5: WAREHOUSE

The towering structure ahead appears to have occupied an entire city block at one point. It stands nearly three stories tall; mounds of rubble surround the building. Others in the area appear not to have survived the rapid descent as well. Several oversized doors capable of fitting three horse drawn wagons side-by-side when open dot the building. A smaller, heavily dented iron door sits in the building on one corner.

This old warehouse used to store ore mined from the nearby mountains. Several toppled carts spilling the mined ore litter the open floor of this structure.

Amongst the high ceiling of this structure a cave fisher lurks preying on creatures passing through this structure.

CAVE FISHER

N Medium vermin

Init +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +0

CR 2

600 XP

DEFENSE

AC 15, touch 11, flat-footed 14 (+1 Dex, +4 natural)

hp 22 (3d8+9)

Fort +6, **Ref** +2, **Will** +1

Immune mind-affecting effects

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft., climb 20 ft.

Melee 2 claws +5 (1d4+3)

Ranged filament +3 (drag)

Special Attacks pull (filament, 10 feet)

STATISTICS

Str 17, **Dex** 12, **Con** 17, **Int** —, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 4

Base Atk +2; **CMB** +5 (+9 with pull); **CMD** 16 (28 vs. trip)

Skills Climb +11

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Filament (Ex) A cave fisher can fire a thin filament of sticky silk as a standard action. This touch attack has a range of 60 feet and no range increment. A creature struck by a cave fisher's filament becomes attached to the sticky thread. As a standard action, a creature can rip the filament free with a DC 20 Strength check. A caught creature can also attempt to escape a filament by making a DC 25 Escape Artist check. A filament is AC 14 (touch 12), has 5 hit points, and has DR 15/slashing. An application of liquid with high alcohol content (or a dose of universal solvent) dissolves the adhesive and releases the creature caught by the filament. A cave fisher can have only one filament active at a time.

Pull (Ex) A cave fisher has a +4 racial bonus on CMB checks made using its pull special attack.

Treasure: Scattered amongst the rubble are the remains of a past victim of the cave fisher. A leather belt pouch still wrapped around the partial remains of a halfling skeleton contains 37gp.

6: BLACKSMITH

A broad awning made of heavy timbers, reinforced with iron brackets tilts heavily towards the cracked cobblestone street. A hand-wide crack runs down one corner of the building, the wooden window shutters hang askew over the window openings. Barely visible through the crooked window shutters is a large anvil.

The timbers creak as a PC moves into the building, but they continue to bear the weight of the dilapidated building. A heavy anvil lies on the cracked stone floor of the room. All blacksmithing tools have been removed from the building.

A PC studying the floor closely (DC 18 Perception) will notice faint signs of heavy booted, humanoid footprints. They appear quite old. Judging from the footprints appearance the owners went through the building rummaging for something.

The prints belong to a scouting party of duergar who scouted portions of the city. It has been several months since the duergar have been here. They were the ones who took all of the blacksmithing tools. They have since retreated to deeper, more difficult to reach portions of the caverns.

7: GARDEN PARK

The fringes of this open courtyard are cluttered with the familiar rubble piles pervasive through these caverns. Visible beyond the rubble surrounding this open courtyard are elaborate walkways in various states of upheaval. Several statues lay toppled over amongst cracked basins of what appear to have once been elaborate and ornate fountains. Several luminescent mosses and mushrooms can be seen about the garden.

This was a large city garden when the city was on the surface. The garden has proven a haven for various types of underground plant life. Different fungus formations, mosses and even worse have grown to make this subterranean garden their home.

A violet fungus resides near the edge of this garden.

VIOLET FUNGUS

N Medium plant

Init -1; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +0

DEFENSE

AC 15, touch 9, flat-footed 15 (-1 Dex, +6 natural)

hp 30 (4d8+12)

Fort +7, **Ref** +0, **Will** +1

Immune plant traits

OFFENSE

Speed 10 ft.

Melee 4 tentacles +4 (1d4+1 plus rot)

Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

STATISTICS

Str 12, **Dex** 8, **Con** 16, **Int** —, **Wis** 11, **Cha** 9

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +4; **CMD** 13

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Rot (Ex) A creature struck by a violet fungus's tentacle must succeed on a DC 15 Fortitude save or the flesh around the point of contact swiftly begins to rot away, exposing raw bone with shocking swiftness. This hideous affliction causes 1d4 points of Strength damage and 1d4 points of Constitution damage. This is a poison effect. The save DC is Constitution-based.

8: WIZARD'S LIBRARY

A two story, square, windowless building lies ahead. It appears shifted slightly to the right on its foundation. The wall of the neighboring building has collapsed against the left wall, rubble piling high.

Slender pillars hold a relief carved roof over a cracked stone apron before two large, rust stained iron doors. Intricate carvings of arcane script surrounding the raised heads of open-mouthed demons are readily visible even from a short distance.

The wizard's library survived the plummet into the earth better than many of the other ruined buildings in the lost city. Only small, hairlines cracks are evident even though the entire building shifted off of its foundation. The left exterior wall of the library seems to bear the weight of the building next to it with ease as there are few signs of it collapsing under the weight.

When the city flourished centuries ago, the wizard would allow some private guests to use the lower floor of the library for their own research. Study tables and a wealth of books were available to those fortunate enough to gain admittance. The second floor was always strictly off limits and the visiting times for the first floor were quite restricted.

There are two primary entrances to the library. The obvious is through the pair of heavily warded iron doors. The other is through a chimney used by the great hearth in the study on the second floor and library on the first floor. The wizard was thorough in his protections and the chimney is also warded and protected with a series of trapped iron grates between the chimney top and hearth openings.

8A: CHIMNEY ENTRANCE

There are two ways to reach the roof for PCs seeking to check the chimney. The more difficult way is to scale the 30-foot wall on a non-rubble side (DC 25 climb).

A PC could also take advantage of the rubble pile on the left wall to make a shorter 15 foot climb (DC 20 climb). The rubble pile is not without dangers and could collapse as the PC scrambles up it. There is a 2 in 6 chance of the rubble pile shifting. The collapsing rubble pile causes a small avalanche of stone causing 2d6 damage (DC 20 Reflex save for half).

Upon reaching the sharply pitched roof the PC will find a chimney towards the rear of the library. The chimney connects to the two fireplaces in the building; the library (Area 11) and the study (Area 14). Using a light source to peer into the chimney reveals a series of iron grates appearing to have weathered the test of time. The first is 2 feet below the top of the chimney, several partial skeletons of unidentified vermin rest on the top grate.

The chimney is a series of three traps. From the top down, a scythe trap, poisoned needle trap, and a falling trap.

Just below the lip of the chimney is a thin, razor sharp blade that slices across the open area unless disabled. The bones of subterranean vermin on the grate below are from creatures trying to enter the chimney.

SCYTHE TRAP

CR 3

Type mechanical; **Perception** DC 23; **Disable Device** DC 25

EFFECTS

Trigger touch; **Reset** automatic

Effect Atk +15 melee (2d6+2)

The next obstacle is the iron grate 2 feet below the opening of the chimney. The gate is hinged to open downwards. A large padlock with a rune (a symbol frequently used by Herinack and non-magical) carved into the side secures the gate. The padlock is trapped.

POISON NEEDLE TRAP**CR 4****Type** mechanical; **Perception** DC 25; **Disable Device** DC 25**EFFECTS****Trigger** touch; **Reset** automatic**Effect** Atk +15 melee (1d4 plus black adder venom)**BLACK ADDER VENOM****Type** Poison, injury; **Save** Fortitude DC 20**Frequency** 1/round for 6 rounds**Effect** 1d2 Con damage; **Cure** 1 save

The next iron grate is another 2 feet down the chimney. A third iron grate can be seen beyond. This iron grate has a padlock securing one side of it. Any weight placed on this iron grate causes it to fall away and trigger a wall of force sealing the hearths from the chimney making entry near impossible while the walls are below the iron grate are quickly coated by an oil-like substance. Should the PC descending the chimney succeed in unlocking the padlock without placing any weight on the grate, the wall of force is not triggered and the walls are not slicked.

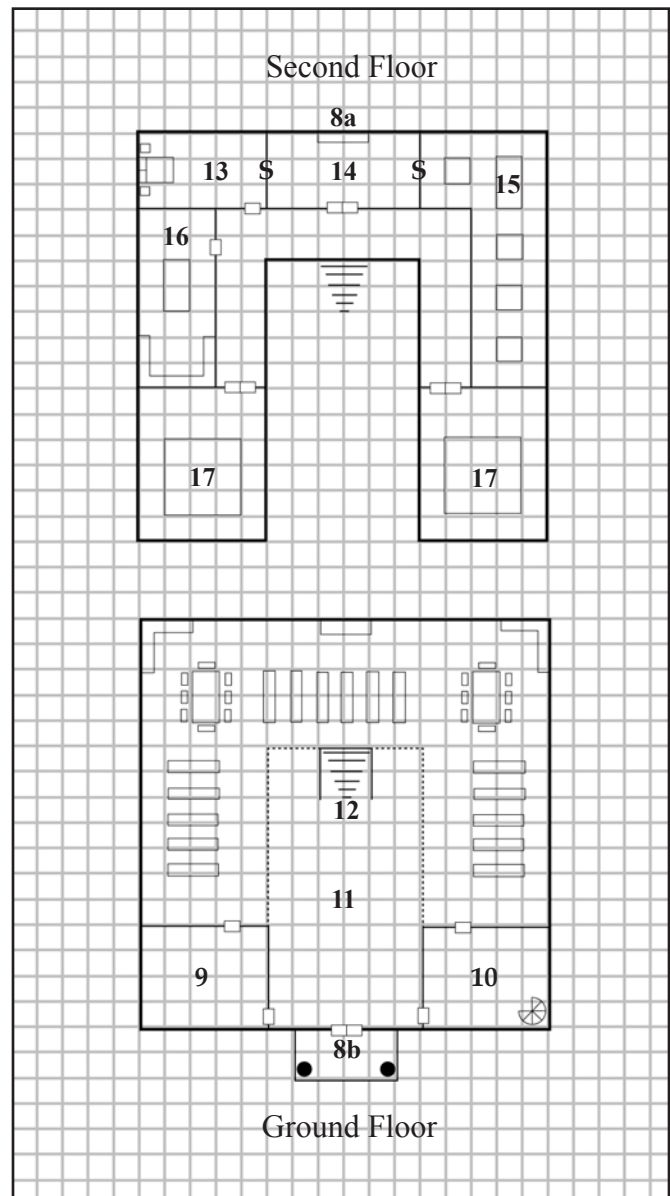
A PC triggering the wall of force may end up at the bottom of the chimney, unable to enter the study or library hearths, searching for some way to ascend or break out of the chimney to avoid a slow death.

COLLAPSING GRATE**CR 3****Type** mechanical; **Perception** DC 25; **Disable Device** DC 25**EFFECTS****Trigger** touch; **Reset** none**Effect** 20-ft.-deep pit (2d6 falling damage); DC 30 Reflex avoids (due to oil-like substance) falling to bottom (Area 11); spell effect (wall of force covers hearth)**8B: IRON DOORS**

The porch's cracked stone is the only portion of the building to exhibit significant damage. Even the slender pillars holding the roof overhead show no signs of cracks from the violent descent into the chasm. The roof has relief images of demons battling beleaguered angels.

Two iron doors, stained orange from rust have a series of arcane script circling intricately carved open-mouthed demonic heads on each door. The demonic mouth on the left is shaded darker than the other. Large iron pull rings sit beneath two locks.

The only entrance to the library, the wizard kept it heavily secured with an intricate series of locks and traps. The script engraved in the door is written in an ancient form of shadowtongue. PCs that speak shadowtongue or make a linguistics check (DC 25) are able to decipher an oft repeated phrase, "Make the shadows grow darker."

FAKE LOCKS TRAP**CR 4****Type** magical; **Perception** DC 25; **Disable Device** DC 27**EFFECTS****Trigger** touch; **Reset** automatic, 1 hour**Effect** shadowy fire, 5d4 fire damage, DC16 Reflex for half**WIZARD'S LIBRARY MAP**

The locks above the pull rings are fake. Attempting to open either lock without disabling the trap will trigger the demonic mouths to breathe shadowy fire.

Opening the fake locks (DC 22) results in a resounding click, but does not allow the doors to open. The actual locks to the door reside inside the mouths of the demonic figures.

These demonic mouth locks (DC 25) are also trapped; the key to bypassing them is to open the locks in the correct order. The order is to start with the lighter colored demonic mouth and then the darker demonic head. The clue to this is the phrase written in shadowtongue on the door, "Make the shadows grow darker."

DEMONIC MOUTH LOCK TRAP**CR 8****Type** magical; **Perception** DC 29; **Disable Device** DC 29**EFFECTS****Trigger** touch; **Reset** automatic, 1 hour**Effect** 1d4+11 fire damage, DC19 Reflex for half

9: STORAGE ROOM

Several shelves are toppled over in this room, having once stood in the center of the room. The floor is littered with writing journals, broken shards of glass, quills, and other sundries. Two wooden desks sit haphazardly against the eastern wall.

This room was once a storage room. Unlike other portions of the library, the shelves and desks in this room felt the effects of the descent into the chasm spilling all their contents about the floor.

The spilled items include blank writing journals, blank sheets of paper, broken glass from ink vials, and other miscellaneous items. There is nothing of significant value in the spilled contents.

There are two doors in the room, one in the north wall and one in the eastern wall.

10: STAIRS

A heavy layer of dust coats the floor and books are strewn across the floor. A splintered bookshelf rests on its side. The southeast corner of the room contains a spiral staircase descending downward.

The books on the floor are centuries old and brittle to the touch. Great care must be taken to avoid having the pages turn to dust. Several of the volumes contain fiction and one intricately details the scandalous affair of a prominent family within the city of Bransik.

The stairway once led down to a basement beneath the library. Now it is choked with rubble before meeting bedrock, the basement destroyed from the collapse into the chasm during the earthquake.

II. MAIN LIBRARY

A great room opens ahead of you consuming the entire first floor of the library. A balcony overlooks the main library from above, stone railings lining the open area. A wide hearth sits along the back wall.

A wide set of marble carved steps lead up to the second level at the far side of the room. To either side of the steps stand tall statues of cloaked, faceless figures.

Bookshelves stand to the left and right. Study tables with unlit lanterns upon them sit in both the northeastern and northwestern corners. The bookshelves are laden with books and appear to have survived the tumultuous descent into the chasm unscathed. The air smells of old books.

The main library consumes most of the first floor of the structure. Numerous tomes remain intact on the bookshelves. Many of the books here would be of value to the right collectors who could understand their value. Though the shelves survived the plummet many of the books have not survived the passage of years.

The study tables at either rear corner of the room are empty save for two lanterns on each. The chairs, lanterns, and tables themselves appear to have been undisturbed from the descent into the chasm.

For each thirty minutes the PC spends searching the library for tomes of value or interest, they find 1d4 tomes until all 8 have been found. A GM may also require a DC 20 Appraise check to determine if the tomes are worth something to a collector or historian.

House Names of Bransik, details several prominent noble houses in Bransik; 75gp

Herbalist's Handbook, contains several herbal recipes lost to the modern world; 125gp

Ironcrag Dwarven Dialects, studies on dialects of the Ironcrag dwarves; 90gp

Ecology of the Auroch, detailed research on Auroch; 35gp

Smelting Processes of Ironton Forge, contains a unique smelting process lost to time; 175gp

The Bransik Family, chronicles several generations of the Bransik family; 100gp

Trials of Gap-Tooth Ridge, a fiction piece popular in Bransik; 110gp

Architecture Evolved, a dated tome on architecture of the era; 145gp

12: GRAND STAIRS

Marble steps of black, white and reddish tones lead up to the second level balcony and layers of heavy dust cover the smooth marble, undisturbed. A red velvet braided rope is hung across the opening at the top and bottom of the stairs.

Two black suits of well-crafted armor flank the base of the stairs. The suits of armor stand nearly six feet tall, a long sword held resting on the floor as their shadowy visages look over the great library.

The two suits of armor are Guardian Phantom Armors. If the red velvet braided rope is disturbed or crossed in any way the Guardian Phantom Armor at the bottom of the steps animate, attacking any who crossed or lowered the rope.

GUARDIAN PHANTOM ARMOR (2)

NE Medium undead

CR 4

1,200 XP

Init +5; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +6

DEFENSE

AC 21, touch 11, flat-footed 20 (+9 armor, +1 Dex, +1 shield)
hp 13 (3d8)

Fort +1, **Ref** +2, **Will** +3

Defensive Abilities channel resistance +2; Immune undead traits

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee mwk longsword +5 (1d8+2/19-20) or 2 slams +4 (1d4+3)

STATISTICS

Str 14, **Dex** 13, **Con** —, **Int** 7, **Wis** 11, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +2; **CMB** +4; **CMD** 15

Feats Improved Initiative, Power Attack

Skills Perception +6, Stealth +6

Languages Common (cannot speak)

SQ freeze

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Freeze (Ex) A guardian phantom armor can hold itself so still it appears to be a normal suit of armor. A guardian phantom armor that uses freeze can take 20 on its Stealthcheck to hide in plain sight, disguised as normal armor.

The stairs themselves are trapped. Once beyond the 6th step the trap activates. From that step forward, every even step has a scythe that strikes out towards the person's ankle.

Type mechanical; **Perception** DC 25; **Disable Device** DC 23

EFFECTS

Trigger touch; **Reset** automatic

Effect Atk +20 melee (2d4)

13: BEDROOM

This sparsely furnished room has a large bed on the far side of the room, covered in a thick black blanket and two end tables on either side of the bed. A small desk with a simple wooden chair sits on the north wall.

This is Herinack Dersuni's simple sleeping quarters. He spent little time here save for a few hours of sleep each night. He spent much more time in the more lavishly equipped study or workshop.

14: STUDY

A large stone hearth is across from the heavy, oaken doors of the room. Above the mantle of the hearth is a dial with three shades of gray on it. Several oversized couches with thick cloth coverings sit in the room. A low table sits between them.

There are secret doors in the eastern and western walls of this room. (DC 25 Perception)

The dial above the stone hearth is part of the puzzle to enter the mirrored rooms. See Area 17 for description on how the dial factors into the puzzle.

15: WORKSHOP

The secret door slides into a pocket in the wall revealing an 'L' shaped room. Several heavy butcher block style tables sit in the southern portion of the room. Vials, beakers containing liquid, and metal clamping rods rest on top of the tables. A shelf with more glassware sits on the eastern wall, seemingly undisturbed from the plummet into the chasm during the earthquake.

The northern portion of the room is devoid of any furnishings, the eastern wall marred black from apparent scorch marks.

Layers of dust cover the tools and glassware in this room. The fluids remaining in several of the beakers are extremely explosive and quite unstable after all of these years. There are six beakers and vials still containing fluid. Disturbing any of the glassware with liquids in them has a 50% chance of spontaneously exploding for 2d6 dmg.

Treasure: Amongst the glassware on the workshop tables near the base of a metal stand is a *wand of magic missile* (43 charges).

16: KITCHEN

A large dining table with elaborate carved legs and chairs for six, sit at one end of this room. In the south side of the room, counters form a 'U' and surround a small wood burning stove for cooking. Cooking utensils and iron skillets hang from hooks in the ceiling.

Herinack Dersuni disliked carrying his scraps to the trash and kept a small gray ooze in a chamber beneath a large sink

opening. Despite the many years this gray ooze has subsisted in the kitchen on small vermin having made their way into this room. The gray ooze still resides here, treating the sink as a sort of lair, although its size has been constrained by its minimal food source. The gray ooze lives in the sink and spends one round extracting itself from the sink to attack. The ooze will leave the room to pursue but is hampered by its movement rate.

GRAY OOZE

CR 3

N Small ooze

800 XP

Init -3; **Senses** blindsight; **Perception** -5

DEFENSE

AC 8, touch 8, flat-footed 8 (-3 Dex, +1 size)

hp 42 (4d8+24)

Fort +7, **Ref** -2, **Will** -4

Defensive Abilities ooze traits; Immune flanking, cold, critical hits, fire, paralysis, poison, polymorph, precision damage, sleep, stunning

OFFENSE

Speed 10 ft.

Melee Constrict (Gray Ooze) +5 (1d4+1/x2) and Slam (Gray Ooze) +5 (1d4+1/x2)

STATISTICS

Str 12, **Dex** 5, **Con** 22, **Int** —, **Wis** 1, **Cha** 1

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +3; **CMD** 10 (can't be Tripped)

Skills Acrobatics -3 (-11 jump), Fly -1, Stealth +1

SQ acid (DC 18), transparent

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Acid (Ex) The digestive acid that covers a gray ooze dissolves metals and organic material, but not stone. Each slam and constrict attack deals 1d6 additional acid damage.

Armor or clothing worn by a creature grappled by a gray ooze takes the same amount of acid damage unless the wearer succeeds on a DC 18 Reflex saving throw. A wooden or metal weapon that strikes a gray ooze takes 1d6 acid damage unless the weapon's wielder succeeds on a DC 18 Reflex save. The ooze's touch deals 12 points of acid damage per round to wooden or metal objects, but the ooze must remain in contact with the material for 1 full round in order to deal this damage. The save DCs are Constitution-based.

Transparent (Ex) Due to its lack of vivid coloration, a gray ooze is difficult to discern from its surroundings in most environments. A DC 15 Perception check is required to notice the gray ooze. Any creature that fails to notice a gray ooze and walks into it automatically suffers damage as if struck by the ooze's slam attack and is immediately subject to a grab attempt by the ooze.

17: MIRRORED ROOMS

The solid double doors ahead are graced with a series of intricate designs depicting swirling shapes and geometric patterns. Iron bands wrap the edges of the doors and the hinges appear hidden from view. Above the door handle is a dial with three shades of gray, ranging from light gray to a dark gray.

Words that match the iron doors at the front of the library are carved into the doors.

The script engraved in the door is written in an ancient form of shadowtongue. PCs that speak shadowtongue or make a linguistics check (DC 25) are able to decipher a repeated phrase

"Make the shadows grow darker." PCs that entered through the front doors of the library will also recognize the script as being the same, even if they could not decipher it.

The rooms beyond are mirrors of each other. Depending on how the dials are set on the double doors and above the hearth in encounter area 14 that protect the rooms dictates whether the PC enters the correct room. Failing to solve the puzzle correctly results in the PC always being in the chamber with the fake spellbook.

Three dials determine this: the dial residing in the study (Area 14) and the dial on each set of doors leading to 17a or 17b. The dials are shaded in three different shades of gray. The dials must be set from lightest to darkest. The study dial will always be the middle shade. Once the dials are set, the room with dial set to the darkest shade of gray must be entered to reveal the true room holding the spellbook. Any other dial combinations or entering the lighter side with the dials set will prevent the PC from entering the actual spellbook chamber.

17A – FAKE SPELLBOOK ROOM

The doors open to reveal a darkened room with a raised platform in the center with a bookstand upon it. A large tome sits open on the stand, cobwebs draped about the volume. Obsidian glyphs have been carved into each of the four walls.

From the opposite corners of the room the darkness itself seems to move as an oversized canine shape of shadow lunges forward and leaps onto the platform at the center of the room, circling the open tome.

When the dials are either set incorrectly or the room with the dial set to the lighter shade of gray is entered the PC will enter to find this false room. Immediately upon entering the chamber a shadow wolf leaps upon the platform and circles the empty podium. The shadow wolf will immediately attack any who set foot on the platform, attempt to take the fake spellbook, or attack it. Shadow wolves were a guardian of choice for Herinack. The shadow wolf will not leave the room even if attacked.



SHADOW WOLF

CE Medium undead (incorporeal)

Init +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., scent; **Perception** +9

DEFENSE

AC 14, touch 14, flat-footed 12 (+2 deflection, +2 Dex)

hp 26 (4d8+8)

Fort +3, **Ref** +3, **Will** +5

Defensive Abilities incorporeal, shadow blend; Immune undead traits

OFFENSE

Speed 50 ft.

Melee incorporeal bite +5 (1d4 Str)

Special Attacks trip (bite)

STATISTICS

Str –, **Dex** 15, **Con** –, **Int** 4, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 15

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +5; **CMD** 17 (21 vs. trip)

Feats Alertness, Improved Initiative

Skills Perception +9, Sense Motive +3, Survival +2 (+6 tracking by scent); **Racial Modifiers** +4 Survival when tracking by scent

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Trip (Ex) A shadow wolf can assume a corporeal form as a free action and bite (as a standard action) a foe in an attempt to trip the opponent. A shadow wolf that hits with its bite attack can attempt to trip the opponent as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity. If the attempt fails, the opponent cannot react to trip the shadow wolf. Shadow wolves use their Dexterity modifier on trip attacks.

The shadow wolf remains corporeal (i.e., it loses its incorporeal traits) for the entire round in which it attempts to trip an opponent. It can assume its incorporeal form on its next turn as a free action.

Shadow Blend (Ex) In any condition of illumination other than full daylight, a shadow wolf can disappear into the shadows, giving it total concealment. Artificial illumination, even a *light* or *continual flame* spell, does not negate this ability; a *daylight* spell, however, will.

The spellbook on the stand is a fake spellbook and is trapped. Anyone touching the spellbook triggers a firetrap. Once the trap is triggered the fake spellbook is destroyed.

FAKE SPELLBOOK TRAP

CR 8

Type magical; **Perception** DC 29; **Disable Device** DC 29

EFFECTS

Trigger touch; **Reset** none

Effect spell effect (firetrap, 1d4+11 fire damage, DC 19
Reflex save for half)

This room can be entered multiple times. Each time the incorrect dial combination or incorrect room (i.e. not the darkest gray) is entered the room repeats. This includes the fake spellbook reappearing on the book stand and any damage caused in earlier encounters being repaired. It is as if the PC entered the room for the first time again.

17B – REAL SPELLBOOK ROOM

The doors open and chilled air spills into the hall revealing a room where the shadows appear to move and eddy about the room. A raised platform of stone is in the center of the room with concentric circles two feet apart carved into its surface. A book stand of wrought iron sits on the platform with a large tome open on it. Cobwebs drape the ornate stand and tome.

Matching obsidian glyphs are emblazoned on each of the four walls. The glyphs appear to absorb any light that is brought into the room.

The obsidian glyphs absorb light causing this room to always be considered dim light.

Anyone stepping upon the raised platform of stone is subject to being anchored by one of the shadowy shapes moving through the room as if affected by the *shadow anchor* spell (DC 17 Will to avoid).

A PC passing the first circle on the platform results in two of the glyphs shooting forth a blast of shadowy fire that rolls over the entire platform. (4d6 fire dmg; DC 18 Reflex for half)

Crossing the second circle on the raised platform causes a pair of shadow conjuration spells (DC 19 to disbelieve) to trigger, summoning two babau demons in the dark corners of the room. The pair of babau demons work in tandem to attempt to sneak up on a PC to gain sneak attack damage in the initial strike.

BABAU DEMONS (2)

CR 3

CE Medium outsider (chaotic, demon, evil, extraplanar) 800 XP
Init +5; Senses darkvision 60 ft., see invisibility; Perception +19

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 11, flat-footed 18 (+1 Dex, +8 natural)

hp 15 (shadow conjuration)

Fort +10, Ref +6, Will +5

Defensive Abilities protective slime; **DR** 10/cold iron or good; **Immune** electricity, poison; **Resist** acid 10, cold 10, fire 10; **SR** 17

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee 2 claws +12 (1d6+5), bite +12 (1d6+5) or longspear +12/+7 (1d8+7/+3), bite +7 (1d6+2)

Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft. (10 ft. with longspear)

Special Attacks sneak attack +2d6

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 7th)

Constant—see *invisibility*

At will—*darkness*, *dispel magic*, *greater teleport* (self plus 50 lbs. of objects only)

1/day—*summon* (level 3, 1 babau at 40%)

STATISTICS

Str 21, Dex 13, Con 20, Int 14, Wis 13, Cha 16

Base Atk +7; CMB +12; CMD 23

Feats Combat Reflexes, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Skill Focus (Stealth)

Skills Acrobatics +11, Climb +12, Disable Device +11, Escape Artist +11, Perception +19, Sense Motive +11, Sleight of Hand +11, Stealth +22; Racial Modifiers +8 Perception, +8 Stealth

Languages Abyssal, Celestial, Draconic; telepathy 100 ft.

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Protective Slime (Su) A layer of acidic slime coats a babau's skin. Any creature that strikes a babau with a natural attack or unarmed strike takes 1d8 points of acid damage

from this slime if it fails a DC 18 Reflex save. A creature that strikes a babau with a melee weapon must make a DC 18 Reflex save or the weapon takes 1d8 points of acid damage; if this damage penetrates the weapon's hardness, the weapon gains the broken condition. Ammunition that strikes a babau is automatically destroyed after it inflicts its damage.

PCs surviving the shadow anchor, shadow fire, and shadow babau demons are left in the room with the spellbook on the wrought iron stand.

The open tome resting on the black stand is nearly two feet by three feet. The leather cover is mottled with red tones seeming to move about the black leather cover of the book. The page edges are gilded in silver and the spidery print on the pages appears to move across the pages.

The stand is not trapped. Herinack Dersuni did use several pages of *explosive runes* within the tome to protect his secrets. There are two pages within the volume containing *explosive runes*. The pages move randomly within the spellbook. There is a 25% chance the page someone attempts to read actually contains the explosive runes.

EXPLOSIVE RUNES TRAP

CR 8

Type magical; Perception DC 28; Disable Device DC 28

EFFECTS

Trigger reading or interacting with pages; **Reset** none

Effect spell effect (*explosive runes*, 6d6 damage, DC 18 Reflex save for half damage for those within 10 feet, but not close enough to read.

LEAVING THE LOST CITY

With the spellbook retrieved the PC must escape the Lost City of Bransik and travel back to Neekolist to return the tome to him. However, the Gray Scorpion rogue will likely be lying in wait unless the PC has eliminated this threat during the course of the adventure.

The rogue will use one of two places to ambush the PC depending on how successful she was in tracking the PC.

LIBRARY AMBUSH

The rogue will use this ambush point if she was able to follow the PC to the library. She will watch most closely the entrance the PC used to enter the library. Provided she has ample time she will look for a position with sufficient cover and use an aimed shot with poisoned (black adder venom) arrow to open the attack.

She will use the cover of her position to afford her another round or two of ranged attacks. If the PC spots her or takes cover, she will leave her position to close on the PC to finish the task.

CAVE ENTRANCE AMBUSH

If the rogue was unable to follow the PC close enough to determine the library location, she will establish an ambush spot near the ruins entrance. She will seek out a location providing some form of cover, even piling stones in place to create an area with cover. She will rely on the sabotaged descending equipment to help weaken the PC.

If the PC uses a rope left in place and fails to check for traps (DC 18 perception) the PC will fall for 3d6 damage (DC 17 Reflex for half) if they attempt to climb the sabotaged rope. Climbing out without aid of a placed rope requires a DC 20 climb check.

Using the cover of the position she will use poisoned arrows to weaken the PC before closing to melee combat.

GRAY SCORPION ROGUE

Half-Elf Assassin 1 Rogue 5

CE Medium Humanoid (elf, human)

Init +7; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +12

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 14, flat-footed 16 (+4 armor, +3 Dex, +1 natural, +1 deflection)

hp 44 (6d8+6)

Fort +2, **Ref** +8 (+1 bonus vs. traps), **Will** +2; +2 vs. enchantments

Defensive Abilities evasion, trap sense, uncanny dodge; Immune sleep; Resist elven immunities

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee +1 Shortsword +8 (1d6+3/19-20/x2) or dagger +6 (1d4+2/19-20/x2) and dagger +6 (1d4+2/19-20/x2)

Ranged +1 Composite shortbow (Str +2) +7 (1d6+3/x3)

Special Attacks death attack (DC 11), sneak attack +4d6

STATISTICS

Str 14, **Dex** 17, **Con** 12, **Int** 11, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +5; **CMD** 19

Feats Improved Initiative, Skill Focus (Stealth), Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (Shortsword)

Skills Acrobatics +11, Bluff +8, Climb +10, Diplomacy +8, Disable Device +12, Disguise +19, Escape Artist +11, Perception +12 (+14 to locate traps), Stealth +15

Languages Common, Elven

SQ elf blood, poison use, rogue talents (befuddling strike, bleeding attack +4), trapfinding +2

Combat Gear *potion of blur*, *potion of cure light wounds*, *potion of cure moderate wounds*, *potion of darkvision*, *potion of invisibility*, *potion of neutralize poison*, alchemist's fire (2), black adder venom (3), flash powder, sunrod (4)

Other Gear +1 *studded leather armor*, +1 *composite shortbow* (Str +2), +1 *shortsword*, arrows (20), dagger, dagger, smoke arrows, *amulet of natural armor* +1, *cloak of resistance* +1, *hat of disguise*, *ring of protection* +1, masterwork backpack, blanket, 16 gp, 5 sp

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Befuddling Strike (Ex) Foe you sneak attack takes -2 on attacks vs you for 1d4 rounds.

Bleeding Attack +4 (Ex) Sneak attacks also deal 4 bleed damage/round.

Death Attack (DC 11) (Ex) You can kill or paralyze for 1d6+1 rounds with a prepared sneak attack.

Poison Use You do not risk poisoning yourself accidentally while poisoning a weapon.

Sneak Attack +4d6 +4d6 damage if you flank your target or your target is flat-footed.

CONCLUSION

The PC's trip back to the main city is apt to be uneventful. Once reaching the city the PC will want to seek Neekolist Rauveen out to return the spellbook to him. The best way to reach him is through the Silver Tankard's barkeep unless other agreements have been made. The barkeep will arrange for the PC to occupy the private booth where Neekolist's servant will be summoned.

Using the secret passage under the street the PC will be led back to Neekolist's study. Neekolist will carefully examine the tome and use several spells of detection to determine whether it is fake. If it passes his examination he will have the agreed upon rewards brought out in a small lockbox. He will turn the lockbox over to the PC.

Neekolist will likely ask some questions about the recovery, was it well guarded, how far into the lost city was it, and such. He will also ask if the PC retrieved any additional tomes from the library. If the PC did, Neekolist will offer to pay the PC for several of those volumes as well after examination (value listed with the tomes from encounter area 11).

Once payments have been made and goods exchanged hands, Neekolist will have his servant take the PC back through the underground secret passages to the Silver Tankard.

PRE-GENERATED CHARACTER

KORMA DENTHED

CR 7

Male human rogue 8

CG Medium Humanoid (human)

Init +7; **Senses** Perception +11

DEFENSE

AC 22, touch 15, flat-footed 22 (+3 armor, +2 deflection, +3 enhancement, +1 natural, +3 Dex)

hp 60 (8d8+24)

Fort +4, **Ref** +9, **Will** +2

Defensive Abilities evasion, improved uncanny dodge, trap sense +2, uncanny dodge

OFFENSE

Spd 30 ft.

Melee +1 *keen rapier* +11/+6 melee (1d6+2/16-20) or

Ranged shortbow +9/+4 (1d6/x3)

Melee +1 *keen rapier* +11 (1d6+2/16-20) or

Ranged shortbow +9 (1d6/x3)

Special Attacks bleeding attack, sneak attack +4d6

STATISTICS

Abilities Str 13, Dex 16, Con 15, Int 15, Wis 11, Cha 13

Base Atk +6; **CMB** +7; **CMD** 20

Feats Combat Expertise, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Mobility, Spring Attack, Weapon Finesse (rapier)^B, Weapon Focus (rapier)^B

Skills Acrobatics +15, Appraise +10, Bluff +11, Climb +12, Diplomacy +10, Disable Device +14, Escape Artist +14, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +7, Knowledge (local) +7, Linguistics +7, Sense Motive +8, Stealth +17, Swim +10, Use Magic Device +11

Languages Common, Dwarven, Elven, Gnoll, Goblin

SQ fast stealth, finesse rogue, trapfinding, weapon training

Gear arrows (20), *amulet of natural armor* +1, backpack, *boots of elvenkind*, *cat's grace potion*, *cloak of elvenkind*, *cure serious wounds potion*, *glamered studded leather armor* +3, *invisibility potion*, +1 *keen rapier*, 2 rations, *ring of protection* +2, rope (silk), shortbow, 5 sunrods, thieves' tools (masterwork), 50 gp

ONE ON ONE ADVENTURES #17
THE 300TH
BY MICHAEL ALLEN
AN ADVENTURE FOR ONE RANGER LEVELS 8-10



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One on One Adventures are for one player and one GM. However, they are easily modified for a traditional party of four players and one GM.

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Recovering consciousness in a pile of dead following a critical battle on the northern borders, the last survivor of a doomed rearguard flees into an ancient underground keep uncovered by the earth-shaking magic of the previous day's slaughter. The complex, an ancient dwarven fortification, once guarded a cross-mountain tunnel to the civilized lands beyond. If the stirring forces of the frost giant Jarl pass through this tunnel unmolested, they are sure to bring death and destruction to the undefended peoples.

The 300th is a site-dependent sandbox adventure for a ranger (or other martial character with similar abilities) of 8th-10th level, but can be adapted for a traditional party of 4-5 6th level characters. It can be set on any mountain border where giants and goblinoid tribes threaten the interior.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

The bridge known as "The Three-Hundred-Year Span" crosses a wide chasm to a back-door pass through the mountains on the northern frontier. Fortified at both ends, the structure serves as a strongpoint against raiders from the snow-capped peaks beyond and as a forward base for punitive forays into the untamed wilds. Frost giants with hordes of snow goblin levies and hobgoblin mercenaries probe the defenses on a consistent, if somewhat unpredictable basis.

Most of the details surrounding the bridge are forgotten to time, but all agree it takes its name from the three hundred years the structure took to complete. The change in architectural style from the lower span to the upper span grants credence to this lore, but hidden truths lie under the rock and snow of the mountain pass, lost in the chasm of time. The lower span of the bridge is far more ancient than the three-century old upper span. Long before the pass above was cleared, this first span once led to a natural series of tunnels fortified by a strong dwarven king known as the Lord of Fire and Ice. A succession squabble split the clan upon the king's death, and following the diaspora of the dwarven people, the secret-keepers of the royal line sealed the tunnels and disguised the causeway to the original span. When the pass above was cut through the hard rock of the mountain, modern bridge builders built upon the solid ancient structure.

Whether from over or under the mountain, the civilized lands are once again under pressure! A crafty frost giant Jarl sends allied hobgoblin armies on a feint through the low countries and then proceeds with a huge force of giants, ogres, ice trolls, and goblin levies to seize the bridge and open the back door. A forced march by the last reserves sees defenders numbering 300 stave off thousands of monsters bent on brutal domination. The battle rages all day and all night, and as the final defenders fall, the snow druids of the dwarven clans call an avalanche to seal the pass. The rocks, ice, and snow collapse the upper span of the bridge and shear off the hidden cliff face hiding the forgotten tunnels through the mountain. The druids' sacrifice is in vain. The way is open unless the sole surviving defender, the 300th, can beat the invading armies through the mountain and bring warning to the lands beyond.

SCALING THE ADVENTURE

The adventure is designed for a martial character of 8th-10th level. If using an already existing character that lacks the engineering skills enjoyed by the pre-generated character (Dralik "Mithraltounge" McClane, 9th-level dwarf ranger), grant the same modifier picked up from boot camp training

before shipping out with The 300. The adventure can also be attempted by a party of 4-5 6th-level characters with the following changes:

1. Increase the base Knowledge check DCs on the Military Intelligence Table and the Lore of the Twin Keeps Table to 15; use only the highest check from the party, adding +2 for every additional check exceeding DC 10. Knowledge (nobility or history - Pick one) may be used in lieu of engineering when rolling on the Lore table if no character has the engineering skill. The party treats Knowledge (engineering) checks as trained when manipulating siege defenses such as the boiling oil cauldrons.

2. Spellcasters begin the adventure with half their spell slots or spells memorized remaining (round down), making their selection before play begins. They may recover the balance in Part One if they are willing to sacrifice the time to do so.

3. The party as a whole must select what activities they pursued prior to shipping out with The 300 in the opening encounter: only one background boon may be selected. Per day action limits must be shared out amongst the party.

4. When searching for treasure in the opening encounter, use only the highest Perception check to determine success. Checks equal to or above DC 10 from additional characters grant a +2 bonus to the high roll.

5. When using the special tables in the keep (such as the Crossbow Duel Table), use only the highest appropriate check from the party. Checks equal to or above DC 10 from additional characters grant a +2 bonus to the high roll.

6. Add a sergeant to both goblin levies and hobgoblin mercenary squads.

7. Add one hobgoblin squad and a second lieutenant to the Jarl's order of battle; there is a 50% chance an officer is with a squad at any given time.

8. Add one ice troll to the troll twins.

9. Apply the quick simple advanced template to the dire wolves and the winter wolf in the Kingmaker's pack.

10. Increase the ogre brute squad by one ogre.

11. Double the number of thoqqua in area 21, but only two join the party as allies.

12. Apply the quick simple advanced template to the glacier toad in area 43.

13. Place two salamanders in area 52. The second suffers from a rare disease, gaining the sickened condition and reducing starting hit points to 50.

14. Apply the quick simple advanced template to the stone fungus in area 53 and grant it one more tentacle attack.

15. For the chase in Part Two, increase the skill check DCs by 5. Use the highest skill bonuses available to advance the entire party forward (if trying for two challenges, this means two different characters might roll (one for each challenge). Checks equal to or above DC 10 from additional characters grant a +2 bonus to the high roll.

EXPECTED ADVENTURE FLOW

Dralik "Mithraltounge" McClane awakens on the battlefield, piles of dead (monstrous and allied) around him. After defeating a patrol of goblin looters, the change in the landscape becomes apparent. The half-collapsed bridge now leads to what McClane recognizes as a forgotten way through the mountain. With an advance guard of the enemy forming behind him, he retreats into the tunnels, looking not only for escape, but a way to blunt the enemy's advance. Quickly reaching an underground fortification, a mirrored twin to a known ancient dwarven site on the far side, McClane faces difficult choices.

The abandoned fortress must be explored to discover the through-tunnels to the far side before the Jarl's forces do the same. At the same time, McClane must damage the material, physical, and morale assets of the invaders. Behind him, the rooms and chokepoints of the complex allow for the ambush and delay of goblin levies, hobgoblin mercenaries, and troll and ogre bruisers with wolf companions. Ahead, vermin, fungus, and territorial beasts such as ice toads block the way, while a salamander guards an ancient artifact that can aid our hero's cause. Potential allies (mephits, and thoqqua), ripe for recruitment, dwell in the abandoned fortress.

Time, strategy, and tactics all play a role in McClane's success or failure. While in the fortress, success in battle, speed of exploration, recruitment of allies, and recovery of artifacts grant boons which aid in the ambushes. These boons continue to grant their benefits during the second phase of the defense: a chase through the long tunnels of the mountains to the far side. A modified chase deck and mini-game simulate continuing hit and run tactics on the advancing army, now angered hugely by the damage they have taken in the fortress. The chase culminates in a last-stand melee reminiscent of Horatius at the bridge. Single combat between McClane and the frost giant commander determines ultimate victory; a player who does not make an effort to pick away at this commander during the ambush and explorations in part one and the chase in part two faces a difficult fight, the loss of which opens the civilized lands to bitter war and destruction.

THE JARL'S ORDER OF BATTLE

Dralik McClane encounters formations of the Jarl's vanguard during the course of the adventure. Because the encounters take place randomly or at a time of the player's choosing, the formations and creature statistics are collected here in one place. Simply refer to the appropriate formation when needed - each formation contains an associated tactics block that may also be discovered by the player during the course of play. With the sole exception of the Kingmaker healing his winter wolf, the armies of the Jarl never use magical healing outside of combat. It is too precious a commodity and must be reserved for in-combat emergencies.

GOBLIN LEVIES (CR 6)

TACTICS: A goblin levy consists of 2 goblin dogs, 8 goblin warriors and a sergeant. 4 goblins and the sergeant usually hang back and provide covering archer fire (the sergeant releasing his flaming arrows first, while the dogs and 4 members of the levy rush to melee. Half of those engaged in hand to hand combat usually use the aid another action to help their allies, providing flanks when possible. If the sergeant or the goblin dogs are slain or incapacitated, the standard goblins must make a DC 12 Will save or gain the cowering condition; they make a new save every round to clear the condition. If both dogs and sergeant are slain, the rank and file cower for one round and then flee. As slave levies, the goblins are unreliable and vulnerable to intimidation or promises of personal safety, especially when their leaders are slain.

Goblin sergeants carry an item known as a wolf drum, which helps mitigate the constant attacks of the Kingmaker's hated wolves on their goblin dogs.

AMBUSH OPPORTUNITY: A clever opponent may be able to capitalize on the goblin's hatred of the wolves, and their status as slave levies in general. A leaderless and demoralized levy

whose attitude can be shifted by making a DC 21 Intimidate or Diplomacy check earns the player two Allies: Goblins boon cards, in addition to removing the squad from the order of battle. Every slain or unconscious goblin grants a +1 circumstance bonus to the check, an incapacitated goblin dog grants a +2 circumstance bonus, while effects of slaying the sergeant have already been factored into the DC. A Drillmaster (see starting boons) may make the check as a swift action, while any others may make an attempt during the round that a shattered goblin levy cowers prior to flight.

GOBLIN DOGS (2)

N Medium animal

Init +2; **Senses** low-light vision, scent; **Perception** +1

CR 1

XP 400

DEFENSE

AC 13, touch 12, flat-footed 11 (+2 Dex, +1 natural)

hp 9 (1d8+5)

Fort +4, **Ref** +4, **Will** +1

Immune disease

OFFENSE

Speed 50 ft.

Melee bite +2 (1d6+3 plus allergic reaction)

STATISTICS

Str 15, **Dex** 14, **Con** 15, **Int** 2, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 8

Base Atk +0; **CMB** +2; **CMD** 14

Feats Toughness

Skills Stealth +6

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Allergic Reaction (Ex) A goblin dog's dander is highly irritating to all creatures save those with the goblinoid subtype. A non-goblinoid creature damaged by a goblin dog's bite, who deals damage to a goblin dog with a natural weapon or unarmed attack, or who otherwise comes into contact with a goblin dog (including attempts to grapple or ride the creature) must make a DC 12 Fortitude save or break out in an itching rash. A creature affected by this rash takes a -2 penalty to Dexterity and Charisma for 1 day (multiple allergic reactions do not stack). Remove disease or any magical healing removes the rash instantly. This is a disease effect. The save DC is Constitution-based

GOBLIN WARRIORS (8)

Goblin warrior

NE Small humanoid (goblinoid)

Init +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; **Perception** -1

CR 1/3

1 XP 135

DEFENSE

AC 16, touch 13, flat-footed 14 (+2 armor, +2 Dex, +1 shield, +1 size)

hp 6 (1d10+1)

Fort +3, **Ref** +2, **Will** -1

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee short sword +2 (1d4/19-20)

Ranged short bow +4 (1d4/×3)

STATISTICS

Str 11, **Dex** 15, **Con** 12, **Int** 10, **Wis** 9, **Cha** 6

Base Atk +1; **CMB** +0; **CMD** 12

Feats Improved Initiative

Skills Ride +10, Stealth +10, Swim +4; **Racial Modifiers** +4 Ride, +4 Stealth
Languages Goblin

GOBLIN SERGEANT

Goblin fighter 3
NE Small humanoid (goblinoid)
Init +8; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +2

DEFENSE

AC 20, touch 14, flat-footed 17 (+6 armor, +3 Dex, +1 size)
hp 24 (3d10+3)
Fort +4, **Ref** +5, **Will** +0 (+1 vs. fear)
Defensive Abilities bravery +1

OFFENSE

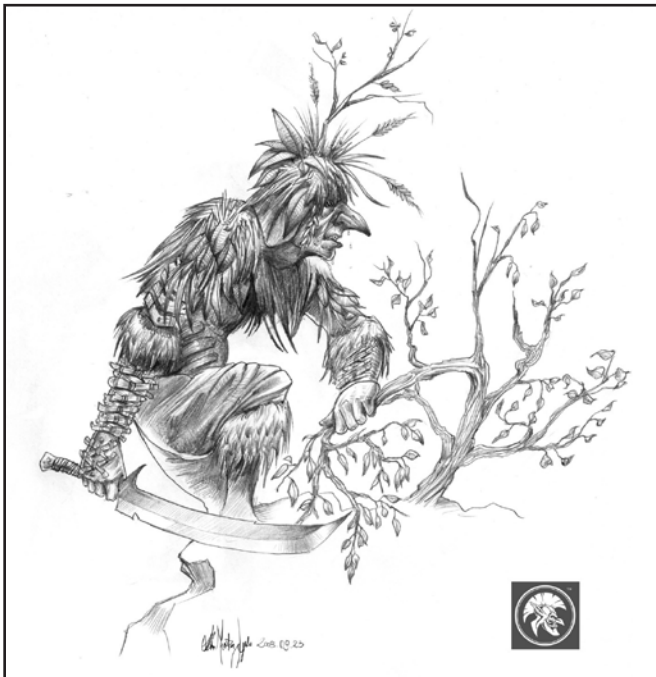
Speed 30 ft.
Melee mwk horsechopper +7 (1d8+1/×3)
Ranged mwk composite shortbow +9 (1d4+1/×3)

STATISTICS

Str 13, **Dex** 18, **Con** 13, **Int** 10, **Wis** 8, **Cha** 10
Base Atk +3; **CMB** +3; **CMD** 17
Feats Combat Reflexes, Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (horsechopper)
Skills Intimidate +6, Perception +2, Ride +4, Stealth +11; **Racial Modifiers** +4 Ride, +4 Stealth
Languages Goblin
SQ armor training 1
Combat Gear +1 flaming arrows (2), *potion of cure moderate wounds*, *wolf drum* (new magic item); **Other Gear** chainmail, mwk composite shortbow with 20 arrows, mwk horsechopper, 80 gp

HOBGOBLIN MERCENARY SQUAD (CR 5 OR 7)

TACTICS: 6 hobgoblin fighters and a sergeant comprise the standard squad. Until he is slain, there is a 35% chance that the lieutenant (a ranger) and two additional fighters join any squad encountered. Four rank and file engage frontally,



WOLF DRUM

Aura faint (enchantment); **CL** 1st
Slot —; **Price** 1,800 gp; **Weight** 1 lbs.

DESCRIPTION

This pellet drum has two heads and is suspended on a rod, with beads hanging on leather thongs on either side of the body of the drum. Once per day as a standard action, the wielder rotates the drum to cast *calm animals* (DC 11). The wielder may also sound the drum at will (as a standard action) to attempt to use Wild Empathy on magical beasts of canine heritage.

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, *calm animals*; **Cost** 900 gp

while two work around to the flanks or provide missile fire. The sergeant drinks his *potion of bull's strength* (not included in stat block) and supports his warriors in close combat the following round. If present, the lieutenant casts *lead blades* on his sickles, and then engages with missile fire until forced into melee, granting his Hunter's Boon from behind the protection of his two guards, who ready to attack any who approach with sword and shield. Hobgoblin mercenaries are reliable, trained troops, who retreat to fight another day if reduced to half their original numbers. If three or more manage to escape, the squad is not removed from the order of battle, although any leaders killed are not replaced. Subsequent encounters are fought at full strength, with the lieutenant leading the squad if all three sergeants have been slain. Once all four commanders are eliminated a squad that "breaks" at half strength is then removed from the order of battle.

HOBGOBLIN FIGHTERS (6)

Hobgoblin fighter 1
LE Medium humanoid (goblinoid)
Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +2

DEFENSE

AC 16, touch 12, flat-footed 14 (+3 armor, +2 Dex, +1 shield)
hp 17 (1d10+7)
Fort +5, **Ref** +2, **Will** +1

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.
Melee longsword +4 (1d8+2/19-20)
Ranged longbow +3 (1d8/×3)

STATISTICS

Str 15, **Dex** 15, **Con** 16, **Int** 10, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 8
Base Atk +1; **CMB** +3; **CMD** 15
Feats Toughness, Weapon Focus (longsword)
Skills Perception +2, Stealth +5; **Racial Modifiers** +4 Stealth
Languages Common, Goblin

HOBGOBLIN SERGEANT

Hobgoblin fighter 3
LE Medium humanoid (goblinoid)
Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +2

DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 12, flat-footed 15 (+4 armor, +2 Dex, +1 shield)
hp 33 (3d10+12)

CR 1/2

XP 200

CR 2

XP 600

Fort +6, Ref +3, Will +3 (+1 vs. fear)
Defensive Abilities bravery +1

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.
Melee mwk longsword +6 (1d8+2/19-20) or flail +5 (1d8+2)
Ranged mwk longbow +6 (1d8/×3)

STATISTICS

Str 15, Dex 14, Con 16, Int 13, Wis 10, Cha 8
Base Atk +3; CMB +5; CMD 17
Feats Cleave, Iron Will, Motivated March*, Power Attack
Skills Climb +7, Intimidate +4, Perception +2, Ride +7, Stealth +7
Languages Common, Giant, Goblin
SQ armor training 1
Combat Gear *potion of bull's strength*, alchemist's fire (2), caltrops, smokestick; **Other Gear** mwk chain shirt, mwk light wooden shield, flail, mwk longbow with 20 arrows, mwk longsword, 187 gp

HOBGOBLIN LIEUTENANT

Hobgoblin ranger 5
LE Medium humanoid (goblinoid)
Init +2; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +9

DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 12, flat-footed 15 (+5 armor, +2 Dex)
hp 47 (5d10+15)
Fort +8, Ref +7, Will +3

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.
Melee 2 mwk sickles +8 (1d6+3) (1d8+3 with lead blades)
Ranged longbow +7 (1d8/×3)
Special Attacks combat style (two-weapon), favored enemy (dwarves +2, elves +4)
Ranger Spells Prepared (CL 2nd; concentration +3)
1st—*lead blades, longstrider**
*precast

STATISTICS

Str 16, Dex 15, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8
Base Atk +5; CMB +8; CMD 20
Feats Combat Reflexes, Double Slice, Endurance, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Focus (sickle)
Skills Acrobatics +5 (+1 when jumping), Climb +9, Intimidate +7, Perception +9, Stealth +12, Survival +9, Swim +9
Languages Common, Goblin
SQ favored terrain (forests +2), hunter's bond (companions), track +2, Wild Empathy +4
Combat Gear *oils of magic weapon* (4), *potion of cure moderate wounds*, alchemist's fire (2); **Other Gear** +1 hide armor, longbow with 20 arrows, mwk sickles (2), *cloak of resistance* +1, 57 gp

OGRE BRUTE SQUAD (CR 7)

TACTICS: Three ogres commanded by a rogue known as "The Stalker" form the brute squad. When multiple entrances to a combat zone present themselves, the stalker often sends his trio out in front while he moves in stealthily from behind. When in a bottleneck, The Stalker uses his *oil of darkness* to set up sneak attack javelin strikes from behind his muscle before closing in for the kill.

