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ISSUE #99 • JUNE 2003

by **glumag**

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D20 INDUSTRY NEWS, DOWNER & INTRODUCING MT. ZOGON

In This Issue

Dungeon

"By day the sun cast a wan maroon gloom across the land; by night all was dark and still, with only a few pale stars to post the old constellations. Time went at a languid pace, without purpose and urgency, and folk made few long-range plans."

Jack Vance
Rhialto the Marvellous



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Letters 8

Critical Threats:
Colossal Crypt 16

Scott Peterson

This tall chamber is composed of rings of ancient crypts. Do they hold the heroes of old? Or possibly the villains? Maybe the giant headless statue that serves as the crypt's centerpiece holds the key. A D&D "Critical Threat."



Quadripartite 20

Peter Aperlo

A minion of chaos has come to the Prime Material Plane from the void of the Far Realms to terrorize and conquer in the name of its masters. The PCs must act quickly to assemble a legendary artifact powerful enough to weaken the minion so it can be defeated. A D&D adventure for four 14th-level PCs.



Critical Threats:
Phyx 42

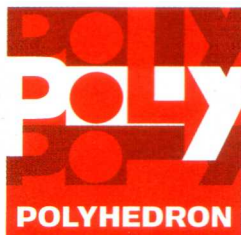
Seth Spencer

The drow train marvelous servants, but when one of their minions grows a spine and escapes, it makes for a deadly encounter. The choker Phyx is just such an enemy. His assassin training combined with his natural choker abilities make him a potent foe. A D&D "Critical Threat."

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ON THE COVER: Mark Zug paints Hu'shurish the efreeti barbarian and artisan. He rules his brass tower, guarding one of the relics needed to assemble the primal anchor in "Quadripartite."



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Maps of Mystery
(Temple of Boccob) **50**

Bonus Subscriber Section!
Fish Story **54**

Adam Jortner

Locathah have invaded, or so it seems. But why, after all these peaceful years, have the fish creatures abandoned their home? The PCs must journey to the flooded village of Waterford and delve into the past to discover the cause of the current commotion and uncover the secret history of the region. A D&D adventure for four 5th-level PCs.



First Watch **3**

Hijinx **8**

Jeff Quick

Former *POLYHEDRON* Editor Jeff Quick drops by to deliver the most daring Mini-Game yet. Try out nonviolent conflict resolution with *Hijinx*, a rock 'n' roll lollapalooza inspired by the fun-loving musical cartoons of our youth. Strap on a guitar, hire an annoyingly intelligent pet, and get ready to meddle.



Global Positioning
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Global Positioning
(Nightclub) **35**

Downer **46**

Our resident drow dungeon guard faces off against Tagget the halfling and runs afoul of a new enemy.

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Vol. XVII, No.3
Issue 99

ON THE FLIPSIDE: Cover artists Jason Martin and Heather McCollum of Artplaymix bring us a colorful rendition of rockin' crimesolvers to commemorate *Hijinx*, this issue's *POLYHEDRON* Mini-Game. Erik and Kyle will be touring with the band until next issue.



View from the Other Side

For the past few months, *DUNGEON* Editor Chris Thomasson has regaled you with tales from our weekly playtest of the new **Adventure Path: Shackled City**, which started with "Life's Bazaar," in issue #97 and continued with "Flood Season" last issue. The next installment will appear in issue #102, which gives me a chance to sneak in and tell you about the campaign from the perspective of one of the players.

Chris likes to focus on our mistakes, mentioning twice now that we were, in fact, "industry professionals" who should know better. I'd like to point out that there's one very good reason why Chris focuses on these mistakes in his editorials. Messing up is pretty much the only thing we do reliably or well.

To bring you up to speed: *DRAGON* Editor Jesse Decker replaced the lost druid Hallan with a cleric of Fharlanghn named Podo, friend to Matt Sernett's new character, Kodo (*DRAGON* editors sure love them some *Beastmaster*). Newbie Web Developer Rob Head replaced the departed Meechee with Brien, an elven barbarian. The rest of us kept on keeping on with the same old characters from the first installment. To make a long story short, the villainous Tongueater ate Brien and Podo, proving that his tastes extend far beyond what his name suggests.

My character, Mestiphar the Magnificent, survived the way he's always survived when the going gets tough—by not coming to the dangerous sessions. Even though the playtest has scored one of the highest kill-rates of any campaign I've ever played, I've been lucky enough to be on vacation or tight deadlines each time a character has been killed. Whether my character's survival comes from pure luck, karma, or insider knowledge is, of course, a private matter between me, my boss, and the DM.

Here are some things I've learned along the way. A "Diary of a Survivor," if you will.

Come Early, Come Often

When you miss a session, no matter the reason, you're putting your friends at risk. That's not to say you should enslave your life to the schedule of the game, but it's worth factoring the risk to other players when you decide not to show up to a session. DMs often plan expecting everyone to be there. By the time you've gotten stuck in traffic or decided to blow off the game, it's likely too late for the DM to scale down his encounters. Nearly every time a fellow PC has died in the last two campaigns I've played, it's been on a day when a couple players were absent.

Initiative Cards Help

When we playtest at work, we generally go for about an hour and a half. That's not a lot of time, so it's best to cut away anything that's not actually playing the game. Chris used to track initiative on a whiteboard, scrolling through turns in a fairly clumsy fashion that slowed down the game. We finally convinced him to use initiative cards produced by The Game Mechanics (www.thegamemechanics.com) and the difference is remarkable. Check them out online or just make some cards of your own with ordinary 3 x 5 inch index cards. You won't be sorry.

The Fiend Folio is an Enemy to All Players

The first couple **Shackled City** adventures used creatures from the recently published *Fiend Folio*. The book's very popular around the Paizo offices, since four of our editors participated in writing it. It's also been very unpopular because creatures from it have killed almost a half-dozen PCs. Last week, the combination of a particularly nasty pit trap and a swarm of blood-bloaters almost took out half the party. All of us have been anxiously awaiting meeting our own creations in combat. At this rate, few of us expect to survive, and we've got only ourselves to blame.

ERIK

Dungeon

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I Wanna Praise You...

I'd first like to applaud issue #97. I found all the adventures within to be nothing short of exhilarating. My players especially enjoyed "Life's Bazaar," by Chris Perkins (another tally on the hit-list, Chris!). We used this module as a break from the higher-level campaign my players are currently tackling. They seemed to appreciate the idea of running two separate worlds, and it gave them a second wind when going back to the master campaign.

Now I'd like to address a few of the letters published in the last couple issues regarding people concerned about the use of both drugs and mature content as gaming material. Grow up. What you are really saying is that death and violence are fine, but your kids shouldn't be introduced to otherworldly threats.

It seems to me that these issues are going to eventually find them in some way, and what better way than through the filtered advice of the parent or guardian?

You know, it only takes a few minutes for a DM worth his weight in Bit-tleSnags (which is what my rogue PC calls anything without value) to simply alter the adventure to fit into your impenetrable G-rated game. If kids were trying to hunt down adult material, there are many other contending magazines that come to mind.

To close, I just want to say "good job and keep it up" to the staff of *DUNGEON Magazine*. It's my favorite thing to find in my mailbox (other than the occasional 6-digit inheritance from that great-uncle I've never met). Although I am not a fan of *POLYHEDRON*, I'm not going to let that technicality null my appreciation for *DUNGEON*. I praise thee.

Hmm, publish this and I'll renew my subscription ... bah, I'll do it anyway.

James Bethany ("Gargamel")
Vie Email

Can we still publish your letter?

—Erik Mona

Frown Now Upside Down

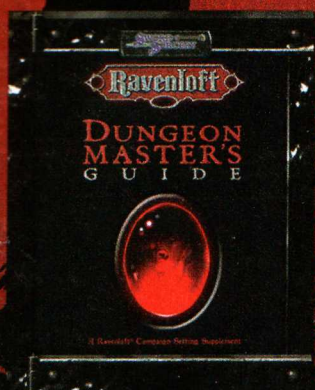
I must say I walked into my local bookstore with a frown on my face. Shall I buy this issue of *DUNGEON*? I asked myself. Last issue was below average, and the one with vile content didn't interest me not so much because it was vile, but because it struck me as boring.

I picked up issue #97. Oh look, I muttered, a cartoony beholder. I flipped inside, however, and found I had struck gold!

I'd like to congratulate you guys on *DUNGEON* #97! It has to be one of my

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A collection of seven Star Trek comic book covers from the 1970s, arranged on a blue and white background. The covers are: 'The Motion Picture' (top left), 'The Motion Picture II' (top center), 'The Motion Picture III' (top right), 'The Motion Picture IV' (middle left), 'The Motion Picture V' (middle center), 'The Motion Picture VI' (middle right), and 'The Motion Picture VII' (bottom center). The covers feature various Star Trek characters and scenes, including the Enterprise, the Klingons, and the Klingon warrior Kahless. The covers are in various states of wear and tear, with some showing significant damage and discoloration.

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favorites thus far. “Demonblade” was a brilliant adventure, and I’m very happy with the new **Adventure Path: Shackled City**. It thrills me that the adventure consists of so many pages, because my group hasn’t had a long one since “Tears for Twilight Hollow” (*DUNGEON* #90). “Blind Man’s Bluff” has given me loads of adventure ideas.

Also, this issue of *POLYHEDRON* was by far the best ever. I have been thinking of DMing a World War II campaign for the last while, but didn't know how.

Vile content? I don't see what all the hype about it is. If a father wants to use **DUNGEONS & DRAGONS** for his kid, let him. So what if he sees a label that says "Porphyry House of Horror." Unless he's a reincarnated surgeon, he won't be able to open the sealed section without tearing it. Better yet, why doesn't the father take it out of the magazine and throw it away? *Wow! What a concept!*

My advice, however, is to omit the vile content. My sentiments? You may lose reader's by including vile content, but I for one won't burn my subscription because I don't see Satan's house of gore on the front cover.

Andreas Palalas
Via Email

Youth Chimes in on Vile Debate

I have roleplayed for about a year now, but just started reading your magazine with issue #96.

I have read the letters that were submitted regarding the sealed content in issue #95. Now, I didn't buy that issue, but as I understand it, the sealed section caused some complaints.

I have seen many replies to this section with negative feedback regarding children. As I am a DM for a group of 14- and 13-year-olds, I buy D&D stuff. However, if I tried to buy a book called *The Book of Vile Darkness* or a magazine with a sealed section, my parents would forbid it.

The way I see it, it's the parents' responsibility to monitor this kind of thing. If I had bought it through a subscription, however, my parents would have just cut it out, thrown it away,

then given me my magazine back.

Also, regarding the “mature tone” letter in issue #97 about drug use, I think it was handled very well [in *DUNGEON* #96’s “Pandemonium in the Veins”]. My group could tell it helped a little, but then hurt in the long run. One guy tried some to get a boost, but lost some permanent Constitution and so immediately stopped. I think that the drug use was shown in a very negative light which proved a point very well. I applaud you for your portrayal of drugs as a bad thing!

**Your 14-year-old DM,
Sam Kerr**

I'll start by saying that I think your magazine has revolutionized the way people perceive roleplaying games today. I've been playing D&D for nineteen years, and I have seen enough change to boggle the mind. People who don't "get" the game cannot understand why I have \$3,000 worth of rules in my bookshelves, or spend hours developing plots and personalities for my adventures.

"Aren't you going to ever grow up?"

"You mean you still play that game?"

Sometimes I feel that at heart I'm still that 10-year-old, sneaking my

Getting in Touch with Dungeon/ Polyhedron

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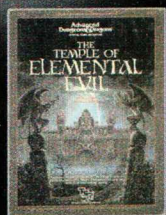
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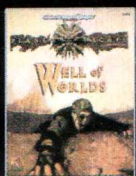
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books from under my bed at night.

D&D is more than just a game. It is an extension of our reality. It is an expression of a life that we, deep down, wish we could be a part of. A place where good can always triumph over evil, and where death is not the end, just a delay. It is a sense of control in today's world, which we have no control over.

Then again, it is just a game. A couple rulebooks and ten bucks for a magazine full of adventures and hours of fun. But wait. John "I've been a gamer for 300 years, and the original rules and original setting are better, and the game's gone commercial" Doe decides today's game has lost something—that fancy magazines and fresh new perspectives somehow distort the true meaning of the game. If you have to measure the game's worth against your self-proclaimed superiority, I pity you.

Games evolve. They change daily, like it or not. True gamers evolve with them. I feel sorry for anyone who feels today's game has not improved from yesterday's game.

A fresh revised ruleset or flashy magazine cover does not hurt the game's integrity. A gamer with a superiority complex does. So next time you bash the game, the material, or the people who strive to make a better game for tomorrow, don't. It's bad enough we get negativity from the people who don't "get" it. What's disappointing is when we get the same from the people who should. *DUNGEON*, keep up the good work.

Trevor Surette
Yarmouth, Nova Scotia
Canada

Forgive Me, Father

I write to confess my sin: I wasted good money on an adventure published by another gaming company [company name withheld because we're nice editors]. At my gaming store, I perused numerous adventures, hoping to find an adventure suitable to the level of the PCs in my campaign. Based on the description on the back of one of these modules, I thought I had found the per-

fect adventure for my characters. But when I got home and removed the plastic covering from this module, I discovered numerous flaws that made me regret my purchase.

First off, the module's word content seemed to be no greater than that of the average *DUNGEON* adventure. That might not sound so bad, but, in a single *DUNGEON* issue, I get four or five adventures, all for a cost, with my subscription, of about half what I paid for this one module!

To make matters worse, I further found that the adventure was highly location-specific and therefore almost impossible to adapt to my own setting. For example, and this is important to the adventure, the city where the adventure begins presumed a dwarven city founded by "an aggressive dwarven empire" that had launched a war against a neighboring human kingdom!

Furthermore, one of the first encounters involves chasing some thieves into the foundry that makes the cannons for the city's navy. Ugh. In this module, the NPCs' speech sounded unrealistic, the narrative straightjacketed the PCs' actions along a predetermined course, and the readable text blocks frequently had the PCs taking specific actions.

Furthermore, the module provided no notes for adapting the adventure to other settings, nor even for adapting the adventure to characters of varying levels. As a working adult, my mistake cost me nothing I could not afford. However, I wish there were a way I could warn your other readers, especially the young ones, not to make the same mistake I made. I would tell them that other gaming companies cannot even come close to matching the value *DUNGEON Magazine* provides. I hereby declare myself officially spoiled by the quality of *DUNGEON Magazine*.

Jon Rariden
Lilburn, GA

And we hereby declare ourselves officially spoiled by letters like Jon's. Thanks for the kind words!

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While a few of those companies offer slick production values and nice-looking covers, very few have been in the business as long as DUNGEON has. Believe it or not, most of the suggestions in the DUNGEON Writer's Guidelines came from years of feedback from readers just like you. From "Scaling the Adventure" sidebars to not forcing the action of PCs in boxed text, we've funneled our experience into creating the most user-friendly adventures in the industry. We're always glad to hear that our plans have worked for our readers.

—Erik Mona

THE END Where's Godlike?

I am a big fan of the POLYHEDRON comic Godlike, and really love the work done on it. There is something I noted in the latest POLYHEDRON issue:

1. It was based around WW II.
2. There was no "next issue: ..." at the end of the latest and greatest Godlike comic.

Will there be any more Godlike comics? I sure hope the comic continues, for I really, really love it.

**Jonathan Adams
Via Email**

Good news, bad news time. Godlike was originally planned as a self-contained six-installment story. The comic in DUNGEON #97 marked the last time it will appear in these pages. Although writer/author Dennis Detwiler doesn't have plans to continue the strip elsewhere, he does have plenty of plans for the Godlike RPG. Interested folks can check out the news on Godlike at the site of the game's new publisher, Arc Dream Publishing (www.arcdream.com).

On the good news front, last issue saw the debut of Godlike's replacement, Downer, by our very own Art Director Kyle Hunter. We'll keep publishing the exploits of the down-on-his-luck drow as long as Kyle keeps writing and drawing them. We love Downer around the office, and hope you grow to welcome him into your homes. Or at least into the magazine. —Erik Mona

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CRITICAL THREATS

BY SCOTT PETERSON
ARTWORK BY JEFF CARLISLE

COLOSSAL CRYPT

A pale luminescence from below outlines a gigantic headless statue that fills the center of this cylindrical burial chamber. It appears that the statue is that of a bare-chested, male humanoid. Symbols are carved all over the chest and arms of the figure, giving it a tattooed look. The outstretched arms cradle a smooth, circular object between long, claw-like fingers.

Looking down, you can see the source of the light. Heavy patches of a strange, glowing fungus appear to be floating in a body of murky water that rises to just below the statue's knees. Smaller patches dot the interior walls of the cylinder as well as parts of the statue. Jutting from the water is the statue's head. Elongated and smooth, it has a slender nose, jutting chin, and large, lidless eyes. Bits of the fungus have grown around its eyes, now giving them an odd radiance.

Four levels have been carved into the stone above the waterline; 75 feet separates each tier. Every level holds numerous open niches—each 20 feet wide and 10 feet deep. Within each rests a sarcophagus cut from beautiful white and gray-veined marble. Ensnconced behind each bier is a single torch casting a greenish flame. Strange symbols, similar in appearance to those tattooed on the central statue, cover every stone surface within each niche, while man-sized statues—of the same race as the center sculpture—flank the sides of each niche. Each wears a cloak and clutches a long staff topped with a fist-sized orb.

Two sets of stairs wrap around support pillars rising from opposite ends of the crypt. Landings allow you to step off and explore the lower levels of this massive chamber.

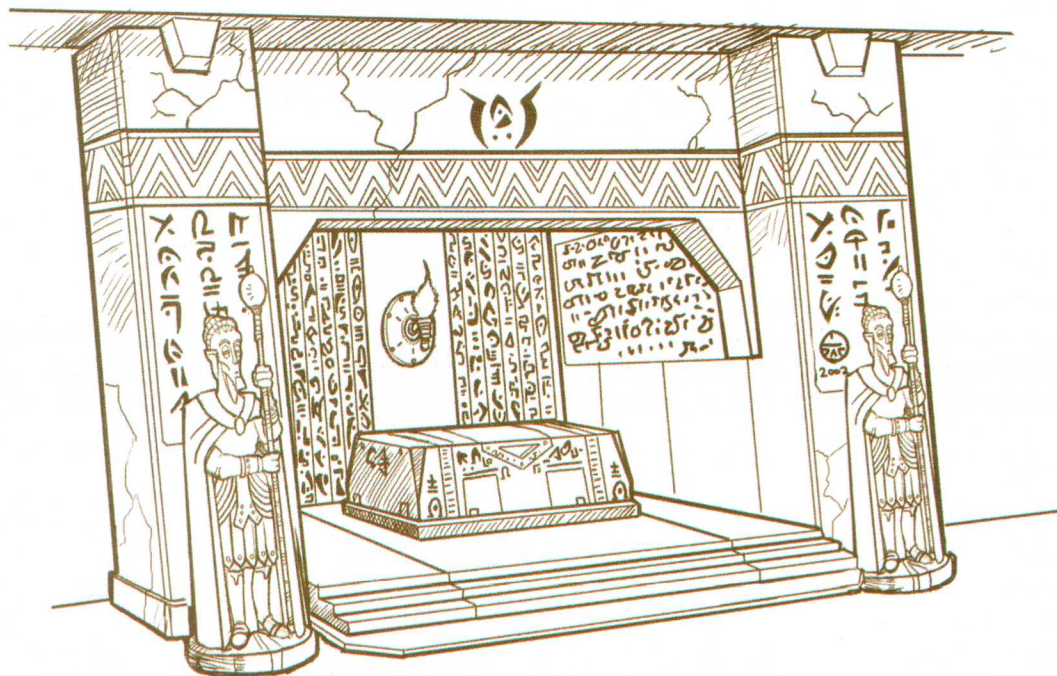
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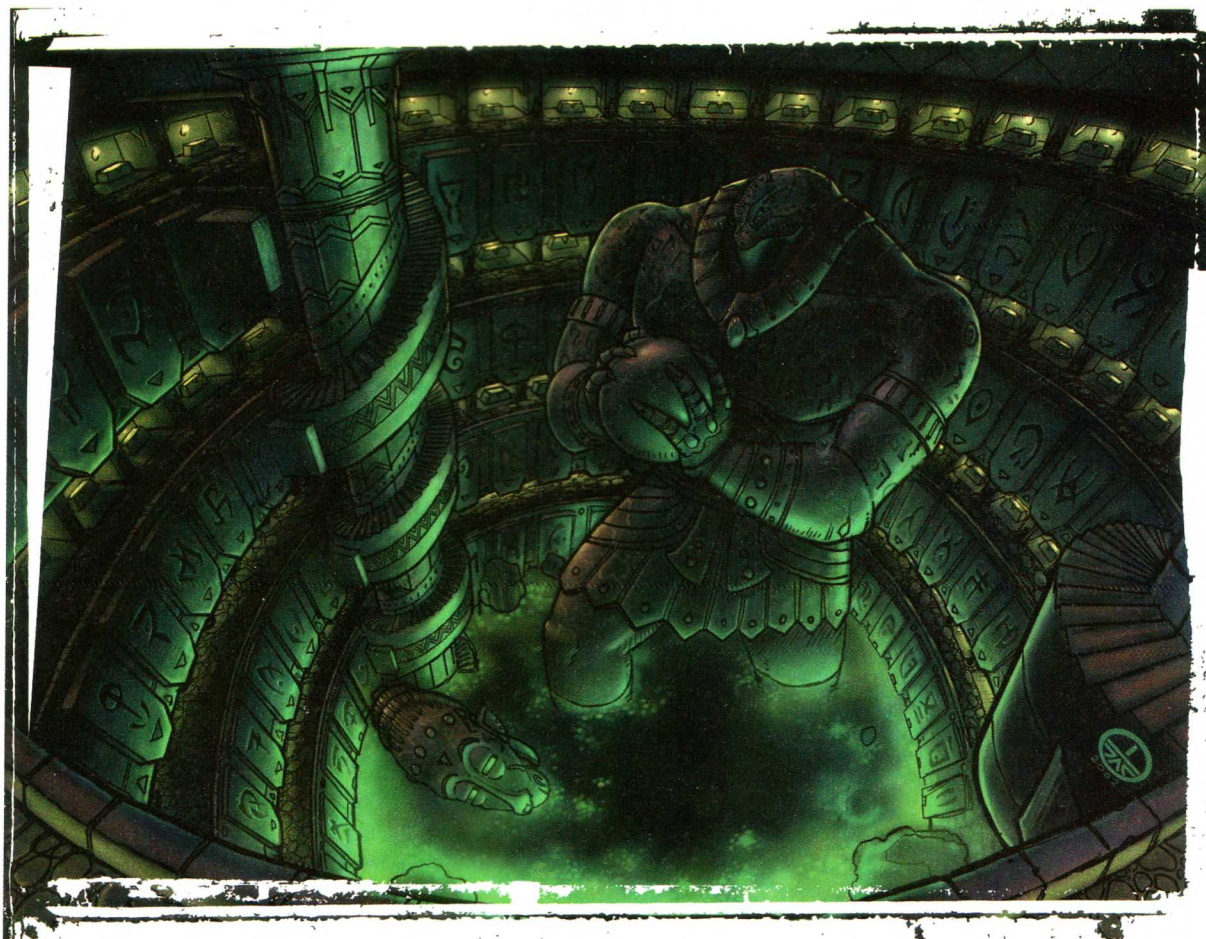
The crypt rises to a height of 400 feet from the bottom of the chamber to the top. The characters enter the room at the uppermost ring, 300 feet from the bottom (275 feet above the water). You can easily make the room larger by inserting more levels between the top and bottom layers. Feel free to alter the description of the statue to suit your campaign. The figure could be a more normal race or something even more monstrous or alien.

The water is 25 feet deep. Characters without a way to breathe underwater must make Swim checks (DC 15) to get a look at the bottom. The water might be fed from an underground spring, or perhaps the crypt is open to the sky over the statue, allowing rain to fill the basin at the base of the crypt. It might be frigid, exposing creatures that fall in to hypothermia, or scalding hot (see the *DUNGEON MASTER's Guide*, page 86). No matter the temperature, anyone who plummets into the water risks drowning (see the *DUNGEON MASTER's Guide*, page 85). Beneath the water is a small mausoleum that rests between the statue's legs, as well as a fifth and final ring.

You might also consider changing the water to some other, more naturally volatile substance. Perhaps the water is acid or magma, and the stone of the crypt magically enhanced to resist the effects of the deadly substance. Perhaps it's not water at all, but a toxic fog that paralyzes or kills those who enter and fail a Fortitude save.

Altering the climate within the room can make it more interesting, as well. If you opt for cold water, perhaps the room is high in the mountains, adding frigid air and slippery stone to the challenges the PCs must deal with. Walking down the stairs might be difficult enough to require Balance checks to avoid falling over the side. Conversely, the chamber might lie near a volcanic range, and the sweltering heat of the chamber makes even the stone hot enough to burn.