OGRES (3)

CE Large humanoid (giant)
Init -1; Senses darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +5

DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 8, flat-footed 17 (+4 armor, -1 Dex, +5 natural, -1 size)
hp 30 (4d8+12)
Fort +6, Ref +0, Will +3

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft. (40 ft. base)
Melee greatclub +7 (2d8+7)
Ranged javelin +1 (1d8+5)
Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

STATISTICS

Str 21, Dex 8, Con 15, Int 6, Wis 10, Cha 7
Base Atk +3; CMB +9; CMD 18
Feats Iron Will, Toughness
Skills Climb +7, Perception +5
Languages Giant

OGRE STALKER

Ogre rogue 3
CE Large humanoid (giant)
Init +5; Senses darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +10

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 10, flat-footed 18 (+4 armor, +1 Dex, +5 natural, -1 size)
hp 52 (7d8+21)
Fort +8, Ref +5, Will +2
Defensive Abilities evasion, trap sense +1

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.
Melee mwk scythe +12 (2d6+10)
Ranged javelin +5 (1d8+7)
Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.
Special Attacks sneak attack +2d6

STATISTICS

Str 25, Dex 12, Con 17, Int 8, Wis 10, Cha 5
Base Atk +5; CMB +13; CMD 24
Feats Improved Initiative, Night Stalker*, Power Attack, Skill Focus (Stealth)
Skills Acrobatics +11, Climb +17, Disable Device +2,



Perception +10, Stealth +10 (+14 in dim light or darkness)

Languages Giant

SQ rogue talents (fast stealth), trapfinding +1

Combat Gear *potion of cure moderate wounds* (x2), *oil of darkness*;

Other Gear +1 *studded leather*, javelins (3), mwk greatclub, *feather token* (tree), 16 gp

THE KINGMAKER'S PACK (CR 10)

TACTICS: Half a dozen wolves, three dire wolves, and a winter wolf; a magical beast renowned for its frosty breath attack accompany The Kingmaker (an ogre giantkin ranger) making him the deadliest opponent apart from the young Jarl himself. Fortunately the ogre sends his wolves on scouting missions singly or in pairs; half the pack is out at any given moment once the ogre establishes a command post. The ranger does not send the winter wolf out to scout until five or more of the pack fail to return, at which point he keeps one dire wolf or a pair of wolves for close protection; sending the remaining wolves on patrol.

AMBUSH OPPORTUNITY Suborning a dire wolf (+0 Cha bonus) or wolf (-2 Cha bonus) is possible with a Wild Empathy check: the scouting wolves start unfriendly (DC 20) as long as combat has not been joined (if so: hostile DC 25), and the skill check can shift as many steps as the check result allows. A turned animal (Friendly or Helpful) grants the **Allies: Wolves** boon. Every time Dralik sends his new companion to find more wolves, advance the Time Unit Total by 3.

AMBUSH OPPORTUNITY With possession and identification of a goblin wolf drum, and the **Allies: Wolves** boon, Dralik is in a position to attempt to turn the winter wolf. He will need to reduce the pack numbers as indicated in the tactics block to force an encounter with the beast. Though the worg and Dralik have language in common, he may only overcome the hostile attitude with a Wild Empathy check, using the drum's magic (although feel free to play out a conversation for role-playing purposes). Like the wolves above, Dralik can shift the attitude as far as his check allows, but if he fails to make the wintry beast friendly or helpful, it remembers its true master and attacks.

THE KINGMAKER

Ogre (Giantkin) ranger 2

CE Large humanoid (giant)

Init +0; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +5

DEFENSE

AC 18, touch 9, flat-footed 18 (+4 armor, +5 natural, -1 size)

hp 67 (6d8+30+10)

Fort +12, **Ref** +5, **Will** +5

Resist cold 10

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft. (40 ft. base)

Melee greatclub +10 (2d8+9)

Ranged mwk javelin +5 (1d8+6) or rock +4 (1d6+6)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

Special Attacks rock throwing (1d6, 90 ft.)

STATISTICS

Str 23, **Dex** 10, **Con** 19, **Int** 10, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 11

Base Atk +5; **CMB** +12; **CMD** 22

Feats Iron Will, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Toughness

Skills Animal Handling +10, Climb +11, Perception +10, Survival +10

Languages Common, Giant

Combat Gear *potion of cure moderate wounds*, **Other Gear** +1 *studded leather*, javelins (3), 16 gp

WOLVES (6)

N Medium animal

Init +2; **Senses** low-light vision, scent; Perception +8

DEFENSE

AC 14, touch 12, flat-footed 12 (+2 Dex, +2 natural)

hp 13 (2d8+4)

Fort +5, **Ref** +5, **Will** +1

OFFENSE

Speed 50 ft.

Melee bite +2 (1d6+1 plus trip)

STATISTICS

Str 13, **Dex** 15, **Con** 15, **Int** 2, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 6

Base Atk +1; **CMB** +2; **CMD** 14 (18 vs. trip)

Feats Skill Focus (Perception)

Skills Perception +8, Stealth +6, Survival +1 (+5 scent tracking);

Racial Modifiers +4 Survival when tracking by scent

DIRE WOLVES (3)

N Large animal

Init +2; **Senses** low-light vision, scent; Perception +10

DEFENSE

AC 14, touch 11, flat-footed 12 (+2 Dex, +3 natural, -1 size)

hp 37 (5d8+15)

Fort +7, **Ref** +6, **Will** +2

OFFENSE

Speed 50 ft.

Melee bite +7 (1d8+6 plus trip)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.

STATISTICS

Str 19, **Dex** 15, **Con** 17, **Int** 2, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +8; **CMD** 20 (24 vs. trip)

Feats Run, Skill Focus (Perception), Weapon Focus (bite)

Skills Perception +10, Stealth +3, Survival +1 (+5 scent tracking); **Racial Modifiers** +4 Survival when tracking by scent

WINTER WOLF

NE Large magical beast (cold)

Init +5; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, scent; Perception +11

DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 10, flat-footed 16 (+1 Dex, +7 natural, -1 size)

hp 57 (6d10+24)

Fort +9, **Ref** +6, **Will** +3

Immune cold

Weaknesses vulnerability to fire

OFFENSE

Speed 50 ft.

Melee bite +10 (1d8+7 plus 1d6 cold and trip)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.

Special Attacks breath weapon (every 1d4 rounds, 15-ft. cone, 6d6 cold damage, Reflex half DC 17)

CR 1

XP 400

CR 3

XP 800

CR 5

XP 1,600

STATISTICS

Str 20, **Dex** 13, **Con** 18, **Int** 9, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 10
Base Atk +6; **CMB** +12; **CMD** 23 (27 vs. trip)
Feats Improved Initiative, Run, Skill Focus (Perception)
Skills Perception +11, Stealth +4 (+10 in snow), Survival +5;
Racial Modifiers +2 Perception, +2 Stealth (+8 in snow), +2 Survival
Languages Common, Giant

THE TROLL TWINS (CR 6)

TACTICS: A pair of Ice trolls accompany the young Jarl's personal retinue. Elegant tactics are beyond them, although if fire or acid damage prevents them from regenerating two rounds in a row, success on a DC 15 Will save cautions them to retreat until they can do so, otherwise they battle on with little concern for their survival.

ICE TROLLS (2)

CR 4

CE Large humanoid (cold, giant) XP 1,200
Init +4; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +9

DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 13, flat-footed 13 (+4 Dex, +4 natural, -1 size)
hp 45 (6d8+18); regeneration 5 (acid or fire)
Fort +8, **Ref** +8, **Will** +2
Immune cold
Weaknesses vulnerable to fire

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.
Melee battleaxe +7 (2d6+4), bite +2 (1d6+2), claw +2 (1d4+2) or bite +7 (1d6+4), 2 claws +7 (1d4+4)
Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.
Special Attacks rend (2 claws, 1d6+6)

STATISTICS

Str 19, **Dex** 18, **Con** 16, **Int** 9, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 7
Base Atk +4; **CMB** +9; **CMD** 23
Feats Intimidating Prowess, Lightning Reflexes, Skill Focus (Perception)
Skills Intimidate +7, Perception +9, Survival +4
Languages Giant

THE JARL (CR 9)

TACTICS: With the advice of the Kingmaker fresh in his ear, the young Jarl initially battles with caution so he may enjoy the rights of his inheritance. Engaging with thrown rocks, the immature leader eventually becomes impatient with the losses inflicted on his vanguard as the day-long battle continues. If more than half his force has been destroyed, or if the Kingmaker has been slain, the Jarl forgets his councilor's advice and wades into melee, retreating only if reduced to half hit points. At the end of the day, the giant is willing to battle unto death to achieve his objective, even if it means his entire force is destroyed.

THE JARL

CR 9

CE Large humanoid (cold, giant) XP 6,400
Init -1; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +10

DEFENSE

AC 21, touch 8, flat-footed 21 (+4 armor, -1 Dex, +9 natural, -1 size)
hp 133 (14d8+70)
Fort +14, **Ref** +3, **Will** +6
Defensive Abilities rock catching; Immune cold
Weaknesses vulnerability to fire

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.
Melee greataxe +18/+13 (3d6+13) or 2 slams +18 (1d8+9)
Ranged rock +9 (1d8+13)
Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.
Special Attacks rock throwing (120 ft.)

STATISTICS

Str 29, **Dex** 9, **Con** 20, **Int** 10, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 11
Base Atk +10; **CMB** +20; **CMD** 29
Feats Cleave, Great Cleave, Improved Overrun, Improved Sunder, Martial Weapon Proficiency (greataxe), Power Attack, Skill Focus (Stealth)
Skills Climb +13, Craft (any one) +7, Intimidate +7, Perception +10, Stealth +2 (+6 in snow); **Racial Modifiers** +4 Stealth in snow
Languages Common, Giant

PART ONE: THE STAND

As Dralik explores the Fire Keep looking for an ultimate escape, he discovers many places to ambush or trap the Jarl's vanguard, and even meets potential allies. These activities are presented as AMBUSH or RECRUITMENT OPPORTUNITIES in the text, and come at the cost of time lost and random encounters once the Jarl penetrates the keep.

Once in the keep, Dralik may spend 5 Time Units to refresh his spells (if playing with a standard group, the spell casters may recover the spells or spell slots removed for the opening encounter, but not any spells or slots used since the beginning of the adventure). If he holds slots open for later preparation, it takes one Time Unit to fill a slot. Like refreshing his spells, Dralik must choose his activities in the keep wisely: all have an impact on the final victory. The tables provided contain the information needed to track Dralik's activities, but few key concepts are presented here:

Ambush and Recruitment: These entries reveal potential allies Dralik may bring to his aid, as well as opportunities to use the supplies, terrain, and equipment found in the keep to his advantage. These opportunities usually cost Time Units to put in play. Use these examples to adjudicate similar player-invented activities and ambushes.

Maps: The player map cards reveal much of the complex. It will speed play to stay "theatre of the mind" during the initial explorations, using description in conjunction with these handouts, drawing battle maps only when needed.

Time Units: The Time Units Tracking Table is an abstract representation of how efficient Dralik is in accomplishing his exploration, and in laying his ambushes. It follows a rough timeline, but is not an exact linear sequence of events, and should not be taken literally. In general, time passes whenever Dralik searches a room, follows up on AMBUSH and RECRUITMENT opportunities, or engages the Jarl's forces.

Random Encounters: Once the Jarl breeches the gatehouse, his troops start fanning out, exploring the complex, as did Dralik. As they secure more of the complex it becomes more likely Dralik will encounter them randomly. Dralik may

always initiate an encounter by lying in wait when he is ready to make an ambush. In this case roll on the encounter table until a combat result is achieved; for every “no encounter” result one Time Unit passes.

Thorough Searches: Searching a room (regardless of success or failure) consumes at least one Time Unit. If the room description contains additional information following the read-aloud text, play it out as written. If there is no information following the read-aloud text, roll on the *Thorough Search Table* to discover what is revealed. Some rooms allow a *Cursory* search which grants resources at no cost in Time Units (usually because the resources found tie in with an ambush or recruitment opportunity).

Boon Cards: Dralik receives boon cards during the course of play. They may be played as a free action at any time, and in any quantity in accordance with the instructions on the card. Other than the Chase boons in part two, which can only be earned once, and the Thoqqua, Friffen, and Popper cards, all other Boon Cards are not limited by the numbers indicated in the handouts – print as many as are required to distribute during play.

Secret Doors: Unless noted in the text, all secret doors on the map require a DC 25 Perception check to discover. Dralik’s stonecutting ability grants him a +2 bonus to discovery, and a check whether he is actively looking or not if he passes with 10’ of the portal in question.

MILITARY INTELLIGENCE TABLE

A DC 5 Knowledge (local) check reveals the next unknown piece of information. For every full five points above the DC reveal an additional secret.

The player makes a roll on this table whenever the adventure text indicates, and whenever he defeats (or engages for at least three rounds) a formation of the Jarl’s troops other than a wolf patrol, and as long as the lettered section of the complex in which the fight takes place has not been secured (Time Unit Tracking Table).

1. **A NEW JARL** - The banners moving on the hill indicate that the Jarl has been slain in combat. Those of his heir are pre-eminent. An impetuous youth, the Jarl’s heir might not have the full support of the remaining giant lords. The capture of the young Jarl would grant the civilized nations great bargaining power over the monstrous humanoids of the north.

2. **THE KINGMAKER** - The young Jarl’s primary ally is an ogre (giantkin) known as “The Kingmaker”, a ranger who travels with a pack of wolves, including a winter wolf. Eager to cement his position in the royal household, The Kingmaker provides valuable counsel to the prince, advocating boldness when opportunity presents, and caution when needed.

3. **THE WOLFPACK** - The Kingmaker often sends his wolves out as scouts, so it is possible to suborn or ambush the less intelligent members of the pack. He keeps the winter wolf close, being loathe to send it out singly unless the pack is significantly reduced in numbers.

TIME UNITS TABLE

Advance the Time Unit Total when indicated in the adventure text. Searching a room with descriptive text following the read aloud text consumes one Time Unit. Advance Time Unit Total as per the Thorough Search Table when indicated. Advance the Time Unit Total by 1 whenever Dralik crosses from one lettered section of the complex to another	
0-25	The Vanguard Assembles - Dralik enjoys a fairly accurate estimate of how long it will take the Jarl to get moving
26-50	The Vanguard Approaches - Dralik anticipates the approach of the Jarl, but the timing is still uncertain. Every time Dralik moves from one Lettered area to another paraphrase the following: <i>The Enemy is likely mobilized by now, but who knows how cautious they will be in their approach?</i> Dralik may choose to initiate combat at the gates at any time - if he does so, record the number of Time Units required to bring the total to 51. This number will be subtracted from the final total when determining the Jarl's reinforcements for Part Two. Advance the Time Unit Marker to 51.
51-75	At the Gates - Unless in the Gatehouse, Dralik is unaware of the enemy's progress, although an alarm provides warning if set. This section of the Jarl's advance is further broken down as indicated below. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 51 If set in area 1, the <i>alarm</i> sounds as the monsters enter the tunnel. 55 The ramming of the outer gates begin 65 The outer gate is breached, monsters flood area 2. 70 The Kingmaker's Pack Enters the Great Hall 75 A Hobgoblin Squad Enters the Great Hall
76-100	The Jarl On the Move - The Jarl's Forces begin to secure the complex. Roll for Encounters as per the table. The Jarl's exploration of the complex is further broken down below. As each lettered area is secured, encounter losses have only a 50% chance of counting against the Jarl's order of battle; except for the Jarl, The Kingmaker, and the Stalker, a fact known by Dralik when he recognizes different livery on some of the monsters. Encounters initiated by Dralik continue to count against the order of battle. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 80 West Wing secured, Encounters here receive a +10 modifier to the roll. 85 East Wing secured, Encounters here receive a +10 modifier to the roll. 90 King's Watch and Royal Suites secured, Encounters here receive a +10 modifier to the roll. 95 Step Cavern secured, Encounters here receive a +10 modifier to the roll. 100 Mine Head and Temple secured, Random Encounters here receive a +25 modifier to the roll. 105 Exit Tunnels Discovered - Proceed to Part Two. Dralik may choose to initiate Part Two of the adventure at any time by fleeing the complex - if he does so, record the number of Time Units required to bring the total to 105. This number will be subtracted from the final total when determining the Jarl's reinforcements.

4. THE ENEMY – The newly-hailed Jarl assembles a force of 10 goblins levies, 3 hobgoblin mercenary squads, an ogre brute squad, and a pair of trolls in addition to the kingmaker and his wolf pack. This vanguard will press into the civilized lands unless stopped.

5. ORDER OF BATTLE – Grant the player the tactics blocks for each of the Jarl’s units in the following order before proceeding to #6 below: The Kingmaker and his wolfpack, Goblin Levies, Hobgoblin Mercenaries, Ogre Brute Squad, The Troll Twins.

6. ENEMY PATTERNS – Dralik becomes more familiar with his enemies and their movement patterns. Reduce the Time Units Total by 3 any time this result is achieved.

LORE OF THE TWIN KEEPS

A DC 5 Knowledge (engineering) reveals the next unknown piece of information. For every full five points above the DC reveal an additional secret.

The player makes a roll on this table whenever the adventure text indicates, and when half of the rooms in each lettered section of the complex have been thoroughly explored.

Note: The Twin Keeps are actually mirror images of each other, but for ease of play, and consolidation of player aid handouts, the compass directions and maps are presented as identical. Some secrets revealed may refer to details discovered in the Ice Keep on the far side of the mountain; the player will have to infer what they mean here in the Fire Keep.

1. Read the following text to the player:

The gaping tunnel on the damaged Three-Hundred Year span must certainly lead to the twin of the recently discovered Ice Keep on the civilized side of the mountains. That facility continues to give up previously-uncovered secrets, but the Fire Keep has never been found until now. If the hidden tunnels linking up with the cross-mountain

THOROUGH SEARCH TABLE

Advance Time Units by 1 if successful on a DC 20 Perception check, otherwise advance Time Units by 2. Then roll 1d20 below to determine result. Result Modifiers: Time Units >26:+1; Time Units 26-50:+0; Time Units 51-75:-1; Time Units <75:-2 Some entries are indicated as unmodified – these take effect immediately prior to any modifications.	
Less than 1	Combat: A Hobgoblin Squad enters the room during the search. The defeat of this squad does not affect the Jarl's order of battle.
1 Unmodified	Forgotten Trap CR 4: Type mechanical; Perception DC 25; Disable Device DC 20, EFFECTS Trigger location; Reset none Effect Atk +20 melee (2d4+6/×3); random weapon (swinging axe, javelin, falling blocks etc.) is purely descriptive
1	Rats: Beat their 17 Initiative score or take 1d6+2 points of damage
2	Lost Magic: Advance Time Units by 3 while you disarm a vicious trap, but recover a <i>potion of cure moderate wounds</i> .
3	Secret Stash: Advance Time Units by 2 as you lever up a stubborn flagstone to recover a <i>potion of cure light wounds</i> and 3 +1 <i>crossbow bolts</i> .
4	Misused Arms: Advance Time Units by 1 while you repair a +1 <i>giant-bane crossbow bolt</i> that was used to slay one of your long-lost dwarven kin during the succession squabbles.
5	Lost: This secret passage seems to lead nowhere, but there is a rotting leather satchel in the passage ahead. Advance Time Units by 1d3+1 and roll again on this table.
6-10	Nothing Found
11	Equipment Found: Roll 1d4: 1. 50' of rope; 2. grappling hook; 3. flasks of alchemist fire; 4. impact foam
12	Dwarven Arms: Roll 1d6: 1-3 <i>searing bolt</i> x2 (as per <i>searing arrow</i>); 4. mwk cold iron throwing axe x2; 5. <i>frostbite sling</i> ; 6. <i>crown of blasting</i> , minor; results of "5" and "6" are granted only once – for subsequent results roll on the Dwarven Magic entry.
13 Unmodified	Secrets: Roll 1d4: on a "1" treat as Unmodified 20 otherwise treat as a result of "20". Additionally, gain a Slain Leader boon card for discovering a perfect ambush site.
13	Dwarven Magic: Roll 1d6: 1-3 <i>potions of cure moderate wounds</i> ; 4. <i>potion of haste</i> ; 5. <i>oil of keen edge</i> ; 6. <i>wand of bear's endurance</i> (3 charges) – one available, subsequent results: <i>potion of cure serious wounds</i> .
14	Lost Maps and Magic: Reduce Time Units by 1 and recover a <i>potion of bull's strength</i> , a <i>potion of aid</i> , or a <i>potion of barkskin</i>
15	Lost Maps and Healing: Reduce Time Units by 2 and recover a <i>potion of cure moderate wounds</i>
16	King's Map: Receive next unknown map card, or reduce Time Units by 5 if all have been revealed.
17	Legends of the Jarls: Receive next unknown piece of information from the Military Intelligence Table or gain Slain Leader boon if all have been discovered.
18	Letters from the Marshall: Gain a +2 circumstance bonus on diplomacy checks when recruiting allies; this bonus may be earned more than once.
19	Dwarven Hoard: 500 gp plus one roll on the Dwarven Arms and one roll on the Dwarven Magic result.
20 Unmodified	Secrets: Secret Passage to any known room.
20 or higher	Secrets: Secret Passage to a random room.

tunnel system are discovered by the Jarl's forces, they will provide a sure way to get an army safely to the far side. The Fire Keep may provide not only an escape route for you, but opportunities to harass and delay the Jarl's invasion.

2. MAPS - The player draws one map card, representing recalled tales and information about the keep. If he draws any one of the three cards representing the royal suites and the step cavern, he immediately gains the others for free. If a player is entitled to an additional piece of information as a result of his Knowledge check, he may draw another card or select a secret from result 3. Secrets instead. Once all the map cards are drawn, he continues to learn secrets.

3. SECRETS - The player learns one secret about the Ice Keep, which may reveal important or matching intelligence about the Fire Keep. Determine randomly which secret is learned, including secrets only from map cards the player has already drawn. If the player is entitled to additional information as a result of his Knowledge check, reveal 4. Legendary Forge below; if already revealed, the player may choose a map or secret to reveal until they are all revealed, at which point the Time Unit total is reduced by 3 for each piece of lore learned.

A. Gatehouse (Areas 1-6): Trapped secret passages lead from the front gate towers to the inner gates, supplementing the murder holes built above the entrance.

B. The Great Hall (Areas 7-8): Secret doors near the balcony led to a piping system that directed magical hot spring water throughout the complex. When exposed to the air outside these tunnels (controlled by valves in the mines), the outer three inches froze almost instantly, creating ice falls with luminescent water running within.

C. Crafting Halls (Areas 19-17): Raw blocks of ice were brought to an ice sculpting studio by magical teleporter unsafe for the travel of living creatures.

D. Warrior Halls (Areas 18-23): A hypocaust system of boiling magical water was discovered powering the kitchen ovens and laundry; blocked channels underneath the complex provided secret access to many other chambers.

E1. Upper Halls (Areas 24-29): A secret passage in the marshal's suites exited in the mines.

E2. Upper Halls (Areas 24-29): A treasure vault with a hidden secret passage to the temple was discovered in the royal suites.

F1. The Mine Head (Areas 30-40): Access to the cross-mountain tunnels were discovered here.

F2. The Mine Head (Areas 30-40): An ice quarry near the source of the magical spring contained a teleporter unsafe for living travel to move ice to the crafting halls.

ENCOUNTERS TABLE

When time units are equal to 55 or greater, roll d100 for a random encounter any time Dralik moves from one lettered section of the keep to another, except during an ongoing battle, or as part of a retreat from a combat Dralik initiates. If Dralik is using stealth, he may be granted a surprise round; make an opposed check against the encountered creatures **Perception**.

Dralik may attempt to initiate a combat on this table to begin whittling down the Jarl's troops. Making the attempt (whether it results in a battle or not) consumes one Time Unit. A **DC 15 Stealth** check result allows him to disengage before combat if he does not like his odds, although the Time Units still advance.

Any time a unit is not available due to losses in the Jarl's order of battle, treat as No Encounter.

The Time Units Tracking Table calls out modifiers to the die roll once the Jarl begins to secure the complex. Some entries are indicated as unmodified - these take effect immediately prior to any modifications.

01-05 Unmodified	As 1-15 below, but if possible the reinforcements arrive behind Dralik, otherwise they arrive in 2 rounds, granting 1 round to act prior to their arrival.
01-15	As 16-25 below, but both rerolls must result in an encounter result: the Perception Check to identify the reinforcements receives a -5 penalty for distraction.
16-25	Roll again twice - the second result arrives as reinforcements in round 3 of the combat. If the first reroll indicates no encounter, simply proceed with the second wave immediately. A DC 25 Perception check identifies the reinforcing troops (if any) before they arrive.
26-40	No Encounter
41-65	Wolf Patrol: Roll again 01-35: 1 wolf; 36-60 2 wolves; 61-80 1 wolf, 1 dire wolf; 81-100: 2 dire wolves. Note: adjust encounters with multiple wolves as needed to reflect losses: If 5 or more wolves have been slain or turned a result of 80-100 indicates a 50% chance of encountering the winter wolf instead.
66 Unmodified	The Jarl plus one additional random unit from this table as escort
67-80	Goblin Levy
81-90	Hobgoblin Squad
91-95	Ice Troll Twins
96-98	Ogre Brute Squad
99 Unmodified	The Kingmaker's Pack
100 Unmodified	The Jarl plus one additional unit from this table as escort
Greater than 100	Roll again until a result is obtained: 01-40: Ice Troll Twins; 41-65: Ogre Brutes; 66-80: The Kingmaker's pack; 81-95: The Jarl plus one hobgoblin squad and one goblin squad.
20 Unmodified	Secrets: Secret Passage to any known room.
20 or higher	Secrets: Secret Passage to a random room.

G. The Shattered Temple (Areas 41-48): A secret passage in the high priest's chambers led to a treasure vault in the royal suites.

4. LEGENDARY FORGE (The Forge = Areas 49-53) - The forges attributed to both the Ice Keep and the Fire Keep have never been found. Some surveyors and engineers think there is a secret access from the temple or mines, but have been unable to root it out. The forges are rumored to contain legendary weapons specifically designed to defeat the dwarves' historic and monstrous enemies dwelling beyond the mountain.

GETTING STARTED

Slowly, your eyes begin to open, a red film over the left. The giant-thrown rock that knocked you out must have cracked your head hard enough to cause bleeding into that eye. There is not much time to ponder this realization, as a blue-skinned snow goblin is sawing through the leather thong attaching the coin pouch to your belt.

Dralik's back-up weapons are already slung over the goblin's shoulder; his urgrosh is within reach (picking it up provokes attacks of opportunity). If Dralik beats the Goblin on the initiative, he may make an unarmed attack without provoking an attack of opportunity; if the goblin wins, he is dazed for one round as his brain tries to grasp that his victim is alive.

Creatures: The goblin is one of a five-goblin squad looting the battlefield in the predawn. The remainder of the team starts scattered within 40 feet of Dralik and rushes to aid their companion if he survives the first round of combat and lets out a yelp. Otherwise Dralik has one additional round to recover any weapons he desires. These goblins fight to the death, and are not considered part of the Jarl's order of battle.

Read or paraphrase the following when the fight has ended.

Piles of dead, friend and foe alike, surround you. To the rear, you see that the upper level of the Three-Hundred-Year Span has been knocked away by a huge collapse scarring the mountainside. The battle druids must have set loose the last ditch defense called for when all was lost: an earthquake to seal the pass. As you ponder the meaning of this, that all your companions are dead, you grow more unsettled as the Jarl's forces begin to stir on the mountainside. The thousands slain by you and the rest of The 300 seems to have made no dent in the invasion army. Grasping about for a means of escape, you spy a tunnel opening on the far side of the surviving lower arches. Realization hits you as to what this means: the lands beyond are not safe. Though the pass is sealed, there is still a way through the mountain for the enemy.

Development: Reveal the adventure background to grant additional common knowledge to the player, who must then decide what service he performed in the civilized lands prior to marching with The 300. He served either as a Diplomat to both allied and belligerent tribes, a Drillmaster of new recruits, or an Explorer seeking hidden retreats for refurbishment or sanctuary for the threatened peoples. Once this choice is made, grant him the appropriate player handout detailing the background boon he gains from this past service.

Development: Defeating the goblin looters in four rounds or less grants Dralik one roll on the Military Intelligence Table (see Part One above).

Treasure: Dralik recovers all of his personal gear from the looters. In addition, he may have time to recover gear from his fallen companions. He makes a DC 26 Perception check to correctly identify the fallen from their uniform insignia. Although he does not know the exact gear each has, he may choose from one of the following four options: *medic*, *engineer*, *scout*, and *artillerist*. For every full five points exceeding the DC he may select one additional gear set to recover (and may pick the same category more than once). If he fails the check, he still discovers the loot collected by the goblins. Dralik may Take 10 on this check the first time he searches if he chooses. He may make up to two additional searches at a cost of 5 Time Units each (see Time Units below). On these follow up checks, the threat of discovery means he cannot Take 10, and he is very aware of the increased patrol activity on the battlefield, indeed before he gets too far into subsequent searches, he knows time is becoming a factor.

Goblin Loot: +1 flaming bolts (3), potions of cure moderate wounds (2), wolf drum (new magic item), masterwork throwing axes (4)

Medic Gear: *potion of aid*, *potions of cure moderate wounds* (2), *potion of cure serious wounds*, *potion of neutralize poison*, *antitoxin*, *healer's kit* (6 uses remain)

Engineer Gear: *chime of opening* (2 uses remain), *engineer's drops* (new magic item), *oil of floating disk*, *potion of ant haul* (CL 4), *potion of levitate*, *oil of alarm*, journal with notes on various lost fortifications - make an immediate roll on the Lore of the Twin Keeps Table

Scout Gear: *elixir of hiding*, *potion of invisibility*, *smokesticks* (2), *smoke pellets* (2), *spring loaded wrist sheath*, *journal with notes on the Jarl's army* - make an immediate roll on the Military Intelligence Table

Artillerist Gear: +1 flaming bolts (2), *oil of heat metal*, *alchemist's fire* (x2), *bottle of liquid holding* (new magic item) holding 200 gallons of oil, *fire ward gel*, *frost ward gel*.

ENGINEER'S DROPS

Aura faint (transmutation); **CL** 5th

Slot none; **Price** 250 gp; **Weight** -

DESCRIPTION

These eye drops allows the user to visualize exact angles, stress points in natural and built structures, and the properties of many construction materials, granting a +10 competence bonus on Knowledge (engineering) checks for 1 hour.

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, *fox's cunning*; **Cost** 125 gp

BOTTLE OF LIQUID HOLDING

Aura moderate (transmutation); **CL** 7th

Slot -; **Price** 5,000 gp; **Weight** 2 lbs.

DESCRIPTION

This glass bottle with a twisting brass stopper holds up to 500 gallons of any liquid.

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, *fox's cunning*; **Cost** 1,250 gp

1: THE ENTRANCE TUNNEL

A twenty-foot wide tunnel drives into the cliff face on the far side of the lower arch of the once proud bridge. Six hundred yards into the heart of the mountain a gatehouse hewn into the rock blocks the way. Portions of the roadbed are slick with moisture.

Well-graded and set with pavers; the stones near the entrance where the earthquake spent most of its fury are cracked and askew. Ahead, the gatehouse remains intact; the outer doors stand slightly ajar. Six feet of clearance under the partially-raised portcullis grants access into the courtyard.

The ceiling of the entrance tunnel peaks forty feet overhead. A chamber in the ceiling above the approach is reached through the gatehouse (**area 3**). Cunningly disguised murder holes (Perception DC 27) allow boiling oil or water to rain down on attackers. Three two-hundred gallon cauldrons stand on pivoting cradles. One cauldron is filled with water; the other two stand empty, knocked over during the quake. They easily pivot back into place to be refilled. A narrow tunnel at the far end of the cauldron chamber continues to the cliff side. Spyholes every fifty feet offer good views of the tunnel below, but the final observation post at the far end is filled with rubble.

AMBUSH OPPORTUNITY: Watching the advance of the enemy from spyholes above the tunnel grants one roll on the Military Intelligence Table but costs one Time Unit. Clearing the rubble from the observation point grants two rolls and costs three Time Units (or one Time Unit with a DC 15 Knowledge, engineering check). The intelligence table rolls and the time units stack.

AMBUSH OPPORTUNITY: Dropping boiling water or oil may be the first opportunity to begin a war of attrition. Likely sources to fill the two empty cauldrons are as follows.

Beer from the brewery	1 Time Unit per Cauldron
Water from the baths or laundry	2 Time Units per cauldron.
Ice and snow from the frozen temple	3 time units per cauldron
Lard from the Kitchen	1 time unit per cauldron - the lard heats to boiling oil
Molten stone and rubble	0 time units, but the Thoqqua from the kitchens must be convinced to heat nearby debris using their molten body ability.

Once filled, the cauldron's contents must be heated. A **DC 15 Knowledge (engineering)** check reveals a lack of soot stains under the cauldrons, indicating that kindling a fire might give away the position of the hidden vents. The Jarls' forces make a **Perception Check** with a skill bonus of +10 modified by +2 for each fire kindled under a cauldron against a DC of 27 to spot the murder holes. If they spot the fires above apply a -4 penalty to the **Knowledge (engineering)** check made when the contents of the cauldrons are released.

A **Knowledge (engineering)** check releases the contents: consult the following table for the results. For each pot of boiling water, add a +2 circumstance bonus, for a cauldron of oil add +4. Molten rock adds +4 to the check and also destroys the first ram presented by the Jarl's army, subtracting 5 Time Units from the current total. If Dralik tips only one cauldron, he may Take 10 on this check - otherwise the distraction of

Engineering Check	Result
Less than 10	One Goblin Squad destroyed
10-15	Two Goblin Squads destroyed
16-20	Two Goblin Squads destroyed, One ogre from the brute squad burns to death
21-25	Two Goblin Squads destroyed, One ogre from the brute squad burns to death. Earn Burned Ice Trolls boon card
26 and higher	As 21-25 above plus earn one Slain Leader boon card.

having to move to extra cauldrons by himself prohibits Taking 10. Additional allies (one per additional cauldron) allows him to Take 10 when making the attack.

2: COURTYARD

The cavern on the far side of the great stone doors of the gatehouse and beyond the portcullis was once shaped into a large courtyard, but the far end is filled with recently collapsed rock and debris.

The stone doors swing easily on their pivots, and a great iron bar locks them shut. The portcullis machinery in the gatehouse (area 3) functions perfectly despite the damage to the eastern tower. Stairs up to the courtyard's perimeter walkway provide access to the gatehouse towers.

Digging through the rubble to the second set of gates beyond is easily recognized as a fool's errand, but if the player insists, it takes a total of 7 Time Units, which represents not only the excavation time, but the head start it gives to the Jarl's forces when they make their own excavations.

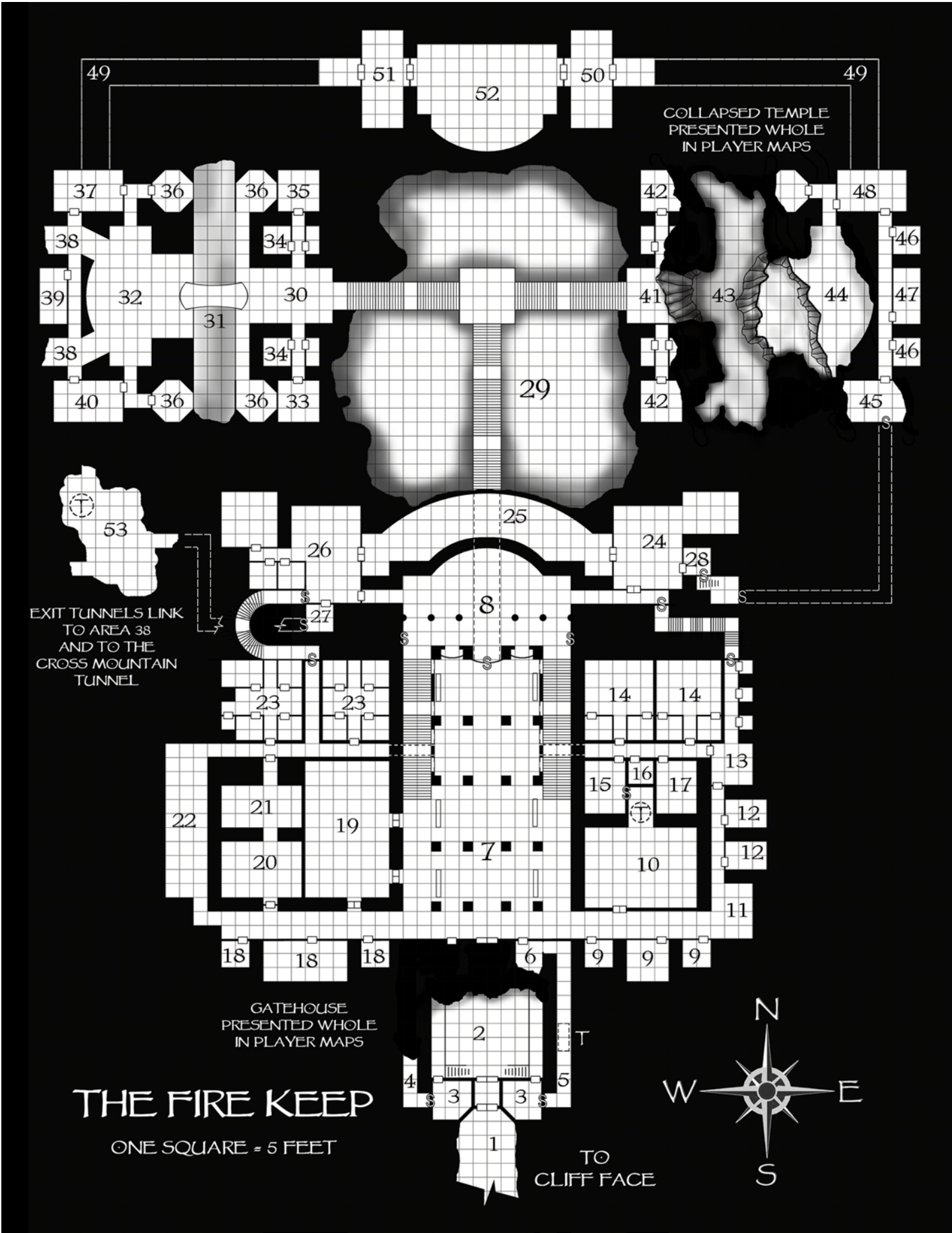
3: GATEHOUSE

The doors on the perimeter walkway of the courtyard open into two "towers" hewn into the cavern wall, the fronts of which contain arrow slits overlooking the approach. A passage between them contains machinery for raising and lowering the inner portcullis. The eastern tower has suffered a partial collapse: the second and third stories contain loose dirt and rubble..

Access to the murder holes over the entrance tunnel (area 1) is located on the third floor of the undamaged western tower. On the second floor of the same tower, a damaged secret door (Perception, DC 15) leads to a collapsed tunnel back to the inner gates. While digging through this tunnel seems futile, it stands to reason that a similar passage on the eastern side might exist.

Treasure: The machine house on the second floor of the tower contains a rack of 6 flasks of alchemist's fire. Retrieving a flask from the rack is a move action that provokes attacks of opportunity, but the placement of the rack is such that it can be seen even in the midst of combat.

Creatures: Digging through the loose rock and debris in second floor of the eastern tower does indeed lead to an intact passage, but doing so disturbs the vermin in the rubble.



THE 300TH (LEVEL 8-10 RANGER)

GIANT CENTIPEDES (6)

N Medium vermin

Init +2; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +4

DEFENSE

AC 14, touch 12, flat-footed 12 (+2 Dex, +2 natural)

hp 5 each (1d8+1)

Fort +3, Ref +2, Will +0

Immune mind-affecting effects

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft., climb 40 ft.

Melee bite +2 (1d6-1 plus poison)

Special Attacks poison

STATISTICS

Str 9, Dex 15, Con 12, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 2

Base Atk +0; CMB -1; CMD 11 (can't be tripped)

Feats Weapon Finesse^B

Skills Climb +10, Perception +4, Stealth +10; Racial Modifiers +4 Perception, +8 Stealth

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Poison (EX) Bite—injury; save Fort DC 13; frequency 1/round for 6 rounds; effect 1d3 Dex damage; cure 1 save. The save DC is Constitution-based and includes a +2 racial bonus.

CENTIPEDE SWARM

N Diminutive vermin (swarm)

Init +4; Senses darkvision 60 ft., tremorsense 30 ft.; Perception +4

DEFENSE

AC 18, touch 18, flat-footed 14 (+4 Dex, +4 size)

hp 31 (9d8-9)

Fort +5, Ref +7, Will +3

Defensive Abilities swarm traits, Immune weapon damage

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., climb 30 ft.

Melee swarm (2d6 plus poison)

Space 10 ft.; Reach 0 ft.

Special Attacks distraction (DC 13), poison

CR 1/2
XP 200

STATISTICS

Str 1, Dex 19, Con 8, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 2

Base Atk +6; CMB —; CMD —

Feats Weapon Finesse^B

Skills Climb +12, Perception +4; Racial Modifiers +4 Perception

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Poison (Ex) Bite—injury; save Fort DC 13; frequency 1/round for 6 rounds; effect 1d4 Dex damage; cure 1 save. The save DC is Constitution-based and includes a +2 racial bonus.

Treasure: A case containing 8 +1 *goblinbane bolts* is unearthed while removing the debris.

AMBUSH OPPORTUNITY: The arrow slits provide good cover for a crossbowman, but draws attention to the upper levels of the gatehouse, advancing the Time Units by 2, representing early discovery of the secret passage. Dralik must choose which targets to concentrate on during a sniper battle at the gates. Dralik makes one attack roll with his crossbow, adding +4 if he targets the goblin levies, +0 if he targets the hobgoblin troopers, and -2 if he targets the ogre brutes. There are also two opportunities to take a single shot at any leader (the Kingmaker, the Stalker, the Jarl, a troll, or any of the goblinoid leaders). Each leader may be targeted by only one of these snap shots – a different leader must be targeted by the second shot. Taking advantage of this opportunity reduces the effectiveness of concentrating on one formation, granting a -4 penalty to the crossbow duel roll. If Dralik commits all 8 of the goblinbane bolts to the archery duel (including against the leaders), he also gains a Wounded Goblinoids boon card. The Jarl's forces break down the main gates and swarm the courtyard immediately following the crossbow duel.

Development: Engaging in the crossbow duel, or watching the approach of the Jarl's troops grants one roll on the Military Intelligence Table.

Crossbow Attack Roll	Result
Less than 16	One Goblin Squad destroyed, Dralik takes 1d8+7 damage from a lucky javelin strike through an arrow slit. On a natural "1" the damage is doubled, as if a critical hit.
17-20	One Goblin Squad destroyed
21-24	One Goblin Squad destroyed, Understrength Mercenaries boon earned
25-29	Two Goblin Squads destroyed, Slain Leader boon earned
30 and higher	Two Goblin Squads destroyed, Slain Leader and Understrength Mercenaries boons earned, One ogre from the brute squad slain, on a natural "20" two ogres are killed.

4. COLLAPSED PASSAGE

This secret passage is filled with rubble from the recent collapse, hopelessly clogged.

A DC 25 Perception check notices a shaped solid slab designed to seal the passage intentionally lowered into place, almost concealed by the rubble.



5. TRAPPED PASSAGE CR (3)

This secret passage quickly turns north. Three diagonal shafts on the eastern wall run upwards and eastwards. The flagstone under the first shaft is cracked.

Trap: The cracked paver has exposed the chain mechanics holding the passage plugs above in place. A misstep brings the first two blocks down. If the trap is discovered, A DC 10 Knowledge (engineering) check reveals that a 10-foot jump is all that is required to avoid placing pressure on the chain.

FALLING BLOCK TRAP

CR 3

Type mechanical; **Perception** DC 20; **Disable Device** DC 20

EFFECTS

Trigger location; **Reset** manual

Effect Atk +15 melee (5' stone block; 4d6)

Beyond the trap, a third plug is winched into storage. A lever at the north end of the passage releases all three plugs. A crank assembly in the inner gatehouse to raises them. If Dralik sets off the trap, he ends up on the northern side of the plugs, where he discovers the reset machinery.

AMBUSH OPPORTUNITY: Leaving the trap as is results in goblin scouts disarming it and advancing the Time Units total by 5. Luring the goblins into the trap (by holding the passage and then withdrawing or engaging in ranged combat from beyond the trap) results in 6 short bow attacks (+4 ranged, 1d4/x3) but grants the Wounded Goblinoids boon as the slabs crush a number of the enemy. The smashed remains wedged in the crack make it easier for the advancing engineers to pry and brace the slabs out of the way: advance the Time Unit current total by 3. Lowering the slabs intentionally and destroying the winch mechanism creates no penalty or advantage.

6. INNER GATEHOUSE

A stairwell winds down to the entrance hall of the main keep. The arrow slits once opening onto the courtyard are choked with dirt and rubble, as are the inner gates, which buckle slightly from the pressure.

7. THE HALL

60 feet wide by over 100 feet long, the great hall glows with light emanating from 3 rivers of lava streaming from vents in the ceiling on the western side, dropping into obsidian pools at floor level and draining into unseen channels. The eastern side contains similar vents and pools, but the magma streams here have solidified. A perpendicular passage on the southern face of the hall runs to the eastern and western wings of the complex, as do arched passages under two great stairways ascending to a 20-ft. high balcony at the north end of the hall.

The lava streams once flowed on both sides of the hall, but when the temple (area G) was damaged some centuries ago, flash freezing and interrupted lava flow caused the eastern

streams to solidify. A DC 15 Knowledge (engineering) check recalls the lore of similar “fountains” in the Ice Keep on the far side of the mountain, where water filled with luminescent particles flowed in the center of frozen falls. A complex channel system that controlled the flow of the water was discovered in the ceiling of that great hall, accessed through secret doors (Perception DC 20) at the top of the stairs on either side. The same engineering check notes that as the lava here cooled, some of it was diverted beyond the retaining pools and onto the great hall floor – anyone caught in this stream would have been horribly burned.

Two dozen armored skeletons of the forgotten dwarves of the lost king are scattered about the hall, victims of the bloody succession battle.

10-ft. by 4-ft. bas relief panels carved from all manner of stone decorate the halls. Some have slipped off their fasteners and lean drunkenly against the walls.

A secret door (Perception DC 25) fabricated from a massive block of stone (hardness 8, hp 540) under the center balcony opens up into a 10-ft. wide passage leading to the staircase in area 29. The secret door cannot be opened if the lock under the king’s throne in area 8 is engaged (which it is when the Hall is first entered).

AMBUSH OPPORTUNITY: Using the corpses in the chamber, or the armor stands from the armory to create a shield wall in the hall delays the advance of the Jarl’s troops until they send scouts to discover the deception (subtract 3 Time Units). Utilizing the laundry beater (area 22) to add simple animation to the shield wall requires a DC 15 Knowledge (engineering) check and subtracts an additional 2 Time Units. Activating the *ghost sound drum* (area 26) completes the illusion, subtracting an additional 2 Time Units.

AMBUSH OPPORTUNITY: Manipulating the lava streams after discovering the valve system in the ceiling allows Dralik to direct streaming lava on advancing troops, rolling once on the Boiling Oil Table from area 1. Blocking the drainage channels (2 Time Units required) in the receiving pool causes the lava to splash out, but also moving one of the bas-relief panels in place as a “bounce” provides for maximum effect (+4 on the engineering check). Moving the panels in place consumes 4 Time Units (2 if the trolley from area 10 is utilized). Dralik can escape from the secret doors onto King’s Watch (area 8) during the confusion without being spotted. Alternately, he may have his allies spring the attack while he is elsewhere – use Dralik’s engineering skill to adjudicate the attack, no matter who springs it.

Development: The Jarl eventually moves into the hall to use it as a base of operations as his minions explore the rest of the complex, which may open up opportunities for additional reconnaissance or ambush.

8. KING’S WATCH

With open arches overlooking the hall below, the great stairs complete their rise at the northernmost set of great columns. Six smaller round supports separate the east-west arcade from a throne room to the north, and three balconies which overlook the great hall to the south.

Torn from the walls, most of the banners in the throne room lie scrunched up in the corners, or draped over the throne itself. This canopy undulates slowly, indicating an air current underneath, caused by the lowering of a stone block under the throne which seals the passage beneath. The stone platform

that slides forward to cover the gap sustained some damage; the cracks permit the draft.

Treasure: Precious metal inlays and gems worth 2,500 gp can be removed from the throne by those willing to deface it and spend 2 Time Units doing so.

AMBUSH OPPORTUNITY: Sealing the cracks in the stone platform under the throne with any reasonable substance hides the locking mechanism and delays the Jarl's army for 3 Time Units as they pound through the secret passage below.

AMBUSH OPPORTUNITY: The king's watch balcony makes a perfect observation point as the Jarl's forces assemble in the hall below. Grant one roll on the Military Intelligence Table. As the forces assemble, the Kingmaker and his wolf pack are the first to arrive (and he immediately begins sending out canine scouts as detailed in his Tactics), followed by a hobgoblin squad, three goblin levies, the ogre brute squad, the ice trolls, and finally the jarl himself as noted on the Time Units Tracking Table. These troops stay below while a search of the lower halls continues unless combat is initiated.

AMBUSH OPPORTUNITY: The balcony rails provide a convenient place on which to rest a crossbow and fire a shot from each hand, as if two-weapon fighting (light crossbows are considered light weapons in this case) into the hall below (Knowledge engineering, DC 15). Four crossbows (two pairs of two) can be set up in each of the smaller balconies, while six (three pairs) can be set up in the middle. It is possible to take a five-foot step, grasp two loaded weapons and fire in one combat round. The rail grants partial cover (+2 to AC and Reflex saves) to ranged fire from below. Any forces in the hall react, two random squads ascend the stairs on either side while a third peppers the balcony with archer fire. If there are fewer than three squads as indicated by the arrival times on the Time Units Tracking table, the additional forces arrive from elsewhere on rounds two and three of the combat). Any excess units (including the Jarl) retreat to the far end, out of sight. If Dralik defeats the enemy, the Jarl re-establishes his command post elsewhere and the occupation of the complex continues as noted. If Dralik is driven from King's Watch, it is now considered secured when rolling for encounters on the Encounter Table, although the rest of the Upper Halls are not secured until indicated.

It takes 5 Time Units to retrieve the weapons from the armory (area 19) and prepare the ambush. Dralik may of course initiate combat from the balconies normally without making these preparations.

9. STORAGE CHAMBERS

These chambers contain stonemasonry tools and equipment, stone blanks, and various statuary and molding segments for repairs or pattern duplication.

10. STONECUTTERS' STUDIO (CR 8)

Extra-wide double doors on the southern wall of this chamber open into room filled with statuary: chiseled stone blocks and intricate stone moldings and décor awaiting completion and integration into the keep's architectural beauty. The artistic improvement of the complex was a never-ending task. To the north, an alcove with raw quarried stone also contains sculptures of dungeon vermin and rodents; the detail is exquisitely lifelike and the rodent faces bear expressions of what can only be contorted pain.

All manner of stonemasonry tools, workbenches, wooden templates and plenty of architectural elements and sculpture suitable to form barricades can be obtained here; rolling pallets make moving such items relatively easy, including two heavy wooden lift-jacks designed to move large bas-relief stone panels into place.

Trap: The northern alcove contains a *teleportation circle*, designed to move stone from the quarry in area 56 to the workshop. Four glyphs decorating the circle match the ring found in the Master's Suite (area 15); and the two (safe) squares to the north are empty of any raw stone or petrified vermin. The circle itself is unsafe for living creatures, turning them to stone; a short in the magical controls keeps the teleporter active; through the years various vermin have suffered the effects of the trap. Medium or larger creatures are only partially affected by the transmutation magic.

AMBUSH OPPORTUNITY: Any of the Jarl's forces, excepting the Jarl himself will chase Dralik through the circle, so luring them into the trap is a possibility. If a goblin levy chases Dralik though, simply mark it as destroyed. A Hobgoblin squad is likewise destroyed after a short battle on the far side, during which Dralik takes 3d6 points of damage. Ogres, ice trolls, and wolves should make their saves and the battle should be continued on the far side.

TELEPORTATION AND FLESH TO STONE TRAP CR 8

Type magical; Perception DC 31; Disable Device DC 31

EFFECTS

Trigger location; **Reset** automatic, 1 round

Effect spell effect (*teleport* to the circle in area 56, DC 22 Will negates; teleported creatures medium or larger are partially turned to stone, gaining the staggered condition; small or smaller creatures are turned to stone as per *flesh to stone*; DC 24 Fortitude negates in both instances).

11. CRAFTSMAN PUB

Less formal than the long tables in the Great Hall, the tables in this cozy pub are perfect for dwarven craftsmen to settle into at the end of the day. The bar in one corner has been looted, but a few bottles of the "good stuff" lie hidden under an overturned bucket.

12. CRAFTER'S ROW

Two bedchambers off this 5-ft. wide hall were once occupied by craftsmen; the personal décor indicates the likely residents as a brewer and a leatherworker.

13. BATHS (CR 7)

A hypocaust heats the floor of this chamber, as well as keeping the water in an "L"-shaped pool in the southeast corner heated. Thick algae covers the surface. A dwarven skeleton covered in the scum floats face down.

The curtained-off hallway to the north leads to three adjoined privy stalls.

Trap: If disturbed, the algae in the bath releases a toxin. A creature in the area-of-effect who makes a successful Perception check knows they are at risk of inhaling the spores and may move out of the cloud before doing so.