The top of the headless statue is an ideal place to stage a climactic battle involving the PCs and an adversary. The villain might lure the PCs to the top of the statue. If combat ensues on the shoulders of the statue, you should require Balance checks (DC 10 or so) each round the PCs take more than a 5-foot step. If the check fails, the PC should make a Reflex save (DC 12) or plummet to the water 275 feet below (Causing 20d6 points of damage). Even if the save is successful, the PC can only hold on helplessly until he can pull himself up (Climb, DC 10).

The stairs and ledges can also become interesting during combat, especially if the PCs get caught on separate levels. The levels and steps have no railings, so opponents should try to knock PCs off the edge of the rings (via bull rush, *telekinesis*, grapple checks, or via other methods). Villains with reach weapons, like longswords or spiked chains, would be especially effective at herding PCs closer to the edge.

The fungus can be harmless or toxic, depending on how much more difficult you wish to make the encounter. It might also be a key component to a spell or ritual, or it might be a component in a binding effect that keep hordes of undead imprisoned in the sarcophagi.

DEVELOPMENT

Cleetu, the Vizier for evil King Olantus, has surmised that a powerful magic device is entombed in the mausoleum. The

Vizier believes that the circular object the main statue clutches is a depiction of this device, and that the original might be entombed somewhere within. With the device, which is actually a *sphere of annihilation*, he plans to extend Olantus's reign into neighboring peaceful kingdoms.

Inside one of the marbled sarcophagi is an extraplanar portal. To activate it, a person must first incant the "opening" ritual, carved into the lid of the sarcophagus. The two statues that flank this particular niche are actually stone golems that have been given instructions to attack anyone who removes the lid without first reciting the ritual. The portal connects to Sigil, the City of Doors. A squad of githyanki troopers have orders to seize the portal and establish a base of operations near the colossal crypt. With a permanent, secret gate to Sigil, they can invade the Outlands in force. If Sigil falls to the gith, the rest of the Multiverse is open for conquest.

Finally, perhaps the central statue was once a massive, destructive creature controlled by an evil warlord (like a colossal stone golem or a blackstone giant from the *Fiend Folio*). Only when its head was severed from its body was the creature defeated. A cabal of greater barghest sorcerers seeks to reunite the statue's head with its body and uncover the controlling device that lies deep within a complex reached through the mausoleum between the creature's feet. Ω

CRITICAL THREATS

BY SCOTT PETERSON
ARTWORK BY PETER BERGTING



PHYX

➤ **Phyx, Male Choker Rog6/Ftr3/Asn5:** CR 16; Small Aberration; HD 3d8+3 plus 11d6+11 plus 3d10+3; hp 100; Init +8; Spd 20 ft., climb 10 ft.; AC 24, touch 15, flat footed 24; BAB +12; Grap +11; Atk +19/+14/+9 melee (1d4+5 plus 1d6 electrical/17–20, +2 keen shock dagger), or +16 melee (1d3+3, 2 tentacle slaps); Reach 10 ft.; SA sneak attack +6d6, death attack, improved grab, constrict 1d3+3, haste, poison use; SQ evasion, uncanny dodge (Dex bonus to AC, can't be flanked), darkvision 60 ft., +2 saves vs. poison; AL CE; SV Fort +10, Ref +17, Will +11; Str 16, Dex 18, Con 12, Int 4, Wis 14, Cha 7.

Skills: Balance +6, Climb +13, Disguise +2, Escape Artist +7, Hide +20, Jump +8, Listen +8, Move Silently +16, Spot +9, Tumble +11. **Feats:** Alertness, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Mobility, Spring Attack, Weapon Finesse (dagger).

See the *DUNGEON MASTER'S Guide*, page 29, for assassin special attacks and qualities. Note that the save DC for Phyx's death attack is 13.

See the *Monster Manual*, page 36, for choker special attacks and qualities.

Possessions: +2 keen ghost touch shock dagger, dust of disappearance (1 use), +2 gloves of Dexterity, +4 bracers of armor, cloak of resistance +2, potion of blur, potion of bull's strength, potion of cat's grace, potion of cure moderate wounds, potion of sneaking.

Found nearly dead by a wandering drow patrol, Phyx was brought up by that house's weapons master for a time, and then thrown in with the house's master of espionage, a sly and cunning drow rogue/sorcerer. Beatings were an everyday

occurrence for Phyx, but he managed to survive and hone his skills in the art of infiltration and assassination. His wake up call most every morning came in the form of a *magic missile* from his instructor, and he quickly developed a hatred for all spellcasters—he doesn't recognize any difference in arcane or divine casting.

Over the years, he was used in many covert attacks on other drow houses. When one attack did not go as well as planned, his house was destroyed in retaliation. Phyx took his opportunity to escape that day and fled into the Underdark.

APPEARANCE

Phyx's small, dark form blends easily with the cave walls of the Underdark. He wears nothing but his magic items and belt with a loincloth and a few pouches. His skin is the color of stone and his eyes a dull gray. He tends to hunch over, making himself appear even smaller than he is.

TACTICS

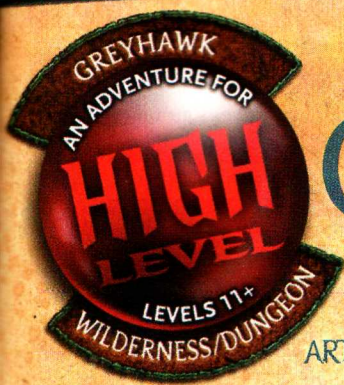
Phyx does not like face to face melee combat; it just isn't his style. He waits, hiding in the shadows until the time is right, and then strikes using his Spring Attack feat and his extra partial action to inflict death attacks on his prey. He goes after anyone that looks like a spellcaster first, and if he sees *magic missiles*, he immediately tries to find a way to kill that foe as soon as possible. He uses his mobility and climb speed to great advantage, and his gray render companion—a massive, slavishly devoted beast Phyx has named Mok—is always nearby for extra muscle. Although a tough opponent, Phyx is still a coward and tries to escape when resistance becomes too heavy.

DEVELOPMENT

Phyx, along with his partner, an advanced (30-HD) gray render, recently stumbled upon a mazelike network of caverns deep in the Underdark populated by a tribe of minotaurs. They dispatched the creatures and took up residence. Phyx has fully explored the complex and discovered many remaining traps; he also has allowed many deadly denizens of the Underdark (all lacking in magical power) a place in his lair in exchange for their pledge to defend his home. Phyx also found that a community of deep gnomes lives nearby. He observed the gnomes displaying magical powers and immediately assumed them to be a group of hated mages. He has since begun picking the svirfneblin off one by one.

Phyx and his gray render friend have established a lair near a large mage college in a major city after being led there by a powerful demon who knows of Phyx and his potent abilities. They have begun preying on the students there, as well as any other spellcasters they stumble across. Authorities know that the assassinations are professionally done, but they're stumped as to the motives of the individuals involved. Ω





QUADRIPARTITE

BY PETER E. APERLO

ARTWORK BY TOM BAXA & MARK ZUG • CARTOGRAPHY BY CHRISTOPHER WEST

| Magic Items ➤ Monsters ⚔ NPCs 📖 Objects 🏰 Settlements ⚡ Traps

"Quadripartite" is a D&D adventure suitable for four 14th-level characters. This adventure is set in the World of Greyhawk, but it can be adapted easily for use in any setting. Consult the "Scaling the Adventure" sidebar for ways to modify the adventure for higher or lower levels of play. A cleric or paladin would be a good addition to a group playing through this adventure, and a character who can read Draconic would also be invaluable.

BACKGROUND

When Oerth was newly formed and the gods themselves were but young upstarts in the cosmos, certain powerful but alien intelligences sought dominion over this plane of existence. These elder entities, which existed in the timeless insanity of the Far Realms, sent their groping tentacles to the Material Plane in the form of monstrous minions—writhing, shapeless horrors that ravaged the primordial world, devouring the souls of the newly sentient, prehuman races. The cries of Oerth's inhabitants were heard by all the young deities, but three gods of neutrality—Pelor, Obad-Hai, and Nerull—were moved to action first. Although they knew that the Far Realms themselves exhibited no particular alignment tendencies, it was clear that the alien creatures native to those planes tended to foster madness elsewhere. Thus, the three gods feared that if the invaders were left unchecked for long, the Material Plane would descend into utter chaos. Conversely, if they allowed the monotonous gods of law to drive out the interlopers, those deities would gain too much power and tilt the balance the other way. Since the three neutral gods had not yet fixed on their separate moral paths, the enmities that would later arise among them had not crystallized. Thus, in a spirit of cooperation that they would never experience again, they entered into a pact to drive the invaders out. Kord immediately joined their cause because, although he was a champion of chaos himself, he could never resist a good fight.

The four young gods soon discovered that these minions of chaos, as they came to be known, were formidable foes. Their connection to the Far Realms made them extraordinarily resilient, and all their injuries healed quite readily. Even worse, every time one of these creatures struck a god, it drained some of his or her divine energy. Not only did this energy heal the creatures more quickly, but they could somehow channel it to their unfathomable masters, who used it to create new minions that would continue to spread their contagion across Oerth.

The four gods retreated to take counsel, hoping to find a way to fight the creatures without making them even stronger. Eventually, they determined that the only way to defeat the minions of chaos was to sever them entirely from the Far Realms and bind them to the Material Plane.

To that end, each god took small portions of his own essence and infused them into separate physical containers. When four such bits of divine essence—one from each god—were combined in a specially sanctified *cauldron of melding*, they formed an item known as a *primal anchor*. This item, when wielded by a mortal or divine champion, would sever the minions' links to the Far Realms and chain them to the Material Plane. Thus "anchored," they could not access the vast majority of their powers. Although still dangerous, the minions of chaos might then be defeated. And after a bloody conflict, defeated they were.

Millennia passed. The Lords of Outer Chaos, as the unfathomable masters of the minions had (perhaps erroneously) been called, retreated to the Far Realms once again. The *primal anchors* were broken up, and the bits of the gods' divine essence that had not been used in the conflict were lost in obscurity. The gods themselves turned their attention to other matters, eventually forgetting their earlier cooperation. Tales of the early mortals who had helped the gods in their war against the alien beasts were passed down, generation after generation, but the details were lost over time. Eventually the stories passed into legend and then, largely, into oblivion.

But not everyone forgot. A few notes in the margins of archaic tomes alluded to the ancient campaign, and a handful of diligent loremasters scattered across Oerth pieced together the truth. Realizing that the Lords of Outer Chaos might one day seek entry into this world again, they began to prepare for that eventuality. They established shrines to protect the few remaining *cauldrons of melding* and ensorcelled them with powerful spells that would enable heroes to retrieve the pieces needed to make a *primal anchor* when the time came.

Now it seems that time has arrived. Rhyll, a half-elf wizard and delver into things best left undisturbed, has called forth a minion of chaos from the Far Realms. Upon emerging from the Rushmoors, the creature began to blaze a trail of destruction in the direction of the town known as Shiboeth. This minion of chaos must be stopped before the town is destroyed and the Lords of Outer Chaos once again come forth to claim the land.

ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS

Tagus Grehan, a local priest of Nerull in the guise of a much older priest, approaches the PCs while they are in Shiboeth on other business. He warns them that a nearly unstoppable force—a minion of chaos—has been unleashed on the world, and that it is headed toward Shiboeth as they speak. He further explains that something called a *primal anchor* is needed to stop it, and that this device is connected in some way with a nearby shrine. He tried to open the shrine himself but was unsuccessful, so he requires their aid. Time is of the essence; the minion is but one day from the outer districts of the city.

Once the characters arrive at the shrine and figure out how to open it, they must decipher four Draconic inscriptions on the four-sided stone *cauldron of melding* inside. Each of the inscriptions is a riddle, the answer to which gives the characters access to one piece of the *primal anchor*. To bring forth the item, the PCs must place all four pieces—the *jewel of fire*, the *phylactery of darkness*, the *leviathan heart*, and the *wheel of Kord*—inside the *cauldron of melding*.

The characters must then find the minion of chaos and use the *primal anchor* to sever its connection to the Far Realms so that they can destroy it. Once they have done so, they can retrace the creature's path, find the obelisk where it first appeared, and confront its summoner. The party must also deal with Tagus, who tries to steal the *primal anchor* for his own purposes once the minion is dead.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

The PCs begin the adventure in the town of Shiboeth in the Kingdom of Gran March. If your campaign does not take place in the World of Greyhawk, any sizable city near a vast moor will do. You can choose from among the following hooks to get the PCs involved, or use them to inspire your own backstory.

- Phladris Renolle, an elf wizard/lorekeeper who is a friend or relative of one of the PCs, has disturbing news that he claims he must share in person. He asks the character to meet him at the Fountain of the Black Goat. Phladris doesn't show up at the appointed time because he has been taken prisoner by Tagus Grehan (see below).
- A PC cleric who worships Pelor, Obad-Hai, Kord, or Nerull is asked by his order to contact a cleric of Nerull named Tagus Grehan in Shiboeth.
- While passing through Shiboeth, the PCs receive an anonymous note (actually from Tagus) asking them to meet someone at the Fountain of the Black Goat.

A CONTACT IS MADE

The adventure begins when the PCs agree to a meeting with someone (even if it's not Tagus himself) at the Fountain of the Black Goat in Shiboeth.

The man is indeed Tagus Grehan, though he is not nearly as old as he seems. (See "The Truth About Tagus," below, if the characters attempt to see through his disguise. Tagus has cast *undetectable alignment* on himself already to keep paladins and

other nosy characters from getting too nervous around him.) Assuming that the PCs allow Tagus to make himself comfortable, he thanks them and continues.

It's well past noon and the appointed time for your meeting has come and gone. The fountain beside which the meeting was to occur is an ancient, sputtering, black basalt structure surmounted by a she-goat figure that seems oddly disturbing. Just as you are nearly ready to give up and leave, a cloaked man, leaning heavily on a staff, moves unsteadily toward you from one of the myriad alleys that feed into the nearly deserted square. As he approaches, you see that he is of advanced age, probably in his nineties.

"Greetings," he says, "I am Tagus Grehan, a faithful servant of the King of All Gloom, and I have information of the gravest importance to us all. May I sit down and tell you about it? The Reaper will call me soon enough, but my legs may not be up for the journey," he says, laughing at his own little joke.

"For some time now, strange events have been occurring in the lands around Shiboeth, especially to the west near the Rushmoors. Men, women, children, and livestock have gone missing, and peasants have heard chanting in an unknown tongue and spotted strange lights on the moors. Alarmed by the disappearances, the ignorant and fearful tried to lay the blame on me and my brethren. So we consulted the ancient texts of our temple in search of the truth. Our investigation revealed that in the distant past, this entire region was a center of worship for certain nameless beings from planes known only as the Far Realms. Our texts record that the servants of these beings nearly overwhelmed all of Oerth before they were defeated by Great Nerull himself, with the aid of Pelor, Obad-Hai, and Kord. These four gods created devices called *primal anchors* that prevented the invaders, called minions of chaos, from fully invoking their native powers."

The old man shifts in his seat and leans in closer. "You may think this talk of things long past to be the meanderings of an old man, but in fact the current threat is the same as the one the gods faced in that long-ago time. Somehow, one of those minions of chaos has been summoned anew—by whom, I know not—and it is headed for us at this very moment, as we sit here talking so cozily. If not stopped, it will level Shiboeth within a day or two.

"You may well ask yourselves why I am telling you all this. Don't I serve He Who Revels in the Slaying of the Living? Shouldn't I be glad of the coming destruction? The explanation is very simple. This servant of chaos devours souls, and in so doing, it denies these souls to the Reaper. Worse still, as the beast feeds, the power of its alien masters increases. If they grow too strong, they will eventually be able to bridge the vast planar expanses and enter our world again. Such a catastrophic event would result in carnage beyond imagining.

"I know that I cannot stop the creature alone; I have already tried and failed. In fact, I doubt any mortal could stop it alone in its current state. Our best option is to work together. Will you help me defeat the minion of chaos?"

If the PCs seem agreeable, Tagus continues with his proposal. If they have questions, he answers those first to the extent that he can. Adjust the information below accordingly.

"Then I was not misled about your wisdom. A direct attack on the minion is sheer suicide. We need a weapon of the gods—the one our ancient texts call a *primal anchor*. Just outside the city is a stone shrine built long ago that is somehow related to this weapon. I know the location, but I have thus far been unable to open the shrine. I will show you where it lies if you meet me at the southern gate in half an hour."

Any character who objects to Tagus accompanying the party to the shrine can make an opposed Diplomacy check to try to change his mind. Success means he agrees to reveal the location without joining them, but he still urges them to hurry. Failure indicates that Tagus insists on personally guiding the characters to the site. If the PCs resort to threats, the cleric agrees to stay behind but tries to shadow them in secret (making Hide checks opposed by their Spot checks).

If the PCs seem undecided, Tagus reminds them that time is short, and that this monster was so destructive that the very gods felt it necessary to cooperate. Thus, mortals should have no compunctions about laying aside their differences to fight for the greater safety of all.

The black obelisk where Rhyll summoned the minion of chaos to this plane is 30 miles from town, and the creature has been traveling at approximately 1 mile per hour since then, tearing up the countryside as it goes. It has already been on the move for 10 hours at the time that Tagus contacts the PCs. Thus, they have roughly 20 hours in which to assemble the *primal anchor* and stop the creature.

THE TRUTH ABOUT TAGUS

Tagus is actually a limber, thirty-four-year-old man, not a doddering nonagenarian. Because of his clever use of the Disguise skill, coupled with an *alter self* spell that provides a +10 circumstance bonus on his Disguise checks, he appears to be quite frail and harmless.

In the event that his disguise is compromised, Tagus truthfully explains that he did not wish to appear dangerous because he was desperate to obtain the party's goodwill and aid. In fact, although Tagus is a thoroughly despicable character, most of what he says is true. The portion of his tale that is untrue concerns how he obtained his information about the minion, the Lords of Outer Chaos, and the *primal anchor*. He and his fellow clerics did not find the legend in ancient texts; Tagus himself discovered it by capturing and torturing Phladris Renolle, an elven wizard/lore master who was on his way to open the shrine that houses the *cauldron of melding*. Phladris is currently being held in the dungeons below the Temple of Nerull in the center of the city. Tagus can't let him go, but he also can't allow the minion to run amok, for the reasons that he's stated. If questioned on those points Tagus has been vague about, he must make successful Bluff checks to convince suspicious characters.

Tagus is also interested in obtaining a *primal anchor* for another reason: He wants to use it against certain celestials that keep showing up to stop important sacrifices. The leadership of the local Temple of Nerull is away at the moment conferring with other brethren on this very matter. If Tagus can get the item and defeat the troublesome celestials himself, all the glory will be his, and he can advance his position in the temple hierarchy considerably. Tagus knows all the *primal anchor*'s powers (see the "Primal Anchor" sidebar), but he reveals only those that specifically affect minions of chaos.

SCALING THE ADVENTURE

This adventure is designed for four 14th-level PCs. You can also run it with smaller groups of higher-level or larger groups of lower-level characters. Or you can modify the adventure for groups of four higher- or lower-level PCs by following the general guidelines below.

12th- and 13th-level PCs: This adventure offers many opportunities for the PCs to rest and recuperate in the shrine between encounters, and there should be at least one opportunity to regain spells. More such opportunities can be introduced by increasing the time required for the minion to reach Shiboeth, and by including a few more curative potions in the treasures for the encounters. The encounters themselves can be adjusted as follows:

- Remove the fighter levels from the frost giants in area 4.
- Remove two levels from Caedra in area 5.
- Cut the number of followers Rhyll has in half.

It is not recommended that parties with an average level below

11 undertake this adventure. After all, the goal is to destroy a monster that gave even the gods trouble.

15th- and 16th-level PCs: With a few simple adjustments, the adventure can be made challenging enough for higher-level groups.

- Add another Large fire elemental to area 3.
- Increase Kel Virond's level by two.
- Add two fighter levels to each of the frost giants in area 4.
- Increase Caedra's level by two in area 5.
- Add two assassin or cleric levels to Tagus.

17th- to 18th-level PCs: Add two more levels to each of the creatures listed above. Give the minion an energy drain attack that allows it to drain a single level with each tentacle rake, even when anchored by the *primal anchor*.

Remember that changing the Encounter Levels should raise or lower the amount of treasure in the adventure. Consult page 170 in the *DUNGEON MASTER's Guide* (Tables 7-2, 7-3, and 7-4) to determine the treasure appropriate to the new encounters.

Creature (EL 14): Tagus Grehan began his career as a rogue, brutally waylaying travelers in back alleys and dark forest byways. More often than not, after relieving them of their gold, he simply left them for dead. But after some years, he grew to enjoy the killing more than the stealing, so he learned the subtle arts of assassination. Taking someone's life for a previously agreed-upon price turned out to be much more lucrative than trusting fate and the victim to provide funds. Only after an employer tried to avoid payment by having Tagus permanently silenced did he look for another vocation with better prospects for long-term health. He found his calling in the service of Nerull. Like any other true believer, he uses every bit of trickery, deception, and sharp steel at his disposal to get ahead in the temple hierarchy.

♣ **Tagus Grehan, Male Human Rog6/Asn4/Clr4 (Nerull):** CR 14; Medium Humanoid (5 ft., 10 in. tall); HD 10d6+10 plus 4d8+4; hp 71; Init +8; Spd 30 ft.; AC 21, touch 17, flat-footed 21; BAB +10; Grap +10; Atk +17/+12 melee (1d6+2 plus poison/15–20, +2 rapier), or +11/+6 melee (1d4+1 plus poison/19–20, +1 dagger), or +15 ranged (1d4 plus poison/19–20, masterwork hand crossbow); SA death attack, rebuke undead 4/day, sneak attack +5d6, spells; SQ +2 save against poison, evasion, poison use, traps, uncanny dodge (Dex bonus to AC, can't be flanked); AL NE; SV Fort +8, Ref +14, Will +10; Str 11, Dex 18, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 16, Cha 13.

Skills: Balance +2, Bluff +14, Climb +2, Concentration +8, Decipher Script +5, Diplomacy +7, Disable Device +10, Disguise +18, Gather Information +11, Hide +17, Intimidate +9, Listen +10, Move Silently +17, Open Lock +10, Search +10, Sense Motive +9, Spot +10, Tumble +13, Use Magic Device +3. **Feats:** Exotic Weapon Proficiency (hand crossbow), Expertise, Improved Critical (rapier), Improved Initiative, Weapon Finesse (rapier), Weapon Focus (rapier).

Languages: Common, Elven, Infernal.

See the *DUNGEON MASTER'S Guide*, page 29, for assassin special attacks and qualities. Note that the Fortitude save for Tagus's death attack is DC 16.

Assassin Spells Prepared (2/2; base save DC=12 + spell level): 1st—obscuring mist, spider climb; 2nd—alter self, undetectable alignment.

Assassin Spellbook: 1st—change self, detect poison, obscuring mist, spider climb; 2nd—alter self, darkness, undetectable alignment.

Cleric Spells Prepared (5/5/4; base save DC=13 + spell level): 0—detect magic, guidance, light, read magic, resistance; 1st—cure light wounds ×2, doom, entropic shield, protection from good*; 2nd—bull's strength, cure moderate wounds, death knell, invisibility*.

*Domain spell. **Domains:** Evil (evil spells cast at +1 caster level), Trickery (Bluff, Disguise, and Hide are cleric class skills).

Possessions: +2 leather armor, +2 rapier (concealed in staff with poison-filled well), masterwork hand crossbow with 20 bolts (in case with poison-filled well), +1 dagger (in sheath with poison-filled well), three extra doses of deathblade poison (Fort DC 20, 1d6 Con/2d6 Con), +3 ring of protection, ring of misdirection (permanent misdirection—caster level 12th—centered on Tagus that functions as the spell; he can change the target of the misdirection

at will), +1 cloak of resistance, 3 potions of cure moderate wounds, scroll of hold person, 137 gp, mithral-and-diamond ring (1,200 gp), silver holy symbol (30 gp), disguise kit, assassin spellbook.

Tactics: If Tagus accompanies the party, he makes every attempt to maintain his disguise as a feeble old man, fighting only if absolutely necessary. He relies primarily on spells and his dagger unless his life is seriously threatened.

Development: Tagus would rather go along to the shrine to ensure that the job is done properly, but if convinced of the party's competence, he's perfectly happy to let the PCs take care of forming the primal anchor and slaying the minion. Disposing of that creature is, after all, his first priority. Thereafter, he can simply snatch the item away.

Should the PCs kill Tagus or otherwise drive him away (he makes every effort not to get involved in a physical confrontation with the PCs), by the end of the day (6 hours later), refugees fleeing in the path of the minion begin arriving in town. The PCs should become aware of them easily and realize the cleric wasn't trying to mislead them. At that point, they can try to find the shrine and cauldron themselves based on the information from Tagus and a successful Gather Information or bardic knowledge check (DC 25), although they've now wasted a significant amount of the time that remained to them. Each check requires 1 hour.

IN SHIBOLETH

The party can purchase any item costing 500 gp or less in Shiboleth. More expensive items can be had, but not before the characters must leave to do battle with the minion.

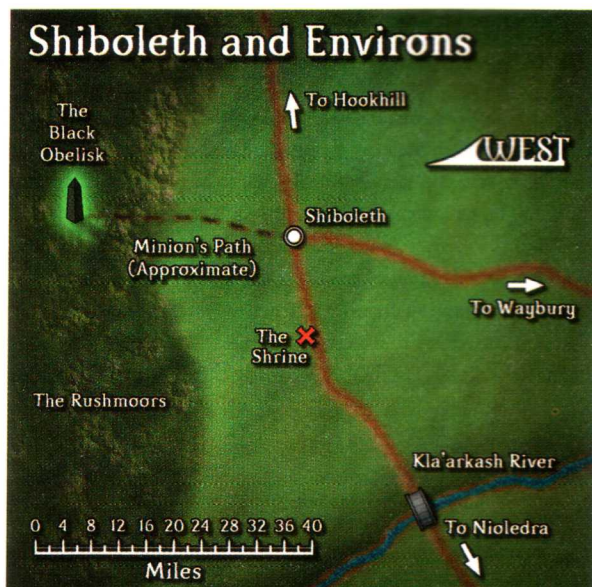
Inquiring among the reticent populace using the Gather Information skill produces the following results to questions about specific topics.

- **DC 15:** Yes, I've heard of people going missing. Mostly country hicks and peasants. Probably just running away from their landlords and debts."
- **DC 15:** "People don't go into the Rushmoors anymore. Not sane people, anyway."
- **DC 20:** "Tagus Grehan? Oh, he's that new young priest at the Temple of Nerull. Vicious-looking, that one is."
- **DC 20:** "Phladris Renolle—he's that elf who spends so much time at the Collegium library. He's been in town a few months. He's always inquiring about the Rushmoors."
- **DC 25:** Shrine/cauldron of melding—"There's said to be some sort of ancient shrine south of here in the woods. No one knows what it's used for, or even where it is."

Additionally, if the PCs search their own memories using the Knowledge (arcana) or Knowledge (religion) skill, they may acquire other bits of knowledge.

- **DC 20:** A few neutral gods fought a war against powerful alien beings in the remote past.
- **DC 25:** A group of spellcasters guards against incursion by extraplanar forces and watches for signs of their approach. They

Shiboleth and Environs



believe these forces have tried to invade in the past as well.

- **DC 25:** A *cauldron of melding* is a device used to forge weapons against invaders not of this plane. The shrines where these cauldrons are sealed against the impious and foolish.

Finally, successful bardic knowledge checks can provide the following clues.

- **DC 25:** Phladris Renolle is a member of a group of spellcasters who claim to be self-appointed guardians against an ancient evil of some sort.
- **DC 25:** A brutal highwayman named Tagus once regularly robbed and killed travelers on the borders of Keoland.
- **DC 30:** A *cauldron of melding* is a device used to forge special weapons against invaders not of this plane. The shrines that hold these items are sealed against the impious and foolish.

THE SHRINE

A successful Search or Wilderness Lore check (DC 9 for either) made at milestone 13 on the southern road leading out of the city reveals a faint path leading off into the woods. The path runs west through the trees for approximately 300 yards, then ends in a hollow strewn with very large boulders. The shrine is here, but it is difficult to discern (Search, DC 18) because of the overgrowth, the natural stones used in its construction, and a permanent *mirage arcana* spell that makes it appear to be part of the natural surroundings. If Tagus is with the party, he can point out the trail and shrine immediately.

What had initially appeared as a large, moss-covered boulder partially hidden in the trees is now revealed to be a roughly rectilinear structure approximately 25 feet on a side. Four thick stone slabs support a massive stone roof covered with moss and vines.

Despite its primitive appearance, the shrine is solidly built and resistant to entry. It was purposely constructed this way to ensure that anyone who managed to enter would be powerful enough to actually retrieve the items needed to create the *primal anchor* and wield it against the minion. The PCs cannot gain access to the shrine through *teleport*, *passwall*, *dimension door*, or any other spell designed to circumvent obstacles, and the stones themselves are immune to cold and electricity damage, as well as to *disintegrate* and *transmute rock to mud*. They have been magically fortified to the strength of adamantine.

➤ **Magically Fortified Stone Wall:** 8 in. thick; Hardness 20; hp 300; break DC 45.

A successful Search check (DC 15) on the southwest wall turns up an inscription in Draconic:

"Let the power of thy faith gain thee entry."

A successful Search check (DC 20) reveals a faint engraving near the inscription. It depicts a robed figure, holding forth a holy symbol with rays of light blazing from it. This image is a clue that the PCs should attempt a turn or rebuke undead check

PRIMAL ANCHOR

A *primal anchor* is intended for use against minions of chaos, and its primary function is to sever their links to the Far Realms and thus deny them some of their powers. To "anchor" a minion of chaos, a character must hit it with a ranged touch attack using the *primal anchor* as a thrown weapon (range increment 20 feet). If it hits, the creature's size is reduced by 1/3 (though it retains its original size category). It loses 10 Hit Dice, and the following adjustments are applied to its statistics: -12 Str, -6 Dex, -4 Con, -8 Int, -8 Wis, -14 Cha, -10 natural armor bonus, -10 SR. It loses its energy drain, frightful presence, and paralysis rays special attacks, as well as its protective aura and regeneration special qualities. Its DR drops to 10/+3, and its immunities are replaced by acid and electricity resistance 20. Its spell-like abilities are also decreased (see

anchored statistics in area 6). The minion's skills and feats are adjusted downward in accordance with the new statistics, as if it were an entirely new creature.

The *primal anchor* can affect other outsiders, as well. Striking any outsider other than a minion of chaos with the item produces an effect equivalent to that of a *blasphemy*, *dictum*, *holy word*, or *word of chaos* spell—whichever would do harm to the target. It also provides the benefits of any desired combination of the *cloak of chaos*, *holy aura*, *shield of law*, and *unholy aura* spells to whoever holds it.

The *primal anchor* vanishes after one week. The magic items that composed it are used up and permanently gone. To make a new *primal anchor*, it is necessary to find new items infused with the essences of the four gods Kord, Pelor, Obad-hai, and Nerull.



aimed at the door (a Knowledge—religion or Intelligence check, DC 15, also reveals this). A turn or rebuke check that would affect a 15-HD undead opens the shrine. When a PC makes such a check (a Use Magic Device or Disable Device check, DC 25, also suffices), read or paraphrase the following:

An odd blue light bathes the structure as the ground begins to tremble. The stone facing you slowly recedes into the ground, revealing a square chamber beyond. Inside the 20-by-20-foot chamber is a square stone object whose four sides converge to form a lip around a round opening in the top.

The stone object is the *cauldron of melding*. If the PCs examine it further, continue with the following.

Around the lip of the stone object runs an inscription in a strange language, and each of the four sides bears a similar inscription. Inside the opening is a swirling vortex of vapor, bright light, and impenetrable blackness.

Anyone staring into the cauldron for more than 1 minute must succeed at a Will save (DC 20) or be dazed for 1d4 minutes. The cauldron accepts only pieces of the *primal anchor*. Any other object or creature placed inside it is forcibly ejected after 1 round and takes 3d6 points of damage from slamming into the ceiling and walls of the shrine (Reflex, DC 18, for half).

An inscription around the rim of the cauldron reads as follows:

"When the four are made one, the masters will abandon the faceless minion."

More inscriptions on each of the four sides of the *cauldron* is a riddle whose answer refers to one of the items infused with the gods' essence. They can be solved in any order, but be sure to keep track of passing time while the players confer about their answers.

When the answer to one of the riddles is uttered within the confines of the shrine (assume a PC has spoken aloud if the player has), all living creatures within the shrine are *teleported* to the location where that item is kept. A loud crack of thunder and a flash of brilliant light accompany this transport.

RIDDLE 1

The inscription on the west face of the *cauldron of melding* reads:

*"You feed it, it lives.
You give it something to drink, it dies."*

The answer is "fire." When that word is spoken, go to area 2, "The Brass Tower."

RIDDLE 2

The inscription on the north face of the *cauldron of melding* reads:

*"It cannot be seen, cannot be felt,
Cannot be heard, cannot be smelt.
It lies behind stars and under hills,
And all the empty holes it fills.
It comes first and follows after,
Ends life and kills laughter."*

The answer is "darkness." Go to area 3, "The Crypt of Kel Virond," when that word is spoken.

RIDDLE 3

The inscription on the east face of the *cauldron of melding* reads:

*"I go around in circles,
But always straight ahead.
I never complain,
No matter where I am led."*

The answer is "wheel." Speaking that word transfers the party to area 4, "The Slate Tundra."

BREAK IT DOWN

"Quadripartite" possesses a unique format that makes it extremely flexible and useful, even if you're not interested in using the module as a whole. Composed of four (or five, if you include the final encounters) unique, very different mini-quests, "Quadripartite" can easily be separated into its component parts if you're looking for interesting individual encounters for your campaign.

Want a fun ice encounter? Use "Slate Tundra." Need a good undead challenge for your party? Check out "The Crypt of Kel Virond." Taken together, the pieces of "Quadripartite" will tax your party's strategic resources to their maximum. But even individually, the mini-quests make for excellent short adventures, or as the premise for entirely new adventures of your own design. The utility of these encounters is limited only by your own creativity.

RIDDLE 4

The inscription on the south face of the cauldron reads:

*"Alive without breath,
As cold as death,
Never thirsty, ever drinking,
Clad in mail, never clinking."*

The answer is "fish." As soon as a PC speaks that word, go to area 5, "Out to Sea."

CREATING THE PRIMAL ANCHOR

When all four pieces of the anchor—the *jewel of fire*, the *phylactery of darkness*, the *wheel of Kord*, and the *leviathan heart*—are placed into the *cauldron of melding*, it fuses them into a *primal anchor*.

An iridescent bolt of energy bursts from the *cauldron of melding*, blowing the roof off the shrine and projecting skyward. Just above the cauldron, floating in the energy beam, is a metal sphere about the size of an ostrich egg that pulses red and black. On its surface are blue letters in the same script as the inscriptions on the cauldron.

The inscription is in Draconic, and it reads:

"Hurl me true. Be not faint of heart."

The sphere is the *primal anchor*. It is cool to the touch and can be plucked from the beam of energy by any character.

As soon as the PCs leave the shrine with the *primal anchor*, the walls seal up again and the roof reforms. It remains this way until the *cauldron of melding* is needed once again—if another minion of chaos appears on the Prime Material Plane. When that occurs, new riddles leading to the four parts of a new anchor appear on the stone faces of the cauldron, and the cycle continues.

THE BRASS TOWER

An efreeti named Hu'shurish has set up a dominion of his own in the desert wastes beyond the Sea of Dust. In ages past, the natives worshiped the creature as a god and constructed a tower of brass at his command. Long ago, the civilization that built the tower fell. The people who once paid homage to the genie left the area, their city slowly crumbled, and the desert swallowed all traces of their civilization. Attended by his faithful magmins, the efreeti remains. These creatures scour the world for precious metals and gems, which they bring to their master so he can create molten masterpieces of art—Hu'shurish's only diversion now. The efreeti's most prized possession is the *jewel of fire*—an item stolen long ago from a Temple of Pelor in Greyhawk and a component of the *primal anchor*.

A clan of firenewts from a nearby chain of volcanic mountains discovered the efreeti's brass tower hundreds of years ago, and like the populace of the lost desert civilization, these crea-

tures came to revere the genie as a deity. The clan's high priest and his entourage make a pilgrimage to the tower once a year to bring Hu'shurish precious metals and jewels and ask for his wisdom in return. The high priest is currently within the tower, communing with the elemental. When the PCs appear before the tower, read the following:

A brilliantly shining brass tower surmounted by an onion-shaped dome rises from the sands of a burning desert. Waves of heat cause the tower's image to dance and shimmer, but the structure is clearly more than 100 feet tall. In front of it is a small encampment within which a dozen or so reptilian creatures go about their business. Several of these creatures are mounted on tall, two-legged beasts.

2A. THE FIRENEWT ENCAMPMENT (EL 13)

Human desert raiders frequently prowl these wastes, so a contingent of heavily armed firenewt barbarians has accompanied the high priest on his pilgrimage to ensure his safety. Captain Frarch and his troops do not like the desert here at all. They would rather go where the hunting is better and the weather is even warmer.

Creatures: Captain Frarch and his three sergeants are mounted on giant striders. The high priest's giant strider is tethered inside the perimeter of the encampment. The remaining dozen firenewts go on foot and are armed with longswords and battleaxes. Note that firenewts and giant striders originally appeared in *Monster Compendium: Monsters of Faerûn*.

➤ **Captain Frarch, Firenewt Bbn10:** CR 11; Medium Monstrous Humanoid (fire, reptilian); HD 2d8+2 plus 10d12+10; hp 98; Init +1; Spd 30 ft., mounted 40 ft.; AC 19, touch 12, flat-footed 19; BAB +12; Grap +13; Atk +15/+10/+5 melee (1d12+4/×3, +1 greataxe), or +15/+10/+5 melee (1d8+3/×3, masterwork heavy lance); SA breath weapon (fire); SQ darkvision 60 ft., fast movement, fire subtype, rage 3/day, uncanny dodge (Dex bonus to AC, can't be flanked, +1 against traps); AL NE; SV Fort +9, Ref +7, Will +6; Str 15, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 9, Wis 10, Cha 8.

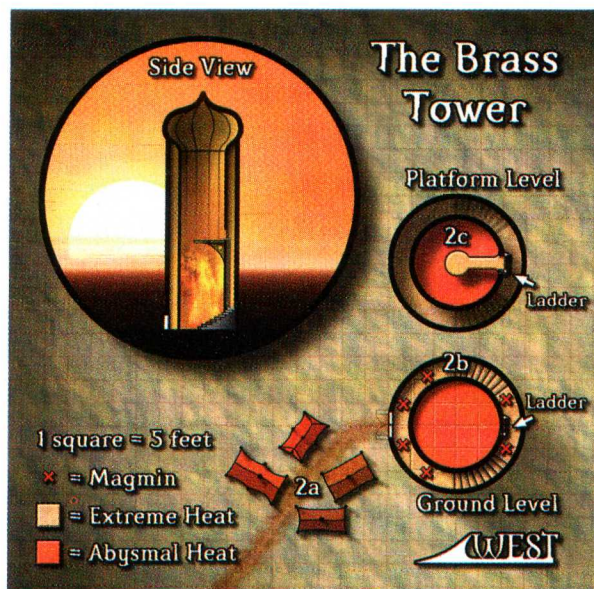
Skills: Handle Animal +5, Intimidate +12, Listen +12, Ride (giant strider) +14, Spot +6. **Feats:** Mounted Combat, Power Attack, Ride-By Attack, Spirited Charge, Trample.

See "Firenewt Regulars" below, for firenewt special attacks and qualities. Note that the Reflex save DC for Captain Frarch's breath weapon is 13.

Rage: While Captain Frarch rages, his statistics change as follows: HD 2d8+8 plus 10d12+40; hp 122; AC 17, touch 10, flat-footed 17; Atk +17/+12/+7 melee (1d12+7/×3, +1 greataxe), or +16/+11/+6 melee (1d8+6/×3, heavy lance); SV Fort +11, Will +8; Str 19, Con 18; breath weapon save DC 15. Frarch's rage lasts for 7 rounds.

Possessions: +2 breastplate, +1 greataxe, ring of protection +1, masterwork heavy lance, jade pectoral (170 gp), 45 gp.

➤ **Sergeants, Male Firenewt Bbn7 (3):** CR 8; Medium Monstrous Humanoid (fire, reptilian); HD 2d8+2 plus 7d12+7; hp 63; Init +1; Spd 30 ft., mounted 40 ft.; AC 16, touch 11, flat-footed 16;



BAB +9; Grap +11; Atk +11/+6 melee (1d12+3/×3, greataxe), or +11/+6 melee (1d8+3/×3, heavy lance); SA breath weapon (fire); SQ darkvision 60 ft., fast movement, fire subtype, rage 2/day, uncanny dodge (Dex bonus to AC, can't be flanked); AL NE; SV Fort +6, Ref +6, Will +5; Str 14, Dex 13, Con 13, Int 7, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Skills: Intimidate +6, Listen +8, Ride (giant strider) +10, Spot +5. **Feats:** Mounted Combat, Power Attack, Ride-By Attack, Spirited Charge.

See "Firenewt Regulars," below, for firenewt special attacks and qualities. Note that the Reflex save DC for a sergeant's breath weapon is 12.

Rage: While a sergeant rages, his statistics change as follows: HD 2d8+6 plus 7d12+21; hp 81; AC 14, touch 9, flat-footed 14; Atk +13/+8 melee (1d12+6/×3, greataxe), or +13/+8 melee (1d8+4/×3, heavy lance); SV Fort +8, Will +7; Str 18, Con 17; breath weapon save DC 14. The sergeants' rage lasts for 6 rounds.

Possessions: Chainmail, greataxe, heavy lance, 4d6 gp.

➤ **Firenewt Regulars, Male Firenewt Bbn5 (8):** CR 6; Medium Monstrous Humanoid (fire, reptilian); HD 2d8+2 plus 5d12+5; hp 36; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 16, touch 11, flat-footed 16; BAB +7, Grap +8; Atk +8/+3 melee (1d8+1/19–20, longsword); SA breath weapon (fire); SQ darkvision 60 ft., fast movement, fire subtype, rage 2/day, uncanny dodge (Dex bonus to AC, can't be flanked); AL N; SV Fort +5, Ref +5, Will +4; Str 13, Dex 13, Con 13, Int 7, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Skills: Intimidate +6, Listen +6, Ride (giant strider) +8, Spot +5. **Feats:** Dodge, Mounted Combat, Power Attack.

Rage: While a regular rages, his statistics change as follows: HD 2d8+6 plus 5d12+15; hp 50; AC 14, touch 9, flat-footed 14; Atk +10/+5 melee (1d8+4/19–20, longsword); SV Fort +7, Will +6; Str 16, Con 17; breath weapon save DC 14. The regulars' rage lasts for 6 rounds.

Breath Weapon (Su): Once every 10 minutes, a firenewt can breathe fire at a single opponent, dealing 1d6 points of fire damage (Reflex, DC 12, for half).

Fire Subtype (Ex): A firenewt is immune to fire damage, but

it takes double damage from cold unless a saving throw for half damage is allowed. In that case, it takes half damage on a success and double damage on a failure.

Possessions: Chainmail, longsword.

➤ **Giant Striders (4):** CR 1; Large Magical Beast (fire); HD 2d10+6; hp 17; Init +1; Spd 40 ft.; AC 16, touch 10, flat-footed 15; BAB +2; Grap +10; Atk +5 melee (1d8+4, kick), or +5 melee (1d8+4, bite); Face/Reach 5 ft. by 10 ft./5 ft.; SA fireball; SQ darkvision 60 ft., fire subtype, healing from fire, low-light vision, resistant to magic; AL N; SV Fort +6, Ref +4, Will –1; Str 18, Dex 12, Con 17, Int 1, Wis 9, Cha 8.

Skills: Listen +1. **Feats:** Run.

Fireball (Su): Twice per hour, a giant strider can emit a small fireball from ducts near its eyes. Each fireball has a range of 60 feet and a burst radius of 10 feet. Any creature caught in the blast takes 1d6 points of fire damage (DC 14 avoids).

Fire Subtype (Ex): A firenewt is immune to fire damage, but it takes double damage from cold unless a saving throw for half damage is allowed. In that case, it takes half damage on a success and double damage on a failure.

Healing from Fire (Ex): Once per 3 rounds that a strider is exposed to intense heat or flame, the creature gains the benefit of a *cure light wounds* spell. A fireball spell or other fiery attack fully heals the creature instantly.

Resistant to Magic (Ex): A giant strider gains a +2 bonus on all saving throws against magical effects.

Tactics: Captain Frarch and his sergeants immediately charge any intruders. They rely on the speed of their mounts and their ability to dash in, attack, and dash away. The firenewts on foot attempt to flank opponents by forming two spear phalanxes consisting of four firenewts each. None of the firenewts are interested in parleying with the PCs; they simply assume that all such beings are raiders trying to trick them.

Treasure: Inside the captain's tent are 210 pp and 530 gp (Search, DC 15). Buried in the sand under a cushion in the high priest's tent (Search, DC 20) is a small sandalwood box (worth 50 gp) containing three blocks of *incense of meditation*.

Development: Once they have dealt with the firenewts, the PCs can look for a way into the tower. If the characters have not entered the tower within 10 minutes of their arrival, the high priest Trel'Shenash completes his business and exits the tower (see area 2b for Trel'Shenash's complete statistics).

Ad-hoc XP Award: Although the giant striders are too low CR for PCs of this level to gain experience, they certainly make the mounted firenewts much more formidable. Treat each mounted firenewt (Captain Frarch and the three sergeants) as one CR higher than listed for the purpose of awarding experience if they remain on their mounts for more than 1 round.

2B. THE OUTER RING (EL 11)

The solid brass double doors are 15 feet high and hot to the touch, but not damagingly so. When the doors are open, continue with the following.

A blast of heated air hits you in the face like a blanket. The walls inside the tower are made of brass and covered with depictions of flamelike creatures leaping to and fro.

Closer examination of the wall relief reveals small human figures making offerings and constructing buildings. They are obviously fearful of the flame creatures and act at their bidding.

This entire outer area is as hot as an oven. Characters without magical protection are subject to the effects of extreme heat (see the *DUNGEON MASTER's Guide*, page 86).

Creatures: Each "X" on the map represents a magmin. These creatures know that the PCs are not supposed to be inside the efreeti's tower, so they try to stop any intruders they notice. Prolonged sounds of combat draw Trel'Shenash to investigate.

The ladder up to the audience platform is 30 feet high and requires a successful Climb check (DC 15) to negotiate due to the heat. A PC attempting to climb without magical protection from the heat takes 1d4 points of fire damage per round.

➤ **Magmins (6):** hp 13 each; *Monster Manual* 130. Note that 14th-level PCs won't normally receive experience for defeating the low-CR magmins.

➤ **Trel'Shenash, Male Firenewt Clr10:** CR 11; Medium Monstrous Humanoid (fire, reptilian); HD 2d8+4 plus 10d8+20; hp 78; Init +1; Spd 20 ft.; AC 17, touch 11, flat-footed 16; BAB +9; Grap +10; Atk +12/+7 melee (1d8+3/×3, +2 battleaxe); SA breath weapon (fire), rebuke undead 4/day, spells; SQ darkvision 60 ft., fire subtype; AL NE; SV Fort +9, Ref +7, Will +14; Str 12, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 12, Wis 18, Cha 13.

Skills: Concentration +13, Diplomacy +5, Intimidate +7, Listen +9, Ride (giant strider) +10, Scry +6, Spot +10. **Feats:** Brew Potion, Craft Magic Arms and Armor, Mounted Combat, Ride-By Attack, Silent Spell, Spell Focus (Evocation).

See "Firenewt Regulars," above, for firenewt special attacks and qualities. Note that the Reflex save DC for Trel'Shanesh's breath weapon is 12.

Cleric Spells Prepared (6/6/6/5/5/3; base save DC = 14 + spell level): 0—detect magic, guidance, light, purify food and drink, resistance ×2; 1st—bane, burning hands*, cause fear, cure light wounds, divine favor, obscuring mist; 2nd—bull's strength, cure moderate wounds, endurance, hold person, produce flame*, silence; 3rd—bestow curse, contagion*, cure serious wounds, dispel magic, prayer; 4th—cure critical wounds, divine power, greater magic weapon, sending, wall of fire*; 5th—fire shield*, flame strike*, summon monster V.

*Domain spell. **Domains:** Destruction (smite 1/day, +4 on attack and +10 on damage), Fire (turn water/rebuke fire 4/day).

†Evocation spell; base save DC = 16 + spell level.

Possessions: +1 chainmail, +2 battleaxe, silver unholy symbol (30 gp), 2 potions of cure critical wounds, pouch holding 2 golden yellow topaz (500 gp each), 3 tourmalines (100 gp each), 4 pink pearls (100 gp each), and 8 smoky quartz (50 gp each).

Tactics: The closest magmins engage the party, doing their best to avoid prolonged close combat. The other magmins arrive to investigate the noise after 3 rounds. After another 2 rounds, Trel'Shenash descends from the audience platform (area 2c) to

find out what's causing the disturbance. If he sees intruders, he casts *greater magic weapon*, *bull's strength*, *endurance*, *fire shield*, and *divine power* on himself, then *prayer*. He proceeds to cast *silence* on any spellcasters, then *flame strike*, *hold person*, and his other offensive spells. Otherwise, he returns to the audience platform.

Development: Once the PCs have dealt with the magmins (and the high priest, if he appears), they can make their way to the center of the tower.

2C. TOWER CENTER (EL VARIES)

Within the core of the tower, PCs without magical protection are subject to abysmal heat (see the *DUNGEON MASTER's Guide* page 86). The audience platform extends into the center of the tower's inner core, 40 feet above the floor where the efreeti lives and creates its works of art. The surface of the platform and the thin bridge leading to it are slick from millennia of use. Any character who engages in violent motion (such as combat) in any spot except the very center of the audience platform must make a successful Reflex save (DC 15) each round or slip and plunge to the floor below, taking 4d6 points of damage and 4d6 points of fire damage from the molten metal.