Type magical; **Perception** DC 25; **Disable Device** DC 15

EFFECTS

Trigger location; **Reset** none

Effect spison (algae spores); never miss; onset delay (1 round); multiple targets (all targets in a 10-ft.-by-10-ft. area)

ALGAE SPORES

Type Poison, inhaled; **Save** Fortitude DC 15

Frequency 1/round for 6 rounds

Effect 1 Wis damage and *confused* for 1 round; **Cure** 1 save

AMBUSH OPPORTUNITY: A long-handled strainer found under a mound of moldy towels (Perception, DC 20) grants a +2 circumstance bonus to the disarm check. A small cask from the pub (area 11), brewery (area 18) or kitchens (area 20) allows the algae to be harvested and thrown as a splash weapon (a ranged attack with an increment of 10 feet. When the cask shatters, the 10-ft. radius spore release is so powerful there is no onset delay. Loading the cask takes 2 Time Units.

14. SUITES

These living quarters include a common room and two small bedchambers. Dwarven families of some stature, likely journeymen crafters, once inhabited these rooms.

15. MASTER'S SUITE

The four poster bed in this chamber is separated from the living space by a divider of intricately chiseled stone lattice. Personal papers, drawings and account books reveal this as the master stonemason's chamber. The glint of metal shines from a drafting table.

A **mithral ring** set with a small shard of limestone lies in plain sight (a Cursory search) on the master's drawing table; a sigil scratched in its surface matches the sigils on the four squares making up the stone *teleportation circle* in areas 10 and 29. This magical ring allows a creature to make five trips per day safely through the teleporter in a 24-hour period. A secret door behind the bed (Perception, DC 25) leads to the safe squares behind the stone teleporter in area 10.

16. CLOSET

This small storeroom contain spare furnishings, tapestries, rugs, and similar household items.

17. APPRENTICE DORM

Five bunk beds, a number of personal chests and wooden lockers, along with a rickety table and chairs fill this room. A small stash of unremarkable tools and personal craft projects identify this as the apprentices' dorm.

18. BREWERY

Three rooms house a brewery and distillery. The middle chamber contains the great copper boilers and other machinery, while the side chambers contain stored barrels of dwarven ale and whiskey. A few samples of the ale prove soured by time, but the whiskey has aged nicely.

Treasure: A Cursory search yields one bottle of fine spirits for personal consumption, while a thorough search yields 6 bottles worth 200 gp each of extremely well made and perfectly aged sprits in addition to that found on the Thorough Search Table.

19. ARMORY

A glowing lantern powered by a continual flame casts long shadows in this large chamber, the eerie backlight initially makes you mistake the ranked stands of armor for a formation of warriors readied for battle in a powerful shield wall formation.

Treasure: A Cursory search discovers a collection of 18 light crossbows and 6 heavy crossbows along with 240 masterwork bolts. Searching the room with Thorough Search Table roll, yields not only the obtained result, but an additional piece of armor or weaponry from result 12 (Dwarven Arms).

AMBUSH OPPORTUNITY: The shield-wall trick detailed in the description for area 7 may be set up in here (although the *ghost drum* or laundry beater animation enhancement may only be used in one area). If a shield wall is created in both areas, the second shield wall subtracts only 1 Time Unit from the current total (plus any enhancements).

20. KITCHENS

The western wall of this chamber contains three great fireplaces for roasting meat, while cast iron stoves stand along the northwestern wall. The fireplaces show evidence of wood ash and soot, and cords of seasoned hickory stand nearby, but the stoves are heated by lava tubes from underneath. A large obsidian lever next to each stove likely controls the flow of lava. The rest of the room contains prep tables, scullery supplies, and a loft to the east where the kitchen servants once slept.

21. BAKERY (CR 4)

Barrels of moldy flour, wooden mixing troughs, and kneading tables fill most of the room. The western wall contains great iron doors, most likely oven doors for baking bread. Heat radiates from these vertical hatches.

Creatures: Control levers, similar to those in the kitchen, protrude from the wall. Like the cast iron stoves, a lava flow underneath heats the bread ovens. A pair of thoqqua, displaced from the forge, live in this flow, which connects to the kitchen stoves (area 20) and the laundry (area 22). These outsiders are aggressive only if the levers in any of the three chambers have been manipulated in some way. Thought hostile, they only attack creatures within 5 ft. of the door. A pause in the combat by stepping away from the doors permits attempts Diplomacy if some method of communication can be

found, otherwise they eventually pursue intruders, or those using missile weapons or ranged spells into the kitchen.

RECRUITMENT OPPORTUNITY: The fire mephit from area 36 can broker a deal with the thoqqua to help defend the keep. Engaging in this diplomacy advances the Time Unit current total by 3. The player earns the Allies: Thoqqua boon.

THOQQUA (2) CR 2

N Medium outsider (earth, elemental, extraplanar, fire) XP 600
Init +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., tremorsense 60 ft.; Perception +10

Aura molten body

DEFENSE

AC 15, touch 11, flat-footed 14 (+1 Dex, +4 natural)

hp 22 (3d10+6)

Fort +5, **Ref** +4, **Will** +2

Immune fire, elemental

Weaknesses vulnerable to cold

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., burrow 20 ft.

Melee slam +4 (1d6+1 plus burn)

Special Attacks burn (1d6, DC 13)

STATISTICS

Str 13, **Dex** 13, **Con** 15, **Int** 6, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +4; **CMD** 15 (can't be tripped)

Feats Nimble Moves, Skill Focus (Perception)

Skills Acrobatics +7, Perception +10, Stealth +7, Survival +7

Languages Ignan (cannot speak)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Molten Body (Su) A thoqqua's body is hot enough to melt stone. Anyone striking a thoqqua with a natural weapon or unarmed strike takes 1d6 points of fire damage. A creature that grapples a thoqqua or is grappled by one takes 3d6 points of fire damage each round the grapple persists. A creature that strikes a thoqqua with a manufactured weapon can attempt a DC 13 Reflex save to pull the weapon away from the creature's molten body quickly enough to avoid having the weapon take 1d6 points of fire damage—damage caused to a weapon in this manner is not halved as is normal for damage caused to items, and ignores the first 5 points of hardness possessed by the item. As a result, most metal weapons can generally safely strike a thoqqua without taking much damage, but wooden weapons have a significant chance of burning away if used against one of these creatures. The save DC is Constitution-based.

22. LAUNDRY

Hampers, drying racks, and vats of water fill the western end of this chamber. A long, low-lipped trough filled with rotting linens runs along the eastern wall. Warm to the touch, any water once filling the reservoir has long since been boiled off by the heating element underneath. Rows of wooden bats on a crank shaft stand poised above the trough, the crank prevented from moving by a glowing magical spear.

Treasure: The spear, warm to the touch along the shaft, is a +1 flaming burst spear. When the magic weapon is removed read the following:

Flame crackles on the spear point as it is removed from the mechanism. The cranks shift and the row of bats strike the metal trough, sounding like a rank of spearmen clanging their spears on their shields as they come to attention.

Utilizing this laundry beater to add simple animation to a mock-up shield wall in the armory (area 18) or great hall (area 7) requires a DC 15 Knowledge (engineering) check.

23. WARRIORS' SUITES

The décor and belongings left behind mark these chambers as living quarters for unmarried warriors. Smaller bedchambers surround a common living space.

24. ROYAL SUITES

Double wooden doors inlaid with precious metals open into the royal suites. A private audience chamber is draped in burgundy velvet, the dwarven color of mourning. The skeletal remains of dwarven courtiers slain by violence lie strewn about the chamber. Ancient bloodstains discolor the cloth hangings and an adamantite axe splits one of the drapes near the top, its head buried in the paneling behind. To the northeast, the bedchamber is visible through a lattice-framed arch, delicately carved from rich marbles. To the west, double doors with stained glass panels open onto a wide balcony. The eastern wall of the main chamber contains a wooden door in a stone-arched frame

Treasure: The +1 adamantite throwing axe is difficult to reach, requiring a tricky climb on the panel moldings. As it is yanked free, Dralik overbalances and falls. Luckily, the axe tears into the drape, splitting it and slowing his descent. He lands safely.

AMBUSH OPPORTUNITY: Hanging the burgundy velvets can from the balcony in area 25 allows a quick descent to the steps below (area 29) for first creature who drives a slashing weapon into them, riding the split down. The torn panels appear safe for subsequent climbers but fail, spilling them into the depth below. Goblins or hobgoblins who attempt the trick generate a Wounded Goblinoids or Understrength Mercenaries boon respectively, while other creatures who make a DC 17 Reflex save take 2d6 falling damage and land prone on the steps. Failure on the Reflex save results in a 100-ft. drop to the cavern floor below (10d6 falling damage). A DC 15 Knowledge (engineering) check grants this information; prepping the quick escape route consumes 2 Time Units.

Treasure: The king's corpse reposes peacefully in bed, its hands folded serenely over the coverlet, a signet ring partially obscured by the long beard (Perception DC 25). Unlike the other corpses in the chamber, where violence and pooling blood led to quick decomposition into skeletal remains dressed in rich ministerial robes, the king's shrunken and leathery skin survives intact, only crumbling to dust if the hands are disturbed, or if the diadem on his brow (a gold-mounted ruby worth 2,500 gp sewn into a midnight blue ribbon) is removed.

25. KING'S VISTA

A wide balcony with a thick stone balustrade overlooks a vast cavern, the floor of which cannot be seen in the darkness below even with continual flame torches marking the extent of a great stone staircase dividing the cavern.

26. MARSHAL'S SUITES

The passage opens into a war room, designed for the military arm of the once-failed dwarven kingdom to meet and plan strategy away from the crowd of the main hall. Double doors to the east open onto the balcony. To the west, two doors on the southern wall of the western hall open into small, well-appointed guest chambers, while the more impressive door to the north reveals the marshal's personal suites.

Magic Item: A drum on one of the tables lets out a short staccato greeting whenever a dwarf comes within 30 feet. This is a *ghost sound drum*, a piece of dwarven equipment widely known in use.

GHOST SOUND DRUM

Aura faint (conjuration); **CL** 1st

Slot —; **Price** 1,250 gp; **Weight** 3 lbs.

DESCRIPTION

This drum plays martial dwarven tattoos and drum rolls, and can be set for continuous play, silence, or to render a brief salute whenever a dwarf passes within 30 feet. The instrument's volume may likewise be adjusted.

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, *alarm*, *ghost sound*; **Cost** 6250 gp



Treasure: Chests, coffers, and rotting bags contain 10,000 cp, 2,000 sp, 500 gp, 20 pp, a mithral shirt, a *wand of bear's endurance* (24 charges), a set of 5 matched garnets worth 90 gp each, or 500 gp when sold as a set, and a golden flagon of red gold chased with cool silver and bearing the sigils of the lord of fire and ice worth 500 gp. It takes 1 Time Unit to collect the bulk of the coin; the armor, gems and jewelry can be picked up with no penalty.

Development: The coin chest containing the copper and silver is oversize for its contents. A secret panel in the base leads to a secret passage down to area 45. The Perception check to discover the passage is DC 25 if the coin has been removed, DC 30 if it has not.

27. ESCAPE TUNNELS

This small storeroom contain folded linens, spare furniture, and other supplies for the upper halls.

A DC 25 Perception check discovers a stone trap door under some stacked rugs opening into a passage leading to the quarry (area 53).

28. KING'S FREEDOM

The eastern wall of the private audience in the king's suites contains a wooden door in a stone-arched frame: the portal stands shut tight.

The locked (Disable Device, DC 20) wooden door (Hardness 5, hit points 20, Break DC 25) secures the king's private study to the east, through which a secret door (Perception, DC 25) in the flagstones lead to a vault via a short flight of stairs. The bottom step is trapped. Though the trap is not too difficult to spot, the bypass (inserting the king's signet ring into a matching glyph carved in stone underneath the lip of the penultimate step) requires a DC 30 Perception check.

WALL SCYTHE TRAP

CR 4

Type mechanical; **Perception** DC 20; **Disable Device** DC 20

EFFECTS

Trigger location; **Reset** automatic, 2 rounds

Effect Atk +20 melee (2d4+6/×4)

29. THE STEP CAVERN

A 10-ft. wide passage leading back into the main hall through a secret door terminates at the peak of an incredible staircase in a huge cavern. Continual flames mark the edges of the steps down to a landing; the stairs then split and descend further to the east and west. Starting at the landing, ice and snow covers the eastern stairs, tiny flakes swirling in from the tunnel entrance at the foot of the steps.

From the upper landing at the top of the stairs, the 100-ft. drop to the cavern floor is shrouded in darkness but from the landing in the middle of the cavern where the drop is only 60 feet, the floor of the cavern can be seen below in dim light. The stairs to the east and west drop another 25 feet before meeting the cavern wall. Overhead, the ceiling of the cavern looms 160 feet up, curving slightly at the cavern perimeter.

Standing at the landing, cool air blows in from the east, warmth emanates from the west. The landing is wet with melted snow where the two currents meet. The eastern frost covered stairs count as difficult terrain.

AMBUSH OPPORTUNITY: As Dralik reaches the middle landing, he dislodges a tower shield abandoned in the ice and snow, which skitters down the snow-swept stairs like a sled. Dralik may set a trap with a DC 22 Survival check (or by recruiting the Ice Mephit in area 45), covering similar shields and setting up icy spots along the steps, which earns him a Wounded Goblinoid boon (goblin scouts later slide pell-mell through area 41 and into the chasm in area 45). Setting the trap consumes 2 Time Units.

AMBUSH OPPORTUNITY: Dralik may also ride a tower shield to make a quick exit from the landing, sliding down the stairs to area 41. A move action is required to mount the shield as a sled, and he concludes his ride at the start of his next initiative prone. He can use a 5-foot step to mount the shield as a snowboard with a DC 15 Ride check (or fall prone at the end). In either position he may make an attempt to leap the chasm in area 43, using his Ride check instead of Acrobatics, and applying a +20 racial bonus for speed. If he takes 1 Time Unit to build a slight take-off ramp at the edge of the chasm, he gains a +4 circumstance bonus, and if the Ice Mephit treats either the stairs or the take-off ramp with its breath weapon, the circumstance bonus increases to +8. If Dralik fails the jump (Ride/Acrobatics DC 45), he still clears the chasm but blows the landing taking 2d6 falling damage falling prone on the ledge where the glacier toad awaits (area 44). For this special maneuver Jump adds its magical bonus to the Ride check.

30. ENTRANCE HALL

The heat intensifies, but does not become too uncomfortable as the stairs deposit you in an entry chamber. A ruddy glow fills the next room, you see a short bridge spanning a canal, mine carts and a rail head beyond.

31. BRIDGE OF FIRE (CR 3)

A sing-song voice emanating from the canal echoes off the walls of the chamber. From the edge of the room, you can just make out that the channel is filled with slowly moving lava, the source of the previously-seen glow.

Creature: Lava diverted from the mines and other areas of the complex pass through the canal. The valve system in areas 36 controls the overflow, and has been switched into the current position, flooding much of the lower mines, but creating a nice home for a fire mephit named Popper. Popper floats in the lava below, and is only hostile if the valves in areas 36 have been manipulated. He starts indifferent to Dralik, although he initially greets him by saying, "Ooooh! A visitor who might not be a troublemaker."

POPPER

N Small outsider (fire)

Init +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +6

DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 14, flat-footed 14 (+2 Dex, +1 dodge, +3 natural, +1 size)

hp 19 (3d10+3); fast healing 2

Fort +2, **Ref** +5, **Will** +3

DR 5/magic; **Immune** Fire

Weaknesses: Vulnerability to cold

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., fly 40 ft. (average)

Melee 2 claws +5 (1d3+1)

Special Attacks breath weapon (15-foot cone, 1d8 fire, Reflex DC 13 for half)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 6th)

1/hour – scorching ray

1/day – heat metal (DC 14), summon (level 2, 1 fire mephit, 25%)

STATISTICS

Str 13, **Dex** 15, **Con** 12, **Int** 6, **Wis** 11, **Cha** 14

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +3; **CMD** 15

Feats Dodge, Improved Initiative

Skills Bluff +8, Fly +10, Perception +6, Stealth +12

Languages Common, Ignan

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Breath Weapon (Su) Popper can unleash a cone of fire every 4 rounds as a standard action. The DC is Constitution-based and includes a +1 racial bonus.

Fast Healing (Su) Works only while in contact with fire.

RECRUITMENT OPPORTUNITY: Popper is a bit put out by the salamander in area 55, who does not "share" the forge, and he thinks the thoqqua in area 21 boring because all they want to do is get rid of the salamander; they never like to simply play in the lava. Popper secretly likes Friffen, the Ice Mephit in area 45, although he hesitates to admit it. Improving Popper's attitude to friendly grants the Allies: Popper boon.

Popper does not know about the lift in area 32: he always uses the lava flows to move through the complex.

32. RAIL HEAD

Tracks running to the mine entrances terminate here. Three carts full of dusty raw ore for processing wait patiently on the rails.

A DC 30 Perception check discovers an elevator platform in the turntable on which the mine carts rest. Controlled by the counterweights in area 39, the panel lowers to reveal a passage to area 49. If Dralik has seen the exposed lift in area 44, he gains a +5 circumstance bonus on the Perception check.

33. MAP ROOM

Maps of significant portions of the mine tunnels are pinned to the walls or piled on the tables. Surveying equipment stands in the corner. A layer of dust coats everything.

A DC 15 Knowledge (dungeoneering) check identifies the most useful maps of the mines which reduces the time needed to find a way through as detailed in area 38. If the maps are not at least found and taken (or destroyed), the Jarl gains an advantage, advancing the Time Units by 3.

AMBUSH OPPORTUNITY: Forging false maps with materials in the chamber requires a DC 13 Linguistics check and delays the Jarl, subtracting 5 Time Units.

34. GUARD POSTS

This watch post has been long abandoned.

35. MINE MASTER'S CHAMBERS

The furnishings in this room reveal the personality of a dwarf so dedicated to the mining of ore that he could not bear to be too far from the mines at any given time.

A journal on the writing desk (Linguistics DC 11) records the following in a sloppy hand:

Those two idiots were wrestling near the stone porter. Grammalt pushed Krikdin into the circle while it was active. The costs to pay for his restoration to flesh will most definitely come out of their pay. Too bad the stonemason has no more of those rings that make safe passage a few times during the day. It would be helpful to have such magic in the quarry.

36. LAVA VALVES

Defined by a gap of about an inch, a 7-ft. circular section in the floor of this octagonal chamber appears to rotate by means of stone bars attached to a housing tab bolted into the deck. The bars, in the shape of an "x" extend out over the surrounding path, permitting up to four medium creatures to push and rotate the center plug.

The lava flow that moves through the complex, heating the forge, hypocaust, and other conveniences can be controlled by the valves in these four chambers. The settings manuals have been lost, but the thoqqua in area 21, or Poppin in area 31 can assist an ally in setting up an ambush, although tinkering with the valves prior to making contact with these creatures adjusts their starting attitudes. Though designed to be turned by four, it is possible for a single creature to slowly make the adjustments, so refined is the engineering.

AMBUSH OPPORTUNITY: Dralik can tempt a goblin levy to chase him into the hypocaust tunnels and then release the lava flow into the tubes. Levering up a flagstone and blazing a trail through empty channels of the heating system requires 4 Time Units, reduced by 1 for every four points, or portion thereof exceeding a DC 12 Knowledge (engineering) check (minimum 1). The goblins do not escape the pressurized flow in time; one squad is completely destroyed. Larger minions of the Jarl will not chase Dralik into the heating system – an obvious deduction based on available tunnel sizes.

37. MECHANICAL SHOP

Various parts and tools for the repair of mine carts, switch mechanisms, and lifts fill the storage areas and workbenches of this room.



38. MINE ENTRANCE

The rail tracks enter the mines from two tunnels, which quickly branch and split, traveling both uphill and downhill. A cursory walk through the closest tunnels discovers some flooded with lava, but a chance still remains that these passages link up with the fabled cross-mountain tunnel system.

The mines contain passages to the quarry (area 53) and to a secret door opening onto the cross-tunnel system to the far side of the mountain. While it is virtually impossible for Dralik to get lost in the mines, his Survival skill determines how quickly he discovers the cross-mountain tunnel, which normally takes 5 Time Units. For every 8 points (or portion thereof) on his Survival check, reduce the number by one. The maps from area 33 grant a +4 circumstance bonus to the check.

Development: Dralik may begin Part Two of the adventure at any time after he discovers the exit tunnel, but the GM should remind him that there are plenty of opportunities to ambush the Jarl in the complex and still make the retreat.

39. COUNTERWEIGHT ROOM

A counterweight system, rigged with wire cable and pig-iron bricks fills this room. The hempen haul ropes need replacement, but the mechanism otherwise appears sound.

Once this room is discovered, knowledge of the lift in area 32 is granted at no cost in Time Units. Fifty feet of sturdy rope are required to replace the haul ropes. The frozen ropes in area 47 have been preserved; it takes 2 Time Units to make the switch. If Dralik already has rope in his pack, the swap requires 1 Time Unit.

40. STORAGE

Various mining tools and implements are stored here, as well as crates of unrefined ore and a small amount of spoiled dry goods and beer for the miners.

41. OVERLOOK

The stairs from the middle landing terminates in an entry hall sliced in half by the collapse of the rooms further to the east. A narrow ledge leads to similarly truncated chambers to the south. Directly ahead, a great chasm filled with snow and ice greets you. This rift was not caused by the recent magic of the druids, but must have occurred decades, if not centuries ago.

42. SHATTERED CHAMBERS

Ancient acolyte robes and temple furnishings covered in a rime of ice fill these damaged chambers.

43. THE RIFT

Across a wide chasm, the sliced-away rooms of the former temple can be seen through a light flurry of snow and ice flakes. Looking down, the floor is visible 40 feet below,

covered in boulders, rubble, and snow. Looking up, daylight is visible hundreds of feet up ice-encrusted sheer rock walls.

This portion of the keep was destroyed when a lava flow and reservoir collapsed, generating the rift seen now. A huge amount of earth from above filled most of the sinkhole below, and the ice and snow from the surface flash froze any extant lava tubes leading to the eastern side of the complex. Open to the elements, this area is now a deep-freeze chamber, insulated in summer by its depth, and adding small layers of ice and snow each winter from elements falling down the shaft.

Creatures: A glacier toad and an ice mephit vie for control of the rift. A DC 29 Perception check spots the toad on the partially collapsed ledge in area 44 (see stat blocks below). If attacked by ranged weapons, the toad retreats into a crack in the cavern wall until Dralik reaches the far side and acts as indicated in the area 44 creature notes.

Fleeing Via the Rift: The rift opens up onto the mountain pass that was originally defended at the bridge.

The 200-ft. icy climb out of the rift is difficult, but not impossible (DC 30) although the number of checks called for with the distance involve makes it hugely risky. It is possible to *fly* or *levitate* up the rift, but Dralik should be warned that the Jarl's forces would not likely use such an option: they would continue to seek the more easily accessible cross-mountain tunnel. Escape this way achieves Dralik's personal safety, but not that of those on the far side mountain.

44. TEMPLE DECK

The remains of an altar grace the chamber, but much of the surrounding flooring has shifted, sunk, or fallen away, exposing a shaft leading down. An elevator, part of the altar platform itself is hopelessly jammed, but it is just possible to wiggle through the cracks to the shaft.

The 80-ft. shaft (Climb DC 5 on the lift cables) leads to the eastern access stairs (area 49); it takes 1 Time Unit to climb up or down the shaft.

A partial chunk of the temple deck survived sinking 15 feet into the rift. A DC 15 Climb check permits access to this sunken ledge.

Creatures: An Ice Mephit named Friffen once called the sunken ledge and temple above home, but recently a glacier toad has moved in and torments the outsider, considering him a tasty treat. A DC 24 Perception check spots the toad biting Friffen during the surprise round. Grant a +4 circumstance bonus if Dralik has previously seen the magical beast. Success on the check allows Dralik to act in this surprise round. The toad swallows the outsider whole as its next action, knocking it unconscious in the process.

GLACIER TOAD

N Large magical beast (cold) **CR 6**
XP 2,400
Init +1; **Senses** low-light vision, scent; Perception +11
Aura bitter cold (20 ft.)

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 10, flat-footed 18 (+1 Dex, +9 natural, -1 size)
hp 73 (7d10+35)
Fort +10, **Ref** +8, **Will** +3
Immune cold
Weaknesses vulnerable to fire

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., swim 15 ft.
Melee bite +13 (2d6+9 plus 1d6 cold and grab)
Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.
Special Attacks swallow whole (1d4 bludgeoning and 1d6 cold, AC 14, 7 hp)

STATISTICS

Str 23, **Dex** 13, **Con** 20, **Int** 5, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 6
Base Atk +7; **CMB** +14 (+18 grapple); **CMD** 25 (29 vs. trip)
Feats Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack, Skill Focus (Perception), Weapon Focus (bite)
Skills Acrobatics +9 (+13 jumping), Perception +11, Stealth +6 (+14 in snow), Swim +14; **Racial Modifiers** +4 Acrobatics, (+8 jumping), +4 Stealth (+12 in snow)
Languages Aklo

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Bitter Cold (Su) All creatures within 20 feet of a glacier toad take 1d6 points of cold damage each round on the toad's turn.

FRIFFEN

N Small outsider (cold) **CR 3**
Init +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +6
XP 800

DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 14, flat-footed 14 (+2 Dex, +1 dodge, +3 natural, +1 size)
hp 19 (3d10+3); fast healing 2
Fort +2, **Ref** +5, **Will** +3
DR 5/magic; **Immune** Cold
Weaknesses: Vulnerability to fire

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., fly 40 ft. (average)
Melee 2 claws +5 (1d3+1)
Special Attacks breath weapon (15-foot cone, 1d4 cold plus sicken, Reflex DC 13 for half and no sicken)
Spell-Like Abilities (CL 6th)
1/hour – *magic missile*
1/day – *chill metal* (DC 14), *summon* (level 2, 1 ice mephit, 25%)

STATISTICS

Str 13, **Dex** 15, **Con** 12, **Int** 6, **Wis** 11, **Cha** 14
Base Atk +3; **CMB** +3; **CMD** 15
Feats Dodge, Improved Initiative
Skills Bluff +8, Fly +10, Perception +6, Stealth +12
Languages Common, Auran

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Breath Weapon (Su) Friffen can breathe a cone of ice once every 4 rounds that deals 1d4 cold damage. The cold also causes living creatures to be sickened for 3 rounds. A successful Reflex save halves the damage and negates the sickened effect.
Fast Healing (Su) Works only in areas below freezing.

RECRUITMENT OPPORTUNITY: Friffen suffocates 10 rounds after being swallowed. If he is cut out of the toad's gullet in time, his fast healing come into play and revives him in 4 rounds. Friffen is considered friendly unless Dralik uses healing magic to restore him, in which case he is considered helpful. Dralik earns the Allies: Friffen boon.

Treasure: The altar contains dozens of ice sculptures (by Friffen the mephit), that disguise a frost-covered diamond statue of the dwarven god. A DC 25 Perception check reveals this 1,500 gp artwork.

45. HIGH PRIEST'S SUITE

The damage to this chamber cannot disguise the wealth of its once important inhabitant: the dwarven high priest.

A DC 15 Perception check discovers the damaged door to the secret passage leading to area 28.

46. ACOLYTES CHAMBERS

Lesser priests and scribes once occupied these rooms if the unremarkable vestments, well preserved by the cold, are any indication.

47. COUNTERWEIGHT ROOM

A counterweight system for an elevator of some sort fills the room. The wire cables and hemp ropes are sheathed in thick ice.

48. INFIRMARY

A shrine in the northern wall, simple beds, and a small first-aid station identify this room as an infirmary that once combined mundane and magical healing techniques to tend its patients.

49. ACCESS STAIRWAY

The vertical shaft terminates in a 10-ft. wide passage sloping down.

50. APPRENTICE SUITES

Dormitory style bedding, adolescent dwarf skeletons with broken bones and rents in rotting clothing, mundane tools and other personal items suggest a group of apprentices once dwelled here before taking sides against each other in some conflict.

51. MASTER'S SUITES

Armor and weapon prototypes, drawings, and books on metallurgy and magic reveal these chambers as the master smith's suites. A private bedchamber, screened-off nursery, a small kitchen and dining area, a living area, and a private study once provided for his comfort.

52. THE FORGE

The curved southern wall of this chamber once contained five great forges or puddling ovens to both refine raw ore and provide for the heating and carburizing processes of steelmaking. Heated by the same lava flows powering the rest of the keep, the three center forges have been joined by the removal of the walls between them. Something moves within the extreme heat of the combined chambers.

Creature: A salamander riding the currents of lava discovered this chamber and set up shop, driving out the thoqqua who once lived here in communion with the dwarves. The salamander spends his time turning the weaponry and arms of the dwarves into perverted mockeries of their original forms. Cruel and bitter, the monster attempts to slay all who enter, after torturing them for his own enjoyment.

SALAMANDER

CE Medium outsider (extraplanar, fire)

Init +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +16

CR 6

XP 2,400

DEFENSE

AC 18, touch 11, flat-footed 17 (+1 Dex, +7 natural)

hp 76 (8d10+32)

Fort +10, **Ref** +7, **Will** +6

DR 10/magic; **Immune** fire

Weaknesses vulnerability to cold

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.

Melee spear +11/+6 (1d8+4/×3 plus 1d6 fire), tail slap +6 (2d6+1 plus 1d6 fire and grab)

Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft. (10 ft. with tail)

Special Attacks constrict (2d6+4 plus 1d6 fire), heat



STATISTICS

Str 16, **Dex** 13, **Con** 18, **Int** 14, **Wis** 15, **Cha** 13

Base Atk +8; **CMB** +11 (+15 grapple); **CMD** 22 (can't be tripped)

Feats Cleave, Iron Will, Power Attack, Skill Focus (Perception)
Skills Acrobatics +12, Bluff +12, Craft (weaponsmithing) +17, Intimidate +12, Knowledge (planes) +13, Perception +16, Sense Motive +13, Stealth +12; **Racial Modifiers** +4 Craft (armorsmithing, blacksmithing, and weaponsmithing)

Languages Common, Ignan

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Heat (Ex) A salamander generates so much heat that its mere touch deals an additional 1d6 points of fire damage. A salamander's metallic weapons also conduct this heat.

Treasure: The salamander has been saving the best for last. Amongst the strangely modified weaponry and suits of armor rests the hammer of the Lord of Fire and Ice, a *dwarven thrower*. Any dwarf recognizes this legendary weapon, forged in the flames of the Fire Keep and tempered in the icy cold forge of the Ice Keep.

TELEPORTATION AND FLESH TO STONE TRAP CR 8

Type magical; **Perception** DC 31; **Disable Device** DC 31

EFFECTS

Trigger location; **Reset** automatic, 1 round

Effect spell effect (*teleport* to the circle in area 56, DC 22 Will negates; teleported creatures medium or larger are partially turned to stone, gaining the staggered condition; small or smaller creatures are turned to stone as per *flesh to stone*; DC 24 Fortitude negates in both instances).

53. THE QUARRY (CR 9)

This section of tunnels runs through multiple veins of high-quality building stone and marbles. Pre-cut blocks of granite, limestone, and marble await shipment to workshops. In one chamber the stacks of waiting stone are covered in a mossy growth surrounding an underground plant whose creeper vines bear enticing fruit. Dozens of life-size stone statues of vermin and rodents are likewise buried the moss.

Trap: The second half of the stone teleporter from area 10 is located here, glyphs in the four squares that make up the teleportation pad. The rodent and vermin statues skirt the perimeter, a DC 20 Perception check notices that a number of them are cracked and hollow, as if the insides have been sucked out.

Creature: A stone creeper (new monster, see below) feeds heartily on the food coming from the mine tunnels, as well as through the teleportation circle. It jealously guards its territory, attacking any who enter from either the magical transport or the mines.

Treasure: The stone antidote from the creeper clears the staggered condition generated by the trap.

STONE CREEPER

CR 5

A bed of mossy fungus surrounds this dun-colored bush. Long creeper vines covered in an oily film appear to feed on the surrounding moss and bear enticing fruits.

N Medium plant

XP 800

Init +1; **Senses** low-light vision tremorsense 60 ft.; **Perception** +0

DEFENSE

AC 18, touch 11, flat-footed 17 (+1 Dex, +7 natural)

hp 52 (7d8+21)

Fort +7, **Ref** +0, **Will** +1

Immune plant traits

Weaknesses vulnerability to cold

OFFENSE

Speed 10 ft.

Melee 4 tentacles +8 (1d4+3)

Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

Special Attacks flesh tendrils

STATISTICS

Str 16, **Dex** 12, **Con** 16, **Int** —, **Wis** 11, **Cha** 9

Base Atk +5; **CMB** +8 (+12 grapple with flesh tendrils); **CMD** 19

ECOLOGY

Environment any underground

Organization solitary, pair, or grove (3–12)

Treasure incidental

SQ poison, stone antidote

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Flesh Tendrils (Ex) An oily film on the stone fungus' tentacles transforms rocky or stony sections of caves and dungeons into grasping tendrils of flesh. The plant may forgo one or more of its attacks to strike the ground at a creature's feet causing fleshy creepers of transformed stone to sprout and grasp the victim. These tendrils make an immediate grapple check against the target; the stone fungus does not gain the grappled condition, nor does it lose its tentacle attack in subsequent rounds. Each round any square of flesh tendrils maintains the grapple as a free action, and attempts to pin and then tie up captured creatures. The fungus gains a +4 racial bonus to grapple when using this ability. Five or more points of cold damage dealt to the fleshy tendrils causes them to freeze and crack, freeing the victim in a shower of frozen stone dust.

Poison (Ex) The mossy, fungal bed of the stone creeper as well as its fruits turn creatures to stone. **Poison:** ingested; save Fort DC 16; onset 10 min.; frequency 1/min for 6 min; Initial Effect 1d4 Dex; Secondary Effect turned to stone; cure 2 consecutive saves. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Stone Antidote (Su) The nodules that secrete the oily film coating the stone fungus' tentacles can revive petrified creatures. Smearing a creature with the juice in the nodule within one hour of the plant's death grants the benefits of stone to flesh.

Stone creepers thrive in dungeons and caves infested by small vermin and rodents, but are deadly enough to destroy more powerful creatures that enter their garden. The smaller creatures eat the mossy bed surrounding the plant, while larger creatures unfamiliar with the underground realms

are often tempted by the luscious fruits. The plant uses the oily secretions on their tentacles to transform sections of the petrified creatures into tasty treats, sucking out the flesh like the nutmeat from a cracked nut. Their gardens are often littered with the stony husks of their victims. When particularly hungry, the fungus does not wait for its victims to turn to stone but attacks with its tentacles directly.

PART TWO: THE RUNNER

When Dralik quits the Fire Keep for good, a running battle ensues through the cross-mountain tunnel system, ending at a last-stand bridge just before the entrance to the mines that lead to the Ice Keep and the civilized lands beyond.

First, determine how many reinforcements the Jarl receives, based on the Time Unit Total (subtract any Time Units set aside as indicated in the Time Units Table entries The Vanguard Approaches and The Jarl on the Move).

>105: 3 goblin levies, 2 hobgoblin squads, 2 ogres (who join or reform the brute squad)

85-105: 2 goblin levies, 1 hobgoblin squad, grant 3d8+7 healing to one of the following any ogre or troll, The Kingmaker (or the winter wolf if still allied), or the Jarl

<85: 1 goblin levy, 1 hobgoblin squad.

Then proceed with the chase: a modified version of the Chase rules in the Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Gamemastery Guide. For your convenience, a GM card and a player card for the chase is included in the supplementary materials. As this is not a round by round chase, Dralik may use any magic or equipment he sees fit, but the distraction of the chase means he cannot Take 10 on any checks.

CHASE CARD RULES

Start Dralik and three tokens representing the advance of the Jarl's army through the tunnels on card one.

Each turn Dralik may attempt one or both of the challenges to advance – he must decide before acting.

If he attempts one challenge and succeeds, he moves forward one card; there is no penalty for failure.

Success on two challenges moves Dralik forward two cards, or he may move forward one card and take the associated boon from the card the just left. If there are two or more enemy tokens ahead of Dralik he may only move forward two cards, he cannot select the boon.

If Dralik fails either challenge when attempting both, he suffers the failure penalty listed and stays put.

If Dralik fails both challenges, he suffers one of the penalties (random) and one last-place enemy token advances one card.

After Dralik's turn, the Jarl's forces move. Advance one token from any card containing two or more tokens one card. One token from the last place card after this move then attempts to advance, rolling 1d20 against the easiest DC target on the card. If the check is successful, the token moves forward one card, if the roll exceed the DC by five move all tokens forward one card. When the skill check roll is made, if the last-place card contains only one token, grant a +5 insight bonus to the roll.

The chase ends when Dralik, or two of the Jarl's tokens, reach the finish. Even if the Jarl beats Dralik to the bridge, his troops must rest for a short time before advancing. Dralik's Endurance feat allows him to forge ahead and gain the bridge.

If Dralik failed to gain the Prefect Ambush boon during the chase, he may use the Ambush Map to initiate one encounter prior to advancing to the bridge. Roll on the Encounter Table until a combat result is achieved, as if playing the encounter in the Fire Keep. Dralik can retreat from this encounter by making a DC 17 Stealth check from cover or concealment. Then, advance to the conclusion.

CONCLUSION: AT THE BRIDGE

No further retreat remains. Beyond this last cavern lies the secret entrance to the Ice Keep, and thence the undefended lands of the border kingdoms. The advance guard of the Jarl must penetrate no further. The only thing that brings small consolation is the layout of this final cave. A great chasm opens up hundreds of feet into the depths, spanned by a natural bridge under a 40-ft. high ceiling. The relatively narrow confines of the bridge will protect your flank as you make your final stand.

Unlike most of the combats in the Fire Keep, where ambush, stealth, and retreat were likely the watchwords, the battle at the bridge is designed to be a series of assault waves that ramp up the impending doom of our hero. The certainty of that doom may be mitigated by how well Dralik managed the conflict in the keep, and how the chase through the mountain played out.

Allow Dralik a few minutes of game time to heal, arm, and otherwise prepare for the assaults to come. The Jarl and his forces assemble at the tunnel mouth leading to the bridge. They then begin their assault, starting with the weakest elements remaining in the order of battle. The GM should intensify the assault, using stronger elements as the battle continues, with an eye towards creating a cinematic combat sequence. Multiple units might advance or support each other in subsequent rounds, two goblin levies for example, or a goblin levy supported by the odd rock toss from the impatient jarl.

Dralik may continue to play any remaining boon cards as he sees fit. These may present opportunities to model each assault to the tale's advantage. For example, if Dralik holds an Allies: Disaffected Goblins boon, send a goblin levy along with the Kingmaker, whose wolves attack a hapless goblin dog, effectively granting Dralik additional allies during that wave of enemies as they go at each other. All the while during these advancing waves, the war drums pound away at the cave mouth while the remaining foes await their turn.

When the wave assaults become repetitive, or when Dralik is wounded and out of resources, advance the Jarl, who bursts his way past any remaining troops to deal with this frustrating obstacle by himself. His curses and posturing grant Dralik a round or three to heal as he may, or even loose the odd crossbow bolt at the foolhardy young prince before he charges forward, shouting to his minions that "*The Dwarf is mine!*"

If Dralik is slain, the Jarl hurls his corpse from the bridge into the depths. The dwarven god, taking note of his heroics restores him to life. From the bowels of the earth, Dralik must now begin the long task of reclaiming the Twin Keeps and the mountain pass, as suggested in Future Adventures.

If Dralik is knocked unconscious, he is captured by the Jarl. Escape from imprisonment sets up his next adventure, and the reclaiming of the dwarven fortresses.

If Dralik slays the Jarl, the remaining forces break and run, but regroup in the Fire Keep: a partial victory.

If Dralik captures the unconscious giant, only the Kingmaker and his pack and the Stalker from the ogre squad (but no standard ogres) remain steady enough to contest the final result. Dralik, if heavily wounded, may need to flee (which is always an option for him during the final battle). The Jarl's minions are too concerned for their king's life to occupy the Ice Keep before a small militia provides a makeshift defense. The threat of a coup-de-grace against their king automatically intimidates them into keeping their distance, and opens a dialogue that results in a brokered peace: the Jarl is returned to his tribes after his armies vacate the Fire Keep and withdraw from the 300-year span: total victory, and one that results in Dralik being hailed as the new Lord of Fire and Ice, and granted the possession and responsibilities of the Twin Keeps.

FUTURE ADVENTURES

If the Jarl succeeds in capturing the Ice Keep, his minions and allies raid deep into the hinterlands. A chastened Dralik must lead the resistance against the foe, turning back the raids and eventually reclaiming both keeps to secure the border.

If the Jarl was captured and ransomed back, the new Lord of Fire and Ice must strive to repair, repopulate, and retain the new fortifications, both from vengeance sworn by the humiliated giant, and from duergar and other underworld threats deep in the mountain.

If the Jarl was slain, the remainder of his army occupies the Fire Keep, with the frost giants expanding and renovating the frozen rift in the shattered temple, leaving their minions to safeguard the rest of the complex. The border war now includes the underground passages and caves of the cross-mountain tunnel, with svirfneblin allies to be made and duergar enemies to frustrate, as well as the pass overhead to be cleared, as more monstrous humanoids occupy the heights.

PREGENERATED CHARACTER

DRALIK "MITHRALTONGUE" McCLANE CR 9

Dwarf ranger 9

LG Medium humanoid (dwarf)

Init +6*; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; **Perception** +16*

DEFENSE

AC 20, touch 12, flat-footed 18 (+8 armor, +2 Dex), +1 shield bonus when fighting with two weapons

hp 94 (9d10+36)

Fort +10, **Ref** +9, **Will** +5; +2 vs. poison, spells, and spell-like abilities

Defensive Abilities defensive training (+4 dodge bonus to AC vs. giants), light fortification armor (25% avoids critical or sneak attack damage), evasion

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee +1 cold iron thundering dwarven urgrosh +15/+10 (1d8+7/×3) or +1 dwarven urgrosh +15,+10 (1d6+7/×3) or +1 cold iron thundering/+1 dwarven urgrosh (two-handed) +13/+8 (1d8+5/×3), +18/+8 (1d6+3/×3)

Ranged masterwork heavy crossbow +12 (1d10/×3) or masterwork light hammer +12 (1d4+4)

Special Attacks +1 on attack rolls against goblinoid and orc

humanoids, favored enemy (giants +4, goblinoids +2)

Ranger Spells Prepared (CL 6th; concentration +7)

2nd – EXPENDED - two slots available to prepare

1st – EXPENDED - three slots available to prepare

STATISTICS

Str 18, **Dex** 15, **Con** 16, **Int** 10, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +9; **CMB** +13 (+17 bull rush); **CMD** 25 (29 vs. bull rush and trip)

Feats Endurance, Improved Two-Weapon Fighting, Power Attack, Toughness, Two-Weapon Fighting, Two-Weapon Defense, Quick Draw, Weapon Focus (dwarven urgrosh)

Skills Climb +5, Diplomacy +5, Disable Device +10, Heal +5, Intimidate +5, Linguistics +4, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +5, Knowledge (engineering) +6, Knowledge (geography) +8, Knowledge (nature) +5, Perception +16, Ride +10, Stealth +9, Survival +10, Swim +5

Languages Common, Dwarven, Giant, Goblin, Orc, Terran

SQ stable, favored terrain (underground +4, mountains +2), hunter's bond (companions), stonecutting, swift tracker, track +4, weapon familiarity, wild empathy +4, woodland stride

Combat Gear necklace of fireballs (Type 1), potion of protection from arrows, potion of shield of faith, oil of alarm, wand of cure



moderate wounds (9 charges), *alchemist's fire* (2) *Other Gear* +2 *breastplate of light fortification*, +1 *cold iron thundering*/+1 *dwarven urgrosh*, *masterwork crossbow* with 20 bolts, *masterwork light hammer* (x4), *belt of giant strength* +2, *boots of striding and springing*, *cloak of resistance* +1, *masterwork thieves' tools*, *backpack*, *irons spikes* (2) and *hammer*, *stonecutting tools*, *sunrod*, 150 gp

Dralik's Past

The nickname Mithraltongue might be considered a joke by some, but you have put some effort into learning the languages of the giants and goblins that threaten the kingdom from the frozen north beyond the pass. You have also learned some patience when engaging in diplomacy, partially eschewing the traditional gruff face put on by most of your brethren. Your travels under the mountain have made you a skilled engineer, as you explore the constructions of centuries past, and the caves and tunnels of the undermountain often provide secret ways to raid and ambush when diplomacy and intimidation break down. Your skills in the mountains, both under and over, as well as this engineering background are the reason you gained position in the company of The 300, the rearguard responsible for the defense of The Three-Hundred Year Span.

TACTICS HANDOUTS

Photocopy the below sections to hand to the player as needed.

GOBLIN LEVIES

TACTICS: A goblin levy consists of 2 goblin dogs, 8 goblin warriors and a sergeant. 4 goblins and the sergeant usually hang back and provide covering archer fire (the sergeant releasing his flaming arrows first, while the dogs and 4 members of the levy rush to melee. Half of those engaged in hand to hand combat usually use the aid another action to help their allies, providing flanks when possible. If the sergeant or the goblin dogs are slain or incapacitated, the standard goblins must make a DC 12 Will save or gain the cowering condition; they make a new save every round to clear the condition. If both dogs and sergeant are slain, the rank and file cower for one round and then flee. As slave levies, the goblins are unreliable and vulnerable to intimidation or promises of personal safety, especially when their leaders are slain.

Goblin sergeants carry an item known as a wolf drum, which helps mitigate the constant attacks of the Kingmaker's hated wolves on their goblin dogs.

HOBGOBLIN MERCENARY SQUAD

TACTICS: 6 hobgoblin fighters and a sergeant comprise the standard squad. Until he is slain, there is a 35% chance that the lieutenant (a ranger) and two additional fighters join any squad encountered. Four rank and file engage frontally, while two work around to the flanks or provide missile fire. The sergeant drinks his potion of bull's strength (not included in stat block) and supports his warriors in close combat the following round. If present, the lieutenant casts lead blades on his sickles, and then engages with missile fire until forced into melee, granting his Hunter's Boon from behind the protection of his two guards, who ready to attack any who approach with sword and shield. Hobgoblin mercenaries are reliable, trained troops, who retreat to fight another day if reduced to half their original numbers. If three or more manage to escape, the squad is not removed from the order of battle, although

any leaders killed are not replaced. Subsequent encounters are fought at full strength, with the lieutenant leading the squad if all three sergeants have been slain. Once all four commanders are eliminated a squad that "breaks" at half strength is then removed from the order of battle.

OGRE BRUTE SQUADE

TACTICS: Three ogres commanded by a rogue known as "The Stalker" form the brute squad. When multiple entrances to a combat zone present themselves, the stalker often sends his trio out in front while he moves in stealthily from behind. When in a bottleneck, The Stalker uses his oil of darkness to set up sneak attack javelin strikes from behind his muscle before closing in for the kill.

THE KINGMAKER'S PACK

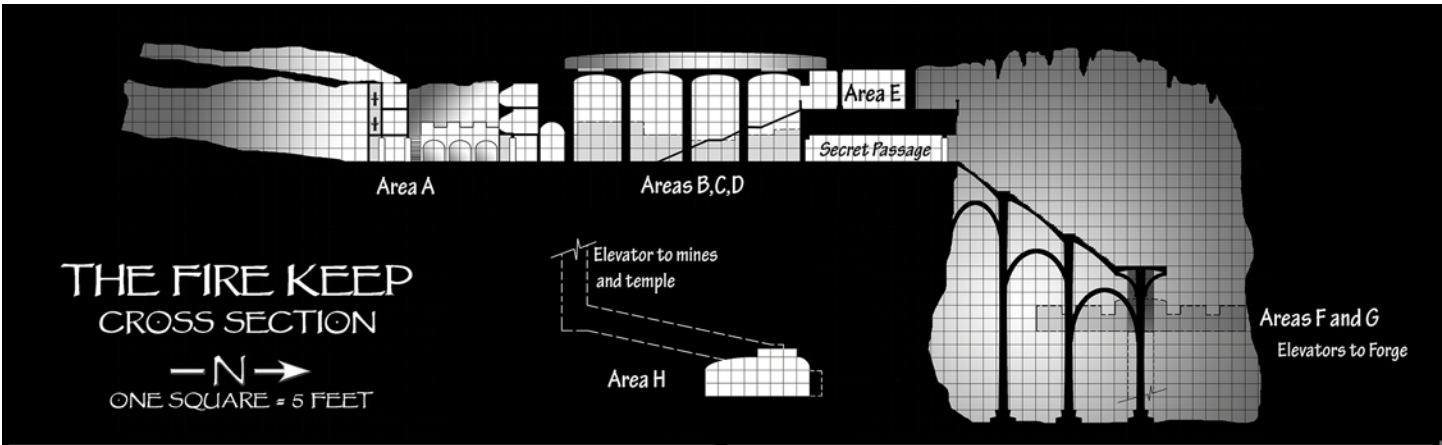
TACTICS: Half a dozen wolves, three dire wolves, and a winter wolf; a magical beast renowned for its frosty breath attack accompany The Kingmaker (an ogre giantkin ranger) making him the deadliest opponent apart from the young Jarl himself. Fortunately the ogre sends his wolves on scouting missions singly or in pairs; half the pack is out at any given moment once the ogre establishes a command post. The ranger does not send the winter wolf out to scout until five or more of the pack fail to return, at which point he keeps one dire wolf or a pair of wolves for close protection; sending the remaining wolves on patrol.

THE TROLL TWINS

TACTICS: A pair of Ice trolls accompany the young Jarl's personal retinue. Elegant tactics are beyond them, although if fire or acid damage prevents them from regenerating two rounds in a row, success on a DC 15 Will save cautions them to retreat until they can do so, otherwise they battle on with little concern for their survival.

THE JARL

TACTICS: With the advice of the Kingmaker fresh in his ear, the young Jarl initially battles with caution so he may enjoy the rights of his inheritance. Engaging with thrown rocks, the immature leader eventually becomes impatient with the losses inflicted on his vanguard as the day-long battle continues. If more than half his force has been destroyed, or if the Kingmaker has been slain, the Jarl forgets his councilor's advice and wades into melee, retreating only if reduced to half hit points. At the end of the day, the giant is willing to battle unto death to achieve his objective, even if it means his entire force is destroyed.



**THE FIRE KEEP
CROSS SECTION**

—N→
ONE SQUARE = 5 FEET

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NEW MAGIC ITEM

GHOST SOUND DRUM

AURA FAINT CONJURATION; CL 1ST
SLOT NONE; PRICE 1,250 GP; WEIGHT 3 LBS.

DESCRIPTION

THIS DRUM PLAYS MARTIAL DWARVEN TATTOOS AND DRUM ROLLS, AND CAN BE SET FOR CONTINUOUS PLAY, SILENCE, OR TO RENDER A BRIEF SALUTE WHENEVER A DWARF PASSES WITHIN 30 FEET. THE INSTRUMENT'S VOLUME MAY LIKEWISE BE ADJUSTED.

CONSTRUCTION

REQUIREMENTS CRAFT WONDROUS ITEM, ALARM, GHOST SOUND; COST 625 GP

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NEW MAGIC ITEM

WOLF DRUM

AURA FAINT ENCHANTMENT; CL 1ST
SLOT NONE; PRICE 1,800 GP; WEIGHT —

DESCRIPTION

THIS PELLET DRUM HAS TWO HEADS AND IS SUSPENDED ON A ROD, WITH BEADS HANGING ON LEATHER THONGS ON EITHER SIDE OF THE BODY OF THE DRUM. ONCE PER DAY AS A STANDARD ACTION, THE WIELDER ROTATES THE DRUM TO CAST CALM ANIMALS (DC 11). THE WIELDER MAY ALSO SOUND THE DRUM AT WILL (AS A STANDARD ACTION) TO ATTEMPT TO USE WILD EMPATHY ON MAGICAL BEASTS OF CANINE HERITAGE.

CONSTRUCTION

REQUIREMENTS CRAFT WONDROUS ITEM, CALM ANIMALS; COST 900 GP

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ՆՈՐՈՓՅՔ ԼՏԱՂԱԳԹԻՐԿ ԾՅԱՂԱ
BACKGROUND - DIPLOMAT

YOU SERVED ON A DIPLOMATIC MISSION TO THE HALL OF THE FROST GIANT JARL. YOUR EXPERIENCES THERE STAND YOU IN GOOD STEAD AS YOU ASSESS THE THREAT TO THE CIVILIZED KINGDOMS FROM THE REMAINING FORCES OF THE JARL NOW STIRRING ON THE MOUNTAIN. YOU GAIN A +5 COMPETENCE BONUS ON KNOWLEDGE (LOCAL) CHECKS RELATING TO THE INVADING ARMIES AND TREAT SUCH CHECKS AS IF YOU WERE TRAINED IN THE SKILL.

MAKE AN IMMEDIATE CHECK ON THE MILITARY INTELLIGENCE TABLE.

YOU ALSO KNOW THE WEAKNESSES OF THE ENEMY LEADERS: GAIN ONE SLAIN LEADER BOON CARD.

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ՆՈՐՈՓՅՔ ԼՏԱՂԱԳԹԻՐԿ ԾՅԱՂԱ
BACKGROUND - DRILLMASTER

THE WEEKS AND MONTHS PRIOR TO THE BATTLE WERE SPENT TRAINING AND EQUIPPING THE LEVIES BEING MUSTERED TO MEET THE HOBGOBLIN INVASION. YOU GAIN THE FOLLOWING BOONS.

- A +5 CIRCUMSTANCE BONUS TO PERCEPTION TO RECOGNIZE THE DRESS AND EQUIPMENT OF DWARVEN SOLDIERY.
- A +5 COMPETENCE BONUS TO DIPLOMACY AND ANIMAL EMPATHY CHECKS
- THREE TIMES PER DAY YOU MAY MAKE A DIPLOMACY OR INTIMIDATE CHECK AS A SWIFT ACTION.