If the PCs have fought the magmins, Hu'shurish is well aware that intruders have invaded his home. If the high priest has already been dispatched by the time the PCs arrive, introduce the efreeti as follows:

Above you rises the vast vault of the dome. It holds no windows, and the heat in this place is unbearable. A skinny brass bridge juts out into space, giving access to a circular platform. Some 40 or 50 feet below you, standing on a swirling pattern of molten metal and sparkling gems in the floor, is a 13-foot tall, red-skinned figure holding a massive brass falchion, sporting a long, black topknot, and wearing a great deal of jewelry along with billowing pants and shoes. He draws himself up to his full height, and his two flashing, fiery eyes regard you with disdain and growing fury.

If the high priest did not descend from the audience platform earlier, he is still here. In this case, add Trel'Shenash to the description above.

Creatures (EL 11 or 13): The efreeti in the center of the tower fancies himself an artist of sorts. He constantly creates fantastic mosaics and sculptures from the gems and precious metals on the floor and walls of his abode.

➤ **Hu'shurish, Male Efreeti Exp2/Bbn3:** CR 13; Large Outsider (evil, fire, lawful) (13 ft. tall); HD 10d8+20 plus 2d6+4 plus 3d12+6; hp 111; Init +7; Spd 30 ft., fly 50 ft. (perfect); AC 26, touch 12, flat-footed 26; BAB +14; Grap +20; Atk +21/+16/+11 (2d6+11 plus 1d6 fire/15–20, Huge +2 flaming falchion) or +19/+14/+9 (1d8+9 plus 1d6 fire, slam); Reach 10 feet; SA heat, rage 1/day, spell-like abilities; SQ fast movement, fire subtype, plane shift, telepathy, uncanny doge (Dex bonus to AC); AL LE; SV Fort +12, Ref +11, Will +13; Str 23, Dex 17, Con 14, Int 12, Wis 15, Cha 15.

Skills: Appraise +5, Bluff +12, Concentration +16, Craft (gem-

cutting) +10, Craft (sculpting) +10, Escape Artist +13, Intimide +15, Listen +15, Move Silently +13, Sense Motive +11, Spellcraft +11, Spot +12. *Feats*: Combat Casting, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Critical (falchion), Improved Initiative, Power Attack.

Rage: While Hu'shurish rages, his statistics change as follows: HD 10d8+40 plus 2d6+8 plus 3d12+12; hp 141; AC 24, touch 10, flat-footed 24; Atk +23/+18/+13 (2d6+14 plus 1d6 fire/15–20, Huge +2 flaming falchion) or +21/+16/+9 melee (1d8+11 plus 1d6 fire, slam); SV Fort +14, Will +15; Str 27, Con 18. Hu'shurish's rage lasts for 7 rounds.

Heat (Ex): An efreeti's red-hot body deals 1d6 points of additional fire damage whenever it hits in melee, or when grappling each round it maintains a hold.

Fire Subtype (Ex): An efreeti is immune to fire damage, but it takes double damage from cold unless a saving throw for half damage is allowed. In that case, it takes half damage on a success and double damage on a failure.

Spell-like Abilities: At will—*produce flame* and *pyrotechnics*; 1/day grant up to three wishes (to nongeniens only), *detect magic*, *enlarge*, *gaseous form*, *invisibility*, *permanent image*, *polymorph self*, and *wall of fire*. Caster level 18th; save DC = 12 + spell level.

Possessions: Large +2 chain shirt, Huge +2 flaming falchion, ring of force shield, fire-proof belt pouch holding 1 blue diamond (5,000 gp), 3 amethysts (100 gp each), 2 bloodstones (50 gp each), and 74 gp.

Tactics: The *jewel of fire* containing Pelor's essence is Hu'shurish's most prized possession—one he is willing to defend to the death. Knowing his vulnerability to cold-based spells, the efreeti attacks spellcasters first, depending on the ambient heat to tire out heavily armored foes. He activates his *wall of fire* spell-like ability to block the entrance to the chamber and turns invisible before engaging in melee. If present, Trel'Shenash tries to protect himself with a *wall of fire* before fortifying himself with defensive magic. He then uses *hold person*, *flame strike*, and other offensive spells against the PCs. If necessary, he enters melee once he runs out of useful spells. Meanwhile, any surviving magmins rush to their lord's aid (1d4 arrive per round until all are accounted for). They attempt to aid each other in grapple checks against PCs near the edge of the platform then push them off onto the molten metal floor below (4d6 points of falling damage plus 4d6 points of fire damage).

Treasure: Set in the floor, at the center of a swirl of gems and molten precious metals, is the *jewel of fire*. Whichever character guessed "fire" as the answer to riddle 1 sees the jewel surrounded by an unearthly blue glow. A successful bardic knowledge or Knowledge (religion) check (DC 25) allows any other character to recognize the jewel as an object sacred to Pelor. The jewel is the size of an anvil and as hot as a raging fire. Anyone grasping it takes 1d6 points of fire damage per round. An evil being who touches the jewel takes 1d6 additional points of damage per round.

In addition to the jewel, the PCs can pick up 5d10×10 gp worth of precious metals and gems per round from the tower floor. However, this semi-molten treasure deals 1d4 points of

fire damage per round for 2d8 rounds to whomever holds it.

Development: As soon as a character grasps the *jewel of fire*, the entire party is transported back to the *cauldron of melding*.

THE CRYPT OF KEL VIROND

Half a millennium ago, Kel Virond was a high-ranking priest of Nerull whose cruelty and sadism were infamous in the lands around Ulek. He sacrificed thousands of innocent people to his dark lord before his fortress outside Havenhill was besieged by paladins of Heironeous.

As his defenses collapsed, Kel Virond retreated to the lower levels of his keep to beg his master for aid. Nerull rewarded his faithful servant with undeath. Kel Virond received a bit of the god's essence in the form of a *phylactery of darkness*, which immediately fused itself to his forehead and transformed him into a lich. The paladins razed the fortress but could not defeat the newly born lich. So they sealed off the exits and consecrated the ground, hoping to keep him trapped. Thus, the tomb Kel Virond had built for himself became his prison. He now awaits someone to set him free.

3A. BLOCKED PASSAGE

A spiral staircase once gave access to the keep above. Now both the staircase and 20 feet of the southern end of this passage are choked off with rubble from the destruction of the keep. If the characters do not have a light source when they arrive here, read the following aloud.

Wherever you are, it's as black as pitch. The air is stale, dank, and heavy with the scent of mold.

When light becomes available, continue as follows.

The vaulted ceilings are only about 7 feet high in the corridor in which you stand. The walls of the corridor are built of close-fitted black stone, slick with algae and fungus. One end of the passage is blocked by rubble.

3B. ANTECHAMBER (EL II)

The followers of Heironeous placed a stone golem with two faces here to prevent Kel Virond from leaving, and to keep any would-be allies of the lich out. They also whitewashed the walls to cover up the unholy blasphemies that had been painted upon them.

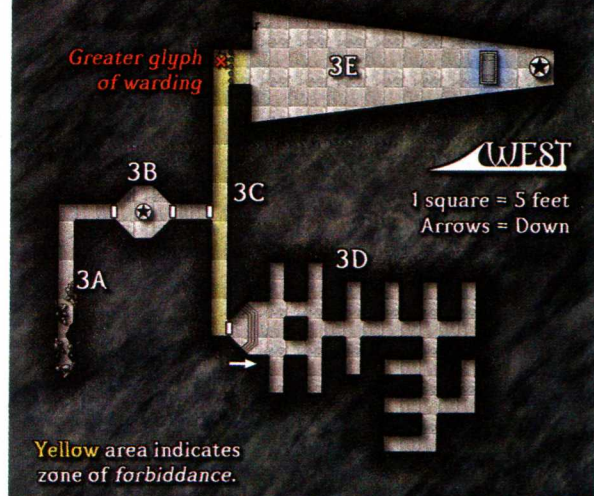
The walls of this octagonal chamber are white, but the mold has eaten away the paint in many places, revealing black stone behind. In the center of the room stands a 9-foot-tall marble statue of a bald, heavily muscled man. He wears a toga and holds his arms straight down at his sides. The statue turns its head toward you, then walks backward to block the door on the far side of the room with its body.

Creature: Emblazoned on the golem's chest is a gauntlet clutching a lightning bolt. A successful Knowledge (religion)



QUADRIPARTITE

The Crypt of Kel Virond



check (DC 10) identifies this image as the holy symbol of Heironeous. The stone golem attacks any undead creatures that enter the room, as well as anyone who attempts to pass without invoking the name of Heironeous. Doing so causes the golem to resume its post in the center of the chamber, allowing the PCs to pass unmolested.

➤ **Stone Golem (1):** hp 77; *Monster Manual* 108.

Tactics: The stone golem attacks any PCs who try to pass with its great marble fists.

Development: Once the PCs defeat the golem, they can proceed farther into the crypt.

Ad-hoc XP Award: If the PCs bypass the golem without fighting it, award them experience as if they had defeated it in combat.

3C. FORBIDDEN CORRIDOR (EL VARIES)

The faithful of Heironeous also warded this corridor to prevent Kel Virond from escaping. The entire passage is affected by a *forbiddance* spell (caster level 13th). Any creature that is not lawful good must succeed at a Will save (DC 22) or be hedged out and damaged as per the spell description (see the *Player's Handbook*, page 206).

To get through this corridor, the PCs must deal with the ghost that inhabits it and find a way through the heavy iron portcullis.

Creature (EL 11): One of those slain during the assault on the crypt five centuries ago was Adelros Melremen, a paladin of Heironeous. Now a ghost, he appears as a knight in full plate armor and shield, wielding a sword. His spirit can never rest until either his bones (currently lying broken and gnawed in area 3d) are given a proper burial in hallowed ground or Kel Virond is destroyed.

➤ **Adelros Melremen, Human Ghost Palg (against ethereal opponents):** CR 11; Medium Undead; HD 9d12; hp 58; Init +4; Spd 20 ft.; AC 22, touch 10, flat-footed 22; BAB +9; Grap +12; Atk +14/+9 melee (1d10+5/19–20, +2 *bastard sword*); SA frightful moan, malevolence, smite evil (1/day, +3 on attacks

and +9 on damage), spells, turn undead 6/day; SQ aura of courage, *detect evil*, divine grace, divine health, *lay on hands* (27 hp/day), manifestation, rejuvenation, *remove disease* 3/week, turn resistance +4, undead traits; AL LG; SV Fort +9, Ref +6, Will +8; Str 17, Dex 10, Con —, Int 12, Wis 15, Cha 17.

Skills: Concentration +12, Diplomacy +12, Handle Animal +12, Heal +11, Hide +2, Knowledge (religion) +4, Listen +10, Ride (horse) +11, Search +9, Spot +10. **Feats:** Exotic Weapon Proficiency (bastard sword), Improved Initiative, Mounted Combat, Ride-By Attack, Spirited Charge.

See *Monster Manual* page 212 for ghost special attacks and qualities. Note that the save DC is 17 for Adelros's frightful moan and malevolence abilities.

Paladin Spells Prepared (2/1; base save DC=12 + spell level): 1st—*bless weapon*, *divine favor*; 2nd—*shield other*.

➤ **Adelros Melremen, Human Ghost Palg (manifested; against material opponents):** CR 11; Medium Undead (incorporeal); HD 9d12; hp 58; Init +4; Spd fly 30 ft. (perfect); AC 25, touch 13, flat-footed 25; BAB +9; Grap +9; Atk +11/+6 melee (1d10+2/19–20, +2 *bastard sword*); SA frightful moan, malevolence, smite evil (1/day, +3 on attacks and +9 on damage), spells, turn undead 6/day; SQ aura of courage, *detect evil*, divine grace, divine health, *lay on hands* (27 hp/day), rejuvenation, *remove disease* 3/week, turn resistance +4, undead traits; SV Fort +9, Ref +6, Will +8; Str —, Dex 10, Con —, Int 12, Wis 15, Cha 17.

Skills: Concentration +12, Diplomacy +12, Handle Animal +12, Heal +11, Hide +2, Knowledge (religion) +4, Listen +10, Ride (horse) +11, Search +9, Spot +10. **Feats:** Exotic Weapon Proficiency (bastard sword), Improved Initiative, Mounted Combat, Ride-By Attack, Spirited Charge.

Paladin Spells Prepared (2/1; base save DC=12 + spell level): 1st—*bless weapon*, *divine favor*; 2nd—*shield other*.

Tactics: Adelros is committed to preventing the lich's escape, but he does not wish to destroy innocent creatures in the process. However, he cannot speak unless he takes over a living body. Thus, he first attempts to scare the PCs away from the portcullis using his frightful moan. If that tactic fails, he attempts to use his malevolence ability against a PC, so that he can verbally warn the group of what lies ahead. If the PCs can convince him (with a successful Diplomacy check) that their mission involves a greater good, he allows them to pass. If they mention that they seek a unique item of power, he also tells them that it may be the lich's phylactery. Adelros attacks only as a last resort, and then only to subdue unless his opponent is evil.

Development: If the PCs manage to open the crypt and confront the lich, Adelros uses every means in his power to aid them, if he is still present.

➤ **Portcullis:** 2 in. thick; Hardness 10; hp 60; break DC 25; Strength, DC 25, to lift.

Note: The bars on the heavy iron portcullis are covered with sharp spikes that deal 1d4 points of damage to any PC who tries to break them or lift the portcullis. The portcullis can be raised using the winches and chains on both sides of it, but the winch

outside the crypt is locked (Open Lock, DC 25) and trapped with a greater glyph of warding (see **Trap**, below).

Trap (EL 7): The floor and walls around the outer winch are protected by a greater glyph of warding.

↗ **Greater Glyph of Warding (Blast):** CR 7; spell; spell trigger; no reset; spell effect (greater glyph of warding [blast], 11th-level cleric, Reflex save, DC 22, half damage, 6d8 sonic); Search (DC 31), Disable Device (DC 31).

3D. THE LESSER CRYPTS (EL 13)

The door to this area is spiked shut from the outside. Prying it open requires a successful Strength check (DC 15) and 1d6+1 minutes.

Kel Virond's deceased acolytes and servants populate this labyrinthine charnel house. He delighted in transforming them into various kinds of undead and keeping them locked down here. He would occasionally toss a live sacrifice into the crypt and laugh as the ravenous undead ripped the hapless victim to pieces.

Creatures: During the long centuries of Kel Virond's captivity, the undead in this chamber received no food at all, so they began to feed on each other. The lesser undead (zombies and ghouls) were eventually devoured by the greater ones (spectres and mohrgs). Now, with even that source of sustenance gone, the hunger of these miserable creatures is unimaginable.

➤ **Spectres (5):** hp 45 each; *Monster Manual* 169.

➤ **Mohrgs (3):** hp 26 each; *Monster Manual* 137.

Tactics: The spectres and mohrgs in this chamber attack any creature that opens the door. They use no care or strategy other than to overpower their foes as quickly as possible.

Treasure: The mortal remains of Adelros the paladin are scattered about this chamber, but finding them requires 30 minutes and a successful Search check (DC 20). His +1 full plate armor, +1 large shield, and +2 bastard sword are also hidden in the refuse of the ages (Search, DC 20, for each). Nothing else of value lies here, since Kel Virond stripped any treasure from the corpses of sacrifices before tossing them to the undead.

Development: Once the PCs overcome the undead in this chamber, they can continue toward Kel Virond's resting place.

3E. THE SARCOPHAGUS AND ALTAR (EL 14)

Beyond the portcullis is the room that Kel Virond built to serve as his tomb when the time of his death arrived. At the far end of the chamber is an altar dedicated to Nerull. In front of it stands a sarcophagus whose top is carved with ornate latticework that conceals a number of peepholes through which the lich can watch the crypt.

The ceiling in this chamber is perhaps 30 feet high and features gothic-style vaulting. A 15-foot-tall statue of a skeletal figure in hooded black robes and wielding a scythe dominates this chamber. Carvings of similar skeletal figures frolicking or dancing with humans and halflings adorn the walls. In front of the statue is an intricately carved, rectangular stone block—perhaps an altar or a sarcophagus.

When the PCs enter the chamber, Kel Virond casts his preparatory spells (see **Tactics**, below) before making his appearance.

The lid of the sarcophagus slides off and shatters on the stone floor. A warrior in chainmail wearing a full helm leaps out and charges, swinging a gleaming black scythe. Only when he's about to strike does it become obvious that his hands are mere bones!

Creature: Although he is frustrated beyond human imagination by his 500-year imprisonment, Kel Virond understands that these mortal intruders are worth more to him alive than dead, because they just might be able to free him.

➤ **Kel Virond, Male Human Lich Clr12 (Nerull):** CR 14; Medium Undead (6 ft. 2 in. tall); HD 12d12; hp 78; Init +2; Spd 20 ft.; AC 25, touch 12, flat-footed 23; BAB +9; Grap +12; Atk +12 melee touch (1d8+5, touch), or +15/+10 melee (2d4+6 plus 2d6 unholy/19–20/x4, +2 keen unholy scythe); SA damaging touch, fear aura, paralyzing touch, rebuke undead 5/day, spells; SQ DR 15/+1, immunities (cold, electricity, mind-affecting attacks, polymorphing), turn resistance +4, undead traits; AL NE; SV Fort +8, Ref +6, Will +12; Str 16, Dex 14, Con —, Int 12, Wis 19, Cha 14.

Skills: Bluff +4, Concentration +12, Diplomacy +10, Hide +6, Knowledge (religion) +10, Listen +13, Move Silently +6, Search +9, Sense Motive +11, Spellcraft +11, Spot +11. **Feats:** Combat Casting, Craft Wondrous Item, Martial Weapon Proficiency (scythe), Scribe Scroll, Still Spell, Weapon Focus (scythe).

Cleric Spells Prepared (6/7/6/6/5/4/3; base save DC = 14 + spell level): 0—detect magic x2, guidance x2, read magic, resistance; 1st—command, curse water, deathwatch, detect good, divine favor, magic weapon, protection from good*; 2nd—bull's strength, darkness, death knell*, enthrall, hold person, spiritual weapon; 3rd—animate dead*, bestow curse, blindness/deafness, contagion, dispel magic, protection from elements; 4th—still dispel magic, divine power, poison, spell immunity, unholy blight*; 5th—dispel good*, slay living, spell resistance, summon monster V; 6th—blade barrier, create undead*, harm.

*Domain spell. **Domains:** Death (death touch 1/day), Evil (evil spells cast at +1 level).

Languages: Common, Infernal.

See the *Monster Manual* page 216 for lich special attacks and qualities. Note that the save DCs for Kel Virond's damaging touch, fear aura, and paralyzing touch are 18, and his fear aura is caster level 12th.

Possessions: +3 chainmail, +2 keen unholy scythe, phylactery of darkness, scroll of restoration, scroll of harm, scroll of raise dead, silver unholy symbol (150 gp), jeweled helm (750 gp), key to portcullis lock.

Tactics: If alerted to the PCs' presence at the portcullis, Kel Virond casts *protection from good* while lying in his sarcophagus. After the first two PCs enter the tomb proper, he casts *blade barrier* at the entrance of the hall to keep the rest at bay, hopefully dicing up a few intruders in the process. He then uses *summon monster V* to call forth a shadow mastiff (hp 48; *Monster Manual* 162) to keep the advancing PCs busy. Time permitting, he then casts *unholy blight*, *hold person*, *bull's strength*, and *divine power*



before emerging from his sarcophagus and wading into combat with his deadly scythe.

Kel Virond does not seek to kill all the PCs—at least not immediately. If he can render one of them helpless by any means (hit point reduction, *harm*, *hold person*, or paralyzing touch), he begins to bargain with the others for that character's life. He threatens to kill the helpless PC unless the others agree to free him from his imprisonment. If they refuse, he slays the

captive with his death touch, *death knell*, or scythe, whichever is most convenient, then rejoins combat.

Treasure: The *phylactery of darkness* is a 1-inch cube of blackest adamantine inscribed with unholy prayers to Nerull. It is fused to Kel Virond's forehead, hidden under his full helmet. Because it maintains his very existence, he will not reveal its location under any circumstances. Once Kel Virond's helmet is removed, the *phylactery's* blue glow immediately reveals it as a

CHARIOT FEATS

The following feats are taken from *Sword and Fist: A Guidebook to Fighters and Monks*.

CHARIOT COMBAT [GENERAL]

You are skilled in chariot combat.

Prerequisite: Handle Animal skill.

Benefit: Once per round when either of your steeds is hit, you may make a Handle Animal check to negate the hit. The hit is negated if your Handle Animal check result is greater than the attack roll with all applicable modifiers included. (Essentially, the Handle Animal check result becomes the steed's Armor Class if it is higher than the steed's regular AC.)

CHARIOT TRAMPLE [GENERAL]

You are trained in using your chariot to knock down opponents.

Prerequisite: Chariot Combat, Handle Animal skill.

Benefit: When you attempt to overrun an opponent with your chariot, the target may not choose to avoid you. If you knock down the target, your steeds each may make one hoof (or stamp) attack

against the opponent, gaining the standard +4 bonus on attack rolls against prone targets. The wheels of the chariot deal a further 2d6 points of damage automatically, but you must succeed at a Handle Animal check (DC varies depending on the size of the opponent) or upend the chariot. See the table below for sample DCs.

Item Struck or Run Over	DC
Light underbrush	10
Log	10
Muddy ground	10
Small pedestrian	10
Medium pedestrian	15
Large pedestrian (including horse)	20
Wooden fence	20
Heavy underbrush	20
Hedgerow	25
Another chariot, side or rear	25
Another chariot, head-on	30

piece of divine essence to the PC who guessed the answer to riddle 2. Alternatively, a successful bardic knowledge or Knowledge (religion) check (DC 25) allows any character to recognize the *phylactery* as an object sacred to Nerull.

The *phylactery* can be removed by chipping the skull (hardness 5, hp 10) away from it. Anyone, regardless of alignment, who touches the *phylactery* gains 1 negative level per round of contact with it. The Fortitude save DC to remove the negative level is 20. A good creature who touches it takes 1d6 points of unholy damage per round of contact in addition to the negative level.

The statue of Nerull has two large black opals (2,000 gp each) for eyes. Finding these requires a successful Search check (DC 15).

The *phylactery of darkness* acts as Virond's lich *phylactery*. Removing it from his head destroys him permanently as surely as destroying a lich's normal *phylactery* would. If the PCs try to leave before removing the *phylactery*, they encounter the ghost once more, who demands that they finish the job.

Development: If the PCs agree to release Kel Virond, he tells them that they must dispel the *forbiddance* in the outer corridor and deal with the stone golem (area 3b) if they haven't already. To get the lich outside, they can dig through the 70 feet of dirt and stone separating the crypt from the outside world, or use a spell such as *teleport* or *dimension door*.

The ghost of Adelros Melremen, if still present, attacks any PC who tries to remove the wards that keep the lich imprisoned. Also, a temple of Heironeous has been built on the ruins of Kel Virond's fortress on the hill above the crypt, and the clerics and paladins who reside there swiftly retaliate against anyone who frees him. Of course, if Kel Virond is set free, he flees with the *phylactery of darkness*.

If the PCs slay Kel Virond, remember that the lich is not truly defeated unless the PCs also remove the *phylactery of darkness*. The moment that a PC frees the *phylactery of darkness* and takes it in hand, the entire party is transported back to the *cauldron of melding*.

SLATE TUNDRA

When the PCs answer riddle 3 correctly, they are transported to a location somewhere east of Jotsplat, in the land of the ice barbarians. Anyone without winter clothing is subject to the

effects of extreme cold (see page 86 of the *DUNGEON MASTER'S Guide* for details).

4A. OF BEARS AND WOLVES (EL 12)

Three frost giant brothers are out hunting today.

A vast plain of broken, jagged slate stretches before you. The visibility is poor, and the wind howls as a light dusting of snow collects in the crevices between the dark gray stones. Slowly, the howling of the wind diverges into individual canine vocalizations coming from directly behind you.

If the PCs investigate, continue with the following.

Less than 100 feet away, near a large rock outcropping, a half dozen immense, salivating white wolves are tearing a polar bear to pieces. A pale giant stands nearby, laughing.

Creatures: The frost giant is Oskrud, the youngest of the three brothers. He's been sent out with the family's pack of winter wolves to scare up some game, but he'd prefer to keep it all for himself.

➤ **Oskrud, Male Frost Giant:** hp 130; *Monster Manual* 98–101.

Possessions: Huge greataxe, short sword, hunting horn, four throwing rocks, large sack holding bag of salt, whetstone, +2 *nunchaku*.

➤ **Winter Wolves, Advanced (6):** CR 5*; Huge Magical Beast (cold); HD 10d10+50; hp 105 each; Init +4; Spd 50 ft.; AC 16, touch 8, flat-footed 16; BAB +10; Grap +26; Atk +16 melee (2d6+12, bite); Face/Reach 10 ft. by 20 ft./10 ft.; SA breath weapon, trip; SQ cold subtype, scent; AL NE; SV Fort +12, Ref +7, Will +4; Str 26, Dex 11, Con 20, Int 9, Wis 13, Cha 10.

Skills: Hide +7*, Listen +10, Move Silently +8, Spot +10, Wilderness Lore +1*. **Feats:** Alertness, Improved Initiative.

Breath Weapon (Su): Cone of cold, 15 ft., every 1d4 rounds; damage 4d6; Reflex half DC 20. Winter wolves can use their breath weapon while biting.

Trip (Ex): A winter wolf that hits with a bite attack can attempt to trip the opponent as a free action (see page 139 in the *Player's Handbook*) without making a touch attack or provoking an attack of opportunity. If the attempt fails, the opponent cannot react to trip the winter wolf.

Cold Subtype: A winter wolf is immune to cold damage, but it takes double damage from fire unless a saving throw for half

NEW WEAPON

Exotic Weapon—Ranged

	Cost	Damage	Critical	Range Increment	Weight	Type
Large Net	40 gp	*	*	20 ft.	20 lb.	*

*Except as noted below, a Large net works the same as a Medium net. It may be used effectively only by a Large or larger creature, or in two hands by a Medium creature with a Strength score of at least 20. A Large net is useful only against Tiny, Small, Medium, Large, or Huge creatures. A Large net can entangle up to two Medium or smaller creatures at once if they are within 5 feet of each other. A character who fulfills the size and Strength requirements who has Exotic Weapon Proficiency (net) can use a large net as well.

damage is allowed. In that case, it takes half damage on a success and double damage on a failure.

Skills: Winter wolves receive a +1 racial bonus to Listen, Move Silently, and Spot checks, and a +2 racial bonus to Hide checks. *Their natural coloration grants winter wolves a +7 racial bonus to Hide checks in areas of snow and ice. A winter wolf has a +4 racial bonus to Wilderness Lore checks when tracking by scent.

➤ **Polar Bear (x):** hp 12 (normally 70); *Monster Manual* 194.

Tactics: As soon as Oskrud notices the PCs, he leaves three wolves to finish off the polar bear and takes the others with him to deal with the intruders. The winter wolves concentrate their breath weapons and trip attacks on one or two of the weakest-looking characters. Oskrud is very confident that he can handle puny little humanoids on his own, and he'd like to prove this to his big brothers. Thus, he blows his hunting to summon their aid only if his hit points drop to below 1/3 of normal and more than two of the winter wolves with him are dead.

Development: If Oskrud does blow his horn, his brothers appear in 2d4 rounds. If he is prevented from blowing his horn, his brothers come to meet him 2d6 minutes later, arriving from the east in their chariot. Go to area 4b when they arrive. Oskrud is not interested in parleying with the PCs. If they capture him alive, he cooperates with interrogation but has no idea where they can find what they seek. He suggests that his brothers might know, however, and requests permission to summon them with his horn, if he has not already done so. Of course, Oskrud knows that his brothers will be no more interested in helping the PCs than he is.

Ad-hoc XP Award: Treat the winter wolves as CR 7 monsters for the purpose of determining the PCs' experience award.

4B. THE BIG BROTHERS

When the frost giant brothers are 300 feet away, each character can attempt a Listen check (DC 15) to detect them. If anyone is successful, read the following.

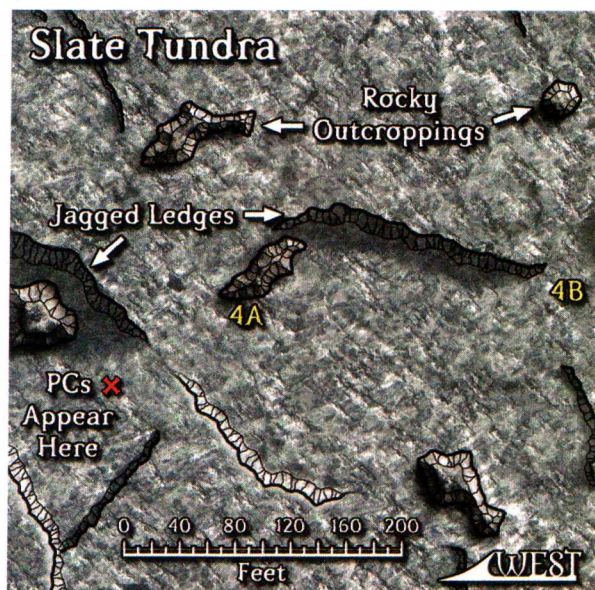
A sound like distant, rumbling thunder becomes audible, as well as a faint crunching noise.

Allow each character a Spot check (DC 20) when the giants close to 150 feet. If anyone is successful, read the following.

From the swirling snow to the east, a pair of hulking forms takes shape. Two wooly mammoths, each wearing a harness and armor, seem to be pulling a vehicle of some kind in your direction. The creatures trumpet loudly as they approach.

The mammoths draw a massive wooden chariot occupied by the two older frost giant brothers, Hrokkvir and Skrati. They are delighted to see actual enemies to fight.

Creatures (EL 14): This week has been the most joyous time in the two brothers' miserable lives. They are the elder sons of Aurgelmir, a particularly foul-tempered frost giant chieftain, and just days ago he was killed by a band of adventurers while hunting. The "boys" are happy about this because now they can



drive his prized mammoth-drawn chariot. Sure, they sneaked a few joyrides behind dad's back in the past, but they always got caught and received sound thrashings. Now that he's gone, Hrokkvir and Skrati are making up for lost time. They are currently out "land-trawling" across the plains, dragging large nets to catch animals and smaller humanoids.

➤ **Hrokkvir and Skrati, Male Frost Giant Ftr1 (2):** CR 10; Large Giant (cold); HD 14d8+70 plus 1d10+5; hp 143; Init -1; Spd 40 ft.; AC 21, touch 8, flat-footed 21; BAB +11; Grap +24; Atk +19/+14/+9 melee (2d8+13/×3, Huge greataxe), or +10 ranged (1d6+9, rock) or +9/+4/-1 ranged touch (—, net); Face/Reach 5 ft. by 5 ft./10 ft.; SA rock throwing; SQ cold subtype, darkvision 60 ft., rock catching; AL CE; SV Fort +16, Ref +3, Will +4; Str 29, Dex 9, Con 21, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 11.

Skills: Climb +13, Handle Animal +2, Jump +13, Spot +6. **Feats:** Chariot Combat*, Chariot Trample*, Cleave, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (net), Great Cleave, Power Attack.

*Feats from *Sword and Fist*; see Chariot Feats sidebar. See *Monster Manual* page 98 for frost giant special attacks and qualities. Note that Hrokkvir and Skrati can each hurl rocks weighing 40 to 50 pounds with a range increment of 120 feet. Each brother can also catch Small, Medium, or Large rocks.

Possessions: Chain shirt, Huge greataxe, net, six throwing rocks, two large nets, *wheel of Kord*, silver statuette of a horse (300 gp), 4-ounce jar of *stone salve*, three hunks of cheese, bone whistle, 3-gallon wineskin, lump of amber (900 gp), haunch of moose, pair of skis (along with gear to secure them under the chariot wheels).

➤ **Wooly Mammoths (2):** CR 8; Huge Animal; HD 16d8+80; hp 152; Init +0; Spd 40 ft.; AC 16, touch 8, flat-footed 16; Atk +20 melee (2d6+10, slam) and +15 melee (2d6+5, 2 stamps), or +20 melee (2d8+10, gore); Face/Reach 10 ft. by 20 ft./10 ft.; SA trample 2d8+15; SQ low-light vision, scent; AL N; SV Fort +15, Ref +10, Will +6; Str 30, Dex 10, Con 21, Int 2, Wis 13, Cha 7.

Skills: Listen +6, Spot +6.

See the Elephant entry on page 196 of the *Monster Manual* for mammoth special attacks and qualities. Note that the Reflex save DC for the mammoth's trample attack is 28.

Tactics: Hrokkvir is driving when the brothers first sight the party at a distance of 120 feet. As soon as they close to 100 feet, Skrati begins throwing rocks. At 20 feet, Skrati throws his net at the nearest opponent. Hrokkvir drives the chariot straight into the center of the party and attempts to trample as many PCs as possible on his first pass. (The mammoth-and-chariot combination has a 20-foot face, so theoretically he could trample a maximum of four Medium PCs.) After his first pass, he circles until Skrati nets at least one PC and secures the net to a cleat on the chariot. Characters trapped in a net are dragged over the sharp-edged slate, which deals 1d8 points of damage per character per round.

Thereafter, the giants switch places, and Hrokkvir has a go at trawling. While traveling at a double move (80 feet), the chariot can turn only 45 degrees in a round. Once both nets are occupied and all six throwing rocks have been used, the driver concentrates on trampling any remaining PCs while the passenger hacks at any he can reach with his greataxe in passing. Note that the chariot affords each giant one-quarter cover (+2 AC bonus and +1 Reflex save bonus, not included in the statistics above).

Treasure: The left wheel of the chariot is the *wheel of Kord*, a solid iron disk pierced in the center and embossed with Kord's holy symbol. The PC who correctly answered riddle 3 sees it surrounded by a blue glow. Any other PC can recognize it as the item for which the group came with a successful Knowledge (religion) check (DC 10). The *wheel of Kord* weighs more than 500 pounds.

Development: The PCs must do more than just grasp the *wheel of Kord* to be *teleported* back to the *cauldron of melding*; they must actually activate the item through a feat of Strength. A successful bardic knowledge or Knowledge (religion) check (DC 15) reveals that Kord often requires such a display to activate devices sacred to him. Once a PC raises the *wheel of Kord* overhead (Strength, DC 18) or performs a similar feat of Strength involving the wheel, the party is *teleported* back to the shrine.

OUT TO SEA

Upon giving the correct answer to riddle 4, the PCs appear in an 18-foot-long, double-prowed rowboat in the middle of the Azure Sea.

Blue water stretches as far as the eye can see in all directions, and the smell of salty air assails your nostrils. Your rowboat rides high on the blue swells and then slips back down into the troughs, but the sea is fairly calm. Your sturdy boat has a rudder at the back and looks like it would comfortably seat eight humans. It is equipped with two sets of oars.

Anyone who can read Elven and bothers to examine the mithral inlay along the outer portion of the bow can easily determine that the boat is named "Seasprite."

◆ **Seasprite:** 4-in. thick; Hardness 5; hp 40.

5A. SQUID ATTACK (EL 9)

Before the PCs have a chance to decide on a direction, they are attacked by a giant squid. Any PC who makes a successful Spot check (DC 20) notices the following and is not surprised.

A slim, silver form dashes toward your boat, just below the surface of the water. It's hard to tell exactly what it is, but a large eye stares up at you for a moment.

Creature: The giant squid noticed some tasty morsels inside the boat and decided to investigate.

➤ **Giant Squid:** hp 70; *Monster Manual* 202.

Tactics: The squid attacks by reaching its tentacles into the boat. Each character inside the boat must make a successful Balance check (DC 10) each round that the boat is under attack or fall prone due to the rocking caused by the monster's attacks.

Development: A pseudoleviathan (see below) arrives 2d6 rounds after the battle with the squid begins, whether or not the fight is over.

5B. THE PSEUDOLEVIATHAN (EL 14)

Each character can attempt a Spot check (DC 15) 4 rounds after the battle with the giant squid begins. If anyone is successful, read the following.

As your boat rides up the crest of a swell, a large fin slices through the waves near your craft. About 30 yards behind it comes a second fin, skinnier but taller than the first. The leading fin suddenly dives into the sea, and the second rises higher out of the water. It seems to be the tail of the biggest fish you've ever seen!

The party is being circled by the largest construct ever to cruise the ocean depths. Its head alone measures three times the length of the party's boat.

Creature: A successful Knowledge (nature) check (DC 15) identifies the creature as a pseudoleviathan, while a successful bardic knowledge or Knowledge (religion) check (DC 20 for either) reveals that the creature is a construct sacred to Obad-Hai, built in the image of one of his most beloved creatures. The pseudoleviathan is essentially a massive, oceangoing, submersible shrine to the god of nature. A successful Spot check (DC 20) reveals that the creature was constructed from the remains of thousands and thousands of sea creatures gathered over time from the ocean floor. This pseudoleviathan is currently being used to collect fish for study under the direction of a druid (see area 5c, below).

➤ **Pseudoleviathan:** CR 14; Colossal Construct (aquatic); HD 24d10; hp 132; Init +0; Spd swim 40 ft.; AC 23, touch 2, flat-footed 23; Atk +25 melee (4d8+16, bite) and +20 melee (4d6+8, tail slap); Face/Reach 20 ft. by 40 ft./10 ft.; SA frightful presence, gulp; SQ blindsight 100 ft., cold resistance 25, construct traits, DR 20/+3; AL N; SV Fort +8, Ref +8, Will +9; Str 43, Dex 10, Con —, Int —, Wis 13, Cha 14.

See the pseudoleviathan entry in "Appendix II" for the pseudoleviathan's special attacks and qualities. Note that the



Will save DC for its frightful presence ability is 24.

Tactics: The pseudoleviathan circles the party's boat for 2 rounds before diving underneath and coming up for a gulp attempt against the entire boat. The bite deals no damage because the druid controlling the construct wants to capture the PCs alive. The pseudoleviathan keeps trying to swallow the boat and the party until either it is successful or more than 150 points of damage have been dealt to it. As long as any PCs are in the boat, one of them (their choice) must make a Profession (sailor) check each round. This check result is the boat's AC against the creature's bite attacks.

Development: If the PCs are swallowed, each character in the boat must make a Profession (sailor) or Balance check (DC 15) to stay in the boat as it slides into the pseudoleviathan's gullet. Failure indicates the PC goes overboard and must make Swim checks (DC 15) each round or risk drowning. Death by drowning is unlikely, though, since Caedra (see area 5c) rescues drowning PCs after 2d6 rounds.

5C. IN THE BELLY OF THE BEAST (EL 13)

The water inside the creature's stomach is quite rough because of the leviathan's movements. The underwater visibility within the creature's belly is 10 feet.

When the PCs' boat first enters the stomach, the leviathan dives for 1 full minute (see "Inside the Leviathan: Table 1" for the effect on the boat), then levels out. Shortly thereafter, the PCs receive a visitor.

After your harrowing trip down the sea creature's throat, you arrive in its cavernous belly. A pocket of air that extends the entire length of the stomach allows normal breathing, and a torch lashed to a small leather boat floating inside the stomach provides light by which to see. But the beast's swimming rocks your boat enough that simply staying afloat presents a challenge.

The leather boat is a watertight coracle large enough to seat four Medium creatures. The torch burns because of a *continual flame* spell cast upon it.

Suddenly, a smiling female surfaces near your boat and waves to you. "Welcome to the pseudoleviathan," she says. "I'm sorry for the rough reception, but you looked like you were in some distress, so I thought I'd invite you in the only way I could. How did you come to be way out here in such a little boat?"

The woman is Caedra Halireth, the half-elf druid who lives in and controls the pseudoleviathan. She commands it mentally through the amulet she wears and has given the construct a standing order to gently swallow interesting creatures for study.

The air supply inside the stomach will last only 60 minutes, minus 5 minutes for each party member beyond four, unless the druid commands the pseudoleviathan to surface and replenish the air. The denizens of the creature's stomach do not currently require any air themselves.

The piece of the *primal anchor* that the PCs seek is called the leviathan's heart. Appropriately enough, this device functions as

the pseudoleviathan's heart. Removing it kills the construct and cause it to sink, something the denizens of the creature would surely object to (see **Creatures**, below).

Creatures: Caedra Halireth has always dreamed of communing with all the creatures of the deep blue sea. As a girl, she ran away from home and disguised herself as a boy so that she could become a sailor. Her secret was eventually discovered, but by then she had earned such respect that she was allowed to remain a part of the crew. One night during a storm, she was swept overboard but rescued by the pseudoleviathan at the command of its creator, an aged druid named Jorn. Caedra was so entranced with the creature and so eager to learn about under-sea life that Jorn agreed to become her mentor and teach her everything he knew. Jorn died some years ago, leaving Caedra mistress of the pseudoleviathan. She is now completely at home under the sea, either in her own form or in that of a sea creature.

Two companions accompany her in the stomach: Hhoshiirll, an awakened Large shark, and Clobgloob, an awakened giant octopus. The three of them use the pseudoleviathan to travel the oceans in search of new creatures, boldly exploring the reefs, wrecks, and lost civilizations that litter the sea bottom. Every morning, Caedra casts *water breathing* on herself (duration 26 hours). She also carries extra *potions of water breathing* for emergencies.

☛ **Caedra Halireth, Female Half-Elf Drd13:** CR 13; Medium Humanoid (5 ft. 8 in. tall); HD 13d8+39; hp 97; Init +5; Spd 30 ft.; AC 15, touch 13, flat-footed 14; BAB +9; Grap +9; Atk

+11/+6 melee (1d8+2/×3, +2 giant bane shortspear), or +10/+5 melee (1d4+1/19–20, *adamantine dagger*); SA spells; SQ a thousand faces, animal companion, half-elf traits, nature sense, resist nature's lure, trackless step, venom immunity, *wild shape* (Tiny, Small, Medium, Large, or dire animal 4/day), woodland stride; AL N; SV Fort +11, Ref +5, Will +11; Str 10, Dex 12, Con 17, Int 11, Wis 17, Cha 14.

Skills: Animal Empathy +12, Concentration +10, Heal +9, Knowledge (nature) +13, Profession (sailor) +13, Swim +10, Wilderness Lore +11. **Feats:** Blind-Fight, Brew Potion, Endurance, Forge Ring, Improved Initiative.

Druid Spells Prepared (6/6/6/5/4/3/2/1; base save DC = 13 + spell level): 0—*create water*, *detect magic*, *flare*, *know direction*, *light*, *purify food and drink*; 1st—*animal friendship* ×2, *calm animals*, *cure light wounds*, *endure elements*, *magic fang*; 2nd—*barkskin*, *charm person or animal*, *hold animal*, *speak with animals*, *warp wood*, *wood shape*; 3rd—*cure moderate wounds*, *greater magic fang*, *neutralize poison*, *speak with plants*, *water breathing*; 4th—*control plants*, *cure serious wounds*, *dispel magic*, *rusting grasp*; 5th—*commune with nature*, *cure critical wounds*, *summon nature's ally* V; 6th—*antilife shell*, *stone tell*; 7th—*summon nature's ally* VII.

Languages: Aquan, Common, Elven.

Possessions: +2 leather armor, +2 giant bane shortspear, *adamantine dagger*, *amulet of pseudoleviathan command**, *ring of protection* +2, *ring of freedom of movement*, 4 *potions of water breathing*.

*See "New Magic Item" sidebar.

INSIDE THE PSEUDOLEVIATHAN

Roll d% for every 5 minutes that the PCs spend inside the pseudoleviathan and consult **Table 1** to determine the creature's activities during the upcoming 5 minutes and the effects of those actions on the PCs. Subtract 10 from the d% roll for every 30 points of damage the creature has taken (minimum 1%), and increase the frequency of the check to every 1d4 rounds as soon as the pseudoleviathan begins to take damage.

Characters attempting to swim inside the stomach encounter "rough" water as long as the creature is swimming levelly; at all other times the water is treated as "stormy" (see the Swim skill description on page 75 of the *Player's Handbook*). The water level inside the creature's stomach can change quite dramatically with its movements, and characters may begin to drown if submerged. (See the Drowning Rule on page 85 of the *DUNGEON MASTER's Guide* for details.)

TABLE 1. PSEUDOLEVIATHAN'S ACTIVITIES

d%	Activity	Effect on Creatures in Stomach
1–15	Climbing	Reflex save (DC 20) or fall out of the boat.*
16–30	Diving	Reflex save (DC 20) or fall out of boat.*
31–90	Level	Reflex save (DC 10) or fall swimming out of boat.*
91–00	Collecting	Reflex save (DC 25) or fall out of

fish for
study** boat.* (swallowing)

*A successful Profession (sailor) check (DC 15) by one of the PCs gives everyone in the boat a +4 circumstance bonus on this Reflex save.

**There is a 20% chance that a larger aquatic creature is also collected. Roll d% and consult Table 2 in this case.

TABLE 2. COLLECTED AQUATIC CREATURES

d%	Creature	Number Appearing	CR
01–02	Sea hag	1	4
03	Kraken	1	12
04–10	Lacedon	2d4	2
11–17	Marrow	1d4	2
18–23	Orca	1	5
24–30	Porpoise	1d4	1/2
31–37	Large shark	1d2	2
38–43	Dire shark	1	9
44–55	Squid	1d6	1
56–65	Giant squid	1	9
66–68	Adult tojanida	1	5
69	Dragon turtle	1	9
70–79	Octopus	1	1
80–88	Giant octopus	1	8
89–94	Sea lion	1d2	4
95–100	Huge viper	1	3

➤ **Hhoshiirll, Male Awakened Large Shark:** CR 3 (the shark's CR is one higher due to the effects of the *awaken* spell); Large Animal (aquatic); HD 9d8+9; hp 49; Init +2; Spd swim 60 ft.; AC 15, touch 11, flat-footed 13; BAB +6; Grap +13; Atk +8 melee (1d8+4, bite); Face/Reach 5 ft. by 10 ft./5 ft.; SQ keen scent, low-light vision; AL N; SV Fort +7, Ref +8, Will +4; Str 17, Dex 15, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 3.

Skills: Listen +7, Spot +7, Swim +11.

Languages: Aquan.

See *Monster Manual* page 201 for Large shark special qualities.

Note that PCs of this level won't gain experience for defeating Hhoshiirll.

➤ **Clobgloob, Female Awakened Giant Octopus:** CR 9 (the octopus's CR is one higher due to the effects of the *awaken* spell); Large Animal (aquatic); HD 10d8+10; hp 55; Init +2; Spd 20 ft., swim 30 ft.; AC 18, touch 11, flat-footed 16; BAB +7; Grap +16; Atk +11 melee (1d4+5, 8 tentacle rakes) and +6 melee (1d8+2, bite); Reach 10 ft.; SA constrict 2d8+7, improved grab; SQ ink cloud, jet, low-light vision; AL N; SV Fort +8, Ref +9, Will +4; Str 20, Dex 15, Con 13, Int 14, Wis 12, Cha 5.

Skills: Hide +11, Listen +4, Spot +4, Swim +13.

Languages: Aquan, Common, Elven.

See page 199 in the *Monster Manual* for giant octopus special attacks and qualities. Note that Clobgloob deals 2d8+7 points of damage with each successful constrict attack.

Possessions: pouch, *potion of cure moderate wounds*, gold-and-ruby necklace (400 gp), five pearls (75 gp each).

Tactics: Caedra and her companions are very friendly at first because they have so few visitors to talk to. This attitude changes quite dramatically when they become aware of the party's plans. Caedra considers the pseudoleviathan a holy object as well as a home, and it would take considerable convincing for her to allow it to be damaged or destroyed. Treat Caedra as unfriendly if the PCs broach this topic with her, rather than indifferent, which is her actual initial attitude (see **Table 5-4: Influencing NPC Attitude** on page 149 in the *DUNGEON MASTER's Guide* for details). Caedra must be swayed to helpful if the PCs intend to avoid a fight here.

If the PCs do not convince Caedra of the need for them to take the *leviathan heart*, she and her companions try to stop the party from injuring the creature. They try nonlethal means first; if those are ineffective, they switch to deadlier tactics. As a last resort, Caedra orders the pseudoleviathan to swallow

enough water to fill its stomach in an attempt to drown the PCs (see the Drowning Rule on page 85 of the *DUNGEON MASTER's Guide*). If this tactic fails to stop the PCs, she tells the creature to expel the entire contents of its stomach through its mouth. This process takes 5 full rounds, during which the water is treated as stormy. At the end of 5 rounds, everything inside the stomach is forced out, taking 2d6 points of damage on the way. Each character may make a Swim or Profession (sailor) check (DC 35) to resist expulsion and stay inside, if desired, but the damage still applies.

Treasure: The *leviathan heart* is the elemental core of the construct. It is a misshapen lump of fused stone, bone, coral, and shells that weighs approximately 100 pounds. It can be seen either when the wall of the stomach immediately adjacent to the heart is out of the water (while the leviathan is climbing), or when a PC is underwater (Spot, DC 20, in the former case, or DC 25 in the latter). The character who guessed the answer to riddle 4 sees the heart surrounded by a blue glow.

To get the heart, a PC has to cut through the lining around it and deal at least 50 points of slashing damage to remove it from the creature's body. Removal of the heart immediately ends the life of the pseudoleviathan, and it begins to settle onto the bottom of the ocean. Water begins to pour into the stomach, filling the void completely within 5 minutes.

Securely lashed inside Caedra's coracle are 2 *potions of water breathing*, 254 gp in a pouch, a silver-and-emerald ring (worth 1,500 gp), and a silver-and-gold hand mirror (worth 220 gp). Lying at the bottom of the leviathan's stomach, hidden under the debris of many a sunken vessel, is a locked iron chest (Search, DC 20). It contains 3,800 gp, a *wand of fireball* (24 charges, caster level 8th), and a *mirror of opposition* (at the bottom of the chest).

◆ **Locked Iron Chest:** 1 1/2 in. thick; Hardness 10; hp 45; break DC 28; Open Lock DC 30.