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ՆՈՐՈՓՅՔ ԼՏԱՂԱԳԹԻՐԿ ԾՅԱՂԱ
BACKGROUND - EXPLORER

YOUR TIME BEFORE THE BATTLE AT THE THREE-HUNDRED YEAR SPAN WAS SPENT EXPLORING POSSIBLE HIDEOUTS AND RESERVE FORTIFICATIONS TO SAFEGUARD THE CIVILIAN POPULACE IN THE EVENT OF A FULL-BLOWN INVASION. THE ICE KEEP WAS ONE SUCH COMPLEX, AND YOU RECOGNIZE THE NOW-EXPOSED ENTRANCE TUNNEL TO ITS LEGENDARY TWIN, THE FIRE KEEP, ACROSS THE SURVIVING LOWER SPAN OF THE BRIDGE. YOUR EXPERIENCE THERE IS SURE TO BE USEFUL INSIDE THE MOUNTAIN; MAKE AN IMMEDIATE KNOWLEDGE (ENGINEERING) CHECK ON THE LORE OF THE TWIN KEEP'S TABLE.

YOUR SKILLS SERVE YOU WELL UNDER THE MOUNTAIN. THREE TIMES PER DAY WHEN MAKING A SKILL CHECK YOU MAY ROLL TWICE AND TAKE THE BETTER RESULT.

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THE 300TH (LEVEL 8-10 RANGER)

Allies: Disaffected Goblins

Play this card to immediately defeat any standard wolf patrol prior to combat. Two cards must be played to defeat a patrol containing a dire wolf; the winter wolf cannot be defeated prior to combat. In battle, as a swift action, play a card to slay any wolf or grant 15 points of damage to a dire wolf or the winter wolf. Two cards may be played to remove a dire wolf and a wolf from any combat with the Kingmaker.

Allies: Friffen

The ice mephit Friffen is grateful for his rescue and wants to repay you. He fights by your side and can help set up ambushes and traps which you devise.

If reduced to 1/2 hit points, Friffen leaves to heal up in the chill of the rift before returning after an appropriate absence. If you describe the Ice Keep on the far side of the mountain, the mephit accompanies you to the far side of the mountain to see its wonders, although while in the Fire Keep he will heal himself as indicated above. To properly describe its wonders, you must have taken the explorer background boon or succeed on a DC 15 Diplomacy check. Killing or outwitting the salamander in the Dwarven Forge grants a +4 circumstance bonus to this check.

Allies: Wolves

You have bonded with one of the wolves accompanying the Jarl's vanguard. Acknowledging you as its pack leader, it leads its former pack brothers and sisters to you. The GM rolls once on the wolf patrol entry on the Random Encounters Table to see what arrives, adding 10 to the percentile die roll: if the result is greater than 100, the beast leads a different encounter to you by mistake (one roll on the Random Encounter Table until a combat result is achieved). You may have the wolf join you to defeat the new arrivals or not, it remains with you until reduced to half its hit points. If you suborn additional wolves beyond the first, only the strongest serves you, the others wander off, lost to both you and the enemy.

Burned Troll

Burns suffered by one of the troll twins are severe enough to impede its regenerative abilities, requiring a DC 19 Fortitude save to activate each round. These burns do not impact the retreat check noted in the tactics: only new burns in combat trigger the morale check Will save.

Allies: Thoqqua

In addition to fighting with you, the thoqqua can heat the boiling oil in the entry chamber, blaze a secret passage through the unused lava vents in the hypocaust system to connect any two rooms in complex, distract the salamander who has seized the dwarven forge (granting you a surprise round), spring the lava flow trap in the great hall so that you can be elsewhere when it goes off or collapse tunnels in the mines using their molten bodies to delay the passage of the Jarl's forces (reduce Time Units total by 5). For each task you send them on, advance the Time Units tracker by 1. If you send them on such a task once the Jarl has penetrated the keep, the GM will determine how long it takes them to return; usually 2-4 time units. The thoqqua retreat into the lava flows permanently when reduced to half hit points, and will not leave the complex for the cross-mountain tunnels.

Allies: Popper

The fire mephit Popper looks forward to some excitement. He follows you until he grows bored, chattering on about the many things he has discovered swimming the lava flows. Among his many talents, he can communicate with the thoqqua in the bakery, help set the boiling oil ambush in the entrance chamber or the great hall, and will leave the complex with you to explore the cross-mountain tunnel. Brave enough to fight by your side, if reduced to 2/3 hit points he leaves to heal up in the lava flows, returning after an appropriate absence. In the cross mountain tunnels, he remains with you until taking half hit points in damage and then does not return.

Wounded Goblinoids

Play this boon to remove four goblins and one goblin dog from the next goblin levy engaged in combat. Play two cards to defeat the encounter immediately.

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Understrength Mercenaries

Play this card to remove 2 hobgoblin warriors from any encounter, and deal 13 points of damage to the sergeant. A Slain Leader boon played at the same time as an Understrength Mercenaries boon destroys a hobgoblin squad.

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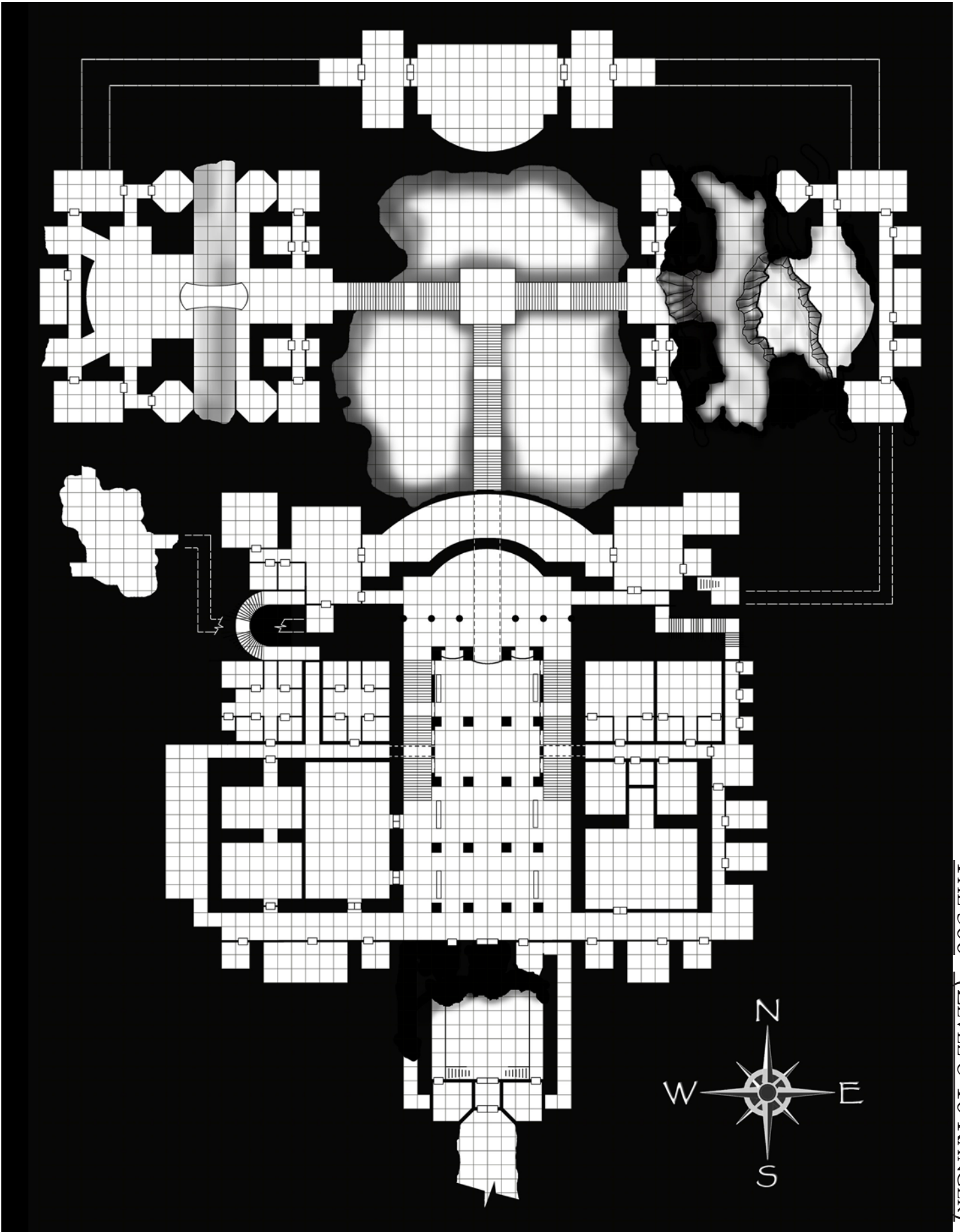
Slain Leader

Play this card to remove any goblin or hobgoblin sergeant from any encounter, applying any associated morale adjustment immediately. This card may instead be played to deliver 25 points of damage to the hobgoblin lieutenant, the ogre stalker, The Kingmaker, or the Jarl.
If used to wound the Jarl, the frost giant makes a DC 25 Fortitude save to take half damage.

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If used to wound the Jarl, the frost giant makes a DC 25 Fortitude save to take half damage.

PLAYER'S MAP



THE 300TH (LEVEL 8-10 RANGER)

Trim to Edge

Cut on Center - 4 Cards Total

Trim to Edge

Trim to Edge

Trim to Edge

AREA E
(1 OF 3)

AREA E
(2 OF 3)

Cut on Center - 4 Cards Total

Cut on Center - 4 Cards Total

AREA C

Trim to Edge

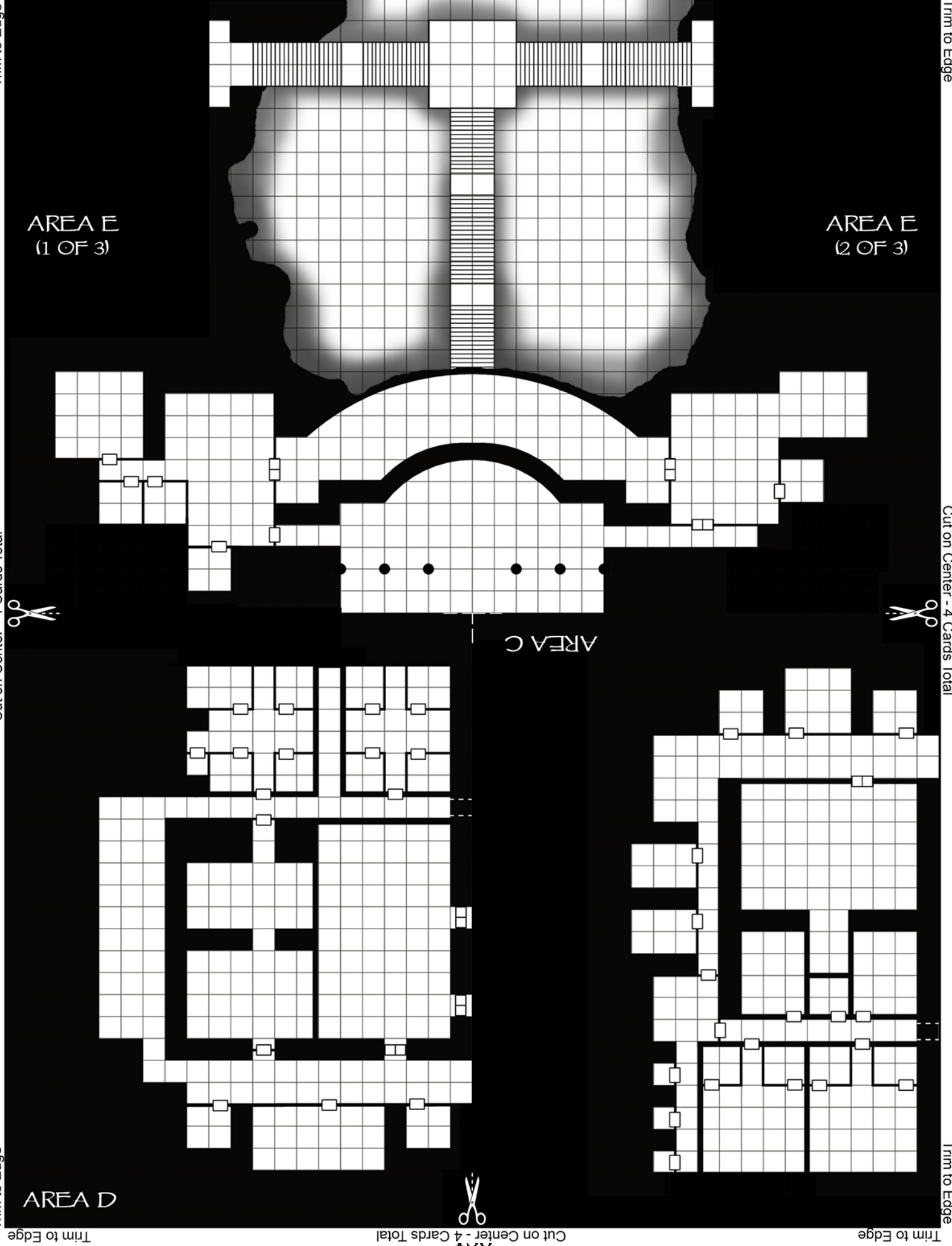
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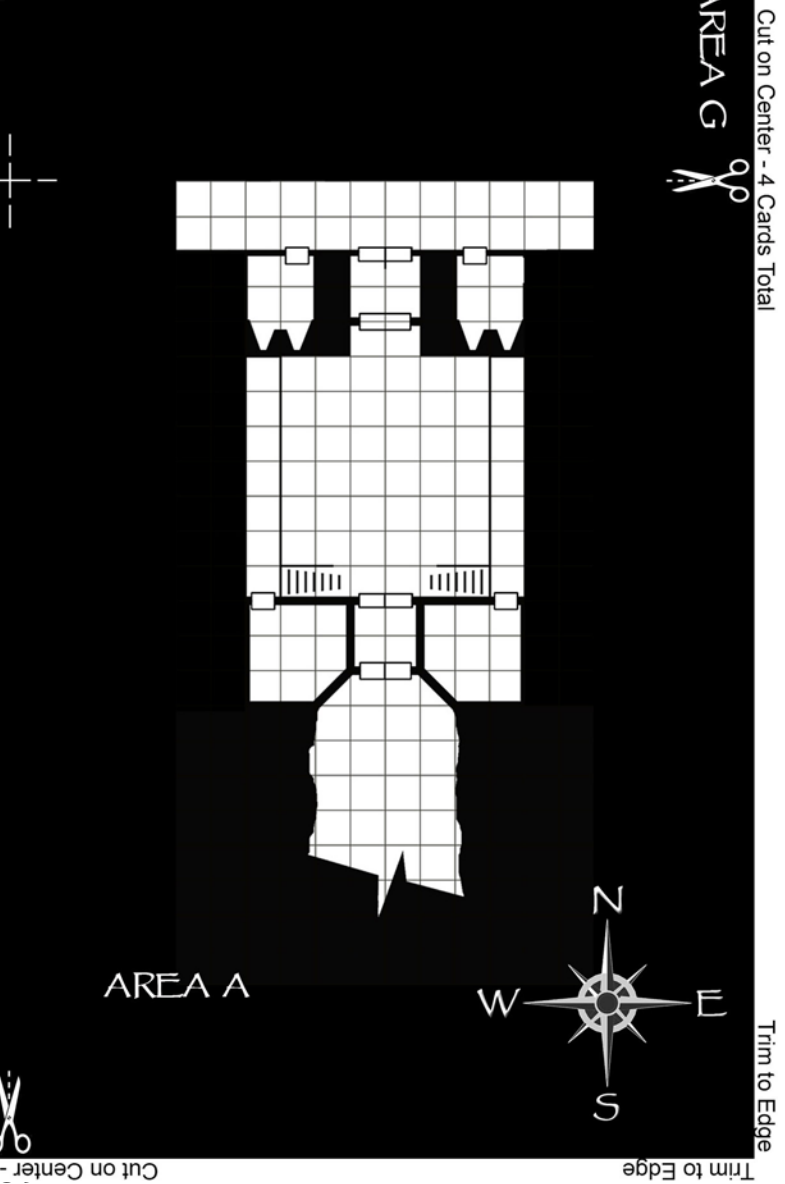
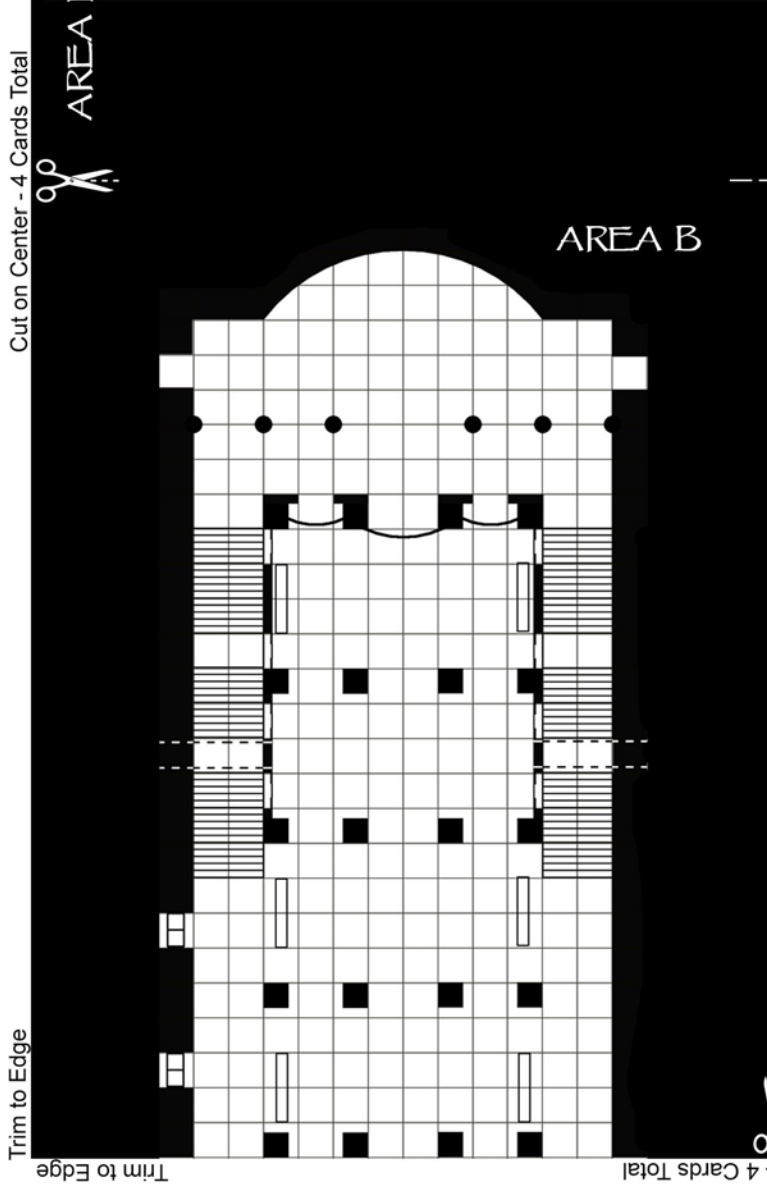
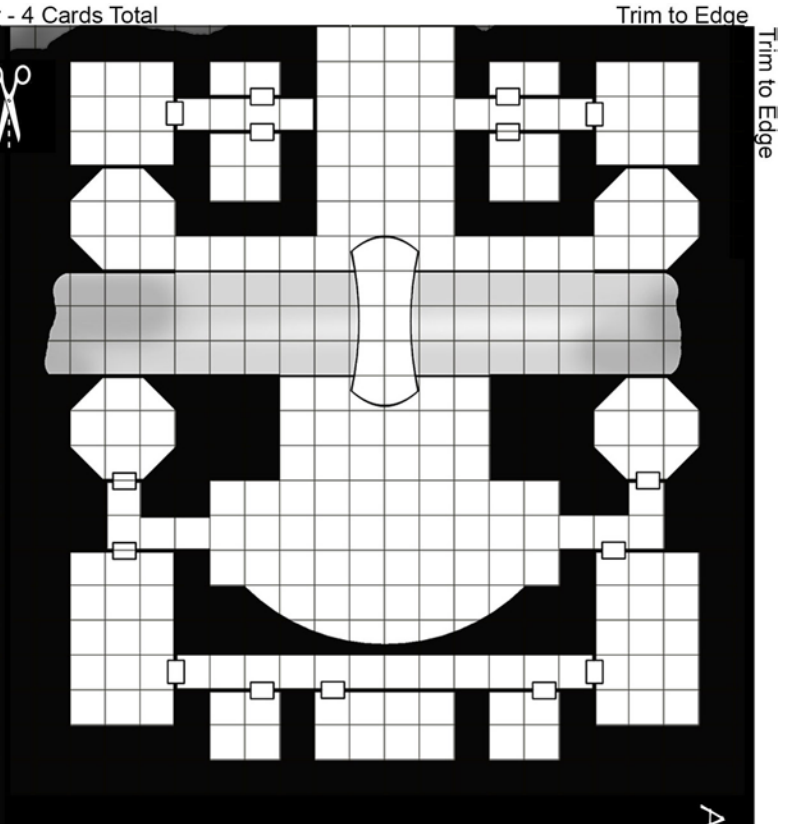
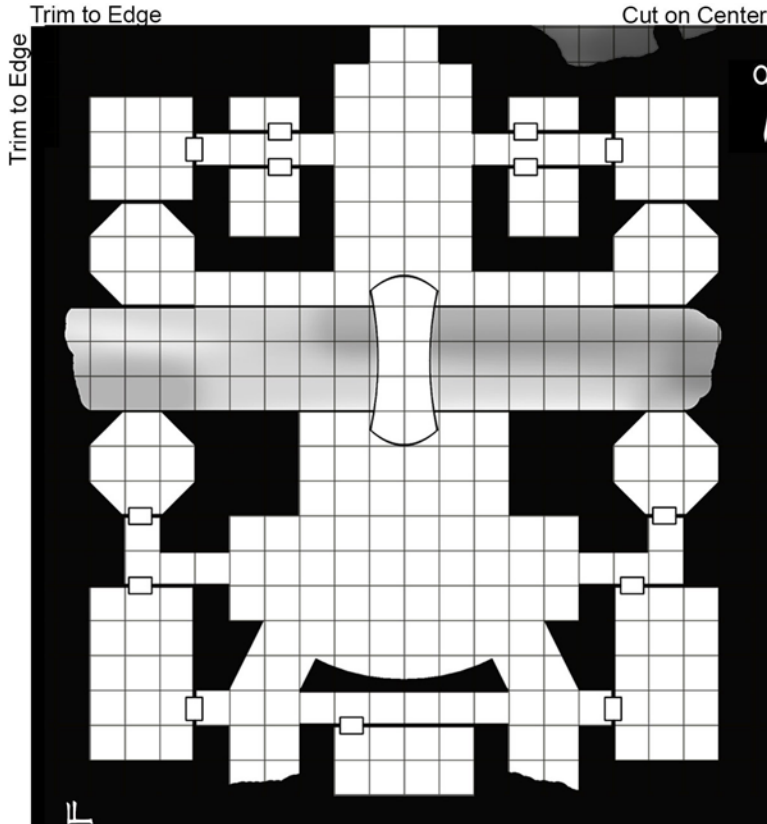
AREA D

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Cut on Center - 4 Cards Total

Trim to Edge







AMBUSH MAP

ONE SQUARE
=
5 FEET

AREA E
(3 OF 3)

FROM THE
TUNNELS

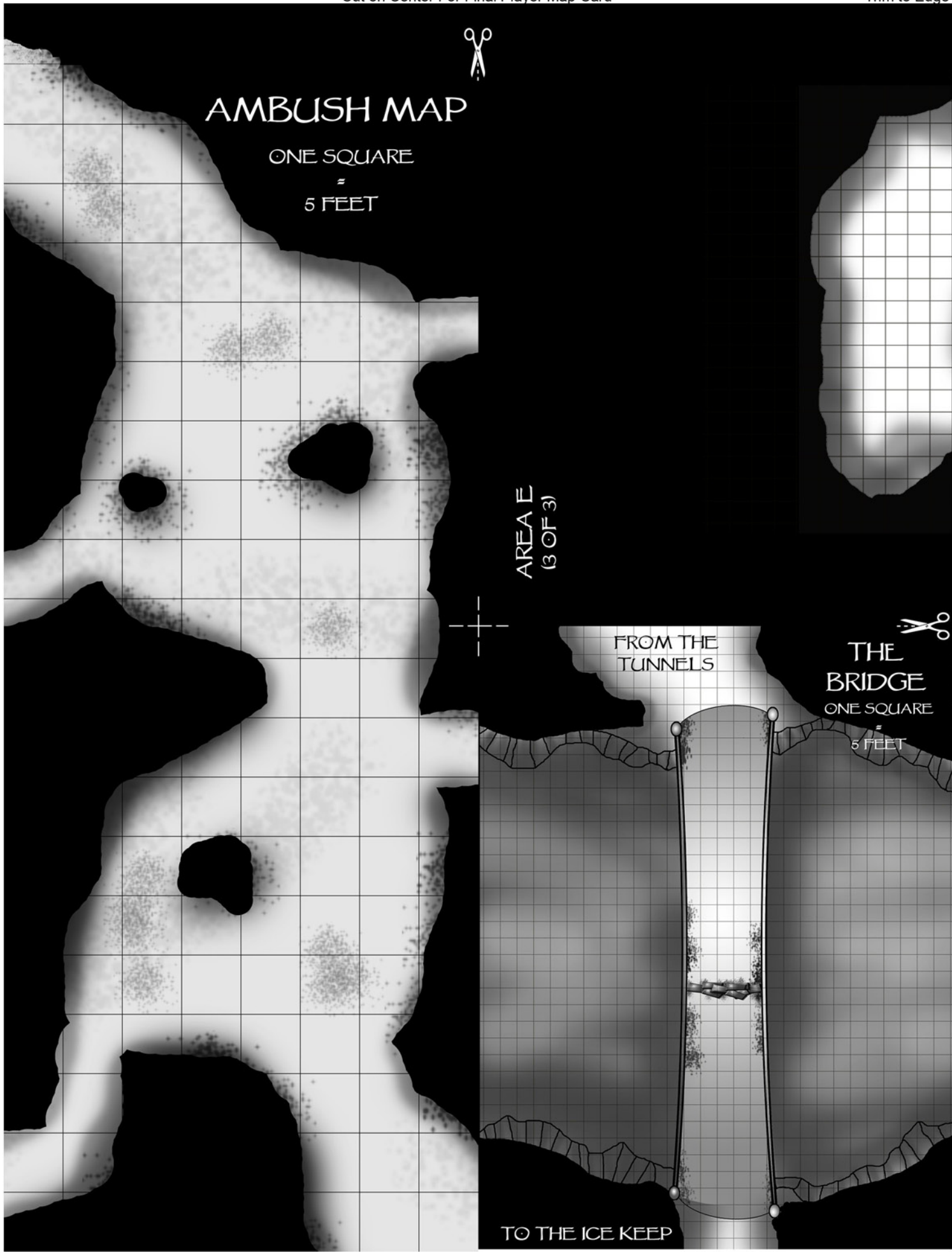
THE
BRIDGE
ONE SQUARE
=
5 FEET

TO THE ICE KEEP

Trim to Edge

Cut on Center For Final Player Map Card

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12



PLAYER CHASE CARDS

Card 1

Leave False Trail
Survival
(Moderate)
or
Lead Pursuers Past Deadfalls
Knowledge (engineering)
(Easy)

Boon: Shake off the Chase

Card 2

Negotiate with Svirfneblin Diplomacy
(Easy)
or
Defeat Duergar Melee Attack Roll
(Difficult)

Boon: Svirfneblin Allies

Card 3

Recognize Advantageous Tunnel System
Knowledge (dungeoneering)
(Easy)
or
Secret Backtrack Tunnels
Stealth
(Moderate)

Boon: Perfect Ambush

Card 6

Shortcut Climb
(Easy)
or
Bridge Defenses
Knowledge (engineering)
(Moderate)

Boon: Final Fortifications

Card 5

Ancient Waystation
Knowledge (dungeoneering)
(Easy)
or
Unusual Minerals
Knowledge (geography)
(Moderate)

Boon: Impatient Jarl

Card 4

Hidden Treasure
Perception
(Difficult)
or
Beasts of the Deep
Wild Empathy
(Easy)

Boon: Beast Master

PART TWO
The Chase

FINISH
Proceed to The Bridge

Card 1

**Leave False Trail
Survival (DC 15)**

Fail: advance one last-place enemy token one card

or

**Lead Pursuers Past
Deadfalls**

**Knowledge (engineering)
(DC 10)**

Fail: Take 2d10 bludgeoning damage (Reflex DC 20 halves)

Card 2

**Negotiate with
Svirfneblin**

Diplomacy (DC 10)
Fail: Take 2d8 piercing damage from crossbow bolts from hidden Duergar.

or

Defeat Duergar

Melee Attack Roll (DC 20)
Fail: Duergar give aid and comfort to the enemy; randomly remove one boon card from your hand. If none remain, take 2d8+6 slashing damage from an ambush.

Card 3

**Recognize Advantageous
Tunnel System
Knowledge (dungeoneering)
(DC 10)**

Fail: Take 3d6 bludgeoning damage from falling rocks (Reflex DC 18 halves)

or

**Secret Backtrack Tunnels
Stealth (DC 15)**

Fail: advance one last-place enemy token one card

Card 6

**Shortcut
Climb (DC 10)**

Fail: 6d6 falling damage (Reflex DC 20 avoids)

or

**Bridge Defenses
Knowledge (engineering)
(DC 15)**

Fail: Jarl's forces gain a surprise round in the final battle (see Conclusion)

Card 4

**Hidden Treasure
Perception (DC 20)**

Fail: advance one last-place enemy token one card

or

**Beasts of the Deep
Wild Empathy (DC 10)**

Fail: Expend one second level spell or two first level spells dealing with angered beasts. If you have no spell slots remaining, use consumables to fulfill the requirements, or take 4d6 points of damage.

Card 5

**Ancient Waystation
Knowledge (dungeoneering)
(DC 10)**

Fail: Receive an attack from a forgotten wall scythe trap: Atk +20 melee (2d4+6/x4)

or

**Unusual Minerals
Knowledge (geography)
(DC 15)**

Fail: advance one last-place enemy token one card

FINISH

Proceed to The Bridge

PART TWO

The Chase - GM Version

Boon: Shake off the Chase

Play this card to remove one goblin levy from the Jarl's order of battle, or combine it with an Understrength Mercenaries card to remove a hobgoblin squad.

Boon: Svirfneblin Allies

Receiving aid from the deep gnomes of the mountain, as a swift action up to three times, you may cast deafness/blindness (DC 12) or blur. You also gain one Wounded Goblinoids boon card.

Boon: Perfect Ambush

A combination of good ambush spots and secret tunnels allow you to achieve perfect surprise. First: Gain one Slain Leader boon card. Then, choose any one existing formation from the Random Encounter Table and place yourself on the ambush map. You gain a surprise round, and may automatically disengage from combat at any time from the exit tunnels at the edges by making a DC 17 Stealth check. You do not need cover or concealment to make this check when retreating in this fashion. If you fail, you stay on the edge of the map and reposition any remaining enemy units anywhere within 20 feet of you before combat continues.

Boon: Beast Master

Enhanced by magic found in a forgotten cache, your newly-made animal friends tear into the Jarl's forces. Roll 1d6: on a 1-3 gain a Wounded Goblinoids boon, on a 4 or 5, gain an Understrength Mercenaries boon, on a 6 gain a Slain Leader boon.

Boon: Impatient Jarl

Frustrated by the locked doors, traps, and delays you leave behind in an abandoned waystation, the Jarl himself chops down a door into which you have inserted hidden slivers of adamantine-bearing ore. The Jarl's axe gains the broken condition. Gain a Slain Leader boon card.

Boon: Final Fortifications

Immediately prior to the final battle, you may take one attack action as if within 30' of any remaining enemy opponent before retreating halfway across the bridge, where you establish a barricade five feet deep granting you partial cover (+2 to AC and a +1 bonus on Reflex saving throws) against medium or smaller creatures. The obstruction counts as difficult terrain for the enemy. You also set up a springboard that can launch a chunk of masonry directly up in the air as an immediate action, deflecting any incoming projectile (including hurled rocks). A full round action and a move action is required to reset the device.

ONE ON ONE ADVENTURES #18

REDEMPTION

BY MICHAEL ALLEN

AN ADVENTURE FOR ONE FIGHTER LEVELS 6-8



CREDITS

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LAYOUT: JOSEPH BROWNING

One on One Adventures are for one player and one GM. However, they are easily modified for a traditional party of four players and one GM.

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Destiny awaits! Castle Aridryll, a forgotten keep in a hidden valley extends its curse over all who enter its domain. The last heir of the line of Aridryll represents the final hope of salvation for the keep and its builder, a fallen elven paladin whose soul burns in eternal torment.

This adventure can be set almost anywhere in an existing campaign; the curse surrounding the castle keeps it isolated. The adventure is designed for a warrior character with a good mix of skills (although none of particularly high rank are required). The pre-generated character provided contains most of the skills needed. If playing with an already existing character who lacks such expertise, consider allowing him to exceed a DC 10 result even if using a trained only skill untrained. Most of the knowledge checks supplement or expand on clues in the read-aloud text or encounter details, and as suggested in the text, reward an engaged and inquisitive player with circumstance bonuses merely for following up on such information. See scaling the adventure for information on how to tie in an existing character (in lieu of the pre-gen).

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

Renowned for his tolerance and compassion of other races, even the savage race known as man, the elven paladin Halueth Aridryll assisted that short-lived race in its journey to civilization: a task which tried the patience of his long-lived sylvan kin. Halueth's generosity would be his undoing, for it came to pass that he fell in love with a human maiden and gloried in their union. Happiness turned to sadness as his bride withered and aged, and so the elf sought ways to extend her life. Growing ever more desperate to achieve his aim, Halueth turned to questionable methods, dark magic, and eventually entered into diabolic pacts with those who reveled in corrupting the pure and good. Castle Aridryll, once a bastion of light and peace, became violent and corrupt.

For many generations following Halueth Aridryll's death, his keep remained abandoned, preserved from ruin by ancient elven magic. From time to time the children's children of the tragic lovers sought to claim the keep for their own. Such efforts invariably failed, and the line of Aridryll faded into obscurity. As the line died out, the remaining descendants experienced increasingly frequent dreams and visions beckoning them to return to the keep and unlock its secrets. Tens of generations later, the last descendent of Halueth enters the castle, driven by nightmares he is unable to banish. Unknowingly reliving each step of Halueth's fall, the choices made by the PC determine if he will follow his ancestor into darkness, or if he will resist evil's lure, freeing the soul of Aridryll and allowing the wounded land to heal.

ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS

The last of the line of Aridryll, Tyros Loneblade walks the road of his ancestor Halueth, reliving key points of the paladin's corruption, ignorant at first that he has entered a shadow plane. If Tyros, as the manifestation of Halueth on this journey, makes the same choices as the fallen elf, he condemns not only Halueth's soul to eternity in hell, but likely his own. Charting a different course redeems Halueth's soul, purging the evil from the lands surrounding the keep and redeems the legacy of Aridryll.

Tyros encounters Halueth's wife and children during his journey through the shadow world. Their tales, integral to the paladin's fall, unfold in each chapter of the adventure. Our hero first encounters Alyssa, Halueth's bride, as a maiden,

the leader of a tribe of nomadic humans, long misunderstood and beset upon by the elves of the valley. Tyros must decide how to protect the humans from intolerance, encountering the elves in what is known as "The Dark Grove".

Reaching Castle Aridryll, Tyros again encounters Alyssa, weakened by what he (through Halueth's jaded eyes) perceives as a disease. This disease, is in fact no more than Alyssa aging, something that Halueth could never accept. As Tyros penetrates the inner keep Alyssa takes on the additional miens of mother, crone, and finally: destiny. Each encounter provides the choice to embrace Halueth's obsession to defeat death, or recognize Alyssa's disease for what it is, acknowledging Alyssa's mortality as a necessary part of the circle of life.

Battles against a dust digger and a nightmare unlock the wards protecting the inner keep, where the children of Halueth enter the tale. The castle proper, haunted not only by the children, but ghostly servants and visitors as well, yields further insight into Halueth's past. Additional clues reveal Tyros' key role in shaping the ultimate destiny of the Aridryll line. Encounters in the keep include a wrymling dragon, the skeletal warriors of a fallen necromancer, blood boils birthed from corrupted waters, a conversation with a contract devil, and a rooftop battle with a nightgaunt.

Reaching the roof, Tyros enters the "Dark Elf's Tower," armed with the knowledge discovered in the lower levels. High above, the sleeping form of Alyssa awaits, preserved by the same magic surrounding the castle. Past caryatid guardians, a sentient wax golem bearing the likeness of Alyssa forces the final choice on Tyros. The hero must decide, as Halueth once did, between his daughter's life and Alyssa's. The choice determines the resolution of the Aridryll legend, confirming the land as a bastion of evil and corruption, or setting it on the path of purification and rebirth.

SCALING THE ADVENTURE

The adventure is designed for a martial character of 7th level, but can also be attempted by a party of 4th-level characters. The GM should designate one of the PCs as the Heir of Aridryll. Half-elves, humans, and elves are the most likely choices, half orcs, tieflings, and aasimars are also possibilities as well. Class is not an issue, and in a pinch, Jamin can designate an individual of a race not named above as the heir; if he does so the ancestral clasp should be offered on loan to the PCs by Aramantha, but she requests that it be returned following the conclusion of the quest.

The only suggested changes for a 4th level party are to forego the circumstance bonuses for asking about the clues provided and to allow the group to rest if they desire following the dragon quest and the fountain of youth quest. With fewer abilities limited by daily use, the fighter character provided can probably clear the keep in one evening once he gains access, using the healing magic scattered about the castle.

If you are playing with a full party of 6 (APL 5), make the following additional changes:

Encounter 4: Add a second dust digger.

Encounter 8a: Add a second plagueborn to the fountain quest.

Encounter 8b: Add 4 skeletons, previously hidden in area 8c, that enter the combat from behind at the top of round 2.

Encounter 11: Apply the simple advanced template to the caryatids.

Encounter 16: Give the wax golem max hp (84), and the benefits of haste when reduced to 42 hp or fewer (from desperate fury).

Optional Encounters: Feel free to place 4 skeletons in the corner towers on the second and third floors, using the skeleton stat block from encounter 8b if time and inclination permit.

As a final note, there is no reason not swap the roles of Halueth and Alyssa for a player wishing to play female hero. The GM will need to adjust the read-aloud text, especially when referring to the player as “My Lady” (instead of My Lord), or “Mother” instead of “Father”.

GETTING STARTED

At the funeral of our hero’s uncle, Tyros receives information about Castle Aridryll, as well as witnessing a funerary ritual with strong parallels to the ritual in the dark grove.

Read the following to get things started:

A sad day dawns. You have lost a friend and mentor in your uncle Jamin and his death at an early age, even for a human, intensifies the feelings of isolation you have experienced your whole life. Though your companions in battle have been many, true friends have been few. Indeed, the only constant in your life, other than your uncle, has been recurring dreams of a keep shrouded in darkness; visiting you with increasing frequency. Jamin himself experienced such visions, often discussing them with you, as well as your feelings of disconnection, for such isolation was not unknown to him. As a human joined with an elf priestess, Jamin bore unspoken disapproval of his wife’s people. Dalliances with the passionate race of humans were excused, even sometimes understood with compassion, but long-term unions are exceedingly rare and frowned upon.

You have always thought Jamin’s wife Aramantha a cold person, and the precise and deliberate manner in which she attends the funerary rites does nothing to warm your feelings toward her. The fires of the funeral pyre have cooled; friends and neighbors gather around the ashes. Aramantha stands with two acolytes to the west facing the rising sun.

The cleric raises an ear of corn. With an audible crack, she snaps it in half and then hands the pieces to the acolytes, who in turn snap them in half again. The juices of the plump kernels yield to the pressure of the acolytes’ ministrations, dripping into a bowl retrieved by the cleric from a small table. The three priests dip their fingers in the vessel, and touch the moist digits to their lips, foreheads, and cheeks, which darken and flush. They then cast the remaining juice out over the ashes. Where they strike, the ground sprouts new growth, green grass and wildflowers blooming in an instant. Each witness then takes a flower from the new garden and departs until none remain but Aramantha.

Aramantha bears a letter from Jamin (included in the pre-generated character’s background) and knows of the dreams shared by both Jamin and Tyros. Like Tyros, Jamin’s dreams increased in frequency the past years; such increases coincided with the passing of known kin. If shown Jamin’s letter, Aramantha posits that destiny plays a hand in events; the increasing frequency of the dreams implies that the dwindling number of the descendants of the Aridryll line represents fewer chances for the curse to be lifted.

Aramantha provides the location of the keep and the knowledge below. Each piece of intelligence includes a

common rumor surrounding the topic, granted freely if the player asks an appropriate follow-up question. The player then makes a Knowledge check to determine if he knows the truth. If the player does not pursue additional information on his own initiative grant a Knowledge check at the same DC to provide the rumor, if the character succeeds by 5 or more, reveal the truth as well.

The Keep and its Environs: Castle Aridryll stands on a promontory overlooking a secluded valley and guards an approach to a nearby mountain pass. The mountain pass is a difficult one; as a result the strategic wisdom of the keep comes into question, especially considering that the valley contains naught but dead forest, drought-stricken hills and brackish streams and ponds.

Additional Information: Rumor states the once vibrant valley, home to human hunter/gatherers was destroyed by dark elves. The Truth – Knowledge (local) DC 15: The elves of ancient times once guarded the valley. Their traditions, utterly alien to nomadic humans of the time period, are considered barbaric to modern elvish sensibilities.

Halueth Aridryll: Enlightened for his age, the elven paladin was a champion of tolerance, bringing tribes of humans living within the valley to civilization before the land turned sour.

Additional Information: Estranged from his clan due to marriage to a human maiden, Halueth stood by his wife’s people when dark elves and other challenges threatened the idyllic valley.

The Truth – Knowledge (nobility) DC 15: The estrangement sprang more from his unyielding support of human concerns over elven rather than a love match socially distasteful to his elven kin. Halueth was unable to reconcile conflict between human and elf.

Halueth’s End: After long decades of questing to reverse the blight on the land, Halueth succumbed to the evil pervading the valley. Ancient elven magic keeps the castle from falling into ruin, but the valley remains uninhabitable by civilized beings.

Additional Information: Some call the highest tower in the keep as “The Dark Elf’s Tower”, attributing the appellation to a brief occupation by a half-elven necromancer.

The Truth – Knowledge (nobility) DC 15: Although a necromancer from the Aridryll line claimed the castle as her own for a short time, the tower’s sobriquet may be due more to the paladin’s demeanor. Halueth grew more desperate, moody, and withdrawn from his retainers as time passed. Many of his crusades sought magical ways to extend or preserve life, most notably a search for the fountain of youth.

Development: Tyros may purchase any additional supplies his small store of coin affords before taking horse.

ACT ONE: THE DARK GROVE

I. REFUGEES IN THE WOODS

After many week’s travel, Tyros approaches the lands surrounding Castle Aridryll.

You are not sure of the border, but the transition to the expected wastelands must be sudden, if the verdant

surroundings are any indication. The last village lies a day behind you, so you are surprised to discover a small band of travelers ahead on the trail. Perhaps they are outlaws hiding in the forest for, though fashioned with great care and skill, their clothing is made primarily from tanned skins, accessorized only by the odd woven garment. Likewise they lack sophisticated weaponry. Handmade bows and arrows, quarterstaves, and fire-sharpened spear points seem to be the norm, and from the wounds some bear, the group has seen recent battle.

From the moment Tyros takes up the quest, he enters a shadow plane, bonding with Halueth's soul the closer he gets to Castle Aridyrll. To the shades and phantasms inhabiting the dream, Tyros appears as Halueth, though the apparitions never say so directly, referring to him as "My Lord", "Master," "Father," or similar honorific. Unless noted, the apparitions are treated in all ways as living creatures, and due to the nature of the shadow plane's magic do not detect as otherwise.

These apparitions are the people of Halueth's future bride Alyssa, who greets Tyros as "My Lord." Strikingly beautiful, and exuding compassion, Alyssa relates their troubles.

For many generations Alyssa's people have lived on the outskirts of these woods often seeking better hunting and shelter within the boughs of the forest. Sadly, the dark elves within torment her people, often spitting them away for decades. When they are returned to the tribe, they are the same age as when they left, often finding their children's children grown or gone. The sense of loss this causes is palpable. Alyssa's people attempt to defend themselves, but their fighting skills are no match for the sylvan warriors. The power of the elves is centered on a grove a few miles ahead on the trail. She asks for any help our hero can offer.

Clues may reveal that all is not what it seems. If the player asks a direct question regarding the topics below, apply a +2 circumstance bonus to the check.

Knowledge (linguistics) DC 20: The honorifics granted in conversation are not merely a formal affectation; the refugees speak an archaic dialect of the common tongue.

Knowledge (local) DC 15: The style of clothing, jewelry, and accoutrements seem dated in cut and design, they are not simply handmade copies of current fashions available in settled communities.

Knowledge (arcana) DC 25: The suspension of aging experienced by Alyssa's people may have been caused by the magic of an elf-stone, which transforms sleeping magic used by the sylvan folk into a temporal stasis effect.

Development: Regardless of whether the player chooses to help Alyssa, the magic of the shadow world herds him along the forest trails to the encounter with the elves in the dark grove. If the player deliberately tries to avoid the encounter as "not pertaining to his quest", a DC 15 Survival check reveals that his path is being magically manipulated. During the march, our hero encounters a sleeping human in the clothing of Alyssa's people. A DC 15 Heal check recognizes the unnatural nature of the slumber, granting a second chance at the Knowledge (arcana) check with a +2 circumstance bonus.

2. ANCIENT RITUALS (CR 5)

Halueth's fall came in inches rather than in one great plunge into darkness. Like many who succumb to evil, a series of marginal choices set him on the path to ultimate damnation. Unable to reconcile conflict between his adopted people and

his elven kin, Halueth drove the elves from their ancestral home. Though it may have been noble to first advocate tolerance of the humans, and even to defend them, impatience and desperation planted the seeds for further corruption.

Encountering Halueth's elven kin, Tyros may choose to drive them from the grove or not. He discovers them in the midst of performing a fertility ritual which, gruesomely, involves tearing apart a sacrificial unicorn whose blood rejuvenates the land (an ancient practice fallen into disuse).

A clearing in the wood ahead has been recently burned, the grass and other vegetation reduced to ash. An elven priestess in dark robes waits with two acolytes on the western side of the clearing facing the sun. A unicorn wearing a green gemstone on a gold chain around its neck stands nearby.

The cleric raises her hand to the equine's horn. With an audible crack, she snaps it off and plunges its sharpness into the breast of the beast. The acolytes tear huge chunks of flesh from the wounds inflicted by the horn. Blood runs freely, dripping into a depression carved in the earth. The three priestesses dip their fingers into this cavity, and touch the moist digits to their lips, foreheads, and cheeks which darken with blood so rich it is almost black.

The three clerics continue to rend the unicorn into bits; as blood fill the cavity they smear more over their bodies, completely covering their pale skin. If Tyros allows this to happen, he observes the final act of the ritual as the celebrants cast the remaining blood out over the ashes; where they strike, the ground sprouts new growth, green grass and wildflowers blooming in an instant. A DC 10 Knowledge (religion) check marks the similarities of this ritual with the funerary ritual of his uncle, rife with symbolism of rebirth (GM info: in the many centuries since Halueth's time, the blood sacrifice has been replaced with that of corn or fruits).

If Tyros interrupts, the clerics order him to stay back, calling him "False Blood" while they complete the ritual. If Tyros attacks, they defend themselves.

ELVEN WARPRIESTS (3)

CR 2 EACH

Elven warpriest 3

XP 600

CG Medium humanoid (elf)

Init +2; Senses Perception +4

DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 12, flat-footed 15 (+4 armor, +2 Dex, +1 shield)

hp 16 (3d8+3)

Fort +4, Ref +2, Will +4; +2 vs, enchantment

Immune sleep

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee mwk longsword +5 (1d8+2/19-20)

Ranged longbow +4 (1d8/x3)

Special Attacks fervor 1d6 2/day

Blessing Supernatural Abilities (4/day) anarchic strike, creeping vines (DC 12)

Warpriest Spells Prepared (CL 3rd; concentration +4)

1st—bless, command (DC 12), cure light wounds, divine favor

0 (at will)—bleed (DC 12), create water, resistance, virtue

STATISTICS

Str 15, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 10

Base Atk +2; CMB +4; CMD 16

Feats Endurance, Diehard, Weapon Focus (longsword)

Skills Knowledge (religion) +4, Linguistics +1, Perception +4, Sense Motive +5, Spellcraft +4, Survival +5

Languages Common, Elven, Sylvan

SQ aura (moderate chaos), blessings (minor), elven magic, keen senses, sacred weapon (4 rounds), spontaneous casting (positive), weapon familiarity

Combat Gear oil of magic weapon, tanglefoot bag; Other Gear mwk bronze chain shirt, bronze buckler, magically strengthened masterwork bronze longsword, longbow with 20 arrows, silver holy symbol, 18 gp

Development: If the ritual is completed without violent interruption, diplomacy is possible. The elves start as unfriendly (Diplomacy, DC 20), readily apparent in the way they tell their side of the story, constantly referring to Tyros as “False Blood”, which may be interpreted as a slur on his half-elven heritage, but is really the elves addressing their kinsman Halueth, considered a race traitor because of his advocacy of the human cause. The elves complain that the humans have been encroaching on their lands for some time; their first attempt at containing the problem was to simply use their magic to put the intruders to sleep and then move them outside the forest boundaries. Alyssa’s people were undeterred, and so the elves marshalled the power of the elfstone to extend the magical sleep for first years, than decades, to make the



cost of intrusion that much greater. They dismiss comments on the lethality of recent skirmishes as wholly caused by the savageness of the humans. Getting the elves to reconsider their position is considered complicated aid (+5 to the DC), although Tyros may attempt to improve their attitude one step before making the request. If he fails in the request, or their attitude shifts to hostile, the elves say that they will die before changing their policy; if the request is successful, the best Tyros/Halueth gets is a promise of further consideration. Halueth chose not to wait and drove his kin out violently. Tyros must resort to violence or choose delay in hopes some other solution will present itself.

Development: If Tyros chooses not to press an attack against the elves, a band of orcs attacks the grove. Three orcs, with the same statistics as the elves above, sans elven immunities, engage Tyros (the GM might reskin their swords as battleaxes with no change in statistics for flavor). The remainder engage the elves, driving them off while Tyros defeats his opponents. At the conclusion of this combat, or at the conclusion of the combat and/or discussion with the elves, the shadow plane advances the story. Read the following:

The violence of bloody sacrifice ended for now, you see the gemstone from the unicorn’s neck lying on the ground, a hairline fracture pulsing with green energy. A blinding flash overwhelms you, and you know no more as you slip into unconsciousness.

A DC 23 Will save normally grants protection against the temporal stasis effect in play, but success here merely grants the knowledge that Tyros experiences a time-altering incident. The elfstone lore from encounter 1 is granted a third and final check with an additional +2 circumstance bonus for experiencing its effects (half-elves are immune to sleep), and a +2 circumstance bonus if the elves revealed the source of their magic (for a possible maximum circumstance bonus of +8 including the discovery of the sleeping human above, and active inquiry by the player).

ACT TWO: THE OUTER KEEP

After awakening from his magical slumber, Tyros proceeds to Castle Aridryll. The elfstone is nowhere to be found.

Awakening with aching head and sensitive eyes, you are unsure how much time has passed. The grove is deserted, and no sign of the magical stone remains. You seek Alyssa and her band of humans, but cannot discover any trace of them. There is nothing to do except proceed to the keep.

The land is not at all what is expected. Instead of barren wastelands and desert, the approach to Castle Aridryll is flanked by rolling green hills.

3. THE GATEHOUSE (CR 4)

Damage to the gatehouse becomes evident as you near the keep. A melted portcullis and splintered wooden doors blasted off their hinges do nothing to prevent entry. Loose stone blocks are propped up by rusted 10’ iron poles, a handful of which litter the ground before you.

A DC 15 Knowledge (arcana or engineering) check identifies the damage as magically sourced and hundreds of years old. A DC 15 Knowledge (engineering) check suggests it useful to have an iron pole in hand to ward off further collapse when moving through the gate (grant a +2 circumstance bonus if the player asks about or investigates the poles).

FALLING BLOCKS TRAP

CR 3

Type mechanical; **Perception** DC 20; **Disable Device** DC 20

EFFECTS

Trigger location; **Reset** manual

Effect Atk +15 melee (4d6); multiple targets (all targets in a 10-ft. square)

Trap: The gatehouse is indeed unstable, collapsing if any pass through. A pole in hand grants a +4 circumstance bonus to AC against the trap.

Development: The 20' high walls (including battlements) of the keep require a DC 25 Climb check to scale for those wishing to bypass the gatehouse. The climb provides access to the outer keep, but not the Inner keep. Proceed to encounter 4.

4. THE BURNING SUN (CR 4)

Once in the inner yard, Tyros again encounters Alyssa's band.

The inner yard is not abandoned as you expected. Familiar faces crowd around you: the followers of the maiden Alyssa, whom you last saw in the forest. Children chatter excitedly all around you, asking why you did not return. It has been a long time since you left them in the woods, and they came to the keep for protection from the elves. The say Alyssa will save them by opening the inner keep. The faces of the adults show grief; Alyssa is nowhere to be seen.

Alyssa is not gone, but has retired to one of the many structures built against the inside face of the keep's outer walls. A collection of workshops, housing, stables, and storage sheds for the bulk of the once-busy keep's garrison, these structures hold no useful salvage, but provide shelter for the refugees, who cannot pierce the magical protections surrounding the inner keep. Holding the human's motley collection of chickens and goats, the stables are filled with fresh fodder, and provide a place to shelter Tyros' horse Darby.

Alyssa suffers from an affliction known as elfwane that struck her down when she attempted to open the main doors to the inner keep. The affliction leaves her listless and drained, with greying hair and a rash of tan, brown, and black spots covering her skin as she loses weight and life force. The clan's healer fears she will die without a cure. The healer, Germaine, is overjoyed to see Tyros; claiming the hero's heralds a possible cure. A small amount of elven (or in this case half-elven) blood taken from just beneath the skin provides the basis of the cure. The blood must not touch live skin while being drawn; exposure to the sun's rays has been known to damage the outer epidermis sufficiently to allow such an operation. The donor suffers the pain of a severe sunburn, but the operation is otherwise considered safe. The disease and cure exist in truth: a DC 15 Heal or Sense Motive check confirms this.