Development: As soon as a PC grasps the freed *leviathan heart*, the entire party is *teleported* back to the *cauldron of melding*.

THE FACE OF CHAOS (EL VARIES)

The minion of chaos is busy tearing up farmhouses and devouring livestock west of Shiboeth while the populace flees for the false safety of the city. (Determine the creature's exact location

NEW MAGIC ITEM

A pseudoleviathan responds to verbal commands from its creator, but it can also be controlled with an item known as the *amulet of pseudoleviathan command*.

■ **Amulet of Pseudoleviathan Command:** This pendant depicts a leviathan swimming in a circle. It allows the wearer to telepathically control a particular pseudoleviathan that was created at the same time as the amulet. The item's range is 300 feet; beyond that

distance the creature cannot receive instructions. The amulet also allows the wearer to see through the leviathan's eyes (whether or not he or she is in the cockpit) and to make use of the creature's blindsight ability. If the wearer moves beyond the command range, the pseudoleviathan continues to carry out its last instructions until control is re-established.

Caster Level: 18th; **Prerequisites:** Craft Wondrous Item, *greater scrying*, *dominate animal*, *command plants*; **Market Price:** 30,000 gp; **Weight:** —.

based on the time that has passed since the PCs met Tagus, assuming that it continues to head approximately east). Any PC heading toward the Rushmoors from Shiboeth can attempt a Spot check (DC 1d8+12) every half hour to sight a fleeing inhabitant, who can point out the direction of the minion's last known location if requested. When the PCs come within 2 miles of the creature, a successful Listen check (DC 15) allows them to pinpoint its direction from its thunderous bellows and noises of destruction.

When the characters finally see the minion of chaos, read the following aloud.

Before you is a creature that looks like something out of a demented druid's fevered nightmare. More than 50 feet tall, it resembles a monstrosity huge, black tree, but the "branches" are writhing about like slimy serpents, and the thick, bloated trunk is divided into five elephantine legs. It bellows as its tentacles lash out to encircle a sheep nearly 10 yards distant. The helpless sheep rises high into the air and disappears into what must be a maw in the midst of the snakelike appendages, judging by the horrific chomping sounds that ensue.

To sever the creature's connection to the Far Realms, the characters must hit it with a ranged touch attack using the *primal anchor*. The item functions as a thrown weapon (range increment 20 feet). If it hits, the creature is cut off from its plane of origin (no saving throw). Read the following aloud if the characters score a hit with the anchor.

Thunder roars as blue energy crackles over the creature's body. Slowly, the beast appears to shrink in size until it has lost a third of its apparent mass. Although still horrible in appearance, it doesn't look quite so invulnerable.

Creature (EL 20 or 14): Statistics for the minion of chaos depend on whether or not it has been struck by the *primal anchor*. The first set of statistics given below are for the unanchored minion; the second set is for the anchored version.

➤ **Minion of Chaos (unanchored version):** CR 20; Gargantuan Outsider (chaos) (60 ft. tall); HD 35d8+245; hp 402; Init +7; Spd 40 ft., swim 20 ft.; AC 39, touch 9, flat-footed 36; BAB +35; Grap +59; Atk +42 melee (4d6+12, bite) and +40 melee (2d6+6, 14 tentacle rakes) and +40 melee (2d8+6, 5 stamps), or +33 ranged touch (paralysis, 1d4 paralysis rays); Face/Reach 15 ft. by 15 ft./30 ft.; SA energy drain, frightful presence, improved grab, paralysis rays, spell-like abilities, swallow whole; SQ alien mind, blindsight 200 ft., DR 30/+5, immunities (acid, cold, electricity, fire, poison), outsider traits, protective aura, regeneration 30, SR 35; AL CN; SV Fort +26, Ref +22, Will +22; Str 34, Dex 17, Con 24, Int 15, Wis 17, Cha 24.

Skills: Bluff +22, Concentration +45, Diplomacy +13, Hide +5, Intimidate +47, Knowledge (arcana) +22, Knowledge (the planes) +24, Listen +43, Move Silently +16, Search +40, Sense Motive +41, Spellcraft +40, Spot +43, Swim +20. **Feats:** Alertness, Blind-Fight, Cleave, Dodge, Great Cleave, Improved Initiative, Mobility, Multiattack, Power Attack.

Spell-Like Abilities: At will—chaos hammer, confusion, death knell, deeper darkness, feeblemind, insanity, unholy aura, unholy blight; 1/day—cloudkill, creeping doom, horrid wilting. Caster level 20th; save DC 17 + spell level.

See the minion of chaos entry in "Appendix II" for the minion's other special attacks and qualities. Note that the Fortitude saves for its energy drain and paralysis ray attacks are DC 34, and the Will save DCs for its frightful presence attack and its alien mind special quality are also 34. A swallowed creature takes 2d8+12 points of bludgeoning damage plus 2d8 points of acid damage and 1d3 negative levels per round from the creature's gullet.

➤ **Minion of Chaos (anchored version):** CR 14; Gargantuan Outsider (chaos) (40 ft. tall); HD 25d8+125; hp 237; Init +4; Spd 40 ft., swim 20 ft.; AC 26, touch 6, flat-footed 26; BAB +25; Grap +43; Atk +26 melee (4d6+6, bite) and +24 melee (2d6+3, 10 tentacle rakes) and +24 melee (2d8+3, 3 stamps); Face/Reach 10 ft. by 10 ft./20 ft.; SA improved grab, spell-like abilities, swallow whole; SQ alien mind, blindsight 200 ft., DR 10/+3, outsider traits, resistances (acid 20, electricity 20), SR 25; AL CN; SV Fort +19, Ref +14, Will +13; Str 22, Dex 11, Con 20, Int 7, Wis 9, Cha 10.

Skills: Concentration +19, Diplomacy +2, Hide +0, Intimidate +21, Knowledge (the planes) +1, Listen +20, Move Silently +11, Search +16, Sense Motive +15, Spellcraft +4, Spot +20, Swim +14. **Feats:** Alertness, Blind-Fight, Cleave, Great Cleave, Improved Initiative, Multiattack, Power Attack.

Spell-Like Abilities: 1/day—chaos hammer, confusion, darkness, forget. Caster level 10th; save DC 10 + spell level.

See the minion of chaos entry in "Appendix II" for the minion's other special attacks and qualities, but note that it now has access only to those that appear above. The Will save DC for its alien mind special quality is now 22. A swallowed creature takes 2d8+9 points of bludgeoning damage plus 2d8 points of acid damage per round from the creature's gullet.

Tactics: The minion of chaos simply tries to devour every living thing in its path. By doing so, it increases the power of its masters in the Far Realms. It prefers swallowing opponents whole over stomping them to death or killing them outright with its spell-like abilities, but it will resort to any method at its disposal if hard pressed.

Development: The minion of chaos dissolves into a bubbling pile of muck when slain. If Tagus Grehan has not accompanied the party throughout the adventure, he has been tracking them since they set off to find the minion. In either case, he makes a stealthy attempt to grab the *primal anchor* from the remains of the minion of chaos when the PCs leave. If they grab it first and take it along, Tagus follows them again and attempts to take the item while the PCs are busy with their next encounter.

The PCs can easily (Wilderness Lore, DC 5) track the creature back to Rhyll in the Rushmoors if they think to do so. If the PCs choose not to trace the origin of the minion and Tagus is present, he urges them to reconsider, since whoever summoned it

can probably summon another. If they still refuse, Tagus or a local lord gathers an expedition to wipe out the cultists. Their success, or lack thereof, is up to you.

BLACK OBELISK (EL 16)

As a boy, the half-elf Rhyll never felt at ease among either the humans or the elves in his hometown of Shiboeth. Derided for his illegitimate birth by the other children, Rhyll withdrew into the world of books available to him through his mother's employment as a charwoman at the Collegium Shiboethensis.

Rhyll also enjoyed long hikes in the Rushmoors near his home. There, in the marshy bottoms, he found some comfort in the croaking of the amphibians—it seemed almost as if they were speaking to him. One day when Rhyll was in his late teens, he ventured into a dark section of the moors where he had never gone before. While exploring, he stumbled upon a five-sided, solid basalt obelisk. The structure stood more than 30 feet high, and its surface was covered with deeply incised runes in an unknown tongue. Intrigued, he made repeated visits to the obelisk and painstakingly copied the alien characters into his notebook. During his visits, the ambient croaking sounds seemed to take on intelligible qualities, but still he could not quite understand their message.

When he came of age, Rhyll entered the Collegium and focused his studies on the school of Divination. But he never gave up trying to translate the obelisk's inscription, and he studied old languages whenever he could, hoping to find a clue.

After he graduated, Rhyll continued to dabble in magic, investigating various methods of controlling the human mind. But deciphering the runes was still his primary goal. The longer it took, the more obsessed he became with the project, until it eventually began to strain his sanity. Rhyll traveled from Shiboeth to Greyhawk, then to Rauxes, and eventually to Far Ekbir across the Wastes. It was there, penni-

less and starving, that he chanced upon the key to the inscription: the Sha'altnakra Fragment. The cramped, handwritten script of this ancient volume was a mad mishmash of forbidden formulae and rituals in Abyssal, Infernal, and Draconic, as well as several dead mortal languages. A single perusal of the text was enough to rend Rhyll's mind from its foundations. He now understood the message carved into the obelisk—the carvings detailed rituals for bringing the forces of the Far Realms back to Oerth.

With his discovery, Rhyll attained the unique clarity of the newly converted and immediately set about preparing the way for the arrival of the masters. He collected like-minded individuals—mostly lost souls looking for direction—from the back alleys and waterfront districts of Ekbir, and his maniacal devotion to his new path energized all their lives with new purpose. By leading his followers in unwholesome chants and rites, he managed to summon a chaos beast, which put him in direct contact with its masters in the Far Realms. After spending some time communing with these beings, he knew what he had to do next. Soon, several offspring of prominent families went missing, and the normally passive local authorities focused their attention on Rhyll's cult. When he and his followers were eventually forced to flee Ekbir, Rhyll heard the call of the obelisk drawing him back to the Rushmoors.

In the shadow of the great stone, away from the prying eyes of the unenlightened, Rhyll and his cultists continued their dark masses and grisly sacrifices. The Lords of Outer Chaos eventually "rewarded" the cult by sending a minion of chaos. After devouring a goodly number of the faithful, the creature set off in the direction of Shiboeth to consume whatever souls it could find and strengthen the foothold that its masters had made there eons ago. Meanwhile, Rhyll and his followers continued their unholy rites on the moor, ecstatic in the knowledge that the door had finally been opened for their masters.

When the characters follow the minion's trail back to the obelisk, they find Rhyll and his myriad followers cavorting and capering around the ancient monolith in their obscene ritualistic dances.

The Black Obelisk



A makeshift camp of sorts has been set up near the obelisk. Rhyll has cast an *alarm* spell on the approach to the place of worship to warn him of intruders.

Creatures: The revelers consist of Rhyll, his pseudonatural toad familiar, his chaos beast cohort, and some of his followers, including several armed thugs Rhyll recruited in Ekbir and eventually converted to his cause.

➤ Rhyll of Shibolet, Male Half-Elf

Div7/Alienist5: CR 12; Medium Humanoid (5 ft. 6 in. tall); HD 12d4+39; hp 69; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 14, touch 12, flat-footed 13; BAB +6; Grap +6; Atk +8/+3 melee (1d4+2 plus 1d6 fire/×3 plus 2d10 fire, +2 *flaming burst punching dagger*); SA spells; SQ alien blessing, half-elf traits, mad certainty, pseudonatural toad familiar (Crindlap), *summon alien*; AL CN; SV Fort +8, Ref +6, Will +11; Str 10, Dex 13, Con 17, Int 19, Wis 14, Cha 12.

Skills: Concentration +18, Knowledge (arcana) +19, Knowledge (the planes) +21, Listen +12, Scry +15, Search +5, Spellcraft +14, Spot +12. **Feats:** Alertness*, Brew Potion, Craft Wondrous Item, Extend Spell, Leadership, Scribe Scroll, Skill Focus (Knowledge—the planes), Spell Focus (Enchantment), Spell Penetration.

*Only when Crindlap is within 5 feet.

Languages: Abyssal, Celestial, Common, Draconic, Elven, Infernal.

Alien Blessing (Ex):

Rhyll has a +1 insight bonus on all saving throws, but has permanently lost 2 points of Wisdom (already included in the statistics above).

Pseudonatural Toad

Familiar (Su): Rhyll's familiar, Crindlap, while still outwardly a toad, has become a pseudonatural creature (see below). He grants Rhyll the same benefits as a normal toad familiar would grant a 7th-level master.

Mad Certainty (Ex): Rhyll has an additional 3 hit points, as though from the Toughness feat. However, his mind has begun to fracture, and he has developed a phobia against birds and avian creatures. He suffers a –2 penalty on all saving throws, attack rolls, and Charisma-based skill and ability checks with regard to birds, while any such creature gains a +2 morale bonus to AC and saving throws against Rhyll.

Summon Alien (Sp): When Rhyll casts any *summon monster* spell, he summons a pseudonatural version of the creature (see template below).

Wizard Spells Prepared (5/6/6/6/5/4/3; base save DC = 14 + spell level): 0—*daze**, *detect poison*†, *ray of frost*, *read magic*, *resistance*; 1st—*alarm* (already cast), *comprehend languages*†, *expeditious retreat*, *hypnotism**, *mage armor*, *obscuring mist*; 2nd—*alter self*, *detect thoughts*†, *hypnotic pattern*, *invisibility*, *summon monster II*, *Tasha's hideous laughter**; 3rd—*clairaudience/clairvoyance*†, *gaseous form*, *hold person**, *protection from elements*, *suggestion**, *summon monster III*; 4th—*confusion**, *fire shield*, *phantasmal killer*, *screaming*†, *summon monster IV*; 5th—*contact other plane*†, *dominate person**, *feeblemind**, *mind fog**; 6th—*extended summon monster V*, *mass suggestion**, *true seeing*†.

Spellbook #1: 0—*arcane mark*, *dancing lights*, *daze**, *detect magic*, *detect poison*†, *flare*, *ghost sound*, *light*, *mage hand*, *mending*, *open/close*, *prestidigitation*, *ray of frost*, *read magic*, *resistance*; 1st—*alarm*, *charm person**, *comprehend languages*†, *detect secret doors*†, *detect undead*†, *expeditious retreat*, *hypnotism**, *identify*†, *mage armor*, *obscuring mist*, *true strike*†.

Spellbook #2: 2nd—*alter self*, *detect thoughts*†, *hypnotic pattern*, *invisi-*



bility, locate object[†], see invisibility[†], summon monster II, Tasha's hideous laughter^{*}.

Spellbook #3: 3rd—clairaudience/clairvoyance[†], gaseous form, hold person^{*}, protection from elements, suggestion^{*}, summon monster III, tongues[†].

Spellbook #4: 4th—confusion^{*}, emotion^{*}, fire shield, lesser geas^{*}, locate creature[†], minor globe of invulnerability, phantasmal killer, scrying[†], summon monster IV; 5th—contact other plane[†], dominate person^{*}, feeblemind^{*}, mind fog^{*}, summon monster V; 6th—analyze dweomer[†], extended summon monster V, legend lore[†], mass suggestion^{*}, true seeing[†].

*Enchantment spell. Spell Focus feat makes the save DC (if applicable) for these spells 16 + spell level.

†Divination spell. Rhyll's prohibited school is Necromancy.

Possessions: +2 flaming burst punching dagger, bracers of armor +2, ring of protection +1, horn of fog, 2 potions of cure serious wounds, potion of blur, potion of nondetection, scroll of invisibility, scroll of minor globe of invulnerability, silver tooled belt inset with garnets and pearls (800 gp), gold-and-sapphire ring (500 gp), key to chest. In camp: locked chest (Open Lock, DC 25) containing 2,300 gp and four wizard spellbooks (see above).

➤ **Crindlap, Male Pseudonatural Toad Familiar:** CR —; Diminutive Outsider; HD 1/4 d8 (effective 12d8); hp 34; Init +1; Spd 5 ft.; AC 19, touch 15, flat-footed 18; BAB +7; Grap -10; Atk +11 melee (damage varies, touch); Face/Reach 1 ft. by 1 ft./0 ft.; SA true strike; SQ alternate form, deliver touch spells, DR 10/+3, empathic link, improved evasion, low-light vision, outsider traits, resistances (acid 20, electricity 20), share spells, speak with amphibians, speak with master, SR 24; AL CN; SV Fort +4, Ref +5, Will +10; Str 1, Dex 12, Con 11, Int 9, Wis 14, Cha 4.

Skills: Concentration +15, Hide +21, Listen +9, Scry +10, Spot +9.

See "Pseudonatural Creature" template, below, for details of alternate form and true strike abilities. Note that since Crindlap has no natural attack of his own, he can use true strike only when delivering a touch attack for Rhyll.

➤ **Chaos Beast:** hp 62; *Monster Manual* 34.

❖ **Thugs, Male Human War1 (9):** CR 1/2 each; Medium Humanoid; HD 1d8+5; hp 13; Init +0; Spd 20 ft.; AC 14, touch 10, flat-footed 14; BAB +1; Grap +3; Atk +4 melee (2d4+3/18–20, falchion); AL CN; SV Fort +4, Ref +0, Will -1; Str 14, Dex 10, Con 15, Int 9, Wis 8, Cha 10.

Skills: Handle Animal +2, Intimidate +4, Ride (horse) +2. Feats: Toughness, Weapon Focus (falchion).

Possessions: Scale mail, falchion, pouch with 2d10 gp.

❖ **Followers, Male and Female Human Com1 (65):** CR 1/2; Medium Humanoid; HD 1d4+4; hp 9; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 10, touch 10, flat-footed 10; BAB +0; Grap +1; Atk +1 melee (1d6+1, club); AL CN; SV Fort +1, Ref +0, Will -2; Str 12, Dex 10, Con 12, Int 7, Wis 7, Cha 9.

Skills: Swim +5, Use Rope +4. Feats: Endurance, Toughness.

Possessions: Club.

Tactics: If Rhyll becomes alerted to the presence of intruders, either by his *alarm* spell or by some other means, he sends his thugs to investigate and tries to blend in with his followers.

Rhyll is willing to use any resource at his disposal (*expeditious retreat*, *alter self*, *invisibility*, *undetected alignment*, *horn of fog*, or the like) to escape rather than fight. If cornered, he uses his summoning spells to put obstacles between himself and the attackers so that he can bring more powerful Enchantment spells (*suggestion*, *confusion*, and the like) to bear on his opponents. The thugs and followers defend Rhyll fanatically.

Throughout the battle, Rhyll's chaos beast cohort continues to cavort around the obelisk. It attacks anyone, friend or foe (except Rhyll), who comes within reach.

The cultists attack en masse, trying to overwhelm opponents with their sheer numbers. They put the *Aid Another* action to great use, trying to grapple individual enemies and pin them before trying to pound with clubs and blades.

Development: If Rhyll dies, his remaining followers become demoralized and surrender. They flee the battle if they lose more than 75% of their original numbers. If Rhyll escapes, he doesn't return to the obelisk for at least a year.

CONCLUSION

With Rhyll and the minion of chaos defeated, the only remaining issue is Tagus and his plan to steal the *primal anchor*. If the PCs can keep the item out of his hands for a week, it disintegrates on its own. If he does obtain it, he uses it to defeat the good outsiders that regularly interfere with the work of his temple, as described in "The Truth About Tagus." Retrieving the *primal anchor* or simply preventing Tagus from using it could constitute a whole new mission for the PCs.

Meanwhile, Phladris Renolle continues to languish in the dungeon at the Temple of Nerull. Investigations into the elf's disappearance ultimately lead back to the priest of Nerull, but by the time the PCs discover where he is, the temple's leaders may have returned, making it a much more difficult task to sneak into the dungeons.

Finally, if Rhyll managed to escape the carnage at the obelisk, he is still slavishly devoted to furthering the ends of the Lords of Outer Chaos. His activities toward that end could provide endless trouble for the PCs.

APPENDIX I

PSEUDONATURAL CREATURES

This template is taken from *Tome and Blood: A Guidebook to Wizards and Sorcerers*.

Pseudonatural creatures dwell between the stars and beyond the planes as we know them, nestled in the far realms of insanity. When summoned to the Material Plane, they often take the forms of familiar creatures, though they are more gruesome in appearance than their earthly counterparts. Alternatively, they may appear in a manner more consistent with their origins—a mass of writhing tentacles is a favorite appearance, although other terrible forms are always possible.

CREATING A PSEUDONATURAL CREATURE

"Pseudonatural" is a template that can be added to any corporeal creature (referred to hereafter as the base creature). The creature's type changes to outsider. It uses all the base creature's statistics and special abilities except as noted here.

Special Attacks: A pseudonatural creature retains all the special attacks of the base creature and also gains the following.

True Strike (Su): Once per day, a pseudonatural creature gains a +20 insight bonus on a single attack roll of its choice. It is not affected by the miss chance that applies to attacks against a concealed target.

Special Qualities: A pseudonatural creature retains all the special qualities of the base creature and also gains the following. (If the base creature already has one or more of these special qualities, use the better value.)

Resistances: A pseudonatural creature gains electricity and acid resistance according to the table below.

Damage Reduction: A pseudonatural creature gains damage reduction according to the table below.

Hit Dice	Resistances	Damage Reduction (Acid, Electricity)
1-3	5	—
4-7	10	5/+1
8-11	15	5/+2
12+	20	10/+3

Spell Resistance: A pseudonatural creature gains spell resistance equal to double its Hit Dice (maximum 25).

Alternate Form (Su): At will, a pseudonatural creature can take the form of a grotesque, tentacled mass. This change does not alter the creature's available attack modes, but each opponent takes a -1 morale penalty on attack rolls against it.

Saves: Same as the base creature.

Abilities: Same as the base creature, but Intelligence score is at least 3.

Skills: Same as the base creature

Feats: Same as the base creature

Climate/Terrain: Any land and underground

Organization: Same as the base creature

Challenge Rating: Up to 3 HD, as the base creature; 4-7 HD, as the base creature +1; 8+ HD, as the base creature +2

Treasure: Same as the base creature

Alignment: Same as the base creature

Advancement: Same as the base creature

Speed: Swim 40 ft.

AC: 23 (-8 size, +21 natural), touch 2, flat-footed 23

Base Attack/Grapple: +18/+50

Attack: Bite +25 melee, or tail slap +25 melee

Full Attack: Bite +25 melee and tail slap +20 melee

Damage: Bite 4d8+16, tail slap 4d6+16

Face/Reach: 20 ft. by 40 ft./10 ft.

Special Attacks: Frightful presence, gulp

Special Qualities: Blindsight 100 ft., cold resistance 25, construct traits, DR 20/+3

Saves: Fort +8, Ref +8, Will +9

Abilities: Str 43, Dex 10, Con —, Int —, Wis 13, Cha 14

Climate/Terrain: Any aquatic

Organization: Solitary

Challenge Rating: 14

Treasure: Double standard plus *leviathan heart*

Alignment: Always neutral

Advancement: 25-72 HD (Colossal)

A pseudoleviathan is an ocean-going construct manufactured as a shrine to Obad-Hai. Often, the creature's creator lives within it for long periods, using it to travel the world's oceans and study the creatures of the depths.

A pseudoleviathan is made to resemble an ancient, extremely rare sea creature. It resembles an immense sturgeon with a long, tooth-filled snout much like a crocodile's. Its body, which is typically more than 140 feet in length, is constructed from the remains of thousands of sea creatures.

Passengers ride in a cubical chamber approximately 10 feet on a side, located in the construct's head. Creatures within the chamber can see out through the pseudoleviathan's eyes as through they were portholes. Hatches in the top of the head lead outside, and hatches below lead to the creature's cavernous stomach. The pseudoleviathan holds only a limited amount of air in its head and belly. A Medium creature can breathe comfortably inside the head for only about 6 hours. The stomach is always flooded, but an air pocket about 5 feet high that extends the length of the stomach allows four Medium creatures to breathe for 1 hour. (For each air-breather beyond four, deduct 5 minutes from the air supply.) The construct can replenish the air inside its head and belly by surfacing for 1 minute and exchanging air through a hole that opens in the top of its head.

COMBAT

In combat, a pseudoleviathan bites with its powerful jaws and tries to swallow opponents with its gulp ability. It can also slap with its immense tail.

Blindsight (Ex): A pseudoleviathan can ascertain its surroundings by nonvisual means (mostly hearing and scent, but also by noticing vibration and other environmental clues). This ability enables it to discern objects and creatures within 100 feet. The pseudoleviathan usually does not need to make Listen or Spot checks to notice creatures within range of its blindsight.

Construct Traits: A pseudoleviathan is immune to mind-

APPENDIX II

PSEUDOLEVIATHAN

Colossal Construct (Aquatic)

Hit Dice: 24d10 (132 hp)

Initiative: +0

affecting effects, poison, *sleep*, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, necromantic effects, and any effect that requires a Fortitude save unless it also works on objects. The creature is not subject to critical hits, subdual damage, ability damage, ability drain, energy drain, or death from massive damage. It cannot heal itself but can be healed through repair. It cannot be raised or resurrected. A pseudoleviathan has darkvision (60-foot range).