Development: Alyssa actually suffers from the very natural process of aging, perceived as disease through Halueth's fixated subconscious. Halueth sacrificed himself under the sun's rays for three years on the promise of an alchemist who

said he could distill his elven blood into a longevity potion for his aging bride. Halueth refused to see the damage his "sacrifice" caused his adopted people.

A DC 15 Knowledge (nobility) check recalls the story of an alchemist who once bled noble elves and sold the blood as a panacea, promising in some cases eternal life.

If asked her opinion, Alyssa weakly replies that Tyros' sacrifice is not needed: she is resolved to her fate. Though preordained to penetrate the magical defenses of the inner keep, she is firm in her knowledge that she will succeed, no matter the cost. Our hero shortly discovers that she speaks the truth, for healed of the disease or not, the doors to the inner keep open on her demise. The choice here is to honor Alyssa's wishes or push on as Halueth once did, blind to the cost paid for his obsession.

It takes three days exposure to the sun's rays to recreate Halueth's trial, during which the land around the castle turns to drought and wasteland. Each day at midday the PC must make a DC 15 Fortitude save or take 1d4 points of non-lethal damage from heatstroke. Though such damage is treatable at night, the DC increases by one each day. Alyssa musters the strength to visit Tyros at his vigil in the inner yard, begging him to forgo the suffering, that she has accepted her fate and is prepared for death. As the days progress she comments on the fact that even the land around them seems to be dying. The healer Germaine is always close by, tending his patient during these appeals.

The Keep: Attempting to enter the keep prematurely exposes the PC to +10 *ray of exhaustion* (DC 14) strike that immediately resets. For each round the character stays in contact with any portion of the inner keep (climbing the walls, trying to break a window or door) the ray strikes again. The magic is enhanced: exhausted characters take 1d2 points of Con damage per hit. After each strike, the healer Germaine reiterates that Alyssa holds the key to the opening the castle safely.

Creature: On the final day of exposure, the once green grass of the inner keep has transformed to dust. A dust digger manifests in the sand and dirt below Tyros: the land crying out for vengeance against Halueth's obsession. Alternately, if the player yields to Alyssa's entreaties, the healer Germaine transforms into the dust digger before the startled hero's eyes, sand running out of his robes and into the ground beneath. In the former case, Tyros stands in the dust digger's space for purposes of the Sinkhole ability (although success on a DC 24 Perception check allows him to act in the Surprise round), otherwise place Tyros ten feet from the dust digger before rolling initiative

DUST DIGGER

CR 4

N Large aberration

XP 1,200

Init +4; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., tremorsense 60 ft.; **Perception** +5

DEFENSE

AC 16, touch 9, flat-footed 16 (+7 natural, -1 size)

hp 42 (5d8+20)

Fort +5, **Ref** +1, **Will** +4

OFFENSE

Speed 10 ft., burrow 20 ft.

Melee bite +5 (1d8+3 plus grab), 5 tentacles +3 (1d4+1 plus grab)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

Special Attacks sinkhole, swallow whole (2d8+4 bludgeoning, AC 13, 4 hp)

STATISTICS

Str 17, **Dex** 11, **Con** 18, **Int** 2, **Wis** 11, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +7; **CMD** 17

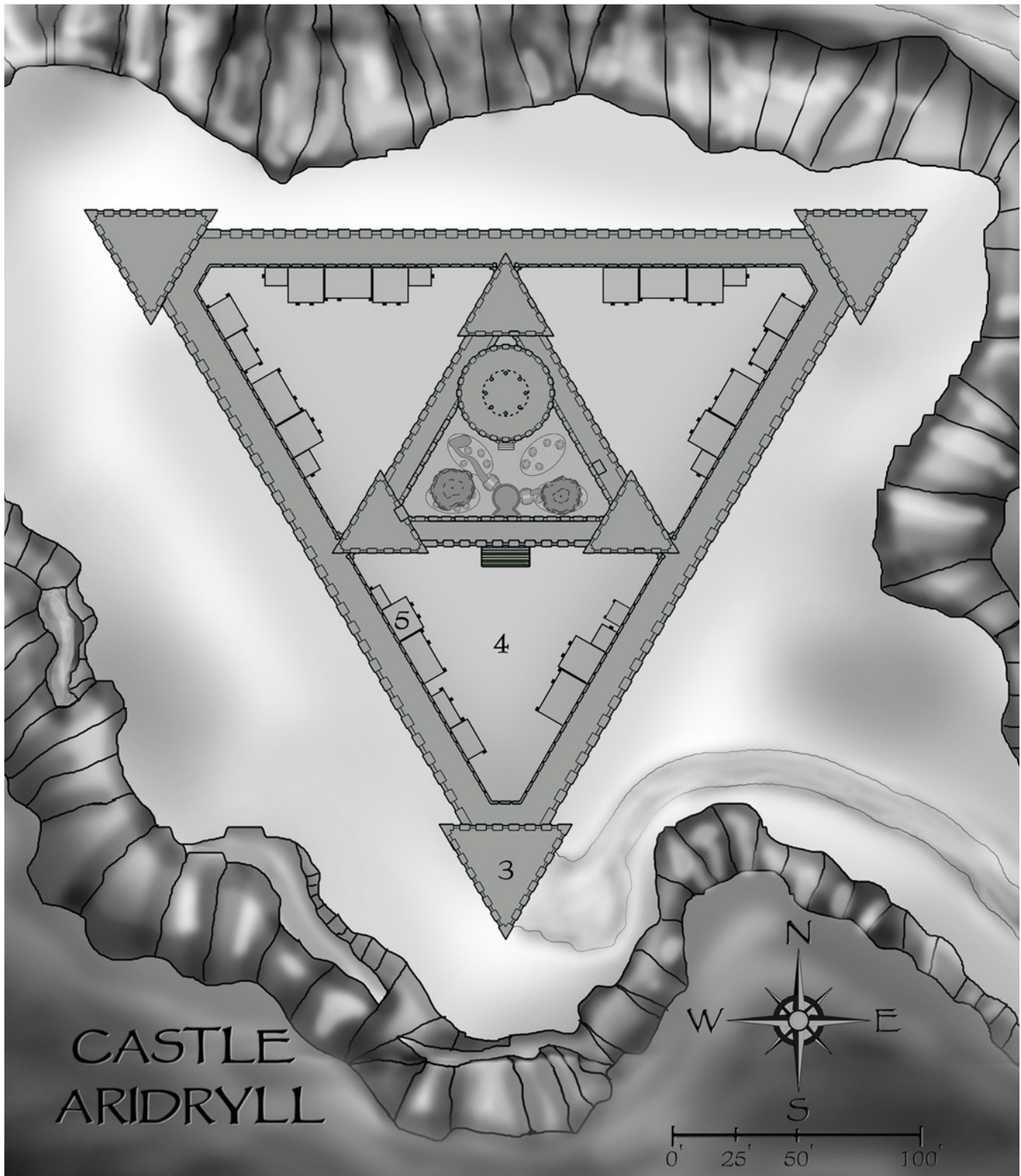
Feats Improved Initiative, Multiattack, Skill Focus (Stealth)

Skills Perception +5, Stealth +5 (+13 in ambush); **Racial Modifiers** +8 Stealth in ambush

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Sinkhole (Ex) A dust digger can burrow into sand, loose

soil, or dirt to lie in ambush just under the surface. When it feels (via tremorsense) prey walk into a square it threatens, it can deflate its body as an immediate action, causing the sand and other loose soil above to shift and slide. All creatures who were standing in the dust digger's reach must make a DC 15 Reflex save or become entangled as long as they remain in the dust digger's reach. All creatures who were standing at least partially in the dust digger's actual space must make a DC 15 Reflex save or become entangled and fall prone – if such a creature makes this save, it immediately moves to the closest adjacent unoccupied square. If this results



in more than a 5-foot move, the creature moves that distance and then falls prone. The save DC is Strength-based.

Development: Following the encounter with the dust digger, Germaine distills the cure for Alyssa if he is still present, which has no immediate effect. If he instead transformed into the monster Alyssa approaches our hero. In both cases, the scene below plays out as follows:

Alyssa smiles wanly and says, "I told you your sacrifice was unnecessary on my behalf, although I do understand why you may have thought so." With a look of determination she gathers her strength and climbs the steps to the front door of the inner keep. She places a hand on each of the great double doors, which swing open with ease. The maiden swoons, and then collapses as you vault to her side. Her eyes seek yours one final time; she whispers, "Do not mourn me, my Lord. Fate is inexorable, but ours is intertwined through eternity." Alyssa's body goes limp, eliciting a soft keening from her people. From the direction of the stables, a child's cry of pure terror pierces the mournful dirge.

5. THE NIGHTMARE AWAKENS (CR 5)

Halueth's obsession to prolong Alyssa's life eventually drew his children into it. His last act before his fall was to steal the years from his daughter's life to give to his bride. Halueth's selfishness created a poisoned atmosphere in which his child Astryd became a willing (if misguided) martyr. Three events establish Astryd's blind devotion to her father and need to save her mother at all costs; this is the first.

Creature: A nightmare, the shade of the fallen paladin's mount possesses Tyros' horse and is discovered attacking Astryd and Alyssa, unrecognizable in the manifestation of "mother".

A horrific sight! The dun colored coat of your trusty mount Darby is now coal black. Smoke pours from inflamed nostrils. Lips pulled back from the teeth forms a grinning rictus. Flames shroud the hooves as the beast rears back, striking a woman attempting to shield her young daughter from harm. Her gowns becomes an inferno as she crumples to the ground. With a snort, the terrible equine snorts smoke into the rafters in triumph and then advances.

NIGHTMARE

NE Large outsider (evil, extraplanar)
Init +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +12

CR 5

XP 1,600

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 11, flat-footed 17 (+2 Dex, +8 natural, -1 size)
hp 51 (6d10+18)
Fort +8, **Ref** +7, **Will** +3

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft., fly 90 ft. (good)
Melee bite +9 (1d4+4), 2 hooves +4 (1d6+2 plus 1d4 fire)
Space 10 ft.; Reach 5 ft.
Special Attacks smoke
Spell-Like Abilities (CL 6th)
1/day (self plus 1 rider only) – plane shift

STATISTICS

Str 18, **Dex** 15, **Con** 16, **Int** 13, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 12
Base Atk +6; **CMB** +11; **CMD** 23 (27 vs. trip)
Feats Alertness, Improved Initiative, Run
Skills Fly +13, Intimidate +10, Knowledge (planes) +10, Perception +12, Sense Motive +12, Stealth +7, Survival +10
Languages Abyssal, Infernal

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Smoke (Su) In battle, a nightmare exhales smoke that chokes and blinds foes, filling a 15-foot cone each round as a free action. Anyone in the cone must succeed on a DC 16 Fortitude save or become sickened until 1d6 minutes after leaving the area. This smoke acts as obscuring mist for the purposes of concealment. The smoke persists for 1 round. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Development: Astryd is recognizable as one of Alyssa's people but Alyssa-as-mother, though still alive, is burned beyond recognition. A DC 20 Knowledge (local) check reveals her race as half-elven (her features are significantly more human than elven). Magical or mundane healing eases her hurts, but does not restore her visage, and even the most cursory Heal check reveals she remains in critical condition. Astryd pleads with Tyros to save her mother, weeping as more of the refugees arrive at the stables. When all ideas on how to ease her hurts are exhausted, Astryd pipes up, "My father says the tears of a dragon will heal these burns." A DC 15 Heal or Knowledge (arcana) check recalls legends surrounding such healing, while a DC 15 Knowledge (nobility) check reveals that Halueth once defeated a red dragon plaguing the valley, and that one of the main halls of the inner keep is a memorial to that quest. If this does not prompt Tyros to explore the castle, the remaining refugees suggest taking their stricken companion inside. The refugees refer to the burned woman only as "mother", never revealing a true name.

ACT THREE: THE INNER KEEP

Alyssa's band carries their burned companion into the main hall of the inner keep to make her more comfortable. Through the arches leading to the chambers on either side, ghostly apparitions of servants and courtiers walk. These manifestations, unlike the more substantial shades of Alyssa's people, are obviously spirits. The ghosts cause the shaken refugees to huddle near the circular dais at the far end of the hall, and look to Tyros for guidance and protection, again referring to him by his honorifics in conversation.

6. FIRST FLOOR

A. THE GREAT HALL: 30 feet wide by 60 feet long, great wooden beams vault a 25' high ceiling. The far end of the hall ends in a curved dais, behind which a double staircase ascends to the second floor. Columns and arches running the length of the main hall do little to hide the activity in the side chambers, which appears to be the regular business of a vibrant keep.

The dais at the far end of the hall contains a pair of carved wooden thrones. Arrayed behind them, flush with the curve of the stairs, built-in seating once provided a resting place for attendant councilors and secretaries. A wooden door on the western side of the staircase opens to stairs down the basement (area 8), while the secret eastern door (Perception, DC 20) leads to a passage under the main stairs providing

access to the northern apex of the first floor. The refugees stop short of the dais, too reverent to intrude on the domain of the lord. The little girl once again begs Tyros to find the cure to ease her mother's pain, telling him he must make haste, and offers a crystal vial to collect the tears.

Creatures: The ghost of Halueth's son haunts the dais. The elven paladin's single-minded search to extend life meant that he missed most of his offsprings' childhood, years which no magic could ever get back. Unlike his daughter Astryd, his son Tam eventually became estranged from his father, setting off to chart his own course in the world, a decision to which the line of Aridryll owes its existence. Tam's shade may be encountered multiple times in the events detailed below. It cannot be harmed, though it appears a living being until met with violence, at which point, it takes on a ghostly form for the remainder of its interactions. Astryd ignores Tam; if pressed she refers to him as "the runaway" before turning her attention back to her mother.

Events: Multiple story events involving Halueth's family trigger and complete at the throne dais. These events are presented below in their most likely order, but player actions may require the GM to adjust or modify their placement.

Event 1, Tam as a Youth: A small half-elf boy appears from behind the thrones as Tyros first mounts the dais (to access either the stairs up or the side doors built into them). The youth speaks, "Play with me father," and pours out a box of carved wooden soldiers, magical creatures, wizards, and priests. If Tyros plays with the child, Tam provides a running commentary and sometimes uses magic Tyros recognizes as prestidigitation to provide visual and sound effects to the miniature battle which lasts for well on to an hour. Two more times Tam makes the request, setting up the pieces in anticipation. After the third game is ended, if Tyros heads up the stairs, Tam says, "The dragon armor is safe in the armory." If heading to the basement for the first time, Tam says, "Beware the Dark Heir's magic." If Tyros declines to play all three games, the boy watches him sadly as he departs.

Development: Tam does not re-appear until after the conclusion of the dragon tear quest (7c), which triggers the fountain of youth quest (8a).

Event 2, Tam's Second Appearance: Tam does not re-appear until the conclusion of the dragon tear quest (7c), which triggers the fountain of youth quest (8a). Tam's appearance in this event depends on Tyros' actions in the first. If Tyros played three games with Tam, he appears once again as a youth, and asks if they will play another game soon. If Tyros did not play the three games, the boy is gone and the collection of soldiers abandoned, covered in cobwebs and dust. Instead, a half-elf just into adulthood stands near the dais, saddling a riding horse. This is Tam as a young man, who stands silent unless asked about the boy, in which case he replies, "He was lost when you turned away." Both Tam-the-youth and Tam-the-adult stand mute while Event 3 plays out.

Event 3, The Dragon Tears' Gift: When Tyros returns with the dragon tears to heal the burned Alyssa-as-mother, read the following aloud.

Very carefully, you drip the tears of the dragon onto the worst of the burns. Though the charred flesh seems to sizzle when the droplets strike, the painful whimpering

of the wounded woman eases. The moistened skin begins to rejuvenate; in a matter of minutes the burns fade and looking up at you, a woman (who could be the older sister of the fallen Alyssa) speaks, "My lord, I am prepared to meet my fate, the fate that awaits us all. I thank you for easing my pain, although you need not have gone to such trouble for me."

The woman closes her eyes and her head falls back on the pillow. The young girl cries out, "Something's wrong, something's wrong, save my mother, save my mother!" You watch as the woman's hair turns white. Her skin wrinkles and sags as the weight drops off her supine form. Fingers and toes curl into arthritic claws; as if she has aged in an instant. Whether a side effect of the dragon tears or mistake in harvesting them you are not sure, but something has indeed gone terribly wrong.

Astryd beats her hand futilely against Tyros' armor while Alyssa completes the transition to her crone aspect. She once again entreats Tyros to save her mother, saying the fountain can revive her. She once again offers the crystal vial to collect the water.

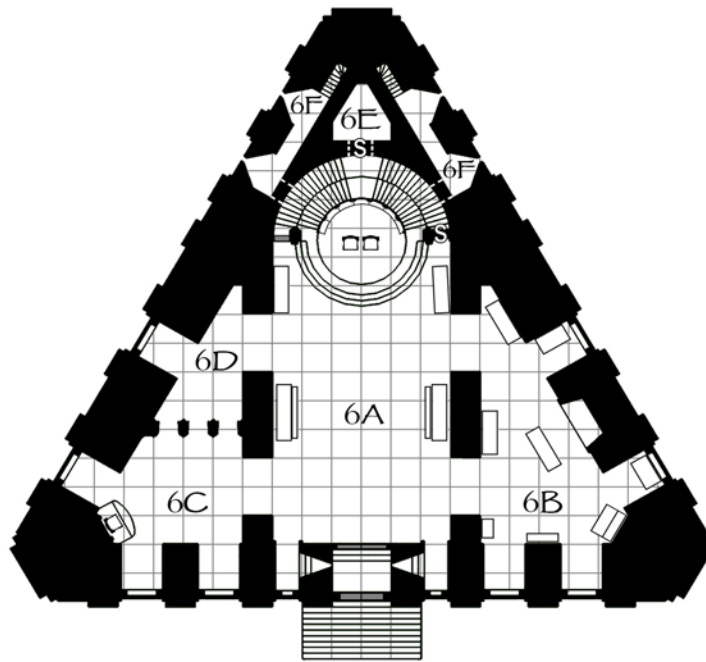
Event 4, The Fountain Quest: The fountain Alyssa refers to lies in the basement. The child knows this, saying once again that her father told her the fountain will save her mother. A DC 15 Knowledge (nobility) check recalls that Halueth once sought the fountain of youth. If the player agrees to seek the fountain to save the ailing mother, Tam speaks. The young half-elf asks why Tyros does not listen to the mother's wishes, reminding him that she said he need not go to such trouble. If Tyros persists in the quest, Tam-as-adult sadly turns away and leads the horse out of the great hall, vanishing as he does so, while Tam-as-youth sadly puts away his box of soldiers and walks slowly out of the hall's main doors, disappearing in a similar fashion. If Tyros yields to Tam's reasoning Astryd asks him once more if he will seek the fountain. If he declines, the child snatches up the vial and sprints to the basement door herself. A few moments later, her cries of terror are heard below. Tam, in either guise, makes no comment if Tyros heads to the rescue.

Event 5, Mortality's Grasp: Returning from, or declining the fountain quest triggers the final event at the dais. If Tyros declined the quest and did not chase after Astryd, skip to read aloud text below. If Tyros willingly took up the quest, or if Astryd retrieved the waters and was saved by Tyros, one or the other may administer the liquid to Alyssa-as-crone depending on who has the vial. In this case Alyssa's features resume the visage she wore when first encountered in the woods as the maiden. Otherwise, Alyssa-as-crone awakens one last time. Either version of Alyssa speaks,

"I told you, my lord, that such efforts are not needed on my behalf. You and I, we cannot deny our fates. There is still time to turn from such a futile path and receive the gift of understanding. You will see. The child will blindly accept her father's sacrifice to save the Lady of the Tower. You must choose wisely when the time comes."

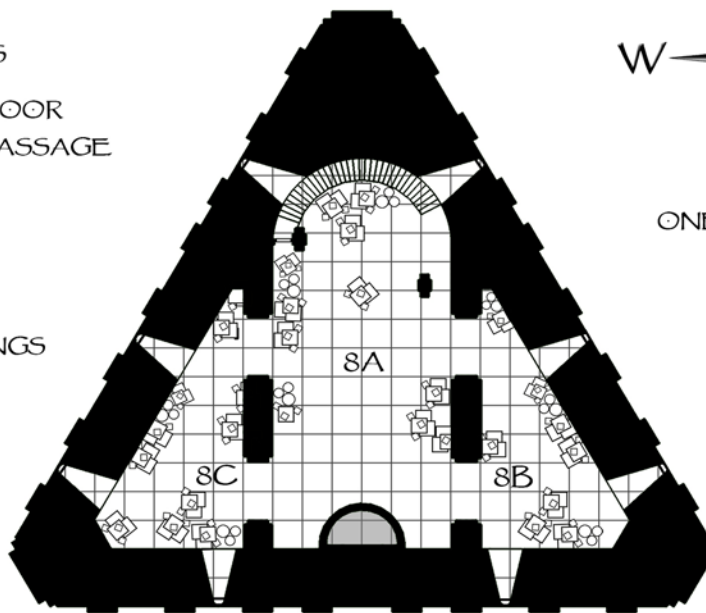
The speaker exhales one final breath before going limp on her pallet, dead. If Astryd is present to witness this, she wails and then runs up the stairs to the second floor, faster than Tyros can follow.

Development: Following Event 5, the magical wards protecting the rooftop tower (Acts IV and V) dissipate.



6. INNER KEEP - FIRST FLOOR

MAP KEY

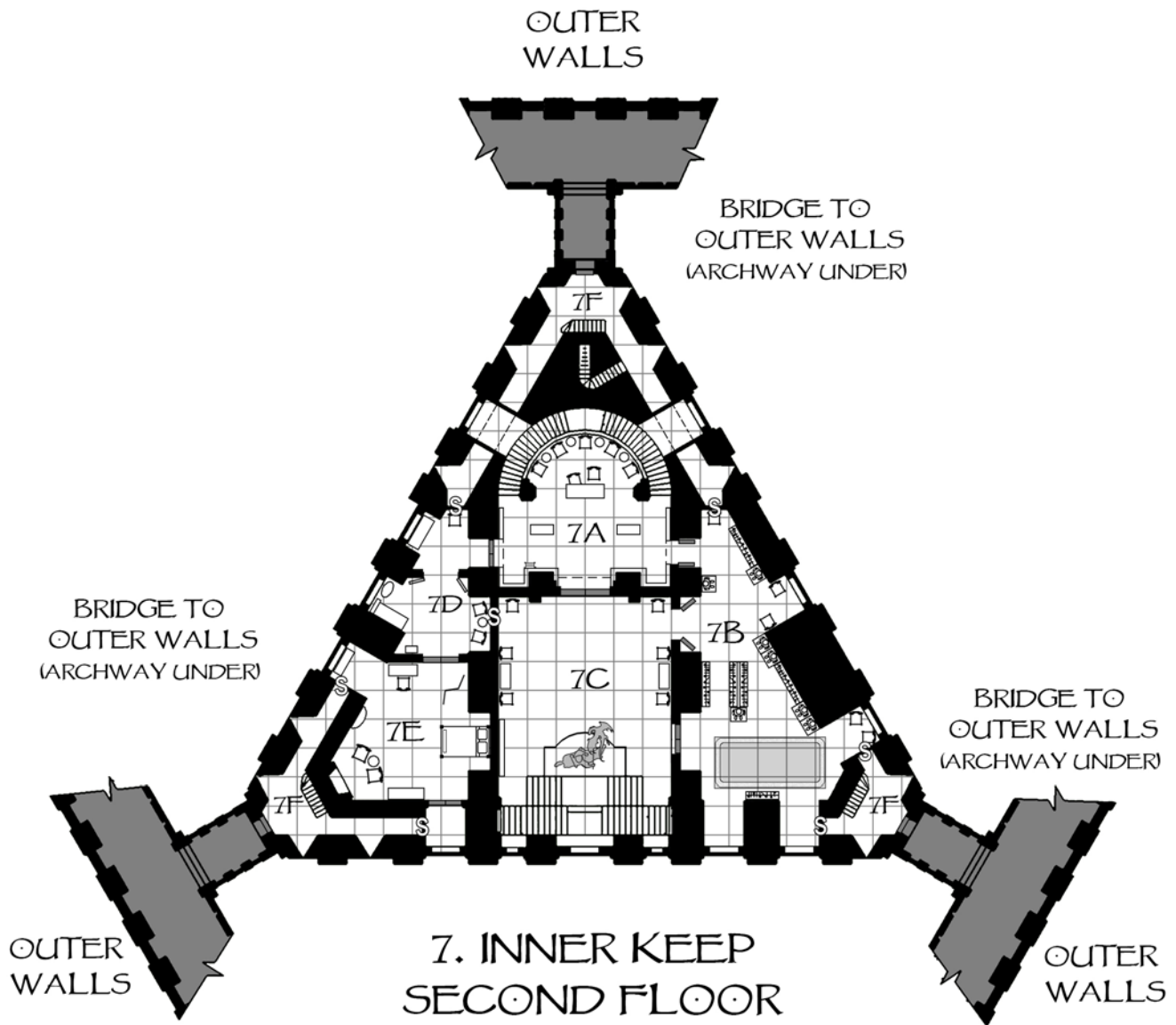


8. UNDERCROFT

B. KITCHENS: The spectral servants in this chamber prepare like ghostlike food of all stamps. A roasting boar turns on a spit in the fireplace. Bread fresh from the oven melts with butter. Platters of vegetables and fruit: raw and cooked, undressed and covered in sauces and seasoning cover almost every surface. Though insubstantial, the glorious aroma of these foods permeate the kitchen. The ghosts do not respond when addressed, but listening to their chatter reveals that they are preparing this interesting fusion of elven and human cuisine for the noble guests in the council chamber.

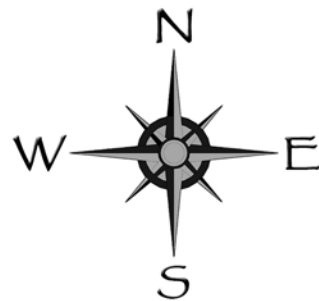
C. COUNCIL CHAMBER: Aristocratic guests in archaic fashion crowd this smaller audience chamber; servants bearing trays of wine and tidbits pass amongst them. The screens to the music room to the north are open; music can be heard over the dull roar of the noble ghosts. Most spirits respond with small talk or obeisance dependent on their station, but provide no information of import.

Two of the ghosts address Tyros directly. The first, a merchant prince, thanks "My lord" for summoning him to the castle, and he looks forward to completing their business



MAP KEY

- DOORS
- WINDOWS
- SECRET DOOR
- SECRET PASSAGE
- STAIRS
- FURNISHINGS



ONE SQUARE = 5'

transaction in the coming days. A DC 15 Sense Motive check notes a touch of irony in the honorific.

The second respondent wears an intellectual mien, perhaps she is a sage, scholar, or wizard. Excited to have access to the library and the dragon hall upstairs she shares that the writings and relics therein contain more than just tales

of Halueth's quests, but information that can unlock great secrets. As much as she enjoys parties, she anticipates burying her head in the books and scrolls for some weeks to come.

D. MUSIC ROOM: A smaller group of spirits listens to a bard sing a heartbreaking ballad, relating the tale of love

squandered by a knight's single-minded obsession to follow his quest. The spirits here do not interact, permitting a search of the rooms. A DC 15 Linguistics or Perform (any music) check reveals the entire musical library in the chamber to be devoted to songs of a similar nature.

E. STRONGROOM: A locked secret door (Perception DC 20, Disable Device DC 20) in the access passage under the main stairs leads to a triangular chamber containing an unlocked chest full of coins as well as deeds and documents relating to the Aridryll lands.

Treasure: The coin in the chest totals 1,274 gp, 4,236 sp and 3,192 cp

F. ARCHER SLITS: The archer slits in the northern apex are accessed through passages under the main stairs. Steep, narrow, wooden stairs climb to a barred wooden trap door (Hardness 5, HP 20 Break DC 23) to the second floor tower.

7. SECOND FLOOR

A. LIBRARY: The western doors are unlocked, but the grand doors to the Dragon Hall are secured with a good lock (Disable Device DC 30).

Comfortable seating near the balcony rail overlooks the double staircase down to the main hall, while a chandelier bright with burning candles provides light when the two great window are absent the sun's blessing. A rolling ladder on tracks runs the entire circumference of the room, accessing the built in bookshelves, which arch up over double doors to the east, west, and south. The eastern doors stand open, racks of arms and armor can be seen in the chamber beyond.

At a writing desk in the center of the room a leather satchel, identifiable as belonging to the intellectual wizard from the council chamber below leans against the desk leg. The writing surface is piled high with books on a multitude of topics. Sheets of parchment with scribbled notes and arcane doodling and journals filled research notes top the pile. Three clues are buried in the tomes and parchments. Additional information is provided with a knowledge check.

Clue 1: Four different versions of heroic verse detail quests relating to dragons. Three deal with slaying them, one of which describes putting an evil dragon to torture so extreme prior to its death that it wept bloody tears. One tells the story of a good dragon so moved by song and tale, that she offered herself in service to the knight, weeping as she swore fealty. **Additional Info:** Halueth slew a red dragon terrorizing a nearby kingdom in a battle so vicious; the bards often sympathize with the wyrm (Knowledge, nobility DC 15).

Clue 2: A volume in celestial, buried under pile of books in infernal outlines sacrifices by good-aligned individuals who bargain with devils for the sake of forsworn souls. Some of the stories note with pride how the devils were often out-bargained by the good of heart. **Additional Info:** Some notes in one of the journals speaks of "Alyssa's bargain", which seems to indicate a wager of some kind to save the "Dark Elf's" soul; the notes refer to unnamed protections granted to the "Heir of Aridryll (Knowledge, linguistics DC 15).

Clue 3: A book on the extension of life by magical means lies open to a page with an illustration of sacrificial weaponry. Perusing the tome in more detail reveals that each chapter is written in a language more in keeping with each particular legend; the chapter on the fountain of youth, for example is written in sylvan, necromantic magical essays in draconic and abyssal. **Additional Info:** A Knowledge, linguistics DC 15 check identifies the captions on the weapons page as infernal, but the archaic form resists any translation.

B. ARMORY:

Racks of armor and weaponry fill this large chamber, save near the southern end, where a fencing mat takes precedence. Beyond this training area, arches in the heavy wall frame glass-paned windows overlooking the courtyards below.

The window wells access tunnels through the exterior walls leading to archer slits and the three corner towers. The windows are removable in times of conflict: stout replacement iron grates hinge into wall pockets. Double doors to the Dragon Hall stand open to the west.

Treasure: Most of the arms and armor are serviceable but otherwise mundane equipment suited for the rank and file. A ten minute search and a DC 15 Appraise check discovers 2-5 masterwork weapons and 2-4 pieces of masterwork armor or shields worth a total of 3,200 gp (GM or player choice of type and style). It takes merely a walk through the room to discover a set of full plate heavily embossed with dragon imagery. Red enamel adds to the effect, creating a martial vision in red and gold. This is Halueth's personal armor: +1 energy resistant (fire) full plate. In a rack next to the armor is a +1 dragonbane harpoon. A DC 15 Knowledge (nobility) check recalls tales of Halueth's personal arms and armor, revealing the properties. Grant a +2 circumstance bonus to the check if Tam told Tyros about the armor. While in the shadow plane, Tyros is considered to have Exotic Weapon Proficiency (harpoon), and the plate fits without needing to be resized.

C. DRAGON HALL (CR 6): The following is visible from the open double doors in the armory;

Banners and tapestries depicting the military and heroic exploits of an elven paladin in red and gold full plate line the walls and hang from the rafters of this richly-paneled room. A grand double staircase commands the south end of the chamber. On the landing, a full-size bronze sculpture of the mounted warrior engaging a small dragon provides a focal point for the room's design. The dragon's scales are cast in reddish gold. It rears back in mid-flight, held fast by a harpoon known as a dragon catcher piercing the shoulder near the right fore claw. A rope from the harpoon runs back to the saddle of the knight's horse; three turns around the pommel keep the magical beast trapped, awaiting the elf's next blow.

The dragon portion of the sculpture comes to life as Tyros crosses the threshold into the chamber and speaks, "And so warrior, what is to be our joined fate?" A DC 16 Knowledge (arcana) check reveals that the dragon is neither red nor gold, as if the scales are caught in between a transformation into their true color. The dragon waits until Tyros makes a hostile move or engages in conversation.

It is possible that the dragon will grant its tears freely to Tyros at the conclusion of a successful diplomatic encounter. The dragon starts as indifferent to Tyros needs (DC 15), but her attitude can be improved as many steps as a Diplomacy check allows. A tale of needing the tears for healing piques her sympathy; she asks for more details, showing concern and empathy during appropriate parts of Tyros' story. The dragon says she enjoys tales of heartbreak and loss; if Tyros repeats one of the songs from the music room below, grant a +4 circumstance bonus to both the check to improve her attitude, and to the request to grant her tears freely.

Creature: Should diplomacy break down, or if Tyros takes the dragon as a threat and attacks, violence and pain can gain the tears. The scales on the dragon turn true red, and the creature attacks, breaking free from the rope attached to the statue. When the dragon is successfully pinned, knocked unconscious, or slain proceed to the developments below.

WYRMLING RED DRAGON

CE small dragon (fire)

Init +6; **Senses** dragon senses; Perception +10

CR 6

XP 2,400

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 13, flat-footed 19 (+2 Dex, +6 natural, +1 size)

hp 59 (7d12+14)

Fort +7, **Ref** +7, **Will** +5

Immune fire, paralysis, sleep

Weaknesses vulnerability to cold

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft., fly 150 ft. (poor)

Melee bite +11 (1d6+4), 2 claws +10 (1d4+3)

Special Attacks breath weapon (20-ft. cone, DC 15, 2d10 fire)

STATISTICS

Str 17, **Dex** 14, **Con** 15, **Int** 10, **Wis** 11, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +7; **CMB** +9; **CMD** 21 (25 vs. trip)

Feats flyby attack, improved initiative, power attack, weapon focus (bite)

Skills Appraise +6, Bluff +5, Climb +10, Fly +9, Heal +3, Intimidate +10, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +7, Perception +10, Sense Motive +5, Stealth +16, Survival +7

Languages Common, Draconic

Development: Once subdued or convinced, the dragon surrenders its tears into the crystal vial carried by Tyros; as it does so, it becomes smaller and more fragile, appearing at the end of the weeping as if newly hatched. The dragon then solidifies once again into a gilded bronze casting.

Development - Alternate Combat: If the dragon yields its tears willingly, as soon as the operation is complete, the statue of Halueth animates and leaps off the horse, abandoning the harpoon for a short sword and dagger as he howls, "No, this is not the fate ordained!" Run the combat with the same statistics as the dragon, reskinning (for flavor only) the bite and claws as sword and dagger strikes, including the breath weapon as granted by a magical effect (perhaps an elixir of fire breath). In this case the gold dragon watches the combat, commenting at its conclusion that, "The Dark Elf could not accept his fate," before solidifying.

Treasure: A piece of jewelry on a golden chain loops around the belt of the warrior figure (regardless of whether or not it animated). Designs matching the Aridryll ancestral clasp

decorate the trinket. A DC 10 Knowledge (religion) check reveals it to be Halueth's holy symbol (GM info: prior to his fall). Worth 50 gp intrinsically, the symbol holds one final shred of Halueth's goodness, healing 4d6 points of damage when grasped by a wounded character before becoming inert.

D. SITTING ROOM: This antechamber provides a small reception room for the inhabitants of the guest suite. Divided by a wooden partition with open double doors, the window bench in the northern window well contains portable bedding (pallets and blankets) for servants. The southern chamber contains comfortable seating and sports a small writing desk in the window alcove. A secret door (Perception DC 25) to the Dragon Hall is hidden behind a tapestry on the eastern wall.

E. GUEST CHAMBERS:

A canopy bed with drawn curtains fills the eastern wall of this chamber, partially hidden by dressing screen just to the left of the doorway. To the south, the drapes are pulled back from glass-paned doors with intricate grille-work, permitting the setting sun to stream into the room from the window beyond. A fire crackles in the fireplace in the southwest corner of the room. From an overstuffed chair facing the fire, a cultured voice calls out, "You will need this, of course, to complete your quest. The bargain is sealed. All is as discussed." So saying the occupant of the chair places a dagger in a jeweled scabbard on the side table next to his chair, brandy snifters clink and rattle as the weapon is set down.

Should Tyros desire, he may join the man warming himself by the fire. A second chair awaits, and the brandy decanter is full. The host is the "merchant prince" from the council chamber below, appearing more solid than he did in the council chamber below. Also occupying his chair is a leather binder overflowing with documents and parchments. Details of the "quest" are vague, but the merchant reveals it will come to its completion in the tower above, where the sacrifice must be made. The dagger plays a key role. The merchant hopes that "My Lord" is satisfied with the bargain, all the agreements are in order, although he deflects questions for additional details, saying all the information required is included in "My Lord's copy of the contract."

The merchant is, in fact, a **contract devil**. In desperation, Halueth pledged his soul to extend Alyssa's life. This, the final act of his fall, proved to be just as bitter as the rest of his failed quests. The devil provided a sacrificial dagger that could transfer the years from a willing subject other than the attuned wielder (Halueth) to Alyssa, erasing the effects of years gone by. Reasoning that as a half-elf, his daughter Astryd would not lose her entire life to such an exchange, Halueth considered dagger relatively safe, though he did not inform Astryd of the sacrifice she would make. What he did not bargain on is that Alyssa's life had already been extended for considerable years due to previous efforts, and turning those years back with evil magic required more years than Astryd had left.

The dagger is recognizable as one of the sacrificial weapons from one of the tomes in the library (with a caption in infernal). If Tyros discovered the scrap of Halueth's contract from the skeletal necromancer, he recognizes the parchment of the many documents in the merchant's possession as a match to the fragment he holds.

Finally, extended conversation with the merchant grants a DC 19 Perception check to penetrate his disguise and reveal

his true form. The devil cannot be engaged in combat due to the nature of the shadow plane's magic, and if the player attempts to, he simply comments "Tsk! Tsk!" before disappearing. Tyros is free to take up or leave the dagger.

Development: The locked (Disable Device DC 25) glass and iron gridded door leads to the access passages to the armory and corner towers.

F. TOWERS: The corner towers' second stories contain wooden stairs to the third floor, archer slits, and murder holes in the apex of the outermost corners. The iron doors accessing the bridge to the outer walls are barred from the inside (Hardness 10, HP 60 Break DC 30), difficult to force even after the magical wards (encounter 2) are removed. The trap doors to the third floor are barred as well (Hardness 5, HP 20 Break DC 23).

8. UNDERCROFT

A. CENTRAL UNDERCROFT (CR 5)

The stairs from the main hall curve down into the undercroft, where two sets of heavy columns divide the basement into three chambers. Boxes, barrels, and chests fill all three chambers. Across from the stairs in the central chamber, a semicircular fountain holds pure water bubbling up from an underground spring. Torches burn on brackets set into the columns.

If Tyros has not triggered the fountain of youth quest, the central chamber holds no more of interest than stored equipment, tools and preserved foodstuffs. The water in the fountain is pure to drink.

If Tyros accepted the fountain quest, the torches cast shadows on the columns, ceiling and floor making it appear as a forest glade with, leaves rustling in the wind. A 25' radius semi-circular rune pattern glows faintly in front of the fountain. Runes of warning in celestial and infernal warn not to take the waters of the fountain beyond the magical seal but promise health to those who partake of the waters. Characters with knowledge of only one of the two tongues may recognize the other for what it is (but get no translation) with a DC 15 Linguistics check. If Tyros heeds the warning and turns back, Astryd triggers the boilborn (see below) as described in Event 4 in encounter 6A. The player might think to carry Alyssa-asrone to the waters, but she cries out in such pain, that Astryd takes matters into her own hand as above.

Creatures: Taking water from the fountain beyond the seal summons disease and plague into the land. The fountains waters turn black with corruption and bubble up over the retaining wall, creating a slick scum (difficult terrain for any creature without a swim speed) on the flagstones of the cellar. Four bubbles of corruption manifest from the polluted overflow, surrounding Tyros. If Astryd triggered the encounter, she is discovered surrounded by the oozes when Tyros descends the stairs.

PLAGUEBORN

N Small ooze

Init -5; **Senses** blindsight 30 ft.; Perception -4

DEFENSE

AC 9, touch 6, flat-footed 9 (-5 Dex, +3 Natural Armor, +1 size)

hp 19 (2d8+10)

Fort +5, **Ref** -5, **Will** -4

Immune ooze traits; Resist acid 10

OFFENSE

Speed 10 ft., climb 10 ft., swim 10 ft.

Melee slam +7 (1d3+3 plus disease)

Special Attacks death throes, disease

STATISTICS

Str 16, **Dex** 1, **Con** 21, **Int** -, **Wis** 2, **Cha** 1

Base Atk +1; **CMB** -6; **CMD** 5 (can't be tripped)

Skills Climb +11, Swim +11

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Death Throes (Su) When killed, a plagueborn pops in a 10-foot-radius burst that deals 2d6 points of acid damage (DC 14 Reflex half). Creatures taking damage must succeed at a DC 16 Fortitude save or contract cackle fever.

Disease (Su) Cackle Fever: Inhaled; save Fort DC 16; onset 1 day; frequency 1/day; effect 1d6 Wis damage; cure 2 consecutive saves. This save is Constitution-based.

BOILBORN (3)

N Tiny ooze

Init -5; **Senses** blindsight 30 ft.; Perception -4

DEFENSE

AC 7, touch 7, flat-footed 7 (-5 Dex, +2 size)

hp 15 (2d8+6) each

Fort +3, **Ref** -5, **Will** -4

Immune ooze traits; **Resist** acid 10

OFFENSE

Speed 10 ft., climb 10 ft., swim 10 ft.

Melee slam +4 (1d2+1 plus disease)

Special Attacks death throes, disease

Space 2 ft.; **Reach** 0 ft.

STATISTICS

Str 12, **Dex** 1, **Con** 17, **Int** -, **Wis** 2, **Cha** 1

Base Atk +1; **CMB** -6; **CMD** 5 (can't be tripped)

Skills Climb +9, Swim +9

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Death Throes (Su) When killed, a boilborn pops in a 10-foot-radius burst that deals 2d6 points of acid damage (DC 14 Reflex half). Creatures taking damage must succeed at a DC 12 Fortitude save or contract leprosy.

Disease (Su) Leprosy: Injury; save Fort DC 12; onset 2d4 weeks; frequency 1/week; effect 1d2 Cha damage; cure 2 consecutive saves. This save is Constitution-based.

Development: The waters of the fountain run clear when the boilborn are slain. Astryd flees with the vial of water if she is present, otherwise Tyros may ascend with the full vial. Tyros suffers any diseases inflicted by the oozes only if he pauses to rest within the keep.

Treasure: The runes promising health to those who partake of the waters glow more strongly when the oozes are purged. A character may drink from the fountain once per day to receive the benefits of *cure serious wounds*.

B. NECROMANCER'S REST (CR 6)

The boxes and other containers in this chamber have experienced violence in the past. Some are bashed in or overturned, their contents spilled out all over the floor.

Creatures: One of Halueth's many descendants delved into necromancy. With hubris greater than her talent, she and a band of hired mercenaries penetrated Castle Aridryll. Ignoring the visions and apparitions in the courtyard and great hall, the necromancer discovered Halueth's infernal contract (see encounter 7e) in the strong room after researching many family secrets in the library. Using the contract's magic, she summoned the devil Halueth had dealt with once before, intending to trick it into granting her greater power. She soon found her cleverness to be a broken reed, and in the running battle that ensued, the devil chased her down to the cellars where she met her end. Her hate merged with the necromantic energies she had once mastered, granting her undeath as a spell-casting skeletal champion. Her failure dooms her to haunt the place of her death attended by her now-skeletal warrior companions.

HUMAN SKELETON (4)

NE Medium undead

Init +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +0

CR 1/3

XP 135 each

DEFENSE

AC 16, touch 12, flat-footed 14 (+2 armor, +2 Dex, +2 natural)
hp 4 (1d8) each

Fort +0, **Ref** +2, **Will** +2

DR 5/bludgeoning; **Immune** cold, undead traits

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee shortspear +2 (1d6+3/19-20x2), claw -3 (1d4+1) or 2 claws +2 (1d4+2)

STATISTICS

Str 15, **Dex** 14, **Con** -, **Int** -, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +0; **CMB** +2; **CMD** 14

Feats Improved InitiativeB

Gear broken chain shirt, shortspear



SKELETAL NECROMANCER

CR 5

Half elf skeletal necromancer 3

XP 1,600

NE Medium undead

Init +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +8

DEFENSE

AC 18, touch 12, flat-footed 16 (+4 armor, +2 Dex, +2 natural)

hp 38 (5 HD; 2d8+3d6+18)

Fort +2, **Ref** +4, **Will** +8

Defensive Abilities channel resistance +4; DR 5/bludgeoning;

Immune cold, undead traits

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee mwk dagger +5 (1d4+1/19-20), claw -1 (1d4) or 2 claws +4 (1d4+1) or spectral hand +6 touch (by touch spell)

Ranged ray +4 ranged touch (by spell)

Special Attacks channel negative energy (DC 13, 6/day, command undead only)

Arcane School Spell-Like Abilities (CL 3rd; concentration +6)

6/day — grave touch (1 round)

Spells Prepared (CL 3rd; concentration +6)

2nd — burning gaze (DC 16), scorching ray, spectral hand

1st — chill touch (DC 16), mage armor, magic missile, ray of enfeeblement (DC 16)

0th — (At Will) — detect magic, mage hand, ray of frost, read magic, touch of fatigue (DC 15)

Opposition Schools Enchantment, Illusion

STATISTICS

Str 12, **Dex** 15, **Con** --, **Int** 16, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 15

Base Atk +2; **CMB** +3; **CMD** 15

Feats Combat Casting, Command Undead, Improved Initiative, Scribe Scroll, Silent Spell, Spell Focus (necromancy), Toughness, Weapon Finesse

Skills Intimidate +8, Knowledge (arcana) +11, Knowledge (religion) +11, Perception +8, Sense Motive +9, Spellcraft +11, Stealth +10

Languages Abyssal, Common, Draconic, Undercommon

SQ arcane bond (skull)

Combat Gear arcane bond (skull), spell component pouch,

Other Gear masterwork dagger, cloak of resistance +1, spellbook, 297 gp

Development: The skeletal necromancer wears a scarf identifiable as that worn by the intellectual wizard from the council chamber (6a).

Treasure: An unused *potion of cure moderate wounds* lies forgotten in the corner, turned on its side. In addition to the npc gear, the skeletal necromancer carries a key to the strong room (6e) and a fragment of Halueth's infernal contract containing the following text:

...should the Lady of the Tower fall, as defined in the subsection granting the enumerated protections to the Heir of Aridryll, the lands and souls of Aridryll shall suffer as laid down in the terms of the agreement...

C. DRY STORES: This section of the undercroft contains spare bedding and tapestries designed for the different seasons and festivals of the year. A tented pavilion and camp gear suitable for a military leader in the field also rest in this chamber.

ACT FOUR: ROOFTOP GARDEN

9. THE ARCADE

The stairs from the Dragon Hall exit onto a colonnade supporting the battlements above. On the outer wall, openings with a clear field of fire overlook the courtyards. The inner row of columns open onto a rooftop garden.

10. THE CORNER TOWERS

The third floor towers contain archer slits and a ladder to the roof. Barred wooden doors from the arcade and the roof trap doors are well crafted (Hardness 5, HP 20 Break DC 23).

11. THE GARDEN (CR 4)

Two oak trees, trimmed hedges and floral beds, and a gravel path with bridges over a small brook between two pools and a central fountain create a sylvan glade, through which the entrance to the tower on the northern end of the roof can be seen. The foreboding tower extends the height of the keep another six stories.

Creature: A nightgaunt, attracted by the dark emotions surrounding the keep, hunts the garden. The creature prowls the arcade battlements while getting into position to strike (Perception, DC 22). The fell creature likes to play with its prey, snatching and dropping it on the battlements for a fall of 20-30 feet while engendering fear of a much further fall (80 feet) to the courtyards below. If reduced to 10 hp or less, it discards creatures in its Clutches for the long drop.

NIGHTGAUNT

CR 4

CN Medium monstrous humanoid (extraplanar) XP 1,200
Init +6; **Senses** all-around vision, blindsight 60 ft., darkvision 60 ft.; **Perception** +6

DEFENSE

AC 18, touch 13, flat-footed 15 (+2 Dex, +1 dodge, +5 natural)
hp 37 (5d10+10)
Fort +3, **Ref** +8, **Will** +6
Defensive Abilities faceless; Immune cold, gaze attacks, inhaled poison, scent-based attacks

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., fly 40 ft. (average)
Melee 2 claws +9 (1d6+4 plus grab)
Special Attacks clutches, tickle

STATISTICS

Str 18, **Dex** 15, **Con** 14, **Int** 5, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 11
Base Atk +5; **CMB** +9 (+17 grapple); **CMD** 22
Feats Dodge, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes
Skills Fly +7, Perception +6, Stealth +11; **Racial Modifiers** +4 Stealth
Languages Aklo (can't speak)
SQ no breath

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Clutches (Ex) A nightgaunt has a +4 racial bonus on grapple combat maneuver checks. If a nightgaunt uses its fly speed to move itself and a grappled target, it can fly at full speed.

Faceless (Ex) A nightgaunt has no face, but can still see in all directions as if its entire body were an eye. It is immune to gaze attacks, but not to illusions that rely upon vision to function. It has no need to breathe, and is immune to all inhaled and scent-based effects.

Tickle (Ex) As a swift action, a nightgaunt can use its tail to tickle a grappled or helpless foe with horrible efficiency. The target must succeed at a DC 14 Fortitude save or be nauseated for 1 round. The save DC is Dexterity-based.

12. THE TOWER ENTRANCE (CR 5)

A small flight of stairs leads to an arched door, flanked on either side by a statue, one an elven warrior, and the second a human maiden. Glased windows pierce the circumference of the tower until the curved walls die into the apex of the arcaded battlements.

Creatures: The statues flanking the door keep intruders away. These guardians do not pursue characters fleeing back down to the second floor.

CARYATID COLUMN (2)

CR 3

N Medium construct XP 800 each
Init -1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; **Perception** +0

DEFENSE

AC 14, touch 9, flat-footed 14 (-1 Dex, +5 natural)
hp 36 (3d10+20) each
Fort +1, **Ref** +0, **Will** +1
Defensive Abilities shatter weapons; **DR** 5/—; Immune construct traits, magic

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.
Melee mwk longsword +8 (1d8+4/19-20)

STATISTICS

Str 18, **Dex** 9, **Con** —, **Int** —, **Wis** 11, **Cha** 1
Base Atk +3; **CMB** +7; **CMD** 16 (cannot be disarmed)
SQ statue

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Immunity to Magic (Ex) A caryatid column is immune to any spell or spell-like ability that allows spell resistance. In addition, certain spells and effects function differently against the creature, as noted below.

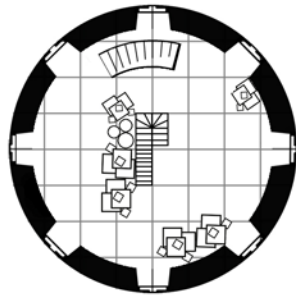
- A *transmute rock to mud* spell deals 1d6 points of damage per caster level to a caryatid column (no saving throw).
- *Transmute mud to rock* immediately heals any and all damage currently suffered by a caryatid column.
- A *stone to flesh* spell does not actually change the column's structure but negates its damage reduction and immunity to magic for 1 round.

Shatter Weapons (Ex) Whenever a character strikes a caryatid column with a weapon (magical or nonmagical), the weapon takes 3d6 points of damage. Apply the weapon's hardness normally. Weapons that take damage in excess of their hardness gain the broken quality.

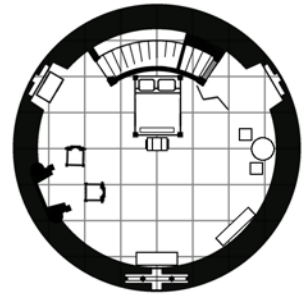
Statue (Ex) A caryatid column can stand perfectly still, emulating a statue (usually one that is holding up the ceiling, like a carved column). An observer must succeed at a DC 20 Perception check to notice the caryatid column is alive. If a caryatid column initiates combat from this pose, it gains a +6 bonus on its initiative check.