Frightful Presence (Ex): When a pseudoleviathan charges or attacks, it inspires terror in all creatures within 30 feet that have fewer Hit Dice or levels than it has. Each potentially affected opponent must succeed at a Will save (DC 24) or become frightened for 5d6 rounds. A successful save leaves that opponent immune to that pseudoleviathan's frightful presence for 24 hours.

Gulp (Ex): A pseudoleviathan can swallow a Huge or smaller creature or object by making a successful bite attack. The monster's interior contains a mass of surging water. Each swallowed creature must make a Swim check (DC 15) every round. Success means the swallowed creature takes 1d3 points of subdual damage but can attack the pseudoleviathan from inside with any weapon other than a bow or crossbow. Failure means the swallowed creature takes 1d6 points of subdual damage and must immediately make a second Swim check (DC 15) to avoid going underwater and starting to drown. Objects swallowed automatically take 1d6 points of damage and might begin to take on water or begin to sink. Anyone attacking the pseudoleviathan from inside hits automatically. If the pseudoleviathan takes 50 points of damage from the inside, it disgorges the entire contents of its stomach, which takes 5 rounds, during which time the water inside is treated as stormy. The wearer of the *amulet of pseudoleviathan command* can prevent the pseudoleviathan from disgorging, and it can also force the pseudoleviathan to gulp creatures or objects without dealing any damage to them, although creatures must still make a Swim check (DC 15) on being gulped or risk drowning. Creatures using a boat or other flotation device who are swallowed by a pseudoleviathan must make a Profession (pilot) or Balance check (DC 15) on being swallowed or be thrown overboard, forcing the Swim checks described above.

CONSTRUCTION

A pseudoleviathan's body is made from the amalgamated mass of thousands of sea creatures' remains (both animals and plants—approximately 200 tons worth) scavenged from the sea bottom over many years. The construct costs 175,000 gp to create, which includes 30,000 for the *amulet of pseudoleviathan command*, 60,000 for the *leviathan heart*, and 8,500 gp for the body. Assembling the body requires a successful Craft (leatherworking) or Craft (armorsmithing) check (DC 20).

The creator must be at least 18th level and able to cast divine spells. Completing the ritual drains 3,000 XP from the creator and requires casting the spells *sympathy*, *awaken*, *hallow*, *reincarnate*, and *commune with nature*.

MINION OF CHAOS

Gargantuan Outsider

Hit Dice: 35d8+245 (402 hp)

Initiative: +7

Speed: 40 ft., swim 20 ft.

AC: 39 (−4 size, +3 Dex, +30 natural), touch 9, flat-footed 36

Base Attack/Grapple: +35/+59

Attack: Bite +42 melee, or tentacle rake +42 melee, or stamp +42 melee

Full Attack: Bite +42 melee and 14 tentacle rakes +40 melee and 5 stamps +40 melee

Damage: Bite 4d6+12, tentacle rakes 2d6+6, stamps 2d8+6

Face/Reach: 15 ft. by 15 ft./30 ft. (tentacles)

Special Attacks: Energy drain, frightful presence, improved grab, paralysis rays, spell-like abilities, swallow whole

Special Qualities: Alien mind, blindsight 200 ft., DR 30/+5, immunities (acid, cold, electricity, fire, poison), outsider traits, protective aura, regeneration 30, SR 35

Saves: Fort +26, Ref +22, Will +22

Abilities: Str 34, Dex 17, Con 24, Int 15, Wis 17, Cha 24

Skills: Bluff +22, Concentration +45, Diplomacy +13, Hide +5, Intimidate +47, Knowledge (arcana) +22, Knowledge (the planes) +24, Listen +43, Move Silently +16, Search +40, Sense Motive +41, Spellcraft +40, Spot +43, Swim +20

Feats: Alertness, Blind-Fight, Cleave, Dodge, Great Cleave, Improved Initiative, Mobility, Multiattack, Power Attack.

Climate/Terrain: Any

Organization: Solitary, pair, or gang (3–4)

Challenge Rating: 20

Treasure: Standard

Alignment: Always chaotic neutral

Advancement: 36–70 HD (Gargantuan), 71–105 HD (Colossal)

Minions of chaos serve the Lords of Outer Chaos, a group of elder deific beings who dwell in the Far Realms. The Lords of Outer Chaos were defeated millennia ago and exiled from the Material Plane, but they are still occasionally worshiped in secret ceremonies by individuals or groups who seek to bring back their reign. Their minions have an unquenchable appetite for souls, which their masters use to increase their power.

From a distance, a minion of chaos resembles a monstrously large, black oak tree, but the “trunk” is actually five thick legs, and the “branches” are a writhing mass of tentacles covered in a confusion of barbs, suckers, and tiny mouths. Its maw is located on the top of its body.

For its size, a minion of chaos is remarkably agile and quiet when it wishes to be, although this is not often.

COMBAT

A minion of chaos typically paralyzes victims with its paralysis rays, then scoops them up in its tentacles to swallow them. It can also wreak havoc from a distance with its spell-like abilities, but it typically does this only to soften up opposition because it prefers to swallow live opponents.

Energy Drain (Su): Any living creature struck by a minion's tentacle attack must succeed at a Fortitude saving throw (DC 34) or gain 1d2 negative levels. For each negative level bestowed, the minion heals 5 points of damage. If the amount of healing is more than the damage the creature has taken, it gains any excess as temporary hit points. If the negative level has not been removed (with a spell such as *restoration*) before 24 hours have passed, the afflicted opponent must succeed at a Fortitude save (DC 34) to remove it. Temporary hit points gained from this ability remain for 1 hour.

Frightful Presence (Ex): When a minion of chaos charges or attacks, it inspires terror in all creatures within 30 feet that have fewer Hit Dice or levels than it has. Each potentially affected opponent must succeed at a Will save (DC 34) or become frightened for 5d6 rounds. A successful save leaves that opponent immune to that minion's frightful presence for 24 hours.

Improved Grab (Ex): If a minion of chaos hits an opponent that is at least one size category smaller than itself with a tentacle rake attack, it deals normal damage and attempts to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity (grapple bonus +59). If it gets a hold, it transfers the opponent to its mouth as a free action and automatically hits with its bite attack in the same round. It can then try to swallow its prey in the next round. Alternatively, the minion of chaos has the opportunity to conduct the grapple normally, or simply use its tentacle to hold the opponent (-20 penalty on grapple check, but the minion of chaos is not considered grappled). In either case, each successful grapple check it makes during successive rounds automatically deals bite damage.

Paralysis Rays (Su): A minion of chaos can produce 1d4 paralysis rays per round. Each ray is 100 feet long and can be directed at a single target (+33 ranged touch). Anyone hit by a paralysis ray must succeed at a Fortitude save (DC 34) or be paralyzed for 2d8+4 minutes.

Spell-Like Abilities (Sp): At will—*chaos hammer*, *confusion*, *death knell*, *deeper darkness*, *feeblemind*, *insanity*, *unholy aura*, *unholy blight*; 1/day—*cloudkill*, *creeping doom*, *horrid wilting*. Caster level 20th; base save DC = 17 + spell level.

Swallow Whole (Ex): A minion of chaos can swallow a creature that is at least two size categories smaller than itself by making a successful grapple check (grapple bonus +59), provided that the opponent is already in its mouth at the start of its turn. Once inside the minion, the opponent takes 2d8+12 points of bludgeoning damage plus 2d8 points of acid damage and 1d3 negative levels per round from the creature's gullet. A successful grapple check allows the swallowed creature to climb out of the gullet and return to the minion's mouth, where another successful grapple check is required to get free. Alternatively, a swallowed creature can try to cut its way out with either claws or a light piercing or slashing weapon. Dealing at least 50 points of damage to the gullet (AC 25) in this way creates an opening large enough to permit escape. Once a single swallowed creature exits, muscular action closes the hole; thus,

another swallowed opponent must cut its own way out. A Gargantuan minion's gullet can hold 2 Huge, 8 Large, 32 Medium, or 128 Small or smaller creatures.

Alien Mind (Su): While a minion of chaos is not immune to mental attacks, anyone targeting it with a mind-affecting or telepathic effect makes direct contact with its utterly alien mind. The attacker must make a successful Will save (DC 34) or take 1d4+1 points of Wisdom damage. An attacker is subject to Wisdom damage on every attempt, whether the attack is successful or not.

Blindsight (Ex): A minion of chaos emits high-frequency sounds, inaudible to most other creatures, that bounce off nearby objects and creatures. This ability enables it to discern objects and creatures within 200 feet. The minion usually does not need to make Spot or Listen checks to notice creatures within range of its blindsight. A *silence* spell negates this ability and forces the minion to rely on its vision.

Outsider Traits: A minion of chaos has darkvision (60-foot range). It cannot be raised or resurrected.

Protective Aura (Su): A minion of chaos is constantly surrounded by effects that duplicate those of the *magic circle against law* spell (caster level 20th). The effect can be dispelled, but the minion can create it again during its next turn as a free action.

Regeneration (Su): A minion of chaos takes normal damage from holy, unholy, and lawful weapons. Ω

Peter Aperlo's credits include being a naval officer (Gulf War, Episode I), an archaeologist (Raiders of the Lost Flint), and too many other roles to list. He currently performs as a freelance author and screenwriter in Los Angeles, much to his wife's joy.



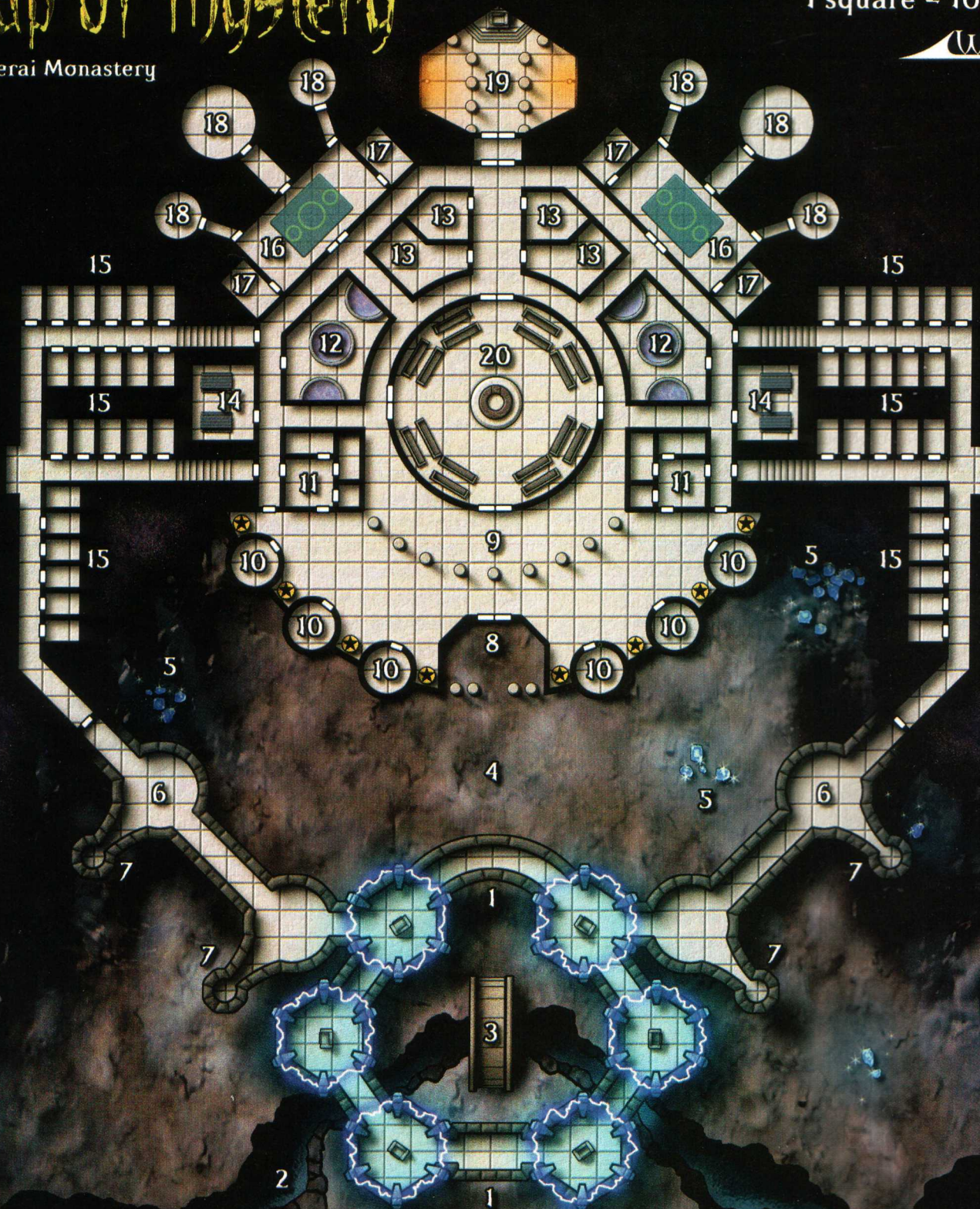
Wayne Reynolds

Map of Mystery

Githzerai Monastery

1 square = 10 feet

WEST



- | | | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------|
| 1) Entrance Gates | 11) Armories & Storage | KEY |
| 2) Rift Chasm | 12) Purifying Baths | |
| 3) Bridge | 13) Masters' Chambers | |
| 4) Courtyard | 14) Dining Halls | |
| 5) Crystal Patches | 15) Private Living Quarters | |
| 6) Defensive Wall | 16) Training Halls | |
| 7) Observation Platforms | 17) Training Hall Antechambers | |
| 8) Main Entrance | 18) Private Sparring Chambers | |
| 9) Central Gallery | 19) Temple of Mind | |
| 10) Private Meditation Shrines | 20) Main Audience Chamber | |

TODAY IS A **BIG DAY** FOR YOU, GALEENA. TODAY YOU **DEPART** OUR SECRET DRUIDIC SCHOOL **FOREVER**... TO VENTURE FORTH INTO THE VAST, VERDANT WILDERNESS—A **DRUID**—NEVER TO RETURN, NO MATTER WHAT.



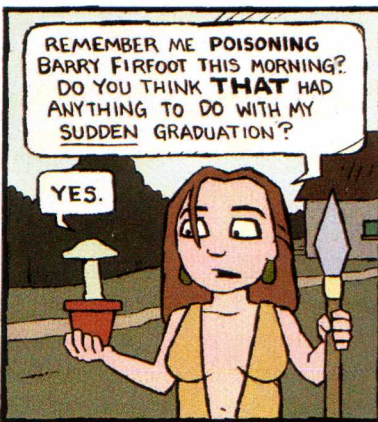
I'M A DRUID? **ALREADY?** I EXPECTED TO BE HERE **AT LEAST** UNTIL I HAD—

BYE. WATCH OUT FOR SNAKES.

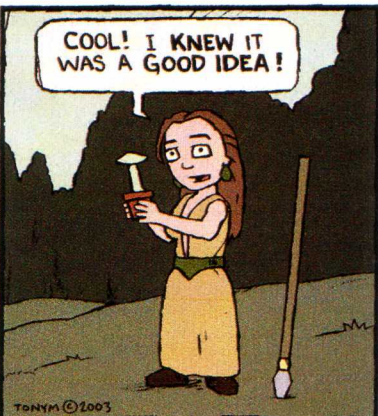


REMEMBER ME **POISONING** BARRY FIRFOOT THIS MORNING? DO YOU THINK **THAT** HAD ANYTHING TO DO WITH MY **SUDDEN GRADUATION?**

YES.



COOL! I KNEW IT WAS A **GOOD IDEA!**



TONYM © 2003

BY TONY MOSELEY

DUNGEON #100

The 100th issue of *DUNGEON Magazine* is here. Launched as the consummate D&D adventure magazine in 1986, *DUNGEON* has become the ultimate DMs supplement. This issue will also be the first to feature the revised 3rd Edition rules. Issue #100 will feature a sampling of all the best *DUNGEON* has to offer, including:

Incursion: The Lich Queen's Beloved: By Christopher Perkins. The massive crossover event will finally arrive. Written by *DUNGEON*'s most prolific author, "The Lich Queen's Beloved" anchors this landmark issue. See page 52 of this issue for details.

Old Embers Never Die: By Andy Collins. The designer behind the revised *Player's Handbook* brings one of *DUNGEON*'s most memorable villains back to the pages of the magazine. The cover subject of issue #1, Flame, the powerful red dragon featured in that issue's "Into the Fire" and issue #17's "Out of the Ashes" returns to his lair in the Western Mountains, hungry for blood and treasure. A D&D adventure for four 12th-level PCs.

Woe to Mistedale: By Skip Williams. This sequel to issue #87's "Raiders of Galath's Roost" takes the PCs back to the Dales region of the *FORGOTTEN REALMS*. Someone—whether drow, the local elves, or another force entirely—has taken up residence in the forests near Mistedale, disrupting trade along the Moonsea Ride and slaughtering merchants. The PCs must embark on a convoluted investigation to uncover the mystery behind the attacks. A D&D *FORGOTTEN REALMS* adventure for four 8th-level PCs.

Beast of Burden: By Michael Kortess. Some massive creature has appeared from the wilds, stalking and destroying entire villages. That alone would have the region in an uproar, but the fact that an organized army seems to live on the creature's back, raining destruction on villagers and the land alike. The PCs must catch the mysterious beast and stop the marauders living atop it before they reach a major city. A D&D adventure for four 6th-level PCs.

Plus, **Critical Threats** by Jonathan Tweet, Monte Cook, Rich Baker, and Peter Adkison, a new "Map of Mystery," and an editorial retrospective and timeline looking back at *DUNGEON* #1–100.

DRAGON #309 WAR

Campaign Components: **Incursion:** By James Wyatt. You've defeated dungeons. You've slain dragons. You've become a hero. The githyanki don't care; they're going to kill you anyway. The githyanki incursion begins next month. For more information on this three-magazine event, check out page 52.

A History of War: By Dean Pissso. A look at the evolution of weapons and tactics with an eye toward the D&D rules, with plenty of ideas for your campaign or your character.

The Art of D&D: By Dean Pissso. If you would conquer, you must know your enemy better than he knows himself. Applying the principles of Sun Tzu's classic *The Art of War* to D&D combats.

Beasts of War: By Andy Collins. Living engines of destruction, these fearsome creatures work with armies, crushing those who oppose them. Few things can turn the tide of battle faster than a properly trained beast of war.

War Spells: By Sean Reynolds. Devastating spells that can clear an entire battlefield, these spells of war were designed with large confrontations in mind. Each spell affects an aspect of war, and many affect massive areas of the battlefield. Living through your next battle might depend on knowing what these spells can do. Ω

Temple of Boccob

Map of Mystery

WEST

1 square = 5 feet

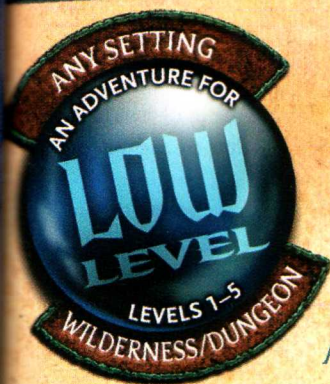


1. Main Entrance
2. Foyers
3. Main Antechamber
4. Mystical Gathering Chamber
5. Pulpits
6. Vestibule
7. Reagent Storage Rooms
8. Main Gallery
9. Acolyte Quarters

10. East Gallery
11. West Gallery
12. Magical Laboratories
13. Private Shrines
14. Dining Hall
15. High Priest's Quarters
16. High Priest's Private Study
17. Private Reading Rooms
18. Arcane Library

KEY





FISH STORY

BY ADAM JORTNER

ARTWORK BY PETER BERGTING • CARTOGRAPHY BY SEAN GLENN

† Magic Items ✨ Monsters ♀ NPCs ♦ Objects 👑 Settlements ↗ Traps

“Fish Story” is a D&D adventure suitable for four 5th-level player characters. Consult the “Scaling the Adventure” sidebar for ways to modify the scenario for higher or lower levels of play. PCs should accumulate enough experience points to gain one level by the adventure’s end.

Characters with ranks in Diplomacy (bards and paladins especially) are recommended, since negotiation is required at several points. This adventure can take place near any shallow river in a temperate zone. In the World of Greyhawk, the setting is on a tributary of the Franz River.

BACKGROUND

The late wizard Kinokuniya had a soft spot for his hometown of Waterford, so when a severe drought struck the area some two hundred years ago, he returned from Brotton bent on saving his village. Kinokuniya decided that the way to deal with the drought was to permanently raise the water level of Murky Pond, the lake that provided the town and the surrounding area with water. To that end, he summoned a Large water elemental and bound it to the lake. Using the hedged prison version of *binding*, he confined the elemental (whose name was Rchkch) to Murky Pond for “as long as there was a soul in Waterford.” Kinokuniya also created a small hole between the planes, working the *binding* so Rchkch could pull more water in to the pond to fill it to a useful level, but not allowing the elemental to overflow the town. To placate Rchkch (and convince the elemental to pull the water through as needed), who foresaw centuries of loneliness, the wizard promised that he would summon other water creatures to the lake to keep the elemental company. Kinokuniya never intended to fulfill that promise, figuring that other intelligent water creatures in the lake would only make life more difficult for those living in Waterford.

Kinokuniya built a small retreat for himself in the caverns beneath the lake, and he often used it to work or meditate when he visited his hometown. He even built himself a sarcophagus in one of its chambers, intending to return here to die when his time came. Eventually, the caverns did indeed become his tomb, just as he had planned.

Eighty years later, the rains returned to the region. The rainwater, on top of the water provided by the elemental, flooded all of Waterford. Unaware of the lake’s nature and unable to reverse

Kinokuniya’s magic, the residents migrated to the nearby town of Spate’s Grove. They granted the use of Waterford to a tribe of locathahs in perpetuity in exchange for military support in times of need. The locathahs never understood the lake’s nature either, and they never encountered the elemental because it was sequestered within the hedged prison that the wizard had created at the bottom of the lake to hold it. Thus, Rchkch was never able to enjoy the company of the locathahs, even though, as Aquan-speaking creatures, they could have eased his loneliness.

Two years ago (twenty years after the tribe settled in Waterford), a strange locathah named Oosah arrived in Waterford and offered his services as a potion-maker to the tribe. The chief of the locathahs accepted his offer, but Oosah had his own agenda. His presence in Waterford was no accident—he had come in search of Kinokuniya’s secrets. After months of searching and spellcasting, Oosah cast *detect thoughts* at the bottom of Murky Pond and discovered an intelligence there—Rchkch. Another week of divination produced the creature’s name and nature, as well as the location of Kinokuniya’s tomb. Certain that he was finally on the trail of the dead wizard’s secrets, the wily locathah entered the tomb and was promptly killed by a well-placed trap.

But Oosah was a tenacious fellow, and his spirit returned as a ghost determined to complete his quest. Using his new powers, he explored the tomb thoroughly but did not find the object of his search—a means by which he could enslave Rchkch and bend the elemental to his will. Stymied, he tried to command the locathahs, but he succeeded only in slaying some of them. The terrified locathahs fled to Spate’s Grove, where they seized a river mill and demanded that the town elders take action. Since Oosah was the only remaining locathah who could speak Common, the people of Spate’s Grove could not understand the demand.

In Spate’s Grove, the town guards are flummoxed. In Murky Pond, Rchkch eagerly anticipates freedom, since there is now only one “soul” remaining in Waterford: Oosah. And in Waterford, Oosah plots to take over the lake as soon as he can discover a means to control the elemental.

ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS

The PCs arrive in Spate’s Grove on other business, but they find the town deserted. All the citizens are at the riverside, watching the town leaders quarrel over what to do about the

locathahs. Eventually, someone notices the PCs and asks for their assistance.

Through battle, magic, or wordplay, the PCs discover the reason behind the locathahs' hostility. The fishfolk now claim Spate's Grove on the strength of a decades-old agreement, since their former town of Waterford has been rendered uninhabitable by Oosah's haunting. If the PCs could get rid of Oosah, the locathahs could return to Waterford.

The party travels to Waterford and confronts Oosah. He feigns compliance, hoping that the PCs have some magic that can help him seize control of the elemental. After confronting the guardians of the tomb, the PCs learn the true nature of the lake. They must then decide whether to free Rchkch or keep him trapped for the benefit of the locathahs. The PCs must also deal with Oosah once the ghost realizes that the PCs pose a threat to his dream of controlling Rchkch.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

The PCs should arrive in Spate's Grove no later than the morning after the locathahs seize the mill. You can choose from among the following adventure hooks to get the PCs involved, or use them to inspire your own backstory.

- The PCs have discovered a reference to an intriguing magic item known as the headband of Kinokuniya in an arcane tomb or scroll. Research has revealed that Kinokuniya was a wizard who disappeared more than a century ago. The world's expert on Kinokuniya is Abo Serra, a historian living in Spate's Grove.
- The PCs need a way to end a drought or flood in another area. They have come in search of the fabled hidden laboratory of Kinokuniya, a wizard native to this area who was known for his ability to manipulate water.