MAP KEY

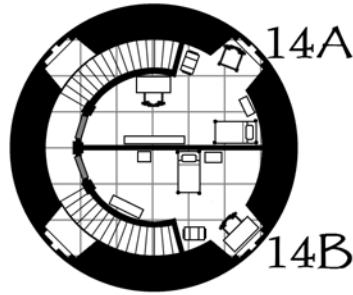
-  DOORS
-  WINDOWS
-  SECRET DOOR
-  SECRET PASSAGE
-  STAIRS
-  FURNISHINGS



17. ATTIC



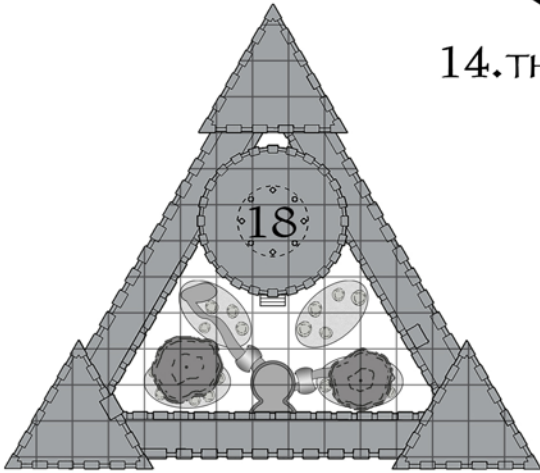
16. THE BEDCHAMBER



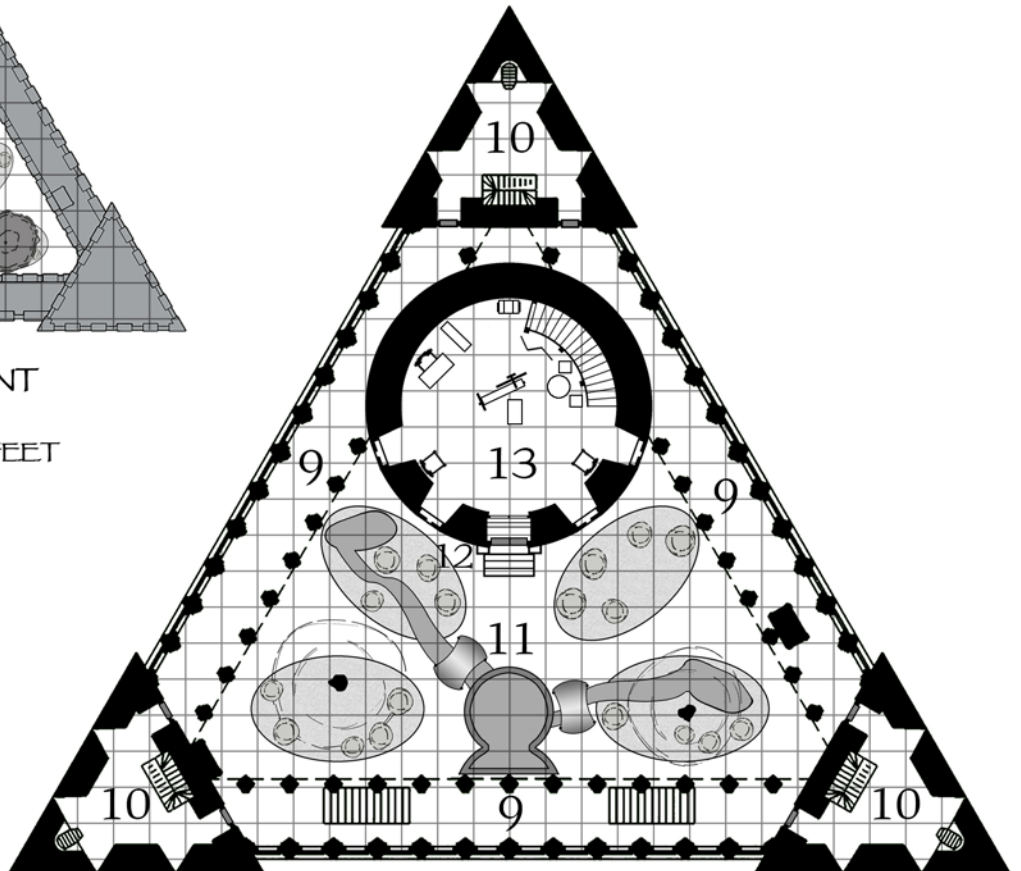
14. THE CHILDREN'S ROOMS



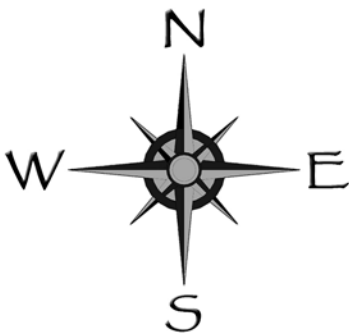
15. THE MASTER'S STUDY



BATLEMENT
DETAIL
1 SQUARE = 10 FEET



ROOFTOP AND CONSERVATORY



ONE SQUARE = 5'

Multiple Paths: Magical wards prevent early entry into the tower. The dragon quest and fountain of youth quest must be completed to gain access. Should the player take things out of order, as soon as the caryatids are defeated the first time, they meld back together and advance again, saying, "The great hall holds the secret to our surrender." The two constructs repair themselves and engage as many times as needed to force Tyros off the roof. If he retreats through the second floor, the encounters in the dragon hall and the guest suite do not take place until he activates them by rendezvousing with the refugees near the dais in the main hall. The rest of the clues on the second floor can be discovered out of order. On his return, if he defeated the columns at least once, he discovers their broken parts scattered on the steps to the tower.

ACT FIVE: THE TOWER

The rooftop tower contains the lord's suites. It is now a monument to the pain of Halueth's folly.

13. CONSERVATORY

Four glass-paned windows overlooking the garden bring the vibrancy of nature into this chamber. Candelabras and an intricate chandelier provide light for the many work stations when the sun goes down: potting tables, a spinning wheel and a loom, and a canvas frame and watercolor box fill all available floor space not taken up by the curved stairs leading upwards.

A figure, visible from the doorway, sits at the loom. Closer inspection reveals as a life-size wax sculpture of a human maiden. A DC 22 Perception check identifies the subjects as Alyssa, although the likeness is not perfect, failure on the check recalls the visage as vaguely familiar only.

After Halueth imprisoned Alyssa in the tower (encounter 16), he could not bear to be without her presence throughout the castle. He fashioned life-size sculptures of her (and the children) to populate his private suites. This early attempt was less than successful, but Halueth kept the sculpture here while he perfected his art.

14. THE CHILDREN'S CHAMBERS

Two unlocked doors open off the landing on the second floor; the stairs continue up.

A. TAM'S ROOM

Another wax figure sits at a writing desk in this bedchamber, a half-elven youth just past puberty. Tomes of magic and wizardry are stacked nearby, along with the components of arcane spellcraft.

The sculpture of Tam depicts him at an age between youth and adulthood as previously encountered; he is recognizable from the dais encounters with a DC 18 Perception check. The writing journal holds no notes on spellcraft, but is, rather, a private diary describing a boy's adventures with his father. The penmanship improves the deeper into the book, as the youthful hand becomes more sure. In the early tales, father and son travel together, with a bond that is quite touching. The later passages show an increasing absence of the father from the stories, until that character does not reappear. The youth

becomes self-sufficient, but also cold and hard, exhibiting less wonder than in the early tales. A DC 11 Sense Motive check reveals the tales as fiction: the metaphorical yearnings of a neglected child. The book is open to the early tales when Tyros first enters the chamber.

Treasure: A handful of *priest miniatures* serve as paper weights. They are recognizable from the battle on the dais as healers.

MINIATURE PRIESTS

Aura faint (transmutation); **CL** 3rd

Slot head; **Price** 750 gp; **Weight** –

DESCRIPTION

These five painted miniatures can be cast on the ground as a standard action, attuning the small clerics to the creature in the square. Thereafter, as a swift action each round the attuned creature may receive the benefits of *aid* (2 charges) or *cure light wounds* (1 charge). Each time a charge is used, one of the priests melts into a blob of pewter; while active the priests are considered equipped items with hardness 0, hp 5. Any unused priests melt after 5 rounds.

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, *aid*, *cure light wounds*;
Cost 375 gp

B. ASTRYD'S ROOM

The peaceful form of a sleeping half-elven girl composed in wax reclines on her bed, surrounded by watercolors and paints. The paintings all depict a heroic knight rescuing a fair princess from a multitude of dangers, or of a mother and daughter together, while the same knight keeps watch over their safety.

A portrait of a young woman hangs on the wall. The wax sculpture on the bed is easily identifiable as the refugee girl from the dragon and fountain quests; her half elven features are more recognizable. A DC 15 Perception check identifies the portrait being the same woman later in life. All girlish toys and remembrances have been put away in chests, the reading material in this preserved room examines the means and quests to extend life.

15. THE MASTER'S STUDY

A. ANTECHAMBER

The maiden from the wood, Alyssa, stands opposite the stairs as you reach the landing, looking out over the garden through a window near stairs leading up. Paneled walls split this level of the tower, the door to the next room is shut tight.

Alyssa is actually a sentient wax golem in disguise (Perception DC 16). One of the statues created by Halueth attained sentience, and now desires the death of the true Alyssa (sleeping in the chamber above) so that she make take her place. The protections of the shadow plane keep her from carrying out the deed herself, the manifestation of Astryd stops the golem each time she ascends the stairs. The golem suspects that the sacrificial dagger provided by the devil can defeat Astryd, and awaits her chance.

The golem greets Tyros, saying *"I have waited patiently for you my lord, our time is at hand. It is within your power to free me from my curse. She must die and I must live. It is the only way. I must require you to make this sacrifice. The blade lies within."* The golem holds out a key, nodding to the nearby door. If questioned further, the golem merely mutters, *"I cannot accept my fate, she must make the sacrifice."* If attacked or if Tyros tries to force his way past, the golem flees up the stairs, slamming the door behind it (Hardness 5, HP 20 Break DC 23, Disable Device DC 20). Statistics for the golem are presented in encounter 16.

B. THE WAXWORKS

Spatters of melted wax deface what was once a lushly appointed study; a dozen partially finished sculptures crowd the room. The desk, entombed in wax drippings, contains numerous charcoal sketches of a human maiden and two half-elven children. It stands near a fireplace with a crucible containing hardened wax. An elf in lordly robes slumps in the nearby chair, his hands gnarled with age. Though well preserved, the elf appears to have been dead for uncounted years.

Halueth died of old age, shut up in his tower. His face retains the beauty of the elven race even in extreme old age, with only a few crow's feet in the corners of his eyes and mouth; the hand are the give-away that this elf survived into his venerable years. Halueth spent his last decades creating substitutes for his lost family after it was too painful to visit the sleeping Alyssa above.

The devil's sacrificial dagger from encounter 7e is driven into the desk through one of the parchments, regardless of whether Tyros picked it up (if he did, he discovers the blade to be missing from his possessions). Entering the tower as the Heir of Aridryll releases the dagger to teleport to where it needs to be to complete the conditions of Alyssa's bargain (encounter 16). The parchment contains a sketch of Halueth's daughter as a young woman (the same as the portrait in her bedchamber). If the dagger is removed, the parchment browns and crumbles away with age, while the blade itself grows freezing cold to the touch (as per chill metal) from the negative energy surrounding its magic. If the wielder drops the blade, or on round five of the transformation, the blade shatters into hundreds of icy shards.

Development: The wax golem of Alyssa climbs the stairs to the bedchamber while Tyros is in the study, leaving the door on the stairwell is open.

16. THE BEDCHAMBER - HALUETH'S CHOICE (CR 5)

The curved staircase proceeds ever upward, passing through an arched door frame. Rounding the corner as you climb the last few steps, a comfortable bedchamber comes into view. Embroidered drapery hangs in the window wells and fine furniture stands against the walls, although a chair and a side table are overturned on the rich carpet. The entire room is bathed in a green glow. On your left a canopied bed holds the sleeping form of Alyssa, her twin stands across the room from the landing, grappling a half-elven woman from behind, a dagger in her free hand. She plows a narrow furrow into the half-elf's bare shoulder, and cries out, "I must live, she must die, if we are to avoid the curse. I seize my fate!"

The golem is of course speaking of her desires to supplant the true Alyssa. Even in the strange green light (cast from the elfstone mounted in the canopy above Alyssa's sleeping form) damage to the golem's face is visible. Furrows carved by Astryd's nails in the struggle show wax underneath instead of blood. A DC 12 Perception check penetrates the disguise if the falsehood has not already been discovered. The true target of the golem's rage may not be apparent, however. The construct shoves the wounded form of Astryd toward Tyros as it advances towards the bed (and landing). The stricken daughter appeals to Tyros to save her mother before fainting. The young woman is recognizable from the portrait of her in her chambers below.

Creature: Should Tyros delay for any reason, the golem plunges the dagger repeatedly into the sleeping form of Alyssa, to no effect. The magic of the shadow plane only permits the Heir of Aridryll to determine her fate. Summoning all its pent up frustration (entering rage), the construct turns on Tyros, who is certainly vulnerable to the blade's fury. The golem prefers to attack with both hands, forgoing its slam attack for a knockback attempt (CMB +6 when two weapon fighting), but if it misses all three attacks in a round, it switches to using the dagger only. The construct fights until destroyed.

SENTIENT WAX GOLEM

CR 5

N Medium construct, Barbarian 2

XP 1,600

Init -1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +0

DEFENSE

AC 13, touch 7, flat-footed 13 (-1 Dex, +6 natural, -2 rage)

hp 55 (4d10+2d12+20)

Fort +4, **Ref** +0, **Will** +3

Immune cold, construct traits, magic

Weaknesses vulnerable to fire

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.

Melee slam +10,+5 (1d6+6) or +1 *frost dagger* +10,+5 (1d4+5/19-20x2 plus 1d6 cold) or +1 *frost dagger* +6,+1 (1d4+5/19-20x2 plus 1d6 cold) and slam +6 (1d6+3)

Special Attacks rage (4 rounds/day), rage powers (knockback)

BASE STATISTICS

When not raging the golem's base statistics are:

AC 15, touch 9, flat-footed 15; **Will** +1

Melee **slam** +8,+3 (1d6+3) or +1 *frost dagger* +8,+3 (1d4+3/19-20x2 plus 1d6 cold) or +1 *frost dagger* +6,+1 (1d4+3/19-20x2 plus 1d6 cold) and slam +6 (1d6+1),

Str 14; **CMB** +8; **CMD** 17

If the golem loses sentience, it comes out of rage (but is unaffected by the fatigue penalty) and drops the dagger on the floor, reverting to its natural attack: **Melee** Slam +6 (1d6+3). It also loses the benefits of its feats and skills, including any Barbarian abilities (reducing its speed to 30),

STATISTICS

Str 18, **Dex** 9, **Con** —, **Int** —, **Wis** 11, **Cha** 1

Base Atk +6; **CMB** +10; **CMD** 19

SQ conditional sentience, fast movement

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Conditional Sentience (Su) A wax golem constructed to look like a humanoid (whether a particular individual or not)

has a small chance of gaining sentience and genuinely believing it is a living creature. Each week, such a wax golem has a cumulative 1% chance of becoming sentient (on the second week the chance is 2%, the third week 3%, and so on), to a maximum of 5%. If it does attain sentience, the golem gains an Intelligence score of 10, retroactive skill points, feats dependent on its Hit Dice, and 1 class level with the potential to gain more. If it was crafted to resemble a specific individual, it also gains a +10 racial bonus on Disguise checks made to impersonate that individual. A sentient wax golem ventures into the world and tries to live a life similar to that of the person (or type of person) it resembles. However, if the sentient wax golem ever encounters the person it is modeled after, it attempts to stealthily kill that person and take her place. The only way for a sentient wax golem to lose its sentience is either to take an amount of fire damage equal to half its hit points (which melts its features away) or to be destroyed.

Immunity to Magic (Ex) A wax golem is immune to any spell or spell-like ability that allows spell resistance, with the exception of spells and spell-like abilities that have the fire descriptor. In addition, certain spells and effects function differently against the creature, as noted below:

- A magical attack that deals fire damage *slows* a wax golem (as the *slow* spell) for 2d6 rounds (no save). In addition, for 3 rounds after taking fire damage, every time a wax golem uses its slam attack, it deals an additional 1d4 points of fire damage due to its molten wax.
- A magical attack that deals cold damage breaks any *slow* effect on the golem and heals 1 point of damage for each 3 points of damage the attack would otherwise deal. If the amount of healing would cause the golem to exceed its full normal hit points, it gains any excess as temporary hit points. A wax golem gains no saving throw against cold effects.

Development: Throughout their marriage, Alyssa hoped that Halueth would turn from his obsession to enjoy the time the two did have together. Halueth's need to defy death cost him the joy freely granted by fate. Patient all her years, Alyssa stood by Halueth until the elf took the final step into evil, his obsession claiming his daughter's life. Alyssa resolved to be free of the "Dark Elf's" obsession and tried to flee the keep. Using the power of the elfstone, Halueth cast her into an eternal sleep, while he sought a way to command her forgiveness. When he died, unable to realize this desire, the triumphant contract devil carried the paladin's soul was carried into hell. For centuries it burned, and in her magical slumber, Alyssa's own soul took pity on her husband's. Her yearning to free him from his torment attracted the intercession of a celestial guardian, who helped her spirit bargain with the contract devil, wagering her soul for Halueth's freedom. Under the conditions of the wager, should any of the Heirs of Aridryll learn from the paladin's mistakes and chart a different course, the two lovers' souls would go free. Should the heirs fail, the simple act of taking up the dagger binds their souls to the outcome of the wager.

The elfstone is knocked loose during the combat and drops from the canopy at its conclusion. Previously weakened (as noted in encounter 2) it shatters, causing the sleeping form of Alyssa to awaken. She sits up in bed, and gesturing to the dagger speaks, "Our time is at hand my lord. I have accepted my fate. Can you do the same? The dagger holds life for one of us, it falls to you to grant it." From the floor, Astryd stirs weakly, "No, No, save my mother, the Lady of the Tower must not fall, lest the curse take hold."

Tyros must choose which of the two women to grant the years stored in the dagger. Though she offers no more advice, once he has made his choice, Alyssa instructs him to place the dagger on the breast of the one to be saved. Positive energy flows through the blade: the results of the choice are detailed in Concluding the Adventure.

17. ATTIC

This room contains sleeping mats and other simple furnishings for servants in addition to the various household goods stored here.

18. ROOFTOP

A dome resting on columns provides shelter for any manning the battlements. The iron trap door to the attic is barred shut (Hardness 10, HP 60 Break DC 30). A Climb DC of the 100' tall tower walls is 25. If this does not deter PCs from attempting the ascent, a second nightgaunt (encounter 11) attacks any making the climb, retreating to the rooftops after knocking them off the tower. This creature flees when the curse of Aridryll is resolved (encounter 16).

CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

If Tyros chooses to save Astryd, Halueth's daughter, Alyssa wins her bargain with the devil, for the Heir of Aridryll has chosen to acknowledge Alyssa's acceptance of her own mortality, unlike his ancestor before him. Astryd's form disappears, and Alyssa rises from the bed and approaches. Placing her palm on her many-times great grandson's cheek, she smiles and says, "Take up your lands my lord, and rule them wisely. Forget not that you are mortal and teach your children not to fear the fate that awaits us all." She then fades from view. From the tower window, Tyros can see the ghostly images of Alyssa, Halueth and Astrid exiting the gatehouse, riding to meet them is the grown wizard Tam. The reunited family pauses for a moment before fading into eternity.

If Tyros chooses to save Alyssa, the prone form of Astryd ages vastly in the space of a few eye blinks, while the Alyssa's visage takes on a youthened appearance for but a moment, then the years of slumber overtake the magic in the blade and the Lady of the Tower follows in the wake of her daughter, aging rapidly and falling back on the pillows in death. The merchant prince appears at the foot of the bed. Grinning evilly, he reveals his natural form, a crown of horns gracing his brow and pages of contracts shrouding his rust-colored skin. He turn to Tyros and with urbane language speaks, "Thank you, young sir for delivering this soul to me. Should it offer some consolation, know that your ancestor too could never accept that Alyssa had accepted her own mortality. Speaking of mortality, enjoy yours, for by using the dagger, I now claim your soul as well. You will find your copy of the contract in my chambers below." The devil then dives headfirst into the bed, disappearing with the unmoving form of Alyssa.

If Tyros refuses to choose, Alyssa asks him three times to make his decision. The body of Astryd disappears, and the devil appears as before. He takes up the dagger and speaks, "Your cowardice has saved your own soul, but Alyssa's is forfeit. I also claim Aridryll for my own under the terms of the contract. Speaking of contracts, can I interest you in three wishes?" Simply tap three times with the dagger and I shall appear. If not, I shall give you until dawn to leave my lands before I summon forth my minions.

This favor I grant for the small service you have done me." He exits with Allyssa's form as above.

Treasure: The +1 *frost dagger* still retains a faint aura of evil from its history, but until a new deal with the devil is made, it has no other properties.

FUTURE ADVENTURES

As Lord of Aridryll, Tyros discovers many pockets of evil still within the valley. He may begin to heal the ancient rifts between human and elf, becoming an emissary of peace and tolerance.

As a pawn of the contract devil, Tyros must outwit the minion of hell to save his own soul, starting with an examination of the contract the hellspawn leaves behind. Perhaps in the course of this quest, he can find a way to redeem the souls of his ancestors, including the now-tormented Alyssa.

PREGENERATED CHARACTER

Tyros Loneblade

Half-elf fighter 7

CN Medium humanoid (elf, human)

Init +6; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +8

DEFENSE

AC 22, touch 14, flat-footed 20 (+9 armor, +1 deflection, +2 Dex, +1 ,dodge)

hp 57 (7d10+28)

Fort +8, **Ref** +5, **Will** +4; +2 vs. enchantments, +2 vs. fear

Defensive Abilities bravery +2; **Immune** sleep

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee +1 *elven curved blade* +15/+10 (1d10+9/18-20×2), or mwk short sword +13/+8 (1d6+5) or mwk heavy flail +13/+8 (1d10+7)

Ranged mwk composite longbow +10/+5 (1d8+5)

Special Attacks weapon training (heavy blades +1)

STATISTICS

Str 20, **Dex** 14, **Con** 14, **Int** 13, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 12

Base Atk +7; **CMB** +12; **CMD** 19

Feats Cleave, Dodge, Great Cleave, Human SpiritARG, Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Skill Focus (Linguistics), Weapon Focus (elven curved blade), Weapon Specialization (elven curved blade)

Skills Appraise +1, Climb +4, Diplomacy +2, Disable Device +1, Heal +7*, Intimidate +6, Knowledge (arcana) +3, Knowledge (dungeoneering, engineering) +6, Knowledge (local, nobility) +4, Linguistics +6, Profession (mercenary) +5, Perception +8, Ride +3, Sense Motive +2, Survival +6, Swim +4

*8 uses remain in healer's kit

Languages Common, Celestial, Draconic, Dwarven, Elven, Goblin, Orc

SQ armor training 1 (note: Armor check penalties included in stat block), elf blood

Combat Gear *aegis of recovery*, *ancestral clasp*, +1 arrows (3), *oil of magic weapon*, *potion of aid*, *potion of cure moderate wounds*, *potions of cure light wounds* (x2), *alchemist's fire* (x2), *antitoxin* (1 dose), *antiplague* (1 dose); **Other Gear** masterwork full plate,

+1 *elven curved blade*, masterwork heavy flail, masterwork short sword, masterwork composite longbow (+5 Str) with 20 arrows, *belt of giant strength* +2, *cloak of resistance* +1, *ring of protection* +1, masterwork thieves' tools, healer's kit (8 uses), skeleton key, sunrod, bedroll, 5 days rations, 50' of hemp rope, waterskin, riding horse with tack, saddle, and saddlebags, 47 gp

Tyros' Past

Your father, a human, must have had some elven blood coursing through his veins, for the result of his union with a half-elven archer in his mercenary company resulted in your own half-elven identity.

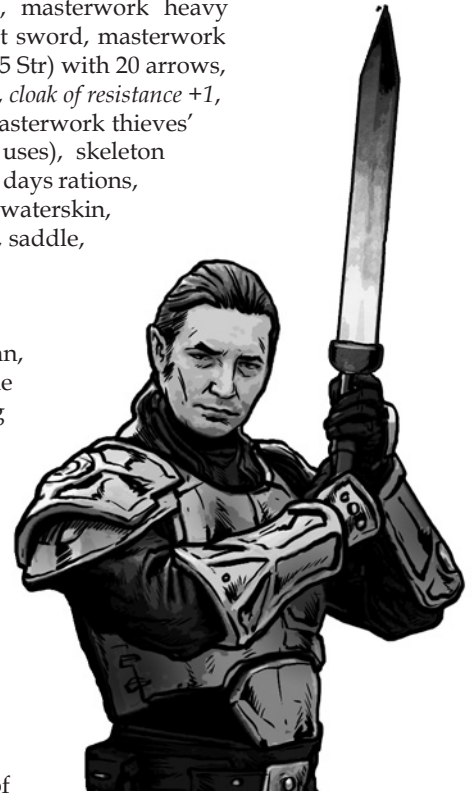
All your life, you have never quite fit in. Shunned by true-blooded elves, and distrusted by humans, following the death of both mother and father,

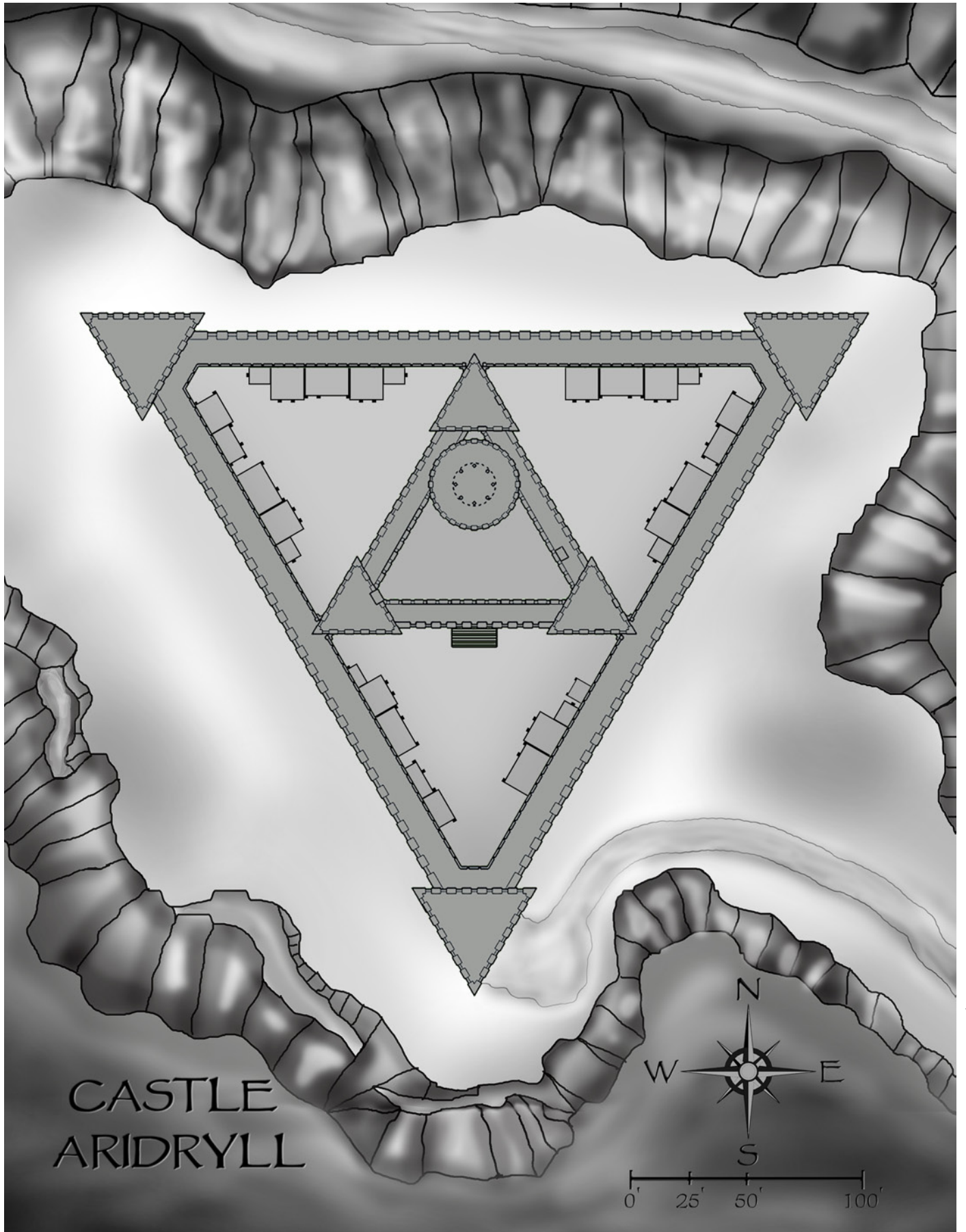
the only anchor in your life has been your uncle Jamin. Time spent with him eases the loneliness deep in your soul. Between such visits, you served as a hired warrior, styled "Loneblade" due to your preference to fight alone in the battle line, cleaving into your foes with the elven curved blade you have struggled to master all your life. Indeed, it was not until your father's passing that you were able to take up the blade with any skill, perhaps due to the special clasp affixed to the weapon inherited from your father and, as Jamin once told you, from his father before him. This blade is the only friend you truly rely on, other than your mount Darby. A high-stepping riding horse, this companion helps you travel speedily, although you dismount to fight, keeping the dun-colored gelding safe behind the lines during combat.

Jamin's Letter

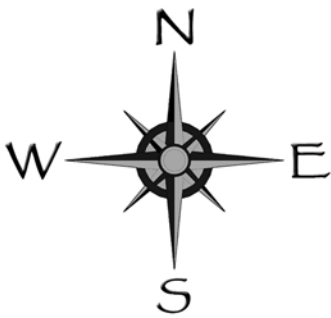
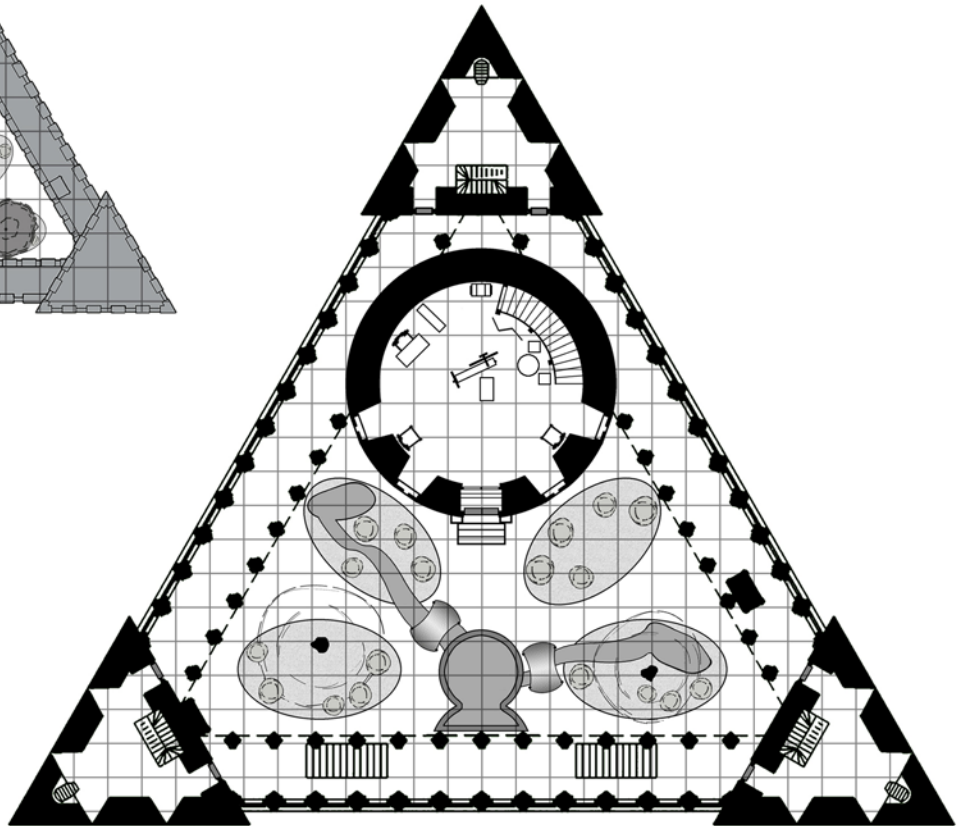
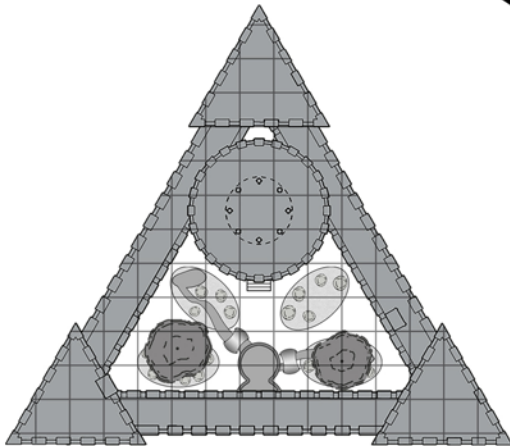
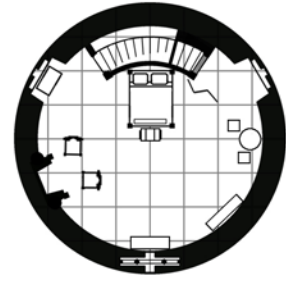
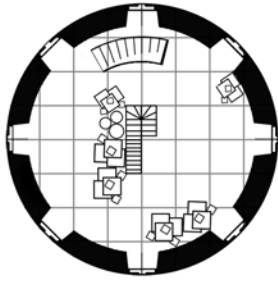
We have often discussed the strange dreams we share, and I confess that I have not told you all there is to know. Forgive me, for I truly thought it best. Throughout the years, some of our kin, driven by those same dreams have attempted to claim the keep known as Castle Aridryll, our family's ancestral home. In every instance, including that of my brother, their quests failed, for some strange curse surrounds the land. Rumor speaks that only the Lady of the Tower can reverse the curse. Her life is the key to the land. Should she fall, the curse will take even deeper root.

The quest tempted me all my life, especially as the dreams and visions became more insistent. When I met Aramantha, however, I knew my time with her would be short by her standards, and so resolved not to absent myself from her side. Perhaps with my passing, and nothing to hold you here, there will be no reason not to take up the quest. Whatever your decision, farewell.





REDEMPTION (LEVEL 8-10 FIGHTER)



ONE SQUARE = 5'

ONE ON ONE ADVENTURES #19

ADVENTURER'S GUILD LOCAL #409

BY J GRAY

AN ADVENTURE FOR ANY FIRST LEVEL CLASS



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One on One Adventures are for one player and one GM. However, they are easily modified for a traditional party of four players and one GM.

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Adventurer's Guild Local #409 is an adventure for one GM and a single PC of first or second level. The adventure is modular and can be customized to work with any character class. Included are 10 different challenges of varying types. A GM running this adventure can choose which challenges to include and which to leave out, allowing them to tailor things to match the player character's strengths, weaknesses, skills, and combat abilities. Also included are a number of NPC rivals who can be used for encounters between challenges. These NPCs can become friend or foe depending upon the inclination of the GM and the player's actions.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

For decades, the Fraternal Order of Adventurers Local #409, better known simply as the Adventurer's Guild, has been the premiere organization for would-be heroes, explorers, and dungeon delvers seeking to make a name for themselves. For an initial membership fee of 100 gp and a modest ten percent from every adventure haul the Guild offers members a wide variety of services, including (but not limited to!):

- Access to the Guild Hall where you can train in the exercise room, exercise in the training room, study in the library, find a bunk for the night, and grab a quiet meal with people who know the thrilling call of adventure.
- Storage space in a secured vault for excess items and coin.
- A 10% discount with many local merchants selling goods and services important to adventurers, including a local temple that offers healing and resurrections.
- An all-important retrieval service. Log your upcoming quest with the Guild and, if you don't return by a specified date, a party will be sent to retrieve you (or your carcass).
- Intervention on your behalf with local law enforcement. After all, sometimes the only difference between a copperless vagrant and an adventurer is membership in the Guild!

Sadly, in the last several years, membership in the Adventurer's Guild has fallen off. Many adventurers have wandered off to other lands in search of danker, darker, deeper dungeons filled with shinier treasure and fiercer monsters. Others have remained local but subscribe to a "right to delve" philosophy and prefer to go it alone, with no Guild to back them up. These days, the old Local #409 is a shadow of what it once was, with only a handful of members. Many of those members are too old to effectively adventure. The Guild Hall is in need of repair and most of the staff has been dismissed. The Guild, in short, is dying.

Hoping to raise their profile in the community and recruit new members, the Fraternal Order of Adventurers Local #409 has announced a contest. In the Guild Hall is a chest with 5 locks. All the locks can be unlocked with the same key but to open the chest there must be one key in each lock. Scattered throughout the city are multiple copies of the key. The first to return with 5 keys and unlock the chest will be awarded free membership in the Guild for one year and a magical weapon of their choice from the Guild's expansive armory.

Acquiring a key requires completing a challenge. There are 10 challenges provided in this adventure so GMs can pick and choose the challenges that are best suited for their player. A GM can also adjust the number of keys required to open the chest upwards or downwards to change the adventure length and XP rewards as desired.

ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS

In *Adventurer's Guild Local #409*, the player character enters a competition sponsored by the local Adventurer's Guild. Winning the contest gives her membership in the Guild and a step-up in her adventuring career, not to mention a magical weapon. Of course, the player character isn't the only would-be adventurer who wants to win that prize!

CHARACTER HOOK

The competition is announced weeks in advance and quickly becomes a frequent topic of discussion within the community. The player character might have a completed quest or two under her belt but should still be fairly new to adventuring. The reasons for entering the competition vary. It might be she recognizes the benefit of joining the Guild without the pesky membership fee on her own. Or she might be encouraged by a mentor or family member to compete. Perhaps there is a rival entering the competition and the player character wants to show her up.

The competition and the Guild should be located in whatever community the player character calls home, making it easy for her to enter. The locations of each challenge are purposefully generic, allowing them to be easily inserted into an existing setting.

BEFORE THE COMPETITION

Careful player characters might investigate Adventure's Guild Local #409 before signing up for the competition. Social characters can make a Diplomacy check to gather details through gossip and conversation while scholarly characters can do research and make a Knowledge (local) check. Bards, of course, can make a bardic knowledge check.

ADVENTURER'S GUILD LOCAL #409

DC 5: The local Adventurer's Guild has been a fixture in the city for decades. It is well regarded by the community, especially by older citizens. The Guild offers a number of services to members and helps connect those who need tasks done with those who can do them.

DC 10: Adventurer's Guild Local #409 is led by Guildmaster Heinrich Wulfgang, a former soldier. A green dragon's head hangs on the wall of the Guild Hall's trophy room. According to local lore, Guildmaster Wulfgang slew the dragon singlehandedly.

DC 15: Membership in the Guild has been down over the last several years. Most adventurers feel the area has been explored, plundered, and tamed to the point of boredom. Some of those that remain believe the Guild impinges on the right of an adventurer to earn their own way without interference from a supervisory organization.

DC 20: Adventurer's Guild Local #409 is in dire straits. There are only a handful of members left, most too old to adventure. If they don't get new blood soon they might have to shut their doors for good. This would be a shame, since there's said to be a wealth of magic items still locked in the Guild's vault—a few lesser items have already been sold to keep the guild afloat.

THE DAY OF THE COMPETITION

Bright and early on the morning of the competition, all entrants report to the Guild Hall, where they are ushered into the trophy room. There are eleven entrants in all, including

the player character. Most are local youths, hoping to advance out of mundane, everyday jobs and live the dream. Others are more ambitious and have real training and skills to back them up. Three of these contestants are “named” and stats are given for them at the end of the adventure. The player character should feel free to pick one of the named contestants as a childhood rival, if desired. The GM can also replace one of the named or unnamed contestants with a rival from the player character’s history.

As the contestants in the competition gather, read or paraphrase the following.

The day of the competition has arrived at last! A festival-like atmosphere prevails outside the Guild Hall. A throng of citizens have come to watch the start of the competition. Vendors have set up booths to sell refreshments to the crowd and a few are even selling rope, a small assortment of weapons, and other gear a clever would-be adventurer might need. Entertainers move about, juggling and singing, hoping to collect a few coins from eager spectators.

Inside the Guild Hall, a nervous excitement fills the air. You and your fellow contestants, eleven in total, have been led into the Guild’s trophy room. The walls are lined with the heads of any number of threatening creatures. Goblins! Owlbears, Griffons! Trolls! And, at the center of it all? The head of a green dragon! Wooden tables and benches are scattered about the chamber and it is not hard to imagine accomplished, powerful adventurers sitting at those tables, drinking ale, and spinning stories on just how those heads ended up on these storied walls.

Heinrich Wulfgang, the master of Adventurer’s Guild Local #409, steps forward and clears his throat. Despite his age and peg leg, Guildmaster Wulfgang remains an imposing figure, with broad shoulders and a voice that rumbles like a rockslide.

“Welcome, adventurers!” the Guildmaster begins, “The Fraternal Order of Adventurers is a brotherhood... and a sisterhood. A general siblinghood, if you will. A family! Yes, a family. The Fraternal Order of Adventurers is a family! One that guides young talent as they explore, hack, sneak, strum, delve, and explode into the heroes of tomorrow! Today, one of you will join our ranks and become a member of good old Local #409. Well, all of you are welcome, of course. Just one of you will get to do it without paying the membership fee and a year’s worth of delving dues but that isn’t the point! The point is, any one of you could be the one who, tomorrow, protects our community from a hoard of goblins! Or a rampaging giant! Any of you could explore to the very depths of a forgotten tomb or to the heights of a mad wizard’s tower! It might sound impossible, but turning the impossible into the possible is what the Adventurer’s Guild does best!

“Behind me is a chest that I personally recovered from a dungeon dive in aught nine! A thing of beauty she is. She opens so easily. Just touch the latch and the lid pops right up! Of course, for the latch to work you have to insert five keys into each of the five locks. Five copies of the same key, actually. Not five different keys. You get the point. Anyway! We have hidden multiple copies of the key you need throughout our fair community! Recovering the keys will require you to defeat challenges that will test your mind, your body, your skills, your cunning, and your courage! The first to return with five keys and open the chest wins!

“Yes, yes. I know. I know. Our community isn’t so small that finding five hidden keys is an easy task. That’s part of the challenge! To make it fair, however, each of the

keys has been painted by an alchemical substance. You’ll each be given a flask full of slime. The slime will glow when one of the keys is near. The brighter the glow, the closer the key. When you get a key, make sure to put it in the special pouch we’re giving you for the job. It will hide the key’s on your person from the slime so it won’t just glow all the time. Important tip. Don’t forget that bit.

“Good luck! If no one returns with the keys by sundown, then no one wins. Remember, fortune favors the bold. Except when it favors the strong or the smart or the clever. Now, let’s go outside, give the people a nice show, and officially start this contest!”

Each of the contestants will be given a flask containing a light pink slime and a pouch to place their keys inside.

Hide and Seek Slime

Price: 10 gp; **Weight** 10 lbs.; **Craft** DC 15

This light pink slime works on the principal of sympathetic magic. If a batch of hide and seek slime is separated out into smaller units, each unit will glow when it comes within a certain range of another unit. At a distance of 500 feet, the unit of slime will give off a gentle glow that is noticeable only looking directly at it. At 100 feet, the unit of slime glows bright enough to be noticeable, even at a distance, in the dark. At 5 feet, the unit of slime glows bright enough to be noticeable at a distance, even in daylight. Alchemists and wizards, both famously absent minded professions, often paint their keys with hide and seek slime and then keep a small vial from the same batch in their pockets. A typical batch of hide and seek slime weighs 10 lbs. and can be divided into 20 different ½ lb. flasks. One pound of hide and seek slime can cover up to 20 Fine sized objects. When hide and seek slime dries, it no longer glows but is still considered part of the batch and will still trigger the glowing effect of slime units from the same batch. Slime left outside of a closed container for too long will dry out.

The golden-threaded pouches given to the contestants will conceal the keys from the hide and seek slime so keys that are found do not cause the slime to glow.

Once outside, Guildmaster Wulfgang will make a short speech to the crowd, remind everyone of the conditions for winning, and then announce the contest has begun. As he does so, another member of the Adventurer’s Guild will bang a loud gong. That is the signal for the contestants to head off in search for their keys. The contest has begun!

FINDING THE KEYS

The player character has eight hours to find five keys and return to the Guild Hall. To determine the likelihood of the PC finding a key each hour, roll a percentile die and use the table below.

Chance of Finding a Key

% Roll	Number of Keys Found
0-30	0
31-90	1
91-100	2

Encourage the player character to develop clever ideas to improve her chances to find a key. Examples include:

- Asking around to see if any residents of the community know where a key might be (DC 12 Diplomacy check).

- Working out a military-style search pattern to maximize efficiency and minimize time spent searching (DC 12 Knowledge (engineering) check).
- Figuring out potential key locations based on knowledge of the community (DC 12 Knowledge (local) check).
- Climbing up to the top of a tall tree or building in order to scout from above (DC 12 Climb check).
- Shadowing another contestant until they find a key (DC 12 Stealth check).
- Using alchemy to increase the effective range of the hide and seek slime (DC 12 Craft (alchemy) check).
- Using good old fashioned intuition and observation to locate keys more quickly (DC 12 Perception check).

If the player character succeeds at her skill check, add +10 to her percentile roll to find a key that hour. For every 5 she beats the skill check by, increase the bonus to the percentile roll by an additional +10.

Once a key has been located, the GM can choose the challenge the player character must overcome to obtain the key or roll randomly on the table below.

Key Challenge Found

d10 roll	Key Challenge
1	Sword Mistress
2	Rainbow Maze
3	Lightning Well
4	Lost in a Bottle
5	Greased Pig
6	Jail Break
7	Magic Shop
8	The Frowning Lady
9	An Act of Kindness
10	Song of the Dead

Before the adventure begins, the GM should determine the level of complexity he wants to introduce. If the GM wishes to keep the adventure simple, assume that, no matter how long it takes the player character to find her 5 keys, so long as she returns to the Guild Hall by sundown she is the first to do so and wins the competition.

If the GM wishes to make the adventure more complex, however, and add an additional element of risk she can roll on the Chance of Finding a Key table once per hour for each of the other 10 contestants. For most contestants, roll on the table without any modifiers. For named contestants, add +10 to their roll on the table. If the named contestant is also the player character's rival, add an additional +10. For the three named contestants assume any key found is automatically acquired.

One of the named contestants, Robin Wolf, has no intention of attempting any challenges. Instead, Robin plans on stealing keys from other contestants using his skills as a pick pocket. Every time Robin rolls on the Chance of Finding a Key table and finds a key, remove a key from one of the other contestants. Remove keys from unnamed contestants before named ones.

To save time during play, the GM should consider rolling the results of the other contestants before the session begins and then modify those results as needed during the adventure.

As a note, members of the Guild, or people in their employ, are watching at every challenge. If a contestant looks as if they will be seriously injured or die, someone will step in to help. The watcher will also replace any key taken so that, no matter how many contestants successfully complete a challenge and acquire its key, there will always be another key for the next contestant to find.

BETWEEN KEYS

Between finding keys, the GM can introduce additional encounters to the adventure. These encounters can be purely a matter of roleplaying and a way to introduce the player character to the other contestants or important NPCs in the community, or they might be more intense and a challenge in their own right.

Example encounters include:

- One of the named contestants might offer an alliance or offer to swap key locations with the player character.
- Robin Wolf might try to steal the player character's keys using his Sleight of Hand skill or a small cadre of unnamed contestants might try to do the same, using less graceful and more damaging methods.
- An ardent admirer might try to seduce the contestant away from her quest.
- Random townspeople might come up and congratulate the player character on her performance in the contest thus far and wax poetic about how exciting the whole matter is.
- Children might seek the player character for her autograph.
- Jealous local youths might try to pummel her into the ground for thinking she's "better than them".
- Pestering merchants might slow the player character down as they try to sell her goods they insist will help her win the contest.

Encounters between keys are an excellent way to add flavor to the adventure, introduce key NPCs, and make a setting come to life with vibrant people, locations, and roleplaying.

CHALLENGES AND EXPERIENCE

Each challenge is worth 400 experience points. Completing 5 challenges earns the player character 2,000 experience points, enough to advance her from level 1 to level 2 using medium experience progression.

CHALLENGE: SWORD MISTRESS

Sword Mistress, a rather infamous adventurer, lounges in a chair outside of one of the local ale houses. As she waits for her next challenger, Sword Mistress sips from a wooden tankard and draws patterns in the air with her rapier.

One of the younger members of the Adventurer's Guild, Sword Mistress is every bit the typical swashbuckler, complete with swagger, bravado, and the skill to back it up. Her name is, in fact, Sword Mistress. She had it legally changed some years back. Murtle Miles just didn't sound like the name of a famous adventurer to her.

A key to the chest hangs from Sword Mistress's belt and she will hand it over to whomever can defeat her in a duel. The rules of the duel are simple. The contestant chooses a melee weapon from those piled in a nearby cart. Sword Mistress wields a simple practice rapier. The first to score three hits on her opponent wins. If Sword Mistress wins, the contestant does not receive a key and cannot challenge her again for her key for an hour. If the contestant wins, Sword Mistress hands over her key. The weapons in the cart are borrowed from the Guild Hall and are all made from wood. Assume a wooden practice equivalent to any weapon the player character desires is in the cart. These practice weapons deal only nonlethal damage. The use of other weapons or magic is not allowed during the duel and results in an automatic loss.

To keep things fair, Sword Mistress is dueling while holding her weapon, a wooden longsword, in her left hand (she is not left handed). Her practice weapon is poorly weighted and she's wearing extremely uncomfortable shoes. In addition, Sword Mistress is drinking ale thoughtfully provided to her by a local vendor between duels. As a result of her imbibing, Sword Mistress suffers a cumulative -1 penalty to her AC, CMD, and all attack rolls, CMB roll, saving throws, and skill checks for every hour of the contest that has passed. During the final hour, Sword Mistress falls into a snoring stupor and the key can simply be plucked from her belt, though nearby community members will not allow the player character to steal anything else.

SWORD MISTRESS

These stats reflect Sword Mistress purposefully handicapping herself for the duel by not wearing armor and using a poorly balanced weapon in her off hand.

Female half-elf swashbuckler 5

CG Medium humanoid (elf, human)

Init +5; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +7

DEFENSE

AC 15, touch 15, flat-footed 14 (+4 Dex, +1 dodge)

hp 40 (5d10+5)

Fort +3, **Ref** +9, **Will** +1; +2 vs. enchantments

Defensive Abilities charmed life (+3, 3/day); Immune sleep

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee practice rapier +5 (1d6+1/16-20, nonlethal)

Ranged none

TACTICS

Before Combat: Sword Mistress does not prepare for a duel, except to stay limber and drink more ale.

During Combat: Sword Mistress keeps this fight simple. The idea is, after all, to challenge the contestants, not to humiliate them. She will not use her dodging panache, opportune parry and riposte, menacing swordplay, or precise strike deeds during the duel. If her opponent seems capable (has a BAB of +1 or greater and has proficiency with her chosen weapon), Sword Mistress will open with an attempt to feint or demoralize on the first round, then strike on the second.

She will continue this pattern, alternating between feints or demoralizations and direct attacks until the duel is over. If the opponent does not seem capable (has a BAB of +0 and/or does not have proficiency with her chosen weapon), she will attack directly, seeking to score a hit every round to get the duel over with as quickly as possible. In both cases, while she will not use opportune parry and riposte, Sword Mistress will take attacks of opportunity if they are presented to her.

STATISTICS

Str 13, **Dex** 18, **Con** 12, **Int** 10, **Wis** 8, **Cha** 16

Base Atk +5; **CMB** +6; **CMD** 20

Feats Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Skill Focus (Acrobatics), Skill Focus (Bluff), Step Up

Skills Acrobatics +15, Bluff +14, Climb +7, Diplomacy +11, Intimidate +7, Knowledge (local) +4, Perception +7

Languages Common, Elven

SQ deeds (derring-do, dodging panache +3, opportune parry and riposte, kip-up, menacing swordplay, precise strike +5, swashbuckler initiative), swashbuckler finesse, elf blood, panache (3)

Gear masterwork studded leather (not worn), masterwork buckler (not used), poorly weighted practice rapier, *cloak of resistance* +1, tankard, signet ring, Guild chest key, 34 gp

Of course, there's more than one way to win a challenge.

- Rogues and other stealthy player characters can attempt to use their pick pocketing skills to steal the key from Sword Mistress. Doing so requires a Stealth check, opposed by Sword Mistress's Perception check to sneak up on her, and then a DC 20 Sleight of Hand check to steal the key. Sword Mistress makes a second Perception check to notice the key being stolen. If her Perception check beats the player character's Sleight of Hand check, she grabs the thief by the wrist, tells her "nice try" and pushes her on her way. After that, Sword Mistress will not accept a dueling request from the player character.
- Sword Mistress, in addition to being fond of drink, also has a weakness for pretty boys and confident girls. She will hand over the key to anyone who attempts to charm her and successfully makes a Diplomacy check to improve her attitude to helpful. Sword Mistress begins with an attitude of indifferent towards the contestants.



CHALLENGE: RAINBOW MAZE

Lady Chatterbird's hedge maze is a point of pride throughout the community and well-known for being expansive, extravagant, and beautiful. At this time of year, vibrant, colorful flowers blossom on the well maintained, verdant hedges that form the labyrinth.

Lady Chatterbird is famous throughout the community for the hedge maze on her estate, which she kindly opens for visitors to wander through on certain days. Today, there is a Guild chest key located at the very center of the maze. The center of the maze lies just at the edge of the hide and seek slime's detection range.

At the entrance of Lady Chatterbird's hedge maze someone has posted a sign that reads:

DIRECTIONS TO THE KEY

Yt wjflm ymj pjd dtz rzxy qttp fy f wfnsgtb bmnqj xyfsinsl ts dtzw miji.

The seemingly random letters on the sign are a message written in code, specifically in a substitution code known as a Caesar cipher, where each letter in the message is replaced with another letter located a specific number of positions forward on the alphabet. In this case, the code substitutes each letter with one located 5 positions forward so, for example, the letter "a" becomes the letter "f".

When translated, the message reads: "To reach the key you must look at a rainbow while standing on your head."

A Caesar cipher is considered one of the easier codes to crack. If the player happens to be an amateur code-cracker, consider using a rail fence cipher instead. In a rail fence cipher, the first step is to write the message downwards in columns for a specified number of rows, starting a new column to the right when the bottom of the column is reached. Spaces between words are omitted. Any empty spaces in the final column are filled with extra letters.

In a message with 5 rows, "To reach the key you must look at a rainbow while standing on your head" becomes:

T	C	K	U	L	T	N	H	T	N	O	A
O	H	E	M	O	A	B	I	A	G	U	D
R	T	Y	U	O	R	O	L	N	O	R	C
E	H	Y	S	K	A	W	E	D	N	H	L
A	E	O	T	A	I	W	S	I	Y	E	P

The message is then properly encoded by going across the rows, so the message on the sign outside of Lady Chatterbird's hedge maze reads

DIRECTIONS TO THE KEY

TCKULTNHTNOAOHEMOABIAGUDRTYUOROLNOR
CEHYSKAWEDNHLAEOTAIWSIYEP

To decipher the message, one first needs to guess at how many rows were used in encoding it. In this case, 5 rows total. One for each of the keys needed. The letters of the message are divided into 5 groups and stacked on top of each other. Then the code-cracker just needs to read downward to decipher the coded message.

PCs run by players who don't enjoy code-breaking puzzles can make a Linguistics check to decipher the code. The DC to decipher the Caesar cipher is 15. The DC to decipher the rail fence cipher is 18. Allow the player character to make the Linguistics check untrained.

Once the code has been deciphered, the player character can use the clue provided to find their way through the maze. The clue suggests looking at a rainbow "while standing on your head". It refers to order of the colors of the rainbow: red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, and violet. If one were standing on their head, the colors would appear backwards: violet, indigo, blue, green, yellow, orange, and red. If the player character seems stuck, allow them to make a DC 10 Intelligence check to receive a clue. If the player character succeeds on the Intelligence check, suggest they draw out a rainbow and then look at it as if "standing on your head".

Flowers of various colors, growing along the sides of the hedges, mark each path of Lady Chatterbird's maze. At the entrance there are three paths leading into the maze. One is marked with red flowers, another with blue flowers, and the last with violet flowers. Noticing the flowers requires a simple DC 5 Perception check. Inside the hedge maze, when the path branches, each fork is marked with flowers of a different color. To reach the center the player character must follow the paths marked by the colors of the rainbow in reverse order, starting with violet and making their way through to red. The key to the Guild chest is located at the end of the red path.

Player characters can look for alternative solutions to this particular challenge.

- Agile characters might scale the side of a building or tree on Lady Chatterbird's estate in order to get a bird's eye view of the maze. The DC for a Climb check depends on what is being scaled and ranges from 10 for a building with plenty of handholds to 15 for a tree. A grappling hook and rope can reduce the difficulty to 5. Once a character sees the maze from above and marks the color pattern of the correct path, they should have little difficulty reaching the center.
- Player characters with outdoor skills can attempt to track their way to the center of the maze. A DC 15 Survival check is needed to spot a set of tracks that seem to have been made by a heavyset man with a peg leg. It seems Guildmaster Wulfgang placed this particular key himself. Once the player character finds the tracks, they will be easy enough to follow to the center.
- A particularly perceptive player character might notice there are cleverly hidden shortcuts leading through the hedge maze, put there by the gardeners to make their jobs easier. Noticing the shortcuts requires a DC 20 Perception check.
- Martialy oriented characters can use a bladed weapon to hack their way to the center of the hedge maze. Each layer of the hedge maze has a hardness of 2 and 5 hit points. At the end of the contest, any player character who damages Lady Chatterbird's hedge maze can expect a visit from the sheriff or the town guard with an order to pay restitution for the damages, either with time spent in labor on the estate or a 1,000 gold coin fine.
- * Wizards and witches with flying familiars can use their guidance to work their way through the hedge maze.
- Of course, the player character is welcome to blunder into the maze. Any player character who blindly navigates the maze will eventually reach the center but loses one extra hour doing so, reducing the time she has left to find other keys.

CHALLENGE: LIGHTNING WELL

The old well on the edge of town dried up years ago. Until today, it had been capped with wooden boards and used as a stand for decorative plants during the holiday season. Now, the well is open and a thick metal chain that hums with some sort of power dangles down inside. The carved handle that would allow the chain to be cranked up seems to be missing.

The key rests in a wooden bucket at the end of the chain, exactly thirty-five feet down. The chain and windlass (the axle positioned above the well that, when turned, winds the chain to draw up the bucket) are metal and electrified. If the player character touches either, have her make a DC 10 Reflex save. Success means she pulls her hand away and receives only a mild but harmless shock. Failure means she takes 2 points of electric damage.

The handle that turns the windlass and winds the chain has been removed. Player characters that succeed at a DC 12 Perception check whilst examining the windlass mechanism will notice that the slot where a handle would normally be inserted has been coated with rubber.

There are a number of possible solutions to this challenge.

- Some player characters might be tempted to climb down to the bucket and retrieve the key. The well is old and cracked but the need to avoid the electrified cable makes the journey treacherous. The DC for a Climb check to reach the bucket is 25 without a rope, 20 with a secured rope or character made handhelds (hammered in pitons), and 15 with a rope that is secured and knotted. Two Climb checks are needed to reach the bucket. Two additional Climb checks are required for climbing back up to the surface. Failing either check by 4 or more means no progress has been made and the player character takes 5 points of electric damage. Failure by 5 or more means that the player character falls to the bottom of the 50 foot well, suffering 1d6 points of damage per 10 feet fallen. The bottom of the dry well has been well cushioned so the falling damage is non-lethal. There is a tunnel leading out of the well at the bottom. Rudy, a gnome in the employ of the Adventurer's Guild, waits there to guide any contestant who falls down the tunnel, up a ladder, and out through a trap door. The player character will find herself in a gazebo some 500 feet away from the well. She will then hear the trap door being barred below her.
- The key is just of reach of a mage hand spell. A player character who figures out a way to lower herself just 5 or 10 feet down into the well, depending upon her level, will have no problem using the spell to call the key to her.
- A handy player character might try to replace the missing handle. A character trying to improvise a handle using available materials can make a DC 15 Knowledge (engineering) check to fit a substitute into the slot tightly enough for it to turn the windlass. A crafty player character will have an easier time of it and can make an appropriate Craft check against a DC of 12 to create a new handle for the well.
- A player character who has resistance to electric damage or who figures out a way to insulate themselves (by using rubber purchased from a nearby alchemist's shop, for example) can grab the chain and haul the bucket up to the surface with a DC 10 Strength check. The chain is heavy and not particularly flexible.

- A player character can attempt to fish the key out of the bucket using a line and hook by making a ranged attack check. The key has an AC of 15 and is in dim light conditions, giving the key concealment and creating a 20% miss chance for any player character without lowlight vision or dark vision unless they shine a light down into the well. GMs can allow player characters to replace their ranged attack roll with a Survival or Profession (fisherman) check if desired.

CHALLENGE: LOST IN A BOTTLE

The local wine merchant has set upon a table outside her shop 10 bottles of wine. "There's a key inside the bottle that sells for 325 gold," she tells you, "You're not allowed to touch any of the bottles. Tell me which bottle hides the key. You only get one chance."

As the wine merchant stated, the key is in the bottle worth 325 gold coins. The bottles are made from dark green and brown glass and almost impossible to see into. These are all real wine bottles, though they contain water and not actual wine. The wine merchant isn't about to risk hundreds of gold coins worth of stock on this challenge.

There are several ways the player character might find the key.

- A DC 20 Appraise check will allow the player character to pick out the right wine bottle. The GM might also allow the player character to substitute Knowledge (nobility) or bardic knowledge for Appraise.
- Spellcasters can make use of a spell, such as detect metal or a similar ability to find the key.
- The keys are made from iron. A clever player character might make use of a magnet to locate the bottle. There is no skill check required for this.
- Finding the key by looking through the glass and into each bottle is beyond the means of most player characters at this level and requires a DC 30 Perception check. Allow the player character to make one check for all 10 bottles rather than an individual check per bottle.
- The wine merchant won't tell the player character where the key is no matter how successful she is on a Bluff or Diplomacy check. However, the wine merchant doesn't have the best poker face. If the player character outright asks where the key is, allow her a DC 15 Sense Motive check. If the check is successful, allow the player character to notice which bottle the wine merchant glances at before she answers the question.
- The player character can randomly pick a bottle. Ask the player to pick a number between 1 and 10, then roll a d10. If the d10 rolls the number she picked, the player character picked the correct bottle.

CHALLENGE: GREASED PIG

Normally, the swine yard outside of the butcher's shop is packed with pigs waiting for the cleaver. Today, only a single, lean black pig wallows in the mud. Around the pig's neck is tied a ribbon from which hangs a key.

The pig in the swine yard is a black racer, a breed known for their speed, and has been greased to make this challenge even more difficult. The swine yard is 50 feet long and 25 feet wide and surrounded by a fence.

GREASED BLACK RACER PIG

N Small animal

CR 1/3

XP 135

Init +1; **Senses** low-light vision, scent; Perception +5**DEFENSE****AC** 14, touch 13, flat-footed 12 (+2 Dex, +1 natural, +1 size)**hp** 6 (1d8+2)**Fort** +6, **Ref** +4, **Will** +1**OFFENSE****Speed** 30 ft.**Melee** bite +1 (1d4)**TACTICS**

The black racer only has one tactic, running. If something grabs it, the pig will wiggle and squeal in an attempt to break free. It will bite only if it is injured and cornered.

STATISTICS**Str** 11, **Dex** 14, **Con** 15, **Int** 2, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 4**Base Attack** +0; **CMB** -1; **CMD** 10 (14 vs. trip, 20 vs. grapple)**Feats** Great Fortitude**Skills** Perception +5, Escape Artist +12**SQ** Greased**Special Abilities**

Familiar: the master of a black racer pig familiar gains a +2 bonus on checks to avoid or escape a grapple.

Getting the key from the pig is harder than some might think.

- The most obvious way to get the key is to chase down the pig. Treat this as combat, starting with initiative. The ground of the swine pen is muddy, slippery, and considered difficult terrain for the player character but not the pig. Before each move action, the player character must make a DC 12 Acrobatics check or fall prone and slide 1d4 squares in the direction she was traveling in when she fell. If the player character hits a fence, her slide comes to a halt and she suffers 1 point of nonlethal damage. Player characters who make it to a square adjacent to the pig can attempt to perform the steal combat maneuver to grab the key. Because the key is tied securely to the pig, increase its CMD by +5 against a steal maneuver. A player character that successfully grapples the pig can automatically succeed at a steal maneuver on their next action. Crueler characters will have an easier time just killing the pig outright. If they do so, they will be expected to reimburse the butcher 20 gp for the loss of the pig.

- Player characters with the wild empathy class feature can try to make friends with the pig. The pig begins play as indifferent to the player character. If the pig's attitude is improved to friendly, it will allow the player character to approach it and remove the key. A spell like charm animal will be helpful in such a situation.

- The player character can attempt to sneak up on the pig and then use Sleight of Hand to steal the key. Because the mud makes movement difficult, the pig gets a +2 to its Perception check to notice the player character's actions. The knot keeping the key secured to the pig increases the DC of the Sleight of Hand check to steal the key to 22.

- This particular pig is partial to music. A DC 15 Performance check involving singing or any musical instrument will lull it to sleep. Acquiring the key then becomes a simple matter of walking up to the pig and taking it.

- If the player character is a wizard, witch, or similar class that has not yet acquired a familiar, it might turn out this pig is her familiar. In that case, the pig will happily hand the key over. Of course, then the player character has to figure out how to save her new familiar from the butcher's block.

CHALLENGE: JAIL BREAK

Normally, you would be trying to stay out of the sheriff's cells. Today, you might need to break in. There's a key inside one of the cells, encased in what looks to be six inches of ice. Of course, the door to the cell is locked.

The key is frozen into the center of a six inch square block of ice. The ice block has an AC of 12, hardness of 0, and 2 hit points. The ice block sits on a bench at the rear of the cell, 10 feet away from the door. The back and side walls of the cell are stone. The front wall and door are iron bars, each spaced 3 inches apart.

The player character might defeat this challenge in a number of ways.

- The deft of hand can use their skills to pick the lock with a DC 25 Disable Device check. After the door opens, retrieving the key becomes a simple matter of chipping it out of the ice.
- Magic users will find acid and fire spells particularly effective in melting the ice. Mage hand or a similar spell can telekinetically float the key over after it has been freed from the ice block.



- While a grappling hook won't fit through the iron bars of the cell, a carefully shot arrow tied to a length of twine could be used to pierce the ice. The block of ice has an AC of 12. The player character can then drag the ice block towards them and chip out the key. Because of the delicacy needed to pierce the ice block, and not just shatter it, the player character receives a -2 penalty to her ranged attack check.
- Characters with high social skills can probably charm the sheriff's deputy into opening the door for her with a DC 15 Diplomacy or Bluff check.
- If the player character tries to break down or otherwise damage the cell door, it has a hardness of 10, 60 hit points, and a break DC of 23.

CHALLENGE: MAGIC SHOP

The local magic shop has always been an odd place. There are no shelves or display cases. Instead, the walls, ceiling, and floor are all painted black, as if to create the impression that one is floating in the middle of a vast expanse of nothing. To make the shop even more surreal, a peacock struts around the room, watching you curiously. The shopkeeper, an older member of the Adventurer's Guild known only as Master Eerie, sits on a floating throne that hovers in the back of the shop. He isn't the only thing floating in the room. A key floats in the exact center, equidistant between all four walls, the floor, and the ceiling. You think, anyway. It can be hard to tell.

MASTER EERIE

Male gnome illusionist 10
 CN Small humanoid (gnome)
Init +6; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +9

DEFENSE

AC 20, touch 15, flat-footed 17 (+4 armor, +1 deflection, +2 **Dex**, +1 dodge, +1 natural, +1 size)
hp 73 (10d6+36)
Fort +7, **Ref** +6, **Will** +10; +2 vs. illusions
Defensive Abilities defensive training (+4 dodge bonus to AC vs. giants)

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.
Melee +2 dagger +6 (1d3/19-20)
Ranged +2 dagger +10 (1d3/19-20)
Special Attacks +1 on attack rolls against goblinoids and reptilian humanoids
Gnome Spell-like Abilities (CL 10th; concentration +11)
 1/day - dancing lights, ghost sound, prestidigitation, speak with animals

Arcane School Spell-like Abilities (CL 10th, concentration +14)

At will - *invisibility field* (10 rounds/day)
 7/day - *blinding ray*

Illusionist Spells Prepared (CL 10th, concentration +14)

5th - *persistent image* (DC 21), *persistent image* (DC 21), *teleport*
 4th - *greater invisibility*, *phantasmal killer* (DC 20), *phantasmal killer* (DC 20), *solid fog*, *stone shape*
 3rd - *major image* (DC 19), *major image* (DC 19), *major image* (DC 19), *major image* (DC 19), *major image* (DC 19)

2nd - *detect thoughts* (DC 16), *glitterdust* (DC 16), *hypnotic pattern* (DC 18), *hypnotic pattern* (DC 18), *mirror image*, *scorching ray*

1st - *silent image* (DC 17), *silent image* (DC 17), *silent image* (DC 17), *silent image* (DC 17), *silent image* (DC 17)

0th (at will) - *dancing lights*, *detect magic*, *ghost sound* (DC 16), *mage hand*

Opposition Schools enchantment, necromancy

TACTICS

Before Combat: If possible, Master Eerie will cast *mage armor* on himself from his wand.

During Combat: Master Eerie prefers to frighten his opponents off rather than harm them. He will cast *greater invisibility*, then attempt to frighten or captivate his targets using his illusions. If he thinks his targets are particularly weak willed, he will use his high *Intimidate* skill to demoralize them as well. If Master Eerie has to, he will resort to using his *teleport* spell to escape and then return with the law at his side.

Base Statistics Without *mage armor*, Master Eerie's statistics are AC 16, touch 15, flat-footed 13.

STATISTICS

Str 6, **Dex** 14, **Con** 16, **Int** 18, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 12

Base Atk +5; **CMB** +2; **CMD** 16

Feats Combat Casting, Craft Wand, Craft Wondrous Item, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Scribe Scroll, Skill Focus (intimidation), Spell Focus (illusion)

Skills Acrobatics +7 (+3 when jumping), Appraise +9, Craft (carving) +14, Fly +9, Knowledge (arcana) +17, Knowledge (geography, local) +10, Intimidate +17, Perception +9, Spellcraft +17, Stealth +11

Languages Common, Draconic, Dwarven, Elven, Gnome, Sylvan

SQ arcane bond (peacock), extended illusions (+5 rounds)

Combat Gear *potion of cure moderate wounds*, *potion of cure serious wounds*, *scroll of displacement*, *scroll of major image*, *scroll of scorching ray*, *scroll of teleport*, *wand of burning hands* (CL 5th, 20 charges), *wand of invisibility* (20 charges), *wand of mage armor* (20 charges)

Other Gear +2 *dagger*, *amulet of natural armor* +1, *belt of mighty constitution* +2, *cloak of resistance* +1, *headband of vast intelligence* +2, *ring of protection* +1, *spellbook*, *signet ring*, chair with permanent *levitation* spell cast on it, 123 gp

The floating key is, in fact, a mind-affecting illusion (*figment*) cast by Master Eerie using the *major image* spell. It seems real to all visual senses and, if someone gets close enough, they will even be able to smell the combination of iron and hide and seek slime that is unique to the Guild chest keys. The illusion has an AC of 15 and any player trying to touch it with either their hands, a weapon, or another object must make an appropriate attack check. Success means the player character's hand or object passes through the figment, revealing it to be an illusion. Failure means the key dances out of the way and begins moving around the room in a strange and frustrating game of keep-away.

Unlike other challenges, there is only one way to solve this one. Once the player character disbelieves the illusion with a DC 18 Will save, Master Eerie will give her the real key. There are, however, a number of ways to realize the key is an illusion and gain an automatic success on the saving throw.

- Obviously, if the player character successfully attacks or grabs the key, only to have their weapon or hand pass through it, they can realize it is an illusion.

- Player characters who make a DC 20 Sense Motive check will realize that Master Eerie is concentrating intently on the key. A simple DC 12 Knowledge (arcane) or Spellcraft check is all that is needed to realize that a simple flotation spell wouldn't need so intense a level of concentration but an illusion would.

- At the GM's discretion, succeeding at a DC 18 Knowledge (arcane) check after using detect magic to examine the key will allow the player character to discover that the "key" radiates a faint aura of illusion magic.

CHALLENGE: THE FROWNING LADY

Lady Chatterbird, an intelligent, beloved, and rather wealthy member of the community sits in a chair at the rear of the local tavern, her back turned to everyone present. The townsfolk present seem quite concerned by this turn of events.

"She's very sad," Lady Chatterbird's maid will tell whomever asks, "And a shame it is, too, because she has one of those keys to give away. Maybe if you make her smile?"

Then the maid winks at you.

"You have only five chances and then you need to move on."

Convincing Lady Chatterbird to smile will require three successful skill checks. After the first successful check, Lady Chatterbird will turn around to face the tavern but will not look at anyone in particular. After the second successful check, Lady Chatterbird will express polite interest in the player character. After the third successful check, Lady Chatterbird will smile, congratulate the player character on a job well done, and offer out her key. Lady Chatterbird will not respond to the same attempt twice. If a well told joke, for example, caused her to turn around, a second joke will not cause her to look at the player character with polite interest. A DC 10 Sense Motive check will tell the player character that Lady Chatterbird is looking for something different to entertain her on each attempt. Lady Chatterbird will declare the event over should the player character harm another person or cause property damage to the tavern.

LADY CHATTERBIRD

Female human aristocrat 4
NG Medium humanoid (human)
Init +1; **Senses** Perception +6

DEFENSE

AC 11, touch 11, flat-footed 10 (+1 Dex)
hp 20 (4d8+2)
Fort +1, **Ref** +2, **Will** +3

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.
Melee mwk +5 dagger (1d4+1)
Ranged mwk +5 dagger (1d4+1)

TACTICS

During Combat: Lady Chatterbird has some basic combat training but isn't a fighter. If attacked she will rely on the crowd to help protect her, then quickly drink her *potion of invisibility* and attempt to escape. She will report her assault to the sheriff right away.

STATISTICS

Str 12, **Dex** 12, **Con** 11, **Int** 16, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 16

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +3; **CMD** 13

Feats Alertness, Skill Focus (Diplomacy), Skill Focus (Knowledge (local))

Skills Bluff +6, Craft (gardening) +5, Diplomacy +13, Intimidate +9, Knowledge (history) +6, Knowledge (local) +9, Knowledge (nobility) +6, Linguistics +5, Perception +6, Ride +6, Sense Motive +6

Languages Common, Dwarven, Elven, Gnome, Halfling, Treant

Combat Gear *potion of invisibility*

Other Gear masterwork dagger, noble outfit with jewelry, 32 gp

A player character can attempt a Knowledge (local) or bardic knowledge check to give them insight into how to entertain Lady Chatterbird.

INFORMATION ABOUT LADY CHATTERBIRD

DC Information gained

- 10 Lady Chatterbird is quite fond of the arts. She regularly contracts actors, musicians, dancers, and tumblers to put on performances for the entire community at her estate. Give the player character a +2 circumstance bonus on any Perform check to entertain her, so long as it isn't too lowbrow. Bawdy jokes aren't likely to amuse her.
- 15 Lady Chatterbird is not just a wealthy heiress but also an intelligent and well-read woman. She enjoys hearing about the latest innovations in a number of scholarly areas but is bored by religion and gossip. Give the player character a +2 circumstance bonus on any Knowledge check made to engage her attention except Knowledge (local) and Knowledge (religion).
- 20 It isn't well known but Lady Chatterbird is quite fond of contests, including games of chance and athletic competitions. She sometimes participates in these games but just as often watches them and has even been known to make a wager or two. Give the player character a +2 circumstance bonus to all checks when attempting to engage Lady Chatterbird's attention by engaging another NPC in a contest.

A number of strategies can be employed to bring a smile to Lady Chatterbird's face.

- Lady Chatterbird is not immune to flattery. A DC 24 Diplomacy check will gain her attention. However, bawdy suggestions or lewd compliments automatically fail. Give the player character a +2 to the check if she offers Lady Chatterbird a pretty flower.
- When trying to convince Lady Chatterbird to turn around, a loud sound or other means of startlement will work. The player character must succeed at a DC 15 Bluff check to sufficiently startle Lady Chatterbird. If the player character is clever enough to use a magic spell or skill to imitate the sound of a large creature, they succeed automatically. This strategy only works on the first attempt. Once Lady Chatterbird is facing the room she can no longer be startled.
- Lady Chatterbird can be entertained by a DC 15 Perform check, though she responds poorly to lowbrow humor. *Fart jokes*, for example, will automatically fail.
- Lady Chatterbird also enjoys lectures on intellectual topics. A DC 15 Knowledge check will engage her attention, though Knowledge (religion) and Knowledge (local) checks will automatically fail.

- Lady Chatterbird is as spellbound by the arts of prestidigitation as anyone. A DC 15 Sleight of Hand check to perform a magic trick will impress her.
- The lady will also be charmed by clever feats of real magic as well. A spellcaster must succeed at a DC 10 caster level check to impress Lady Chatterbird whilst casting a spell.
- Lady Chatterfield will be intrigued by any competition that displays skill on the part of the player character. Examples might include challenging an NPC to an arm wrestling or dart throwing contest, playing a hand of cards, or starting a riddle competition. Gaining Lady Chatterfield's attention with a contest requires a successful ability check against DC 12. Arm wrestling would rely on Strength, dart throwing on Dexterity, riddles on Intelligence, and cards either on Charisma or Wisdom.
- The tavern is full and anyone attempting to pick pocket the key from Lady Chatterfield is bound to be noticed. Likewise, an attack on Lady Chatterfield will rouse the ire of all present and bring the law down hard on the player character's head.

CHALLENGE: AN ACT OF KINDNESS

Sadly, not every street can be a shining example of civic pride. Not far from the marketplace is a dirt alleyway lined by buildings in need of repair. Sitting in front of one of those buildings, a blind beggar holds up a bowl and pleads for coins. The sight would be sad but unremarkable except for the key you can see at the bottom of the beggar's bowl.

The beggar is actually Guild member Blind Bob in disguise. Born blind, Bob has trained as a monk all his life to overcome his disability. It helps that he now wears a swordmaster's blindfold, giving him blindsight with a 5 foot range.

BLIND BOB

Male human monk 7

LN Medium humanoid (human)

Init +3; **Senses** blindsight (5 ft.); Perception +14

DEFENSE

AC 20, touch 17, flat-footed 16 (+3 armor, +1 deflection, +3 **Dex**, +1 dodge, +1 monk, +1 **Wis**)

hp 56 (7d8+21)

Fort +9, **Ref** +10, **Will** +8; +2 vs. enchantments

Defensive Abilities evasion; **Immune** disease

OFFENSE

Speed 50 ft.

Melee flurry of blows +8/+8/+3 (1d8+3) or unarmed strike +8 (1d8+3)

Ranged none

Special Attacks flurry of blows, stunning fist (7/day, DC 14)

TACTICS

During Combat: If attacked, Blind Bob will repeatedly suggest that the contestant has failed the challenge and should leave. He chooses to deal non-lethal damage and will lead by using his stunning fist. If he successfully stuns his opponent, he will use his superior speed to leave the scene, leaping onto rooftops if necessary, before setting up his challenge in a new location.

STATISTICS

Str 16, **Dex** 16, **Con** 14, **Int** 10, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +5; **CMB** +10 (+12 grapple or trip); **CMD** 25 (27 vs. grapple or trip)

Feats Blind-Fight, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Grapple, Improved Trip, Improved Unarmed Strike, Mobility, Scorpion Style, Skill Focus (Perception), Stunning Fist

Skills Acrobatics +13 (+28 when jumping), Climb +13, Perception +14, Sense Motive +11, Stealth +13

Languages Common, Gnome

SQ fast movement, high jump, ki pool (4 points, magic), maneuver training, purity of body, slow fall 30 ft., still mind, wholeness of body

Other Gear bracer's of armor +3, cloak of resistance +2, ring of protection +1, swordmaster's blindfold, beggar's bowl, guild key, 6 cp

A successful DC 20 Perception check will see through Blind Bob's disguise, revealing that the beggar isn't who he appears to be. A DC 20 Sense Motive check will tell the player character that, despite his rags, the beggar sits too confidently and moves with unusual efficiency and grace, though he does appear to truly be blind.

There are a few ways a player character might try to get the beggar's coin.



- If the player character places a coin into the beggar's bowl, Blind Bob will bless her and, never breaking character, offer her the key. No roll is needed.
- If the player character fancies stealing from a beggar, she can attempt to sneak up on Blind Bob and steal the key. Doing so requires a Stealth check, opposed by Blind Bob's Perception check and then a DC 15 Sleight of Hand check. Blind Bob gets a second Perception check to notice the key being lifted. If his Perception check beats the player character's Sleight of Hand check he will slap her hand away and suggest she move along.
- Any player character who attempts to take the key by force will find Blind Bob to be more than a match for them.
- Blind Bob won't be swayed by Diplomacy, Bluff, or Intimidate checks but he does enjoy a good auditory performance. If the player character succeeds at a DC 15 Performance check while singing, playing an instrument, performing a comedy routine, or making a speech he will hand over the key and thank them for the entertainment.

CHALLENGE: SONG OF THE DEAD

A fog rolls over the community graveyard, making it seem especially foreboding today. Through the fog you can see rows of grave markers, a silent tribute those who have passed beyond. On the far side of the graveyard are seven crystal pillars grouped together in a circle, as if forming a shrine.

This challenge is governed by Jolly, a pleasant trickster of a ghost that haunts the graveyard and is on good terms with the Adventurer's Guild. Jolly will do his best to remain undetected by contestants and to not interact with them directly.

JOLLY

Male human ghost aristocrat 4
CG Medium undead (human, incorporeal)
Init +5; **Senses** darkvision (60 ft.); **Perception** +12

DEFENSE

AC 16, touch 16, flat-footed 15 (+5 deflection, +1 Dex)
hp 41 (4d8+20)
Fort +6, **Ref** +2, **Will** +4
Defensive Abilities channel resistance +4, incorporeal, rejuvenation; **Immune** undead traits

OFFENSE

Speed fly 30 ft. (perfect)
Melee none
Ranged none
Special Attacks frightful moan (DC 17)

TACTICS

During Combat: Jolly has no desire to fight. He's interested in having fun in his afterlife, not engaging in combat. He never even got the hang of corrupting touch like most other ghosts. If attacked, Jolly will use his frightful moan in an attempt to scare his attacker away. If the moan succeeds or fails, Jolly will flee, seeking refuge in one of the graveyard's crypts.

STATISTICS

Str --, **Dex** 12, **Con** --, **Int** 11, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 20
Base Atk +3; **CMB** +4; **CMD** 19
Feats Alertness, Improved Initiative, Skill Focus (Stealth)
Skills Fly +9, Knowledge (local) +7, Knowledge (history) +7, Perception +9, Perform (ventriloquism) +12, Sense Motive +9, Stealth +12
Languages Common, Dwarven
Gear none

The crystal pillars are a monument to an adventuring group known as the Crystal Sisterhood. Each pillar, when struck, vibrates and produces a different musical note. A different name and symbol has been carved into each pillar:

CRYSTAL SISTERHOOD MONUMENTS

Name	Symbol
Delila	A sword
Misty	A key
May	A harp
Dawn	A wand
Iris	A bow
Bonnie	The holy symbol of a local diety
Serena	A tree

A DC 12 Knowledge (history), Knowledge (local), or bardic knowledge check is required to know the story of the Crystal Sisterhood. Generations ago, an evil lich stole away the child of Lord Silus Chatterbird, the present Lady Chatterbird's ancestor. The Crystal Sisterhood, an adventuring group of some renown, took up arms and went to rescue the child. They succeeded but, unfortunately, all fell ill and died less than a month after the adventure. Most believe their deaths were



due to a curse the foul lich cast upon its final demise. In honor of the brave women who rescued his child, Lord Chatterbird had a special monument, seven singing crystal pillars, built. Legend suggests that when the pillars are struck in the proper order they will play a magical song and a eighth part of the monument, a tomb that contains the remains of the Crystal Sisterhood, will appear.

Upon entering the graveyard, ask the player character for a DC 15 Perception roll. Success means they spot a piece of parchment fluttering against a nearby gravestone. A poem has been scribbled onto the parchment.

*Bravely, sisters charged the tomb
To save the stolen babe from doom.
With sword and axe they fought the undead hoard,
Spirits bolstered by note and chord.
Angry wounds soothed by blessed touch
Gave deft fingers strength to open evil's hutch.
While bowstrings twanged and struck a blow,
Nature's fury attacked the evil foe,
And spells did end the lich's undead life,
To save the heir and bring end to strife.
Seven sisters returned, babe in hand,
Fouever cheered round, heroes of our land.*

As the player character walk through the graveyard, Jolly will occasionally whistle out a repeating tune of twenty-eight notes. He always uses his Perform (ventriloquism) skill to make it sound as if the whistling is coming from multiple directions at once, so as to remain undetected.

When the player character approaches the crystal pillars, Jolly will move within 30 feet and use his frightful moan ability. The player character must succeed at a DC 17 Will save or become panicked for 2d4 rounds in a sonic, mind-affecting fear effect. Jolly will use the frightful moan each time the player character approaches the pillar until she either drives the ghost off or successfully overcomes it.

When struck with a metal object, like a pipe or sword, the crystal pillars vibrate and produce a note. When a specific tune consisting of twenty-eight notes is played using the crystal pillars, they emit a glow that causes what seems to be a nearby, ordinary stone tomb to shimmer and transform into a grand crystal tomb – the final resting place of the Crystal Sisterhood. The tomb will remain visible in its true form for ten minutes, after which time it will revert back into humble stone. There is a key on the tomb's steps but only when it is in crystal form.

Obviously, the player character has to play the correct tune in order to reveal the tomb of the Crystal Sisterhood. The tune consists of seven notes played in a specific order, repeated exactly four times.

- Musically inclined player characters need only succeed at a simple DC 12 Perform check using any musically based performance skill in order to play the tune they've heard Jolly whistling.
- Player characters without musical skill can still play the tune by deciphering the clues in the poem of the Crystal Sisterhood. Starting with the third, each line of the poem gives a clue as to which crystal pillar should be struck next. The order the pillars should be struck is: Delila (sword), May (harp), Bonnie (holy symbol), Misty (key), Serena (tree), Iris (bow), and Dawn (wand). The final line of the poem intentionally misspells the word "forever" as "fouever", giving a clue that the sequence should be repeated four times. Player characters who have trouble

deciphering the clues can make a DC 10 Intelligence check to get a clue such as: "Maybe the symbols on the crystal pillars correspond to an action in the poem" or "The whistled song you keep hearing sounded longer than just seven notes".

- Player characters are welcome to randomly strike the crystal pillars, hoping to work out the correct tune through deduction and luck. Eventually she will discover the right tune and find the key, but will lose one extra hour doing so, reducing the time she has left to find other keys.

CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

With five keys acquired, the player character will likely want to rush to the Guild Hall. If the GM thinks the adventure needs a "final boss" style battle, this is a good chance for the player character to run into Robin Wolf, another rival, or even multiple rivals. The player character and her rivals can duke it out for the keys or quickly race against each other to reach the finish line.

Consider a race between the player character and her rivals to be a combat without initiative. Place the characters next to each other on a track ten squares long. The first contestant to move ten squares reaches the Guild Hall and wins. Every round, each contestant automatically moves forward one square. During a round each contestant can perform one of the following actions:

- Burst of speed: Make a DC 15 Dexterity check to move forward two squares instead of one. Add a +2 bonus to the roll if the contestant can ignore difficult terrain due to an ability or spell.
- Sabotage: Perform an attack or combat maneuver on a rival to slow them down. A successful attack or combat maneuver performed on a rival keeps him from advancing that round. This can also be accomplished using certain spells such as entangle or thunderstomp. This can only be done when the attacker is next to the defender on the track.
- Parkour: Make a DC 12 Acrobatics or Climb check to use the environment to one's advantage, moving forward three squares instead of one. This can only be done once during the race.
- Shortcut: Make a DC 12 Knowledge (local) check to take a shortcut and move forward three squares instead of one. This can only be done once during the race.

If more than one contestant would reach the final square in the same round, resolve the finish using opposed Dexterity checks.

If the player character reaches the Guild Hall first, read them the following:

You rush into the Guild Hall. Immediately, Guildmaster Wulfang hurries over to your side. He grabs your hand and pumps it enthusiastically.

"You have five keys? I can tell you do, just from the twinkle in your eye!" The Guildmaster says with delight, "I remember that twinkle from back when I was a young lad. Nothing quite gets the blood pumping like hard earned success."

After double checking to ensure that you do, indeed, have all five keys, Guildmaster Wulfang instructs you to insert each of the keys into the chest. You do so and hear a click as the chest unlocks. Pixies dance in your stomach as you thumb the latch and, with shaking hands, lift the lid of the chest.

At the bottom of the opened chest is your reward for winning the competition: a single gold coin stamped with the logo of the Adventurer's Guild. This token proves you are now, and forevermore, a member of the Fraternal Order of Adventurers Local #409.

Wulfgang slaps you on the back.

"No entrance fee and we're waving your percentage owed on all treasure gained through adventures for the first year. I believe we also promised you a magic weapon. This way. This way. You're going to do amazing things, I can tell. I'm never wrong about this sort of thing!"

Allow the player character to add a +1 *weapon* of her choice to her inventory.

The Guildmaster leads you to an armory deep inside the Guild Hall where you pick a magic weapon perfect for you. Once you do that, the Guildmaster leads you outside. There, he instructs you to hold up your weapon and your membership token high for the waiting crowd to see.

"Friends and neighbors, I present to you the newest member of the Fraternal Order of Adventurers Local #409!"

The crowd erupts in cheers!

If the player character isn't the first to reach the Guild Hall, read her the following:

You reach the Guild Hall too late. One of the other contestants stands on the Guild Hall steps, lifting a weapon and a Guild membership token in hand as Guildmaster Wulfgang pronounces him the winner. The crowd cheers.

You applaud politely and begin to turn away, intending to head home, when you feel a tug at your elbow. Guildmaster Wulfgang is at your side, offering a gentle smile.

"Winning isn't everything. We were watching all of you as you competed. You showed the stuff, even if you were a touch slower in doing so. You impressed us and that isn't easy. We can't offer you the whole prize, but the Guild would like to offer you membership all the same. We'll wave the initial membership fee. We do that, sometimes, for promising applicants... and you show a lot of promise."

Assuming the player character accepts Guildmaster Wulfgang's offer, he hands over a gold coin stamped with the Adventurer's Guild logo as proof that she is now a member.

"Welcome to the Fraternal Order of Adventures Local #409." Guildmaster Wulfgang says. "I know you are going to do great things."

OTHER CONTESTANTS

Including the player character, there are a total of eleven contestants participating in the competition. Seven of the contestants are locals with little training.

CONTESTANT

Male human warrior 1
N Medium humanoid (human)
Init +1; **Senses** Perception +0

DEFENSE

AC 13, touch 11, flat-footed 12 (+2 armor, +1 Dex)

hp 8 (1d10+3)
Fort +2, **Ref** +1, **Will** +0

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.
Melee club (1d6+3)
Ranged sling (1d4+3)

TACTICS

During Combat: The contestants are direct in combat. They move in, they attack. If there are multiple contestants they will work together, using aid another actions and flanking bonuses. Any contestant that is knocked down to half their hit points will flee.

STATISTICS

Str 15, **Dex** 12, **Con** 11, **Int** 8, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 9
Base Atk +1; **CMB** +3; **CMD** 14
Feats Step Up, Toughness
Skills Craft (weapons) +3, Profession (villager) +4, Survival +1
Languages Common
Other Gear leather armor, club, sling, 20 sling stones, 2 gp

CERISE DWARFCHILD

Cerise Dwarfchild was orphaned as a babe and raised by a family friend, the dwarf adventurer known simply as Redbraid. She was raised on the road, traveling from settlement to settlement as her adopted father searched for work. Cerise sees the competition as a chance to develop the roots she never had and connect with her human heritage.

Female human barbarian 1
CN Medium humanoid (human)
Init +1; **Senses** Perception +5

DEFENSE

AC 15, touch 11, flat-footed 14 (+4 armor, +1 Dex)
hp 15 (1d12+3)
Fort +4, **Ref** +1, **Will** +1

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.
Melee greataxe +4 (1d12+6/x3)
Ranged shortbow +2 (1d6/x3)
Special Attacks rage (6 rounds/day)

TACTICS

During Combat: Cerise knows she's bigger and stronger than the majority of her targets and her combat strategy takes advantage of it. She's willing to move in, take the damage, and end the fight with one or two chops of her greataxe. Cerise rages easily and will Power Attack if she finds herself at a disadvantage in combat.

Raging Statistics When raging, Cerise's stats are **AC** 13; **hp** 17; **Fort** +6; **Will** +3; **Melee** greataxe +6 (1d12+9/x3); **CMB** +7; **Skills** Climb +7.

STATISTICS

Str 18, **Dex** 13, **Con** 14, **Int** 10, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 10
Base Atk +1; **CMB** +5; **CMD** 16
Feats Power Attack, Weapon Focus (battleaxe)
Skills Climb +5, Intimidate +4, Linguistics +1, Perception +5, Survival +5

Languages Common, Dwarven

SQ fast movement

Combat Gear *cure light wounds* *potion*

Other Gear hide armor, battleaxe, shortbow with 20 arrows, backpack, bedroll, caltrops, flint and steel, hemp rope (50 ft.), shovel, torches (5), trail rations (4), waterskin, 5 gp

PETER HARTNELL

Peter is a local boy made good. He discovered his magical capabilities as a teenager and worked hard, eventually earning a full scholarship to a magic academy in a nearby city. Now, having graduated, he has returned and is eager to show his community just how far he has come.

Male human wizard 1

NG Medium humanoid (human)

Init +2; **Senses** Perception +1

DEFENSE

AC 16, touch 12, flat-footed 14 (+4 armor, +2 Dex)

hp 8 (1d6+2)

Fort +1, **Ref** +2, **Will** +3

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee mwk dagger +1 (1d4/19-20)

Ranged light crossbow +2 (1d8/19-20)

Special Attacks hand of the apprentice (7/day)

Wizard Spells Prepared (CL 1st; concentration +5)

1st – *expeditious retreat*, *grease*

0 (at will) – *acid splash*, *detect magic*, *light*

TACTICS

Before Combat: Peter uses his bonded object, his masterwork dagger, to cast *mage armor* when it becomes clear combat might begin.

During Combat: If Peter has not cast his *mage armor* he will do so, casting defensively if need be. He will use a combination of hand of the apprentice and his spells to attack from a distance.

Base Statistics Without *mage armor*, Peter's statistics are AC 12, touch 12, flat-footed 10.

STATISTICS

Str 10, **Dex** 14, **Con** 13, **Int** 18, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +0; **CMB** +0; **CMD** 12

Feats Combat Casting, Skill Focus (Knowledge (arcane)), Scribe Scroll

Skills Appraise +8, Knowledge (arcane) +11, Knowledge (history, local, planes) +8, Linguistics +8, Spellcraft +8

Languages Celestial, Common, Draconic, Goblin, Infernal, Sylvan

SQ arcane bond (dagger)

Other Gear masterwork dagger, light crossbow with 10 bolts, backpack, scroll case, spell component pouch, spellbook (contains all prepared spells, plus all 0-level spells; 1st – *color spray*, *expeditious retreat*, *grease*, *mage armor*, *protection from evil*, *shield*, and *sleep*), 9 gp

ROBIN WOLF

Robin Wolf's a local prodigy. The problem is, he's the wrong sort of prodigy. At an early age he showed a talent for taking what didn't belong to him. As he grew older, Robin got even better and became the youngest ever member of the local thief's guild. He isn't interested in playing by the rules or

even being a member of the Adventurer's Guild. Instead, he is hoping to gain membership so he can figure out a way to break into the legendary Guild Hall vault, something no thief has ever accomplished.

Male human rogue 2

NE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +1; **Senses** Perception +7

DEFENSE

AC 13, touch 11, flat-footed 12 (+2 armor, +1 Dex)

hp 11 (2d8+2)

Fort +1, **Ref** +4, **Will** +0

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee rapier +1 (1d6/18-20)

Ranged mwk hand crossbow +3 (1d4/19-20)

Special Attacks sneak attack +1d6

TACTICS

During Combat: If there's anything Robin Wolf hates it is a fair fight. If forced into combat he'll use the dirty trick combat maneuver on his target and, if there is a chance, the steal combat maneuver. He will then try to escape with his precious skin intact.

STATISTICS

Str 10, **Dex** 18, **Con** 13, **Int** 12, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +1; **CMB** +1 (+3 for dirty trick and steal); **CMD** 12 (15 vs. dirty trick and steal)

Feats Improved Dirty Trick, Improved Steal, Skill Focus (Sleight of Hand)

Skills Appraise +6, Bluff +5, Climb +5, Disable Device +9, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +6, Knowledge (local) +6, Perception +7, Sleight of Hand +12, Stealth +9, Use Magic Device +6

Languages Common, Undercommon

SQ rogue talents (Combat Trick (Improved Dirty Trick)), trapfinder +1

Combat Gear acid, alchemist's fire

Other Gear masterwork leather armor, masterwork hand crossbow with 10 bolts, rapier, backpack, hooded lantern, oil (5), silk rope (50 ft.) and grappling hook, thieves' tools.



ONE ON ONE ADVENTURES #20

THE TOMB OF KARA-DUIR

BY JEFFREY TADLOCK & JOSEPH BROWNING

AN ADVENTURE FOR ONE ROGUE LEVELS 3-5



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One on One Adventures are for one player and one GM. However, they are easily modified for a traditional party of four players and one GM.

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The tomb of Kara-Duir has finally been located! It is up to the player character to enter the tomb and retrieve the lost relic, the Moon Staff of Danu de Tuatha. Everything is going according to plan until the “resting place” of Kara-Duir turns out to just be a false tomb informing tomb raiders that only the fabled Moon Staff of Danu de Tuatha can find the real tomb and only the real tomb can recharge the great staff! Worse yet, the staff has been broken into three parts that first need assembly. Some days it just doesn’t seem to pay to tomb rob...

The Tomb of Kara-Duir is an adventure for one player and one GM. The adventure is designed for a 3rd-5th level rogue, but is suitable for any character with an investigative nature.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

In ancient times, the land was held in the scaly claws of the black dragon Varsullicraxis. The great wyrm ruled with tooth and claw and all paid tribute. Those who foolishly resisted saw all they held dear melt away in great pools of acid. The land groaned under the black weight of the ancient beast for decades until the great Danu de Tuatha arrived in Waterbridge carrying her moon staff before her.

Danu announced to the town that she would free them from their tyrant and hired a skiff and floated down the River Whythe. If the words of a common boatman are to be believed, Danu took no precautions and simply landed where the enormous beast laired. The eyes of the dragon glimmered and glinted with humor at the strange woman that would dare approach so boldly, but they quickly turned to fear as Danu displayed the *Moon Staff of Danu de Tuatha*.

When the pair returned to Waterbridge, the skiff was loaded with treasure and a tremendous rejoicing passed throughout the town as word of Varsullicraxis’ defeat spread like a fire upon a dry plain. When asked of the dragon’s fate, Danu de Tuatha would only say that the beast would never trouble the lands again. Throughout the celebrations the boatman remained silent concerning the affair, directing all to Danu who wished to hear of the feat.

Much later, after Danu’s passing, the wizened boatman finally told of what he had seen that day so many years ago. He claimed that the dragon simply turned tail and fled before the moon staff, her fear so immense that the great treasure did not even tempt a look backwards. Most believed him a liar, for it was common knowledge that Danu had slain the creature in combat. Did not the prodigious frieze upon the citadel wall commemorate such? This boatman’s name was Kara-Duir. Legends have long claimed that within his tomb the moon staff was entombed according to the wishes of Danu de Tuatha, but such is not the truth, although he pledged life-long service to her and was her closest friend.

Once the great black dragon Varsullicraxis fled before the staff, Danu de Tuatha realized the terrible curse the staff laid upon her. She spoke with it angrily for misleading her about its power, but it only laughed at her pain. The next 10 years she researched how to destroy the staff, hoping that her curse could be lifted in such a manner, but all was for naught, for the destruction of the staff would not lift the curse. Fraught with despair, Danu found an ancient gold dragon named Aurophylax to destroy her cursed staff in the hopes that ancient lore was incorrect. The dragon Danu found was wiser than she, however, for even with the dangers of the staff falling into evil hands (the ability to send a dragon where one wants it to go could be very misused) the ancient wyrm also knew the great power of good within the staff. Instead of destroying the staff, she broke it into three parts.

To the surprise of Danu and the dragon, this lifted the curse upon her. They rejoiced at the unseen benefit and conspired to make the staff available to future generations if the need arose. Thus, the parts of the staff remained in the walled city of Waterbridge for hundreds of years, the power of each item exerting a subtle hold upon its owner to keep within the protective walls. The goals of Danu de Tuatha and Aurophylax, were only partially met however, for the location of the true tomb of Kara-Duir was lost to time and only the false tomb remained in memory. Eventually even that was lost from common knowledge.

After the death of Danu de Tuatha and Kara-Duir, Aurophylax expanded the protections upon the staff, using her ancient draconic magic to increase the security of the real tomb. Originally, the only difficulty for the potential staff-retriever was finding the various pieces of the staff and joining them. After several decades of investigation Aurophylax learned how to draw most of the power out of the staff pieces and she placed the power into a magic pool within the true tomb. She then traveled to the false tomb and inscribed a message within using one of her great claws to aid those seeking the staff.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

A PC who played through 1 on 1 Adventures #1: Gambler’s Quest may already have enough interest in the legend of the tomb of Kara-Duir to search for its location. Such a PC may be exploring the tomb alone or with Lord Kent. If with Lord Kent, a GM is reminded of Kent’s CE alignment and how that may influence the final outcome once the Moon Staff of Danu de Tuatha is recovered.

If this is the first adventure the PC plays, it is suggested the PC gain knowledge of the false tomb of Kara-Duir’s location through acquisition of a book containing a map to the tomb in Waterbridge in a prior treasure horde. The book contains rumors of a powerful staff capable of controlling black dragons certain to pique the interest of a PC. The Highgate Library offers a starting location for a PC to discover more information.

Alternatively the PC could be hired by a powerful NPC in your campaign to obtain the staff for a fee. The NPC may or may not reveal the true nature of the staff to the PC.

GAMEMASTER NOTE

This is mostly a city-based adventure with only brief forays into dungeons, so the GM should be ready for the player to do just about anything. Cities are wide-open affairs and the player will almost surely go off on some tangent. The GM should explore that diversion for a while, but subtly help the player return to the core of the adventure. However, if the GM wishes, this adventure could easily be played with several GM-created diversions about the city breaking up the various parts of the adventure into multiple sessions.

This is also an investigative adventure, which can be a challenging, though rewarding opportunity for GM and player alike. Keeping the flow of the adventure in mind will help the GM provide clues and subtle hints to keep players moving.

To assist the GM, the flow of the adventure should resemble the following:

- Visit the Highgate Library upon reaching Waterbridge to learn more about the staff and False Tomb.
- Visit the False Tomb to discover it is false and be directed to Lammer Malegrou.

- Lammer Malegrou and his research help provide the clues to the three locations the staff resides in.
- Find the three pieces of the staff in the city.
- With the staff assembled it can be used to find the location of the true tomb and recharge the staff.

SCALING THE ADVENTURE

This adventure is designed for a single rogue character. Due to the nature of the adventure a rogue character is strongly recommended. The adventure can be scaled upwards to be played with a party of characters of approximately 3rd to 5th level with the following suggestions.

- Encounter Area 1: Highgate Library:** Add a riding dog
- Encounter Area 5-3: Maintenance Room:** Apply Advanced Template to Horror of Waterbridge
- Encounter Area 5-4: Sewer:** Add advanced venomous snake
- Encounter Area 5-7: Mural Passage:** Add 2 more arrows to target anyone in the hall
- Encounter Area 5-8: Tomb Pool:** Apply Advanced Template
- Encounter Area 7: Livery Auction House:** Change sleeping gas trap DC to 18
- Encounter Area FT-3: True False Tomb:** Add additional attack and damage to 1d8

THE CITY OF WATERBRIDGE

The origins of the city of Waterbridge stretch back into misty time. What is known with certainty is that many generations ago, the council of Waterbridge secured the right from neighboring wood nymphs and treants to kill a dozen silverorn and goldenorn trees from the walking woods that surround the city. These great trees are semi-sentient, but when they come to the end of their century-long life, they are typically afflicted with many diseases and great pain. The nymphs and treants, being unwilling to help, decided the humans were the perfect vessel for easing the pain of the elderly trees. It is upon the trade of the extremely rare silverorn and goldenorn wood that Waterbridge built its foundation. In later years and as the land around the Walking Woods become slightly more civilized, Waterbridge's became the only truly safe resting spot for trade along the Whythe as it winds its way through the dense and dark forest.

The Waterbridge of today is a bustling small city with a population of 5,500 ruled by a council of 4 elected citizens and the Captain of the guard as elected by the guards. All council members except the Captain rule for 10 years before another election is held in the city. Waterbridge is a safe and prosperous city, facing little threat given the nymphs' and treants' control of the Walking Woods. As long as the accord between the city and the creatures of the wood remains true, Waterbridge stands safe in its forest haven.

Even though the woods shield Waterbridge, the prudent Waterbridgians still carefully maintain their city wall, along with its 30 towers. Of most importance are the two waterwalls crossing the River Whythe. Arching gracefully over the river, a series of iron bars hang from the wall to a depth of about three feet below the river's surface. This forms a type of portcullis along the river and all riverine traffic pays a fee to pass through Waterbridge.

The Northshore of Waterbridge is accessible from outside the city via the Whythe Road, while the Southshore is egressed by the East and South spurs of the Waterbridge Road as well as Southgate (used mostly by the guards and as a postern gate

were such needed). The Northshore and the Southshore are linked by two bridges, Highbridge on west and Lowbridge on the east. Both strongly arching bridges are the same height, but one mostly serves the well-to-do while the commoners mainly use the other. The two horseshoe-arch bridges are synonymous to Waterbridge and feature prominently upon the city seal.

Horrifically, every 30 years, the town suffers the depredations of what they call The Horror of Waterbridge (see new monsters), which kills only young adults, leaving behind emaciated corpses. Typically there are a dozen to two dozen murders and then nothing for another three decades. Waterbridge is entering a murderous cycle right as the PC enters the city; there has already been two murders.

WATERBRIDGE

LN small city
Corruption +0; Crime +0; Economy +3; Law -1; Lore +0; Society +4
Qualities academic, prosperous, strategic location, tourist attraction
Danger +5

DEMOGRAPHICS

Government Council
Population 5,500 (3,500 humans; 500 elves, 500 halflings; 500 gnomes; 500 other)

NOTABLE NPCs

- Head Councilor Aloysius Gruntsch** (LN male human fighter 2/rogue 8)
- Chief Librarian and Councilor Allanys Braal** (LG female human wizard 6)
- Guard Captain and Councilor Florence Chakil** (NG female dwarf fighter 8)

MARKETPLACE

Base Value 6,000 gp; **Purchase Limit** 37,500 gp; **Spellcasting** 7th

Minor Items 4d4; **Medium Items** 3d4; **Major Items** 1d6

BEGINNING THE ADVENTURE

The adventure begins with the PC entering Waterbridge after learning that the tomb of Kara-Duir is somewhere within the ancient city walls. Read the following text when the PC first enters Waterbridge.

Passing through the well-kept walls under the scrutiny of guards brandishing well-maintained equipment, you emerge into the bustling streets of your final destination: Waterbridge. You know within these walls lies the tomb of Kara-Duir and within the tomb, the famed Moon Staff of Danu de Tuatha. The buildings here are plastered and colored with many different green hues. The houses and shops are sturdily maintained and even the buildings of obviously poorer means are far from the run-down shacks and rat houses common in other cities. Now, the task at hand is to find the library and a nearby inn.

Locating the library only requires asking any citizen of Waterbridge, for all but the very young know of the great Highgate Library. There are many inns within Waterbridge that could serve the PCs needs, but one in particular should stand out to the PC if she inquires about an inn near the

library: The Sheltered Nook. It has a reputation of safety, good service, and good food.

I: HIGHGATE LIBRARY

Highgate Library is run by Chief Librarian Allany Braal. Besides being Chief Librarian, Braal is also a member of the Waterbridge Council, making her an important personage of Waterbridge. She is a competent wizard, but only a passable librarian. During the past 13 years of her leadership, the library has become less organized and less efficient than under her predecessor. Read the following when the PC first enters Highgate Library.

Dimly illuminated by a single ray of light from the window on the door and an insufficient 7-lamp candelabrum, the Highgate Library is packed with tomes of all shapes and sizes. To your right, an elderly librarian clears his throat, indicating he expects you to approach and state your business. The librarian's good years are obviously far behind. His eyes are watery and speckled with the beginnings of white cloudiness.

The librarian is Dorat Korumafoom, a good-natured, but serious man (5th-Level Expert). He has worked at Highgate for over 40 years and is the eldest of all the librarians. He seems to naturally speak in whispers and is so accustomed to quiet conversations that it wouldn't appear odd even in situations where such is not warranted. Dorat asks the PC her business and informs her that access to the library requires a one-time fee of 50 gp and an additional fee of 2 gp for a day's access to the common shelves, 4 gp for a day's access to the uncommon shelves, 6 gp for a day's access to the rare shelves, and 10 gp for access to the very rare or magical shelves.

These rates are negotiable, however. A successful DC 20 Bluff check can lower the rates in half. Dorat is particularly susceptible to lies concerning researchers from far-away libraries involving flattery of the Highgate. If the PC uses any

such verbiage, award her a +5 modifier to her Bluff check. Using Diplomacy is a bit harder, requiring a DC 25 check to lower rates in half.

Finding information concerning the tomb of Kara-Duir is relatively easy. Although the citizens of today have forgotten where the tomb resides, the books of the past clearly point to its location within the city. The tomb is located in a secret room in the catacombs beneath the Temple of the Moon Goddess Danu. The temple is at the center of the city, on the appropriately named Temple Isle. Information on locating the room, as well as how to open the secret door, can easily be gleaned from the books at the Highgate Library.

Knowing this, the PC will probably decide to scout out the area a bit rather than rushing headlong into breaking into the temple grounds and entering their catacombs surreptitiously. Inquiring from any local provides the PC information concerning the general schedule of the Temple of the Moon and the knowledge that more people attend services during the moonset than during the midday and moonrise services. Additionally, if one has never attended services before at this particular moon temple, the morning service is required for new petitioners.

Later in the adventure the PC will likely return to the library seeking out the crown portion of the Moon Staff of Danu de Tuatha. The PC will face two obstacles to retrieving this portion of the staff. The first will be finding a way to be in the library at night to see the moonlight pass through the chandelier to turn the crown black as the light passes through it. The second will be removing the crown from the chandelier and then from the library.

One could attempt to negotiate evening access to the library by paying a higher fee. To even begin bargaining this fee the PC will need to succeed on another Bluff or Diplomacy check (DC 20). If successful Dorat will agree to allow evening access to the stack for an additional 50gp fee. He advises the PC will be locked in the library during this evening access as a security measure. Dorat expresses reluctance at this deal, but additional funds to the library can only help it.

If she is unable to negotiate evening access the PC will likely need to break into the library after hours. There is the main entrance to the library and a side entrance to the library along an alley. The main entrance is secured with a quality lock (Disable Device DC 30) and is on a more visible street. The chances of being spotted opening the lock are much higher at this door.

The side entrance is beyond a fenced section of the alley. A guard dog is kept in this fenced area at night to provide an additional layer of protection. The dog will bark loudly at anyone it detects crossing into the fenced area. If anyone approaches the door, the guard dog will attack the trespasser.

The guard dog could be distracted by food or poisoned by a creative PC negating the need to fight the dog to gain entrance to the side door.

DOG, RIDING

N Medium animal

Init +2; **Senses** low-light vision, scent; **Perception** +8

CR 1

400 XP

DEFENSE

AC 13, touch 12, flat-footed 11 (+2 Dex, +1 natural)

hp 13 (2d8+4)

Fort +5, **Ref** +5, **Will** +1

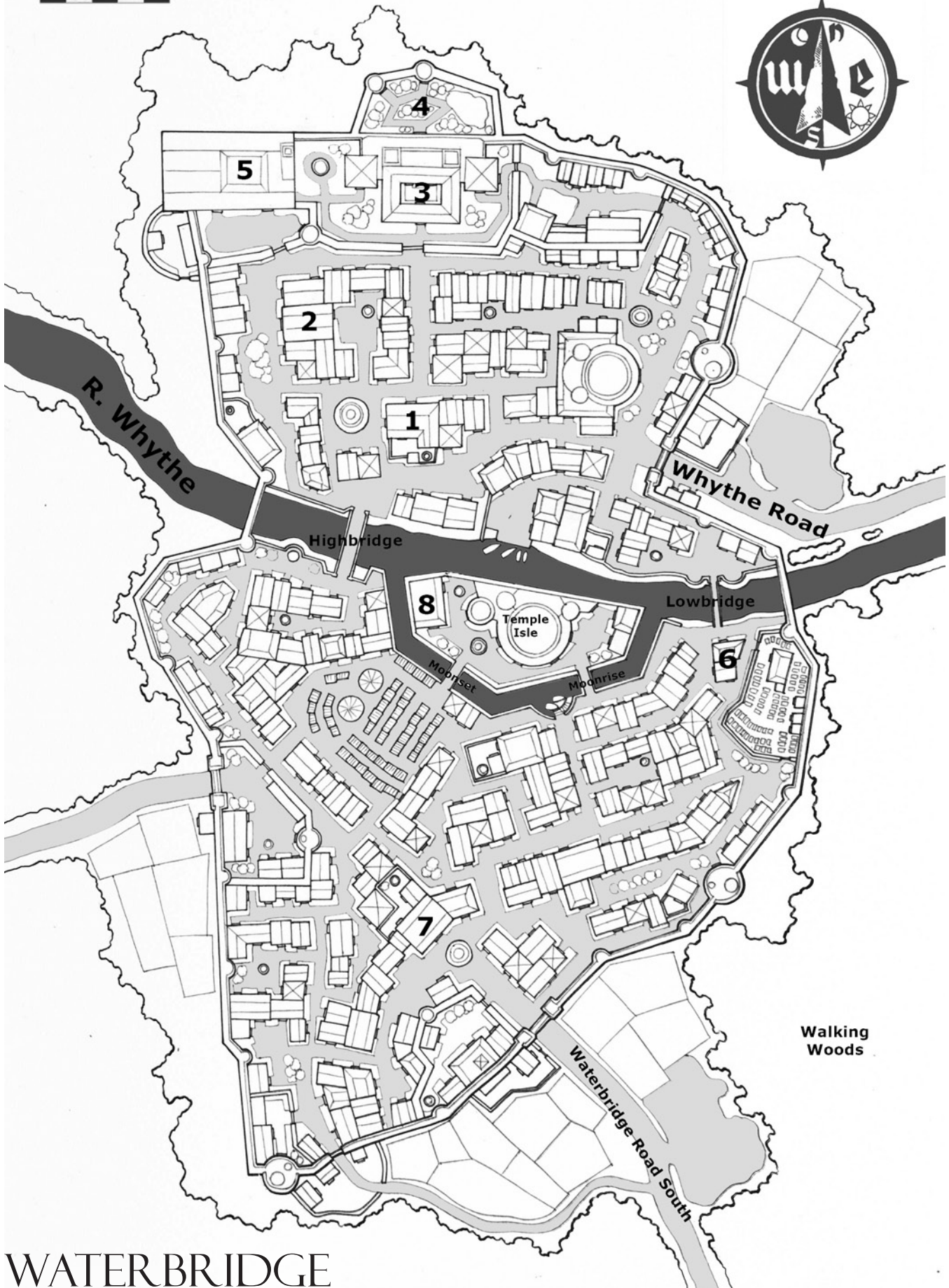
OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.

Melee Bite (Dog, Riding) +3 (1d6+3/x2)



0 50



THE TOMB OF KARA-DUIR (LEVELS 3-5 ROGUE)

WATERBRIDGE

STATISTICS

Str 15, **Dex** 15, **Con** 15, **Int** 2, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 6

Base Atk +1; **CMB** +3; **CMD** 15 (19 vs. Trip)

Feats Skill Focus (Perception)

Skills Acrobatics +6 (+10 jump), Perception +8 Modifiers +4 to survival when tracking by scent, acrobatics (jump) +8

The side entrance is locked as well, but the lock is not as high quality (Disable Device 25) as the front. The side entrance leads into a small storage area that passes to the main library proper.

The chandelier is the seven-lamp candelabrum noted as the PC entered the library for the first time. The candelabrum is positioned such that the moonlight can pass through a small window and illuminate it. The portion that is the crown of the staff will turn black when this event occurs.

Once the piece has been identified the PC will need to reach the candelabrum and detach it (Disable Device DC 10). The PC may wish to disguise the fact the piece is missing. If the PC negotiated with Dorat to have evening access she will likely want to hide the piece when the librarian shows up to let her out. If she snuck into the library, getting away will be much easier.

2: THE SHELTERED NOOK

One of the finer inns in Waterbridge, The Sheltered Nook is mostly occupied by guests availing themselves of the Highbridge Library along with other well-to-do visitors to the city. The food at The Sheltered Nook is widely regarded as some of the best at Waterbridge and it is not uncommon to find important persons eating in the dining room, even though they have their own residences throughout the city. A room costs 10 gp a day while claiming a suite requires 25 gp per day. Two meals are included in the pricing. Alcohol is extra. Read the following text when the PC enters The Sheltered Nook.

Entered via a private courtyard featuring an artfully constructed well, The Sheltered Nook inn is a tall, five-storied building. The exterior is carefully plastered and dyed a light blue hue, almost unique in a town filled with green tinged buildings. The entrance door is thick maple, inlaid with strips of silverorn and goldenorn wood, the extremely rare and valuable wood partly responsible for the wealth of Waterbridge. A smartly dressed young man quickly opens the door. The interior of the inn is richly appointed; marble floors, fine wood paneled walls, and fresh flowers in minor object d'art vases fill the sitting room. You notice several people sitting upon ornately carved furniture in rapt conversation. You are quickly greeted by a smartly attired young man with polite inquiries regarding your needs.

The Sheltered Nook has five stories, the highest being the private residence of the owner, William Clayapple, and his extended family. The fourth floor is composed of four suites, and the third and second floors feature ten single rooms. The ground floor has a kitchen, dining room, sitting room, and music room wherein a quartet performs every other day. The basement is two storied: the deepest is the extensive wine and beer cellar while the first floor of the basement holds the common items necessary for the day-to-day running of The Sheltered Nook.

The staff is helpful and knowledgeable about the city and is willing to answer any reasonable questions truthfully. "Unreasonable" questions (as determined by the GM) require successful Diplomacy checks. The staff cannot be effectively

intimidated and will politely retreat if they feel threatened, reporting anything that makes them in any way uncomfortable to William Clayapple.

When the PC first enters, she notices several people in conversation just before being greeted by young Brander Clayapple. As she and he discuss the inn and its services, there is a chance to overhear what the sitting group is so raptly discussing. A DC 10 Perception check allows the PC to overhear the following.

Lady A: *It's time again... It's starting over.*

Lady B: *I know. It's terrible. Have you heard that...*

Gentleman A: *I think wonderful. We'll find what's behind it and...*

Lady A (gasping in shock): *Wonderful? Are you insane? Surely you must...*

Gentleman B: *I agree. We'll find it and kill it.*

Lady A: *...be joking?*

Lady B (with noticeable sarcasm): *Of course you'll succeed. Unlike all the others before you who failed.*

Gentleman A: *We'll find the killer. I swear.*

Lady A: *Well, while you're doing that, the prudent will send their children away.*

The group is talking about the return of the Horror of Waterbridge (see area 5-3 for more information). If directly asked about the situation, they seem slightly appalled by the direct address of one who doesn't appear to be of their social class, but they explain the situation to the PC regarding the Horror of Waterbridge and its history. While the gentlemen have sworn to find and kill the horror, the PC can quickly determine them more likely to best the moon, for neither look to have fought a day in their soft lives.

3: CHURCH OF NELLESKA

A path winds its way through a well-tended copse of trees to an expansive and open temple. Temple workers tend floor-standing pots of plants lining the sanctuary. A large altar formed from the trunk and limbs of a living oak tree fill the far end of the room.

Nelleska is the chaotic good goddess of freedom with close ties to nature. The clergy here are able to provide services (remove disease, cure spells, etc) to citizens of Waterbridge and adventurers for a donation to the church's coffers.

4: GARDENS OF WATERBRIDGE

A main path wanders through flower-lined paths under the shade of numerous trees. A soft wind rustles the leaves overhead. Waterbridge citizens sit on benches along the path. Several statues stand in the gardens depicting leaders of the city from ages past.

The Gardens of Waterbridge are in the northern sector of the city abutting the city wall. They are well tended by volunteer groups in the city and contain a variety of fauna and flora common to the area. The paths winding through the garden are covered in brilliant white crushed stone. The citizens of Waterbridge are proud of their garden and frequent it for periods of relaxation. They frequently make a point of giving visitors to the city a tour of garden.

Within the past week a tragic event marred the reputation of the garden. A young female was found strangled and drained of blood on one of the benches at the center of the park. The woman was identified as the daughter of Councilman Simon Bravaire. The Councilman said his daughter was fond of late evening walks through the area. She did not return home after one of these walks and was found the following morning by a trio of women tending to the flowers.

The young woman was a victim of The Horror of Waterbridge. Many in the town know of the murder and the PC may have heard of the event and visit the garden to view the scene of the crime. Their investigations are not likely to reveal anything new as most prints have been obscured in the passing days. A bloodstain does remain on the park bench at the murder scene despite much scrubbing.

5: BALSHAW'S BATH HOUSE

Balshaw's Bath House is a commanding building within the city, its tall white stone walls rising above the one and two story buildings near it. Popular among the wealthy and the common people of the city, the bathhouse does a brisk business during the day. The wealthy are afforded access to private bathing areas and saunas, while the common person is granted access to the community bathing pool. Many come to relax and others to broker business deals in the pools and private baths at Balshaw's Bath House.

The bathhouse has a main foyer where the bathing fees are paid. Common people of the town are then granted access to community locker rooms that then lead to the main bathing pool. The more affluent patrons are given access to smaller, private locker rooms that have halls surrounding the public bathing pool leading to private baths. The private baths can accommodate up to six patrons.

The community bathing pool is heated by great braziers beneath it keeping the water just short of scalding. Several drains dot the floor of the pool that empty to the sewer below the facility. The baths in the private areas are heated by a combination of smaller braziers beneath the floor or heated rocks. The private baths also have drains opening to the sewers below.

The PC will likely come to Balshaw's Bath House seeking the real tomb having been led here by the now whole *Moon Staff of Danu de Tuatha*. The PC will come seeking an entrance to the sewers from the bathhouse. Whether coming during the day or after hours, the PC need to pass through the community bathing room to the small employee room on the back wall.

5-1. COMMON BATHING POOL AREA (UNMAPPED)

Hot humid air washes over you as you enter the common bathing area. A large pool of steaming water fills the center of the room, screened halls line the east and west walls of the room. Stone statues depicting lions grace the columns along the bath, streams of water spilling into it from their mouths. Three long steps descend into the bathing pool. Along the back wall of the room is set of plain double-doors.

The pool at the center of the room varies from 3-4 feet in depth. The stairs are along each side of the pool. The screened halls to the east and west are where the wealthier patrons pass to gain access to the private baths. The double-doors at the rear of the room lead to the staff area.

5-2. STAFF AREA (UNMAPPED)

This long rectangular room runs the length of the back wall of the main pool area. Stacks of towels fill one side of the room. The other side has various maintenance tools for upkeep and cleaning of the baths. Both the east and west wall have doors leading in from the private bath area as well as a descending spiral staircase on the western side.

This area is used by staff to store towels that are distributed about the bathhouse. Various cleaning tools and agents are also stored in this room ranging from mops, brooms, and wooden buckets. The stairs at the eastern side of the room descend below the main floor for access to the braziers that heat the baths and the sewer.

When the PC approaches the steps allow a perception check (DC 15) to notice drops of blood on the steps and screams from below.

Small drops of blood appear on each step of the spiral staircase. The muffled sounds of a woman's scream can be heard drifting up from below.

5-3: MAINTENANCE ROOM

Descending the stairs you find yourself in an expansive room beneath the whole of the bathhouse. The air is hot and the chamber dimly lit by the flickering embers of the many braziers warming the baths above. A haze hangs in the air, a mixture of steam and smoke from the burning braziers.

Near one of the braziers located under the common bath above you make out the shape of a three-eyed humanoid beast holding a nude maiden by the head, its tongue arching out towards her and beginning to wrap around her neck.

This young maiden has been taken by the Horror of Waterbridge and brought beneath the baths for feeding. The 6-foot-tall, 300-pound beast looms over the girl as its tongue wraps around her neck to begin the blood draining. If the PC reacts quickly there is still time to save this maiden from her terrible plight.

THE HORROR OF WATERBRIDGE

LE Medium fey

Init +5; **Senses** darkvision 120 ft., low-light vision, scent; **Perception** +9

CR 2

XP 600

DEFENSE

AC 16, touch 11, flat-footed 15 (+1 Dex, +5 natural)

Hp 18 (4d6+4)

Fort +2, **Ref** +5, **Will** +6

DR 2/cold iron

Weaknesses light sensitivity

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., **climb** 20 ft.

Melee claw +2 (1d4/19-20)

Special Attacks beautiful domination, blood drain

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 4th)

Constant – nondetection

At will – invisibility (self only)

1/day – disguise self, doom (DC 14)

STATISTICS

Str 10, **Dex** 12, **Con** 12, **Int** 12, **Wis** 15, **Cha** 16

Base Atk +2; **CMB** +2; **CMD** 13

Feats Ability Focus (Beautiful Domination), Improved Initiative

Skills Acrobatics +8, Bluff +10, Climb +7, Escape Artist +8, Perception +9, Sleight of Hand +8, Stealth +12; Racial Modifiers +4 Stealth

Languages Common, Undercommon

ECOLOGY

Environment any underground

Organization solitary

Treasure standard

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Squeeze (Ex) The Waterbridge horror can squeeze through tight spaces as if were a tiny creature. When squeezing through such tight quarters, it cannot perform any other actions.

Beautiful Domination (Su) The three-eyed gaze of the horror of Waterbridge, has the power to crush the will of targets who have a Charisma score of 16 or higher, drawing them to the horror's side. Any creatures with a Charisma of 16 or higher must succeed on a DC 17 Will saving throw or become captivated. A victim under the effects of the gaze moves toward the horror using the most direct means available. A victim within 5 feet of the horror simply stands and offers no resistance to the horror's attacks, excepting feeble and ineffectual imitations of self-defense. This effect continues for as long as the horror desires and for 1 round thereafter. This is a mind-affecting charm effect. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Blood Drain (Ex) The horror drains blood at the end of its turn if it has encircled a victim's neck with its tongue, inflicting 1 point of Constitution damage.

HISTORY

Throughout the centuries, the tomb of Kara-Duir was breached only once, by a mite named Bugbiter. Bugbiter lived in the sewers of Waterbridge, scavenging a living from what others throw away until he squeezed through a crack into the tomb of Kara-Duir. Afraid, but entranced by the glowing pool of beautiful blue water, he explored the tomb and made it his lair. One day he foolishly forgot his fear and drank of the water, falling into a deep sleep for three decades. When he awoke he was transformed into what would be named the Horror of Waterbridge.

Between 30-year hibernation periods, the horror awakes and goes on a killing spree. It typically kills a dozen to two dozen beautiful young men and women. The horror targets lone individuals, charms them, drains them, and leaves behind an emaciated

corpse. Although it is very rare for a target to survive the horror's beautiful domination attack, those who have reported being attacked by the most beautiful creature imaginable.

If the PC rescues the maiden before her demise, she will request an escort to the main bath areas where she will seek out her friends.

Further exploration of this below ground maintenance area reveals many braziers warming the pools above. The PC will also quickly discover the drains from the baths and pools above are piped to the northeast corner of the room where a basin (15 feet in diameter with 3-foot-high walls) hold the wastewater. A 3-foot-wide aqueduct slants downward through a 5-foot-tall opening to the city's sewers. A metal grate covers the tunnel opening, allowing the waste water to pass through, but keeping things which reside in the sewer from passing through.

The Horror of Waterbridge used its squeeze ability to pass through the metal grate with ease and without the need to unlock the grate. A PC needing to pass through the grate will need to pick the lock (Open Lock DC 15). The sewer passage is dark, a light source will be required for a PC without other means to see in the dark continuing onwards.



5-4: THE SEWER

The sewer passage descends sharply for the first fifteen feet before curving to the right and continuing another thirty feet before meeting up with the main sewer. Along this curve is a slight discoloration of brick that does not match the rest of the sewer brick (Perception DC 30). If the PC carries the staff this Perception check is reduced to DC 20). This is a secret passage to the true tomb.

It will take a few moments of searching to find the recessed catch for the secret door once it is found. While the PC searches for the catch she draws the interest of a nearby sewer snake. The snake will swim through the water in hopes of surprising its prey.

ADVANCED SNAKE, VENOMOUS

N Medium Animal
Init +7; Senses low-light vision, scent; Perception +11

CR 2

XP 600

DEFENSE

AC 18, touch 13, flat-footed 15 (+3 Dex, +5 natural)
hp 17 (2d8+8)
Fort +7, Ref +6, Will +3

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft., climbing (20 feet), swimming (20 feet)
Melee Bite (Advanced Snake, Venomous) +4 (1d4+1/x2)
Special Attacks poison: bite - injury (dc 15)

STATISTICS

Str 12, Dex 17, Con 18, Int 1, Wis 17, Cha 6
Base Atk +1; CMB +2; CMD 15 (can't be Tripped)
Feats Improved Initiative, Weapon Finesse
Skills Acrobatics +11 (+7 jump), Climb +11, Perception +11, Stealth +11, Swim +11

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Poison: Bite - injury (DC 15) (Ex) Poison deals 1d2 CON damage, 1/round for 6 rds, cure 1 save.

If the PC fails to find the secret door leading to the tomb the first time through, she will encounter the snake as she travel deeper in the sewer. If the PC continues into the sewer the GM can relay to her that she has traveled out from the bathhouses, away from where the tomb entrance would be.

5-5. TOMB FOYER

The secret door makes a distinctive clicking sound as it opens into a wide, rectangular room. The air seems much drier than in the sewer tunnel. On the opposite wall are two doors shaped like crescent moons. The door on the left is has the fuller part of the crescent on the left, the door on the right has the fuller part of the crescent on the right side. The chamber is devoid of all other furnishings.

The two doors are shaped like a waxing moon (right door) and a waning moon (left door). Both doors are locked (Open Locks DC 20); the door on the left depicting the waning moon is also trapped. The riddle from the false tomb should indicate the

growing moon, the waxing moon door, is the portal to choose for proceeding.

SEARING LIGHT TRAP

CR 4

Type magic; Perception DC 28; Disable Device DC 28

EFFECTS

Trigger location; Reset none; Bypass none

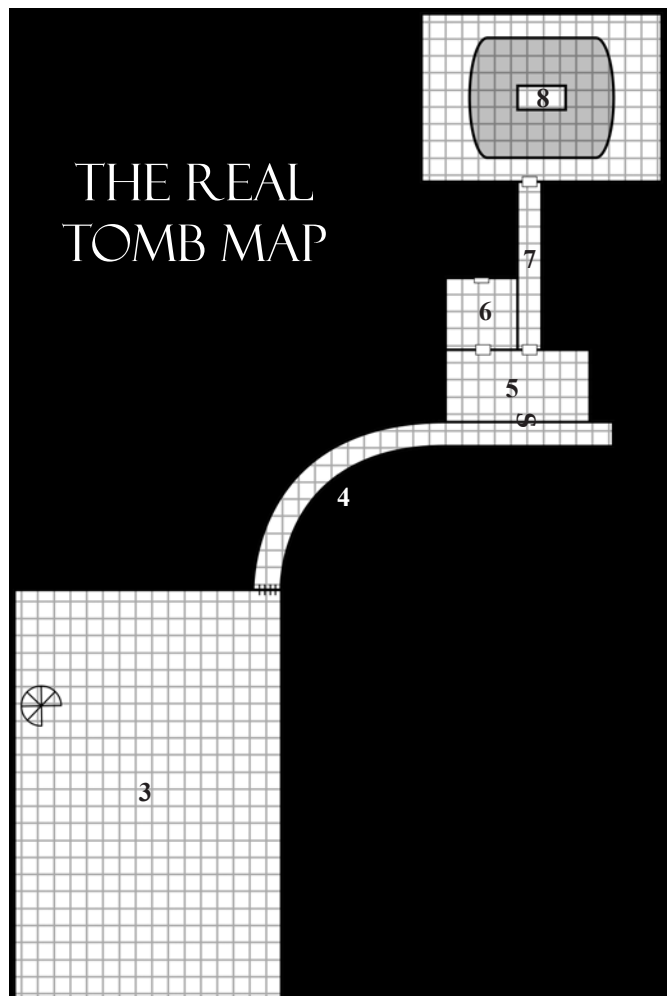
Effect spell effect (searing light, 2d8 damage)

5-6. SMALL ROOM

A stone door with a crescent moon sits on the opposite wall. Empty torch sconces are on the west and east wall.

This room is square, 30-feet by 30-feet. The door on the opposite wall is a false door designed to lead the unwary further into the room. The door appears as a fully functional and normal stone door with the carving of a crescent moon on it. The door includes a working lock, though it is trivial to pick by most rogues (Disable Device DC 10). The lock is simply a ruse to lend to the appearance of this being an actual door.

The door is actually a massive stone block hinged on a delicate pivot point at its base. Any substantial movement to open the door causes the door to topple on an unsuspecting player character.



FALLING DOOR TRAP**CR 3****Type** mechanical; **Perception** DC 22; **Disable Device** DC 25**EFFECTS****Trigger** location; **Reset** none**Effect** 4d6 damage; DC 18 Reflex for half damage**5-7. MURAL PASSAGE**

A passage opens ahead of you stretching some thirty feet ahead. A mosaic has been set into the floor depicting the moon passing through its phases as the hall goes on. The walls of the passage colorfully display a mighty black dragon facing a staff-wielding woman amid fetid marshes. A round portal in the shape of a moon is visible at the far end of the hall.

The PC can freely pass through this corridor. When reaching the door in shape of a moon, they will notice the form of a dragon has been carved into the door. The carving is intricate with many ridges and indentations on the surface of the door. The door is locked with a stout, very complex lock (Open Locks DC 35).

An observant PC (Perception DC 18) will notice one set of indentations are actually grooves the crown of the staff can be placed into. The crown of the staff acts as a key that can unlock the door and bypass the trap. Pushing the crown of the staff into the grooves results in a resounding click as the locking mechanism stiffly releases allowing the Player Character access to the next chamber.

Attempts to pick the lock or otherwise bypass the lock result in a set of traps springing.

ARROW TRAP**CR 3****Type** mechanical; **Perception** DC 25; **Disable Device** DC 25**EFFECTS****Trigger** location; **Reset** none**Effect** Atk +15 ranged (1d8+1/x3)

One arrow shoots from the east wall and one arrow shoots from the west wall targeting the person standing in front of the door. If the arrow trap is triggered or not disabled on the first attempt, the second *sound burst* trap is also triggered.

SOUND BURST TRAP**CR 3****Type** magic; **Perception** DC 27; **Disable Device** DC 27**EFFECTS****Trigger** touch; **Reset** none; **Bypass** none**Effect** spell effect (*sound burst*, paralyzed for 3 rounds, 1d8 and stunned for 1 round. Fort Save DC 13 to avoid stunned)

In addition the cacophonous roar of a dragon is unleashed when the trap is set off seeming to come from dragon's mouth on the door.

5-8. TOMB POOL

Your attention is immediately drawn to a large pool at the middle of the room with a sarcophagus upon a dais forming an island at the center. The structure sits six feet above the water at its highest point. Three empty, circular brackets protrude upwards from the top of it. The water glows a brilliant blue and stretches ten feet all around to the dais in the center.

This is the true tomb and the magic pool Aurophylax drained the powers of the staff into. She has left one final guardian before the PC can return the staff to the empty brackets at the top of the sarcophagus. Within the pool a water elemental lurks. It takes the form of a great water snake, writhing and attempting to grapple the PC to drag them into the pool and under the water.

MEDIUM WATER ELEMENTAL**CR 3**N Medium outsider (elemental, extraplanar, water) XP 800
Init +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; **Perception** +5**DEFENSE****AC** 17, touch 11, flat-footed 16 (+1 Dex, +6 natural)
hp 30 (4d10+8)**Fort** +6, **Ref** +5, **Will** +1**Immune** elemental traits**OFFENSE****Speed** 20 ft., swim 90 ft.**Melee** slam +7 (1d8+4)**Special Attacks** drench, vortex (DC 15, 10–30 ft.), water mastery**STATISTICS****Str** 16, **Dex** 12, **Con** 15, **Int** 4, **Wis** 11, **Cha** 11**Base Atk** +4; **CMB** +7; **CMD** 18**Feats** Cleave, Power Attack**Skills** Acrobatics +6, Escape Artist +6, Knowledge (planes) +2, Perception +5, Stealth +6, Swim +16**Languages** Aquan**SPECIAL ABILITIES****Drench (Ex)** The elemental's touch puts out non-magical flames of Large size or smaller. The creature can dispel magical fire it touches as dispel magic (caster level equals elemental's HD).**Vortex (Su)** A water elemental can create a whirlpool as a standard action, at will. This ability functions identically to the whirlwind special attack, but can only form underwater and cannot leave the water.**Water Mastery (Ex)** A water elemental gains a +1 bonus on attack and damage rolls if both it and its opponent are touching water. If the opponent or the elemental is touching the ground, the elemental takes a –4 penalty on attack and damage rolls. These modifiers apply to bull rush and overrun maneuvers, whether the elemental is initiating or resisting these kinds of attacks.

Once the water elemental guardian has been defeated three stone pillars rise up from the bottom of the pool forming stepping stones to reach the sarcophagus. The pool water is quite volatile due to holding the energy of the staff. The PC

must make an Acrobatics check (DC 12) to cross the tops of the stepping stones without touching the water. Touching the water causes 1d6 damage per round.

The PC must climb (DC 10) to the top of the sarcophagus to return the staff. The staff can be placed into the brackets very easily. Once the staff has been returned the brackets immediately clamp down around the staff and the joints of the three pieces meld into one with no evidence of them having been three pieces previously.

The water in the pool begins bubbling and churning moments later and moves towards small channels in the sarcophagus. The blue, glowing water flows upwards in narrow channels and over the brackets now holding the staff. The staff begins to glow with a soft, silvery light as the water disappears as it touches the staff. This entire process takes about three minutes as the pool is drained by the *Moon Staff of Danu de Tuatha*.

Once the water has disappeared the glow slowly fades from the staff over the course of several minutes and the brackets release their hold. The staff can easily be pulled free from the brackets. The joints where the three pieces were joined are gone and it appears as one solid piece. The *Moon Staff of Danu de Tuatha* has been restored!

6: THE BOATMAN'S CUP

Directly south of Lowbridge is The Boatman's Cup, a boisterous tavern whose guests are remarkably well behaved given the prodigious amounts of alcohol consumed on premises. The Cup is run by Rose Lockerby, known for her fast talk and faster slaps. It is Rose that keeps the rowdy bar in order, for she's an ex-adventurer who gave up her martial pursuits after a particularly narrow escape. She doesn't mind anything but touching and brawls, and she quickly squashes either. Because of her benevolent tyranny, The Boatman's Cup is well known as a place where one can go and enjoy drinking, singing and the conversation of both old and new friends. The Cup is closed from 2-11 in the mornings and a crowd's built up by noon on most days; the singing usually doesn't start until the evening.



Read the below when the PC enters The Boatman's Cup. Preface the main paragraph with either the day or evening text depending on when the PC enters.

Day: *This riverside bar is obviously popular, for there's little room to sit down even though the sun's still shining.*

Evening: *You hear song even before you enter this obviously popular riverside bar. There looks to be room for you, but you'll have to squeeze into a spot.*

A long bar fills the eastern side of the main room and a kitchen lies behind the bar through a pair of double-hinged doors that swing proudly as platters of food exit. Walking among the many trestle tables is a red-haired beauty of a serving wench, doling out quick and biting quips as she goes. As the front door closes behind you, a patron's hand wanders towards her and a deadly accurate slap follows. Laughter echoes throughout the establishment at the newcomer's faux pas and more than one customer says a version of the following, "That's Rose Lockerby you be messing with! You should be thankful she's in a forgiving mood!"

Rose is an ex-adventurer (6th-Level Monk), who gave up the life after all others in her party were slain by a group of wights. After fleeing as fast as possible, she swore to never enter another underground tomb again. She wandered for a few years before finding herself in The Boatman's Cup. The tavern keeper at the time, a handsome elf named Jonjular, caught her fancy and they were quickly married. Good luck was not on Rose's side, however, for Jonjular was found dead from an apparent heart attack not more than 6 months later. In this manner, Rose took ownership of The Cup 4 years ago. She continues to serve customers, not only because she enjoys the constant bustle, but also because her daily hard work puts to rest any whispered accusations that she poisoned her husband for an easy life.

The wooden shaft portion of the *Moon Staff of Danu de Tuatha* is part of a broom used to sweep the tavern floor. The broom is kept in a cleaning closet that contains the broom, buckets, a mop, cleaning cloths, and cakes of lye soap. The cleaning closet is in the kitchen, just beyond a door behind the tavern's bar.

The broom itself is a straw broom, the handle a darkened, grainy wood. A crescent moon has been carved into the handle near the top. Rose has been known to use the broom to escort ruffians out of the tavern with some not so gentle swats to get them moving. The broom has been unusually sturdy in such pursuits, one of the reasons this broom is one of Rose's favorites. Rose found the broom in a storage nook after Jonjular passed away.

Rose keeps a tidy tavern and is frequently seen cleaning tables and sweeping out from under them during lulls in business. A PC that lingers in the tavern is sure to see Rose using the broom several times during the course of the day, somewhat less in the evening hours due to the more crowded establishment. The storage location of the broom is also easily learned as one can see Rose return the broom to the cleaning closet when passing through the kitchen door.

A PC will need to either negotiate with Rose to acquire the broom or steal the broom.

Negotiating with Rose could be a delicate affair. While she is willing to sell or trade the broom, she will not do so without questions. A retired adventurer herself, she will be quite curious as to why a person would be interested in her

broom when dozens are for sale at the market. Her questions could include:

"Why do you seek my broom?"

"Are there not ones in the market that would serve your needs?"

"What is special about my broom?"

"Does this carving of a crescent moon on the handle have something to do with why you want my broom? What does it mean?"

Rose will know the broom is worth something just by initial questioning. She will set the initial asking price to a high price of 50gp for the broom. This price can fluctuate depending on how well the questions are answered or how much further her curiosity is piqued. A Diplomacy check higher than DC 20 will begin lowering the price depending on level of success, possibly down to 30gp. She will not sell the broom for less than 30gp. She may also refuse to sell the broom if the questions are answered poorly or the Diplomacy check is failed by more than 5 at the GM's discretion.

If the PC does not try to negotiate or angers Rose during negotiations they will be left with little choice but to steal the broom from the closet. Attempting to steal the broom during business hours is a difficult task to undertake unnoticed. The Boatman's Cup is frequented by many regulars who are likely to notice a stranger going back into the kitchen or leaving with something even as trivial as a broom.

A PC attempting to steal the broom during business hours should attempt a Stealth check against one of the following pre-determined DCs. During busy hours the PC must beat a DC 25 to go unnoticed by a patron. This DC reflects that it will be easier to blend in with a crowd. During less busy hours the PC must beat a DC 35 to go unnoticed by a patron. This DC takes into account there is less of a crowd to blend in with.

The PC may decide to sneak into the tavern during the hours it is closed. The primary obstacles of this approach is picking the lock to either the door or window used as a point of entry and avoiding waking Rose who sleeps at the Tavern. There are two primary entrances to the tavern, the front entrance and a side entrance for deliveries. Rose has protected both with quality locks (Open Lock DC 25). The windows are also protected with locks as well (Open Lock DC 23).

Once inside the tavern the PC will need to make a Stealth check to avoid waking Rose while retrieving the broom. In addition, one additional Stealth check needs to be made when leaving the building to avoid alerting the sleeping Rose.

7: LIVERY AUCTIONS

Livery Auctions is the premier auction house of Waterbridge. It has a preeminent location near Southgate and by the great statue of Wilosofer, the god of the forests. This means most of the visitors to Waterbridge pass by the brightly decorated doors of the auction house at least once during their stay. The house has two auctions a month, dealing in products ranging from the common to the unique. They are known throughout the region for featuring unique items in a guarded display room open to the respectable part of the public.

Livery auctions is owned by Adonna Zilkerling, but run by her son Robert (3rd-Level Rogue). Adonna is very old and spends her days in the chambers above the auction house, occasionally requesting her servants to take her down to the auction floor where she can again experience the excitement that filled her life for many years. Her son Robert is a generally quiet man, but he's quick with a laugh and a smile and his easygoing manner has made him many friends throughout the city.

The second floor of the auction house is reserved for living quarters and the entertaining of particularly wealthy auction attendees in a parlor. The ground floor is typically bustling with activity during the day. A large great room consumes most of the first floor, a small raised stage at the front of the room and several rows of wooden benches for auction participants. The sides of the room house display cases for items to be sold at upcoming auctions.

Arching doorways are on opposite sides of the room. The entry to the west is an area for refreshments with fresh baked goods and foodstuffs brought in each morning. The entry to the east leads to the display room the auction house maintains. Items kept in this room rarely go to auction and are instead used to draw people to the auction house during the off-times.

The display room currently contains several rare and unique pieces acquired through the years by the auction house, ranging from weapons of ancient variety, goblets, ancient yellowed tomes, and more. The pieces are kept on pedestal displays about the room. During auction house business hours the display room sees a fair amount of foot traffic either by people visiting just for the display room or by people negotiating auction house rates to sell their own wares.

Of interest to the PC is a khopesh with a series of spidery runes running down the blade to an ivory crafted handle depicting a gibbous moon. The ivory handle is actually a piece of the *Moon Staff of Danu de Tuatha*. The khopesh is kept on a pedestal in the center of the room. The khopesh is lit by a *continual light* spell placed on a conical stone below it.

Gaining access to the display cases undetected during the day is near impossible. With the number of people milling about the Auction House breaching the protections would not go unnoticed. A PC casing the auction house during the day is apt to hear Robert complaining about the breeze on the upper story as a result of his mother opening windows against his orders (Perception DC 8).

If a PC does not overhear this exchange, they are likely to notice the open windows if they approach the building at night looking for an entrance (Perception DC 15). Otherwise the doors of the auction house are quite well secured with fine locks and interior bars. While the lock may be picked (Disable Device DC 25), bypassing the barred door via force is near impossible to do silently.

Each display stand, including the one containing the piece of the *Moon Staff*, is protected by a mechanical pressure plate surrounding each pedestal. Stepping on the plate causes it to depress and trigger a permanent *alarm* spell Robert paid a spellcaster in the city to cast. Failure to disable or avoid the triggering mechanism causes the spell to alert him mentally as long as he is within one mile of the auction house. If Robert is in the house he will reach the room in 4d6 rounds. If he is off premise and within one mile he will reach the display room in 2d4 minutes.

ALARM PLATE TRAP

CR 3

Type mechanical; Perception DC 20; Disable Device DC 23

EFFECTS

Trigger location; **Reset** automatic; **Bypass** hidden switch above entryway in door molding

Effect a permanent *alarm* spell is triggered alerting Robert if he is within one mile of the auction house

In addition to the alarm plate trap each display stand is protected by an additional trap. Failure to detect and disarm the trap results in a portcullis dropping from the ceiling at the

entry to the display room trapping anyone in the room. The portcullis is triggered by unweighting the small platform on the display stand.

PORTCULLIS TRAP

CR 3

Type mechanical; **Perception** DC 25; **Disable Device** DC 25

EFFECTS

Trigger location; **Reset** manual

Effect portcullis falls preventing exit from the room; Portcullis Lock Open, Disable Device DC 21

Robert is more interested in capturing anyone that attempts to steal from the auction house. However, if a thief tries to escape through the portcullis blocked entry, they will find the exit locked and trapped with a sleeping gas.

SLEEPING GAS TRAP

CR 3

Type mechanical; **Perception** DC 25; **Disable Device** DC 20

EFFECTS

Trigger location; **Reset** repair

Effect poison gas (sleeping gas, DC 16 Will Save to avoid); never miss; onset delay (1 round); multiple targets (all targets in a 10-ft.-by-10-ft. room)

Robert will turn any captured individual over to Waterbridge authorities for trespassing and attempted burglary charges.

8: HOME OF LAMMER MALEGROU

You find the home of Lammer Malegrou in the northwestern corner of Temple Isle. A simple wooden door sits between two pots filled with flowering plants. The soft sound of wind chimes comes from one side of the porch.

If the PC knocks a voice calls out advising the PC to come in.

The smell of pipe smoke greets you as the door is pushed open. Natural sunlight fills the room from windows to either side. An old, balding man sits in a wooden chair across from a plain wooden table. His eyes show unusual youthfulness for his appearance.

Lammer Malegrou (10th-Level Expert) is a sage focusing primarily on theological matters, but he is quite knowledgeable about local history. He is almost the exact opposite of what one would expect of a sage who concerns himself with such serious matters. He's boisterous in voice and almost always humming or softly singing some new tune he's picked up from any of the many taverns he visits nightly. Although an obviously old man, his step is jaunty and swift and it seems as if age does not weigh him down. Some say he is much, much older than even his appearance would suggest.

Likely the PC has sought Lammer out as "the wizened of old" from the writing on the wall of the false tomb. Though Lammer has no knowledge of the writing he is familiar with the story of the *Moon Staff of Danu de Tuatha*. When asked he will retrieve a tome from a near bookshelf and flip through it for several moments, humming a very upbeat tune before finding the section he wants.

He explains what is missing from most texts on the subject of the *Moon Staff of Danu de Tuatha* is that Aurophylax

split the staff into three pieces, the crown, shaft, and butt, and distributed them through the city. The staff was never left in the tomb the PC explored. Lammer explains the staff pieces compel the owner to not let the piece leave the strong city walls of Waterbridge.

Lammer has to spend several more moments rummaging for another book on his shelf, humming and tapping his foot as he does so. From behind a row of books he pulls forth another and brings it to the table. He flips through the pages in the book, reads one section, flips back to another, and repeats this several times before finally finding the section he seeks.

Running his finger down the dusty page, Lammer states, "To find the true tomb you must locate the three pieces of the staff. Once assembled the staff will lead you to the true tomb where its magic can be infused once again."

Lammer pauses, flipping to another section of the delicate tome "The ivory handled blade elevates its ancient weapon. The wooden shaft sweeps the happiness and sorrows away. The crown lights the building of knowledge."

The passages Lammer read are clues to where the pieces are within the city now. If the player has difficulty figuring out the clues, the GM can use Lammer and his knowledge to help allude to the correct answers.

The bottom of the staff is made of ivory and is part of a khopesh on display at Livery Auctions (City Area 7). The shaft is a broom used at the Boatman's Cup (City Area 6). The crown is part of the chandelier at the Highgate Library (City Area 1).

TEMPLE ISLE & THE FALSE TOMB

There are two places of interest to the PC on Temple Isle: the temple proper and the home of Lammer Malegrou (Area 8), sage extraordinaire. The small isle is a man-made religious stronghold for the moon goddess Danu (whom Danu de Tuatha was named after) in the River Whythe. The isle is walled off from the river and the city. Two bridges cross the water to enter the isle: Moonrise Bridge (to the east) and Moonset Bridge (to the west). The two bridges play an important role in the worship at the temple for entering the Isle is always done at Moonrise Bridge while exits are done on Moonset Bridge. There are three daily worships at the temple: One at moonrise, one at midday, and one at moonset. Anyone from the town is welcome to the worships, and there are usually 300 to 400 people present at any one time. The largest session tends to be the moonset session, as it is filled with visitors to the city who have never attended services here before. Read the following when the PC decides to attend services.

The morning's light is brightening the sky to the east as dozens of people cross over Dawn Bridge to enter the Temple Isle. As they move, some softly sing devotional songs, while other chat with each other, renewing a friendship through daily conversation. The Temple of the Moon Goddess towers above the walled isle, its plaster and whitewashed surface just beginning to pick up the glint of the light from the east.

As you move with the worshippers over the bridge and into the great Temple, the first rays of sunlight hit the crescent symbol at the peak of the great dome. Within, you find the giant circular room below the great dome filled with circular pews surrounding the center balcony hanging down from the top of dome like some giant water drop just about to descend. Around the circular pews are

two doors. One door, its marble surface polished smooth from countless hands, obviously leads to the working areas of the temple. The other door is much less used, but still well maintained.

The first door leads to the working areas of the temple. These areas are always busy with people going to and fro. If the PC goes through this door, she is quickly greeted by a member of the temple and kindly asked to return to the public area. If this request isn't agreed too, force can (and will) be applied. As a general idea, annoying the main temple in a city is a bad idea and the player will probably know better than to do such, but if it comes to this the GM needs to make up the appropriate response to the PC's recalcitrance. It should be obvious to the PC that there is no chance of sneaking through the working areas of the temple - it's just too well lit and busy for anyone to sneak around in.

The second door leads to the catacombs within Temple Isle. The faithful are interred within the many niches adorning the hallway walls. This area is entered only by priests and only during a funeral and 3 times daily during each prayer session. Other than these times it is empty and fairly accessible. It is within these dark catacombs that the false Tomb of Kara-Duir is located.

If the PC investigated in the Highgate Library, she knows that her goal is in the older parts of the catacombs and she'll find locating the secret door leading to the false tomb easy. Opening it is also easy as instructions were in several different books about the tomb in the library. Finding the secret door without instruction is very difficult, requiring a successful DC 28 Perception check assuming that she even looks in the correct location; the catacombs are on multiple levels and composed of passage after passage of similar make and content.

(The False Tomb is Unmapped)

FT-1. THE ENTRY

The narrow catacombs beneath the Moon Temple unexpectedly open into a large room, in the center of which stands a very large statue of a crescent moon. The statue is made of a black stone, except for the moon itself, which is made of a rich marble. All the walls of this room are like the countless passages of the catacombs: honeycombed with niches containing the bones of long-dead worshippers of Danu.

This part of the catacombs is very old and judging from the few footprints in the dust, even the priests come through this area only rarely. The great statue of the moon should tip off the PC that this is the room containing the secret door. As noted earlier, finding and opening it is easy when directed.

FT-2. THE FALSE FALSE TOMB

The secret door slides silently away to reveal the long-lost tomb of Kara-Duir. The air thick and old, this large room is covered in mosaics depicting the stalwart Kara-Duir - his dedication to Danu de Tuatha forever displayed for those who choose to look. Near the western end of the room is a dais upon which rests a carved stone sarcophagus. Behind the dais, the Danu story plays out in the mosaic, her staff held against the fearsome black dragon Varsullicraxus.

Within the sarcophagus is the skeleton of some unknown. There is nothing else of interest within. The secret door leading to the true false tomb lies upon the western wall, just behind the mosaic of the staff. Locating this door requires a successful DC 20 Perception check, but if the PC spends time examining

the staff in the mosaic, the secret door can be located with a DC 15 Perception check.

If the PC fails to locate this secret door, the adventure is not yet over. Rumors about how the true tomb was hidden by a false tomb can be gathered from Dorat Korumafoom, the librarian of Highgate Library, or from Lammer Malegrou, the Temple Isle sage, if the PC succeeds on a DC 15 Diplomacy check with either of the two. This information results in a +5 to additional Perception rolls to find the secret door. If the PC fails all her rolls, she fails to find the tomb. Such is the life of an adventurer! Failure is always an option.

FT-3. THE TRUE FALSE TOMB

The narrow chamber beyond has a sarcophagus set low into the floor, a trio of empty brackets rise from the lid. The walls close in tight on the sarcophagus on the north and south sides. A metal statue of a robed man with a staff stands on the eastern wall near the door.

This false tomb is guarded by the statue Aurophylax left here. The statue animates when anyone approaches within 5' of the sarcophagus.

ANIMATED STATUE (MEDIUM)

N Medium construct

Init +0; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception -5

CR 3

XP 800

DEFENSE

AC 16, touch 10, flat-footed 14 (+4 natural)

hp 36 (3d10+20)

Fort +1, **Ref** +1, **Will** -4

Defensive Abilities hardness 10; Immune construct traits

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee slam +5 (1d6+3)

STATISTICS

Str 14, **Dex** 10, **Con** -, **Int** -, **Wis** 1, **Cha** 1

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +5; **CMD** 15

SQ 2 construction points (spent on Metal, Ex, 2 CP)

Upon the Animated Statue's defeat the following words on the western wall flare in a flash of bright silver light before slowly fading leaving only the scratched in words.

*Herein the tomb lies empty of what you seek,
Only the wise of old knows the story of the three,
Join the three to find what you seek beneath the cleansing waters,
Allow the water beyond the growing moon to replenish what
once was.*

-Aurophylax

Closer examination reveals the words appear to have been etched into the wall by a large claw or talon.

The clue in the writing on the wall indicates the staff is not present, as seen by the three empty brackets. The wise of old refers to Lammer Malegrou, the man who is steeped in the history of Waterbridge. Joining the three refers to piecing the staff back together which will help lead the PC to the sewers under the Balshaw's Bath House where the magic pool will restore the magic to the staff.

CONCLUSION

With the staff recovered and the magic restored the PC will possess a great and powerful artifact. With such power over black dragons the PC may wish to seek out a black dragon to wield the *Moon Staff of Danu de Tuatha* against as tremendous wealth stands to be had, though at a price to the wielder.

If others learn of the PC's possession of the staff of legend she may become a target of theft herself as others seek to wield the staff for themselves. If this occurs, unless the PC takes great protections and maintains constant vigilance she may find herself a victim of theft.

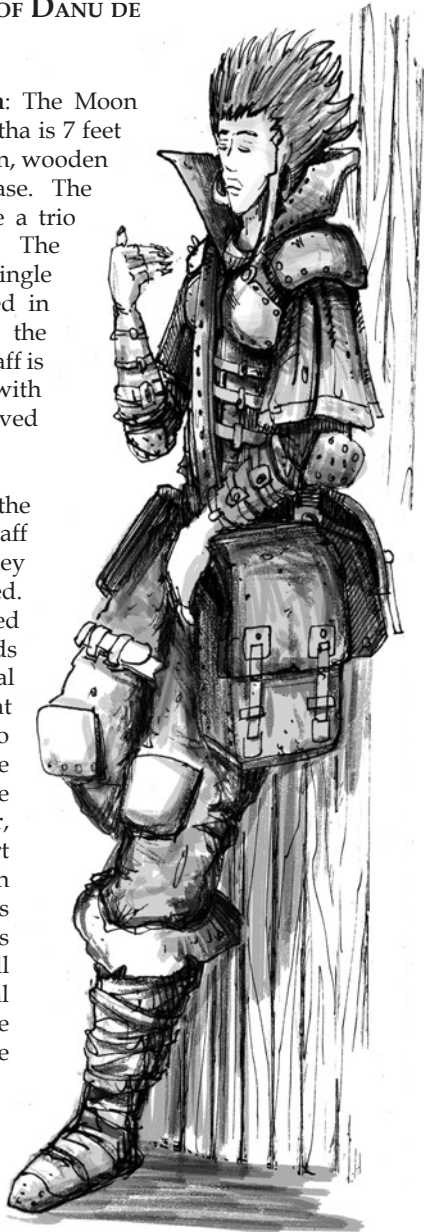
The PC may find more value in simply selling the staff to a collector. Such a buyer does not exist in Waterbridge. The PC would need to travel to a much larger city to find a collector with the wealth and inclination to buy the staff from them. If the PC has attracted the attention of other individuals desiring the staff, reaching a city with the staff may prove more challenging than anticipated.

NEW MAGIC ITEMS

THE MOON STAFF OF DANU DE TUATHA

Physical Description: The Moon Staff of Danu de Tuatha is 7 feet tall with a glass crown, wooden shaft, and ivory base. The crown is shaped like a trio of crescent moons. The wooden shaft has a single crescent moon carved in the wood towards the top. The butt of the staff is a 2' length of ivory with a gibbous moon carved into it.

When Split: Once the three pieces of the staff have been located they can easily be joined. Upon being fitted together the staff holds none of its original magical power—that has been drained into the pool in the True Tomb beneath the Bathhouses. However, the staff acts as a sort of divining rod. When the PC concentrates for three rounds the staff will pull slightly in the general direction of the true tomb. The closer the PC is to the True Tomb the stronger the pull.



When Joined: One of the 5 great *Moon Staffs*, the *Moon Staff of Danu de Tuatha* is the bane to all black dragons. The *Moon Staff of Danu de Tuatha* may be used in combat as a +4 quarterstaff, and when facing a dragon, the bearer may use a *wish* against the dragon. The wish is always a single choice for the dragon. The choice is either instant death or instant banishment to a land far away as chosen by the staff bearer. It is indeed the rare dragon that chooses death. The staff enacts a heavy price upon the bearer, however, for a single use of the staff's wish ensures that all the people the bearer loves will die before their eyes.

All moon staffs work but once for each bearer and all were made from an ancient silverwood tree, the last of its kind. All moon staffs are intelligent and very evil, but have no ability to control their bearers. They communicate telepathically with their owners.

Destruction: A moon staff can be destroyed under the claws of an ancient metallic dragon.

PRE-GENERATED CHARACTER

KATRINA ARDON

CR 4

Female human rogue 4
CG Medium Humanoid (human)
Init +7; Senses Perception +8

DEFENSE

AC 18, touch 14, flat-footed 18 (+3 armor, +1 enhancement, +1 deflection, +3 Dex)

hp 33 (4d8+12)

Fort +3, Ref +7, Will +2

Defensive Abilities evasion, trap sense +1, uncanny dodge

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee masterwork rapier +7 (1d6/18-20) or

Ranged shortbow +5 (1d6/x3)

Special Attacks rogue talent (bleeding attack), sneak attack +2d6

STATISTICS

Str 10, Dex 17, Con 14, Int 12, Wis 12, Cha 12

Base Atk +3; CMB +3; CMD 16

Feats Improved Initiative, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (rapier)

Skills Acrobatics +8, Appraise +5, Bluff +7, Climb +6, Diplomacy +6, Disable Device +10, Disguise +5, Escape Artist +8, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +5, Linguistics +5, Profession (Gambler) +6, Sense Motive +5, Sleight of Hand +9, Stealth +10, Swim +4, Use Magic Device +8

Languages Common, Elven, Orc

SQ rogue talent (fast stealth), trapfinding

Gear antitoxin, arrows (20), *cloak of elvenkind*, holy water (x2), *potion of cat's grace*, *potion of cure light wounds* (x2), *potion of cure moderate wounds*, *potion of invisibility*, rapier (masterwork), 10 rations, +1 *ring of protection*, rope (silk), shortbow (masterwork), +1 *studded leather armor*, 5 sunrods, tanglefoot bag (x2), thieves' tools (masterwork), 3 50-gp gem, 3 25-gp gems, 125 gp.

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