Spate's Grove (small town): Conventional; AL LN; 1,200-gp limit; Assets 66,000 gp; Population 1,100; Mixed (human 70%, gnome 18%, halfling 8%, dwarf 1%, elf 1%, half-elf 1%, half-orc 1%).

Authority Figures: Mayor Czen Reni, female human Brd2/Ari2; Harvest Cleverbrawl, female gnome Ftr2/Rng2 (guard captain).

Important Characters: Tollie Coppers, male halfling Exp4/Rog2 (prosperous merchant), Abo Serra, female human Exp5/Wiz1 (town historian).

Others: Town guards, War1 (×30, 20 currently injured), Priest, Clr4 (Pelor), Acolytes, Clr1 (Pelor, ×4), Brd2 (2), Exp3 (8), Exp2 (12), Rog1 (6), Wiz1 (2), Com1 (1,031).

Notes: In the time of Kinokuniya, kobolds led by the legendary Retiss-Abbas once stormed the outlying gnome warrens near Spate's Grove, forcing local gnomes into the town. This event accounts for the town's high gnome population.

STANDOFF AT THE MILL

A small river known as Poverty Creek flows from Murky Pond past the town of Spate's Grove, forming its northern border. A

broad dirt road approaches the creek from the south and terminates at the gate to Spate's Grove. Pepper farms border the road, and the air is scented with their crops.

A 4-foot-high wall, built to fend off occasional kobold assaults, surrounds Spate's Grove. At the gate, the wall rises into a 10-foot-high arch, which is equipped with a gate and defensive fortifications that are usually manned by guards. The road passes under the arch, continues directly through the town square, and finally ends at the docks by the riverside. A mill, run by local merchant Tollie Coppers, is the only business directly on the river.

Gate and Trap (EL 1/2): When the PCs arrive, the gate is locked and the fortifications vacant because all the soldiers have been called to the mill. The PCs must circumvent the gate to get into Spate's Grove. The short wall is easy to climb (Climb, DC 10), but shards of glass have been embedded in the mortar as further kobold deterrence.

Stout Wooden Gate: 6 in. thick; Hardness 5; hp 60; break DC 20; Open Lock DC 25.

Embedded Glass Trap: CR 1/2; mechanical; location trigger; automatic reset; Reflex save (DC 12) avoids; no attack roll necessary (1d6, glass shards); Search (DC 15); Disable Device (DC 20).

Upon entering Spate's Grove, the PCs find rows of houses shut tight and no townsfolk in evidence. The whole place is eerily quiet and desolate. A successful Listen check (DC 5) allows a PC to hear shouting coming from the direction of the river. Continuing down the main road brings the characters to the site of the excitement: the grassy field in front of Tollie's mill.

The mill itself is plain and worn, and its windows are dark. A human and gnome female stand at close quarters on the field, screaming at one another. Wounded townsfolk form a circle around the two, watching with anxiety and fascination.

The human is Czen Reni, the mayor of Spate's Grove. She wears the dark green robes of a magistrate and shouts in a high, tinny voice. The gnome is the guard captain of Spate's Grove, Harvest Cleverbrawl. Scars run across her face and hands, and her cloak is filthy. A crossbow bolt juts out of her shoulder.

Harvest and Czen are busy exchanging a wealth of insults, and the PCs can easily get the gist of the argument if they bother to listen. Essentially, Czen blames Harvest for launching an ineffective raid, and Harvest blames Czen for being a blithering idiot.

If the PCs do not immediately intervene, a haggard but well-dressed halfling spots them. He approaches, bows, and addresses them as follows.

"Good day and many more to you, fair-minded travelers. By your look, you are adventurers, just as our illustrious mayor and our battle-hardened guard captain were in their youth. I am Tollie Coppers, and I wonder if you might intervene in this matter and talk some sense into our leading citizens?"

If questioned, Tollie (male halfling Exp4/Rog2) explains that Czen and Harvest are currently arguing over the best way to oust some uninvited guests from the town. Last night, a band of

river locathahs attacked and seized Tollie's mill. Czen and Harvest, both former adventurers, disagreed from the start about the best approach to dislodging the invaders. In the end, each made an attempt and was rebuffed.

Czen tried to speak to the locathahs and impress them with her magic, but they responded by shouting something in their language (which no one understands) and shooting her with a crossbow bolt. (In fact, Czen attempted to cast a spell and the locathahs responded with force.)

Harvest and the militia then attempted to storm the mill, but the locathahs laid down such heavy fire from the windows that it proved impossible to get close. Twenty of the thirty militia members are now injured, and the local clerics have expended all their *cure* spells.

Since then, Czen and Harvest have fallen to arguing and both seem to have forgotten the fact that the locathahs are still bivouacked in Tollie's mill. Tollie begs the PCs to intervene. If the characters ask for payment, Tollie barter with them. He can go as high as 400 gp plus a share of next year's harvest.

THE ALTERCATION ON THE FIELD (EL 6)

On the basis of either Tollie's plea or their own good will, the PCs may try to stop the two women from fighting. Armed interference brings the wounded soldiers to the aid of the mayor and the guard captain. Otherwise, the soldiers and priests remain wary but they allow any PCs who seem to know what they're doing to handle the situation. It takes a successful Diplomacy check (DC 20) to get Harvest and Czen to stop their altercation.

Creatures: The intense rivalry between Czen and Harvest stems from their adventuring days. Both tend to exaggerate their accomplishments (which are, in truth, fairly minor).

☞ **Harvest Cleverbrawl, Female Gnome Rgr2/Ftr2:** CR 4; Small Humanoid (3 ft. 3 in. tall); HD 2d10+6 plus 2d10+6; hp 34; Init +8; Spd 20 ft.; AC 19, touch 15, flat-footed 15; BAB +3; Grap

+1; Atk +6 melee (1d6+2/19–20, masterwork short sword) and +6 melee (1d4+1/19–20, masterwork dagger), or +8 melee (1d6+3/19–20, masterwork short sword), or +9 ranged (1d6+2/crit ×3, masterwork mighty composite shortbow [+2 Str]); SA favored enemy (reptilian humanoids +1), two-weapon fighting ability; SQ gnome traits; AL LG; SV Fort +9, Ref +4, Will +2; Str 14, Dex 18, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Skills: Climb +4, Gather Information +2, Listen +6*, Spot +4, Swim +4*, Wilderness Lore +4. **Feats:** Alertness, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Track.

*Includes –1 penalty for weight of gear carried.

†Includes +2 racial bonus to Listen checks.

Possessions: Mithral shirt, masterwork short sword, masterwork dagger, masterwork mighty composite shortbow [+2 Str] with 4 arrows.

☞ **Czen Reni, Female Human Ariz/Brd2:** CR 4; Medium Humanoid (5 ft. 1 in. tall); HD 2d8–2 plus 2d6–2; hp 12; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 12, touch 12, flat-footed 10; BAB +2; Grap +1; Atk +2 melee (1d8–1/19–20, masterwork longsword); SA bardic music (countersong, fascinate, inspire competence, inspire courage) 2/day, spells; SQ bardic knowledge; AL NG; SV Fort –1, Ref +5, Will +6; Str 8, Dex 14, Con 8, Int 13, Wis 10, Cha 16.

Skills: Appraise +7, Diplomacy +8, Knowledge (local) +5, Listen +6, Perform (acting, ballad, comedy, dance, epic, mime) +9, Profession (magistrate) +6, Spellcraft +3, Spot +3, Tumble +6. **Feats:** Expertise, Improved Disarm, Run.

Bard Spells Known (3/1; base save DC = 13 + spell level): 0—light, mending, open/close, prestidigitation*, resistance; 1st—charm person*, erase.

*Already cast during Czen's first attempt at diplomacy.

Possessions: Masterwork longsword, wand of detect magic (7 charges), noble's outfit, silver pendant of office (175 gp), 3 gold rings (100 gp each).

Development: Neither Czen nor Harvest knows why the

SCALING THE ADVENTURE

"Fish Story" is designed for four 5th-level characters, but it can be modified for parties of different levels. The stand-off at the mill can be adjusted by making the locathahs either more or less open to negotiation. For lower-level parties, make the Diplomacy DCs easier, or have Quee challenge the party to fight her alone. (Consider her defeat to be a successful "negotiation.") For higher-level parties, remove the binding goblet altogether, forcing the party to rely on its own magical prowess to solve the problem of the elemental.

Also consider the following adaptations:

• **3rd- to 4th-level PCs:** Make Quee a Bbn3 and Oosah a Clr5. In Waterford, remove one violet fungus from area W2 and one Large zombie from area W5. Add potions of water breathing to area W6. In the tomb, remove one tojanida from area T2 and two animated brass chairs from area T3. Either make Retiss-Abbas an advanced mummy or remove him altogether.

• **6th- to 7th-level PCs:** Add a locathah Clr5 to Quee's warband. Make Oosah a Clr8. Replace the violet fungi in area W2 with a black pudding. Add another tojanida to area T2 and an animated table and rug (both Large) to area T3. Make Retiss-Abbas a Rng4/Sor3 and allow him to use his domination ability freely.

• **8th- to 9th-level PCs:** Make Quee a Bbn7 and Oosah a Clr10. In addition to the changes in the paragraph above, add a locathah Ftr5 to Quee's warband and make the tojanidas in area T2 adult or elder. Add traps that employ deadlier spells, such as *greater dispelling*, *chain lightning*, or *flesh to stone*. Make Rchkch a Huge water elemental. Make Retiss-Abbas a Rng6/Sor6.

Remember that changing the Encounter Levels should raise the amount of treasure in the adventure. Consult page 170 in the *DUNGEON MASTER'S Guide* (Tables 7–2, 7–3, and 7–4) to determine treasure appropriate to the new encounters.

locathahs have come, but both women know the following background information and are willing to provide it in answer to appropriate questions.

- The locathahs normally live in the abandoned human village of Waterford, twenty miles upriver. That area was ceded to them decades ago by the people of this town, who migrated here from Waterford when Murky Pond flooded.
- The locathahs have been good neighbors thus far. Their warriors patrol the river whenever kobold activity is high.
- The locathahs just moved into the mill and began making demands in their own tongue, which no one here understands. The citizens sent for a translator to help them communicate with the locathahs, but he's out of town. Oddly, the locathahs have not pressed the attack, and no one has been killed yet.

Harvest is more than happy to let the PCs try an assault. She is of the opinion that a small, stealthy force might succeed where she and her troops failed. She offers her personal assistance but refuses to put any of her soldiers under the PCs' command.

Czen, on the other hand, argues vehemently for a second attempt at negotiation. Of course, she wants to be the lead negotiator and refuses to allow the PCs to attempt talks without her. A successful Diplomacy or Bluff check (DC 15) is required to persuade her that someone else should lead the negotiations. If the PCs press for payment, Czen promises them 200 gp from the town's treasury if they can expel the locathahs.

INVESTIGATION

The PCs might wish to learn more about their mission before setting out to deal with the locathahs. If the characters indicate such a desire, Czen points out Abo Serra, the town historian. Abo can provide any of the information on the table below in answer to PC questions for a total fee of 80 gp.

The PCs can also ask around among the other townsfolk gathered at the river and gain the information below via successful Gather Information or bardic knowledge checks.

Check Result	Information Gleaned
5	Waterford's most famous son was the wizard Kinokuniya, who saved Spate's Grove from the kobolds more than two hundred years ago.
10	Waterford's families moved to Spate's Grove when the lake levels on Murky Pond rose suddenly.
15	Kinokuniya saved Waterford from drought by adding water to Murky Pond.
17	The kobold commander that Kinokuniya defeated was named Retiss-Abbas. He was a fearsome warrior with great powers. He destroyed most of the gnome warrens in the area before trying to wipe out the humans.
20	Kinokuniya supposedly lived in his

hometown of Waterford for most of his life, but no one has ever discovered exactly where his residence was.

25 Legend has it that Retiss-Abbas was not destroyed, but merely imprisoned somewhere.

35 Locathahs eschew wizardry, so their occupation of Waterford has undoubtedly covered up any of Kinokuniya's secrets that remain in the area.

(Serra only) Serra visited Waterford many years ago seeking evidence of Kinokuniya's dwelling, but she found nothing definite and the fishfolk frightened her away. However, the geography of the place suggests that a cavern system may exist beneath the lake.

THE MILL

The mill is a one-story structure measuring 35 feet by 40 feet. Two long docks provide access to Poverty Creek. The small boats normally moored there have been smashed to pieces by the locathahs for use as cover. The front of the mill has a door and four small windows; the opposite side is open to the river.

◆ **Pine Walls and Dock:** 1 in. thick; Hardness 5; hp 10; break DC 20.

The PCs can try either the Negotiation Option or the Combat Option (see below) at any time. If one fails to work, they can attempt the other.

THE NEGOTIATION OPTION (EL 6)

PCs who approach the mill without announcing themselves are attacked. If they make some effort to indicate peaceful intent, a tattooed, purple-skinned locathah appears at the window. This is the tribal storyteller, Shooshl. To convince her to parley, the PCs must make a successful Diplomacy check (base DC 25, plus modifiers according to the table below).

Condition	Diplomacy DC modifier
PC speaks Aquan	-2 per PC
Party displays the holy symbol of a nature god	-2 per symbol
Party lays down weapons unasked	-5
Party offers gifts to the locathahs	-1 per 100 gp of gift
Party attacks the locathahs	+5 per attempt
Each locathah killed by the party	+10 per locathah

If the PCs succeed at the check and also lay down their arms, they are allowed to approach and enter. If they succeed at the Diplomacy check but have not yet laid down their weapons, Shooshl makes gestures to indicate that they should.

Creatures: If Shooshl admits the PCs, two locathahs meet them at the door and lead them to the chieftain, Quee. Shooshl has preceded them to Quee's makeshift audience chamber.



➤ **Quee, Female Locathah Bbn5:** CR 5; Medium Humanoid (aquatic, 5 ft. 7 in. tall); HD 2d8+4 plus 5d12+10; hp 55; Init +3; Spd 20 ft., swim 60 ft.; AC 19, touch 13, flat-footed 19; BAB +6; Grap +9; Atk +10/+5 melee (1d8+3, masterwork trident), or +9 ranged (1d8/19–20, light crossbow); SQ fast movement, rage 2/day, uncanny dodge (Dex bonus to AC, can't be flanked); AL CN; SV Fort +9, Ref +4, Will +4; Str 16, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 9.

Skills: Craft (trapmaking) +2, Intimidate +6, Listen +9, Search +2, Spot +4, Wilderness Lore +5. **Feats:** Blind-Fight, Iron Will, Power Attack.

Rage (Ex): While she rages, Quee's statistics change as follows: HD 2d8+8 plus 5d12+20; hp 69; AC 17, touch 11, flat-footed 17; Atk +12/+7 melee (1d8+5, masterwork trident), or +9 ranged (1d8/19–20, light crossbow); SV Fort +8, Will +6. Her rage lasts for 7 rounds.

Language: Aquan.

Possessions: Spined shield, masterwork trident, light crossbow with 10 bolts, *potion of cure light wounds*, string of pearls (70 gp).

➤ **Shooshl, Female Locathah Brd3:** CR 3; Medium Humanoid (aquatic, 5 ft. 4 in. tall); HD 2d8 plus 3d6; hp 19; Init +2; Spd 10 ft., swim 60 ft.; AC 17, touch 12, flat-footed 15; BAB +3; Grap +2; Atk +3 melee (1d6–1/×3, masterwork halfspear), or +5 ranged (1d8/19–20, light crossbow); SA bardic music (countersong, *fascinate*, inspire courage) 3/day, spells; SQ bardic knowledge; AL N; SV Fort +1, Ref +8, Will +5; Str 8, Dex 15, Con 10, Int 14, Wis 14, Cha 16.

Skills: Bluff +6, Concentration +4, Craft (cooking) +4, Diplomacy +6, Listen +5, Perform (dance, epic, song, storytelling) +9, Sense Motive +6, Spot +5. **Feats:** Blind-Fight, Skill Focus (Perform).

Bard Spells Known (3/2; base save DC = 13 + spell level; 15% chance of arcane spell failure): 0—*daze*, *detect magic*, *ghost sound*, *light*, *mage hand*, *open/close*; 1st—*cure light wounds*, *hypnotism*, *sleep*.

Languages: Aquan, Auran, Sylvan.

Possessions: Masterwork large wooden shield, masterwork halfspear, light crossbow with 10 bolts, *potion of remove paralysis*.

➤ **Locathahs (2):** hp 9 each; *Monster Manual* 129.

These creatures are river locathahs. River locathahs can survive outside water for 1 hour per point of Constitution. They are otherwise identical to the locathahs described in the *Monster Manual*.

Development: At this point, PCs wishing to talk their way through the crisis must find a way to communicate with the locathahs. None of the ones at the mill speak Common, although Shooshl knows a couple of other languages. If a PC addresses the locathahs in Aquan, they are pleased and all begin talking at once. Otherwise, the characters can try other languages until they find one that Shooshl speaks. Alternatively, they can use magical means or attempt to communicate in pidgin Aquan (treat each communication as an Innuendo check at a –5 penalty against Shooshl's Sense Motive check result).

Quee speaks only through Shooshl, even if she can understand one or more of the PCs. Through Shooshl, Quee explains the locathahs' reasons for seizing the mill as follows.

"Dozens of years ago, our ancestors entered an honorable agreement with the humans of Waterford. The humans gave us their town, which had sunk under Murky Pond, and we pledged to provide our warriors for their ongoing battle against the hated kobolds whenever needed.

"But something evil now haunts the town and slays our people. Nothing can stay there. We have provided what was asked. But there is no longer a town for us to live in. We therefore claim the right to live here!"

A successful Sense Motive check against Shooshl's Bluff check result reveals that the locathahs are not so much belligerent as scared. If pressed, Shooshl admits that her people want the humans to return to Waterford and deal with the creature that has driven them out (Oosah's ghost). If the PCs offer to perform this service, Quee promises (through Shooshl) that the tribe will return to Waterford as soon as it is safe and repay Spate's Grove for any damage to the mill.

The locathahs can also offer the following information in response to specific PC questions.

- Three days ago, a spirit rose from Murky Pond. He looked like Oosah, the strange healer who lived in the stone circle. He uttered a terrible cry and turned his eyes upon the tribe.

POVERTY CREEK ENCOUNTERS

The area between Spate's Grove and Waterford is quiet, except when the resident kobolds are out and about. Once per day and twice per night, roll 1d10 and consult the following table. Each encounter except the one with the kobold hunting squadron should happen only once.

Roll	Encounter
1–5	No encounter
6	➤ Brown Bear: hp 51; <i>Monster Manual</i> 193. (EL 4)
7	➤ Boars (2): hp 22 each; <i>Monster Manual</i> 194. (EL 4)
8–10	➤ Kobold Hunters (12): hp 2 each; <i>Monster Manual</i> 123. (EL 2)

Several locathahs died on the spot; the others were stricken with terror and fled.

- Oosah was not like other locathahs. He arrived from another tribe only a couple of years ago, and he could talk with spirits and summon monsters from the air. The locathahs always avoided him because he was so odd. He was often seen exploring the woods and the lake, casting spells and taking measurements as if searching for something.
- The locathahs have heard legends about a human wizard who lived beneath the lake, but there are no caves there except for the nursery.

If the PCs have treated the locathahs with respect, Quee warns the party through Shooshl about the slimy doom in area W3. If they have not, she omits this information.

If the PCs don't undertake the quest, they must explain their reasons for refusing to a very displeased Czen and Harvest. Czen refuses to pay the PCs anything for their efforts until the locathahs go home. Harvest tries to shame the PCs into meeting the locathahs' demands, offering to accompany them on the journey if they're too scared.

Ad-hoc XP Award: If the PCs manage to deal with the locathahs without provoking a fight, award them experience for Quee and Shooshl as if they had overcome them in combat.

COMBAT OPTION: FRONTAL ASSAULT

This is the method that Harvest and her guards tried. Two locathahs are stationed at each window of the mill, and they open fire on anyone who comes within 50 feet without announcing a desire to parley. Each window provides one-half cover. The locathahs take turns attacking, one firing while the other reloads. Each has 8 bolts. The front door has been barred.

❖ **Front Door:** 1 1/2 in. thick; Hardness 5; hp 20; break DC 23; Open Lock DC 25.

Within, the locathahs have fortified their positions. Stacks of crates force those entering through the front door down a 15-foot corridor.

Creatures: Two locathahs, plus Quee and Shooshl, have prepared to face the invaders. The two ordinary locathahs lie on top of the crates, which provide them with one-quarter cover.

➤ **Quee:** See "The Mill," above.

➤ **Shooshl:** See "The Mill," above.

➤ **Locathahs (2):** hp 9 each; *Monster Manual* 129.

Trap: The crates on which the two locathahs are hiding are filled with pepper and can be pushed over with a successful Strength check (DC 20). Doing so causes the locathahs to fall, taking 1d6

points of damage each. The crates break open when they hit the floor and fill the room with a haze of pepper, causing those within 20 feet of any crate to cough and sneeze uncontrollably for 2d6 rounds.

➤ **Haze of Pepper Trap:** CR 1/2; proximity trigger; no reset; Fortitude save (DC 20) avoids; no attack roll needed; each combatant within 20 ft. takes a -4 penalty on attack rolls; Search (N/A); Disable Device (N/A).

Tactics: The two locathahs atop the crates fire their crossbows at intruders as soon as they come within range. At the end of the makeshift corridor, Quee and Shooshl have piled a semi-circle of debris 3 feet high that provides them with one-quarter cover. Quee fires spines from her *spined shield*, and Shooshl fires her crossbow.

Should the PCs get close enough to engage the leaders, Quee rages. Shooshl uses her bardic music to inspire courage in her allies while laying down cover fire. She breaks off combat and moves back to cure Quee or a nearby warrior as needed.

Development: If the locathahs are defeated but Quee survives, her sense of honor demands that she capitulate to her captors. However, she still refuses to go to Waterford. She makes her plea for the PCs to act just as if the PCs had succeeded at the Diplomacy check required in the negotiation option (see above). If Shooshl is no longer alive, Quee speaks directly to the PCs. If Quee dies, Shooshl and the remaining locathahs immediately surrender and beg the PCs to rid their town of its ghost.

Should the PCs lose, Quee and her followers strip them of valuables, attempt to kill any PCs who are not already dead, and dump the bodies outside the mill.

COMBAT: RIVER APPROACH

The locathahs have placed a single guard on the river side to watch for enemies approaching by water. Characters must swim the river or fly over it to reach the docks.

Creatures (EL 6): Quee, Shooshl, and five locathahs participate in the battle.

➤ **Quee:** See "The Mill," above.

➤ **Shooshl:** See "The Mill," above.

➤ **Locathahs (11):** hp 9 each; *Monster Manual* 129.

Tactics: Should this guard discover the PCs (water imposes a -10 penalty on Move Silently checks), he shouts a warning to his fellows. After 1 round, Quee and five of the locathahs leap into the river to fight the PCs in the water, where the locathahs have a distinct advantage (see the "Fighting in Water" sidebar). As above, Quee rages and Shooshl uses her bardic music to inspire her allies.

Development: If all the locathahs involved in the defense are killed, the rest surrender and the PCs can search the mill.

FIGHTING IN WATER

See the *Player's Handbook*, page 74, for details on Swim checks. Also, apply the following conditions and modifiers to fights in or under the water: All underwater attacks made with slashing or bludgeoning weapons are made with a -2 penalty and at half damage, and all grapple checks are made at a -2 penalty underwater. Freedom of movement

negates these penalties. Spells and spell-like abilities function normally, except those with the fire descriptor are ineffective underwater unless the caster makes a successful Spellcraft check (DC 15 + spell level). Thrown weapons are ineffectual underwater, and ranged weapons suffer a -2 penalty for each 5 feet of water they pass through.



Beneath the western dock are ten juvenile locathahs (noncombatants, 1 hp each), huddled together on top of a sack of tribal goods (broken pottery, old fish, scrimshaw, and 65 gp).

JOURNEY TO MURKY POND

The "road" along Poverty Creek is simply a worn path. The flora is vivid along the trail, and the summer oaks are verdant and crawling with ivy.

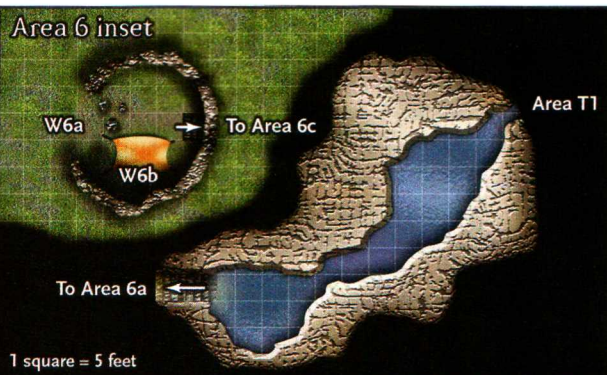
Just east of Spate's Grove, the path climbs a 20-foot outcropping over which Poverty Creek tumbles in a small waterfall. Past the falls, the creek becomes shallow and swift—5 feet wide and about 3 feet deep. The rapids are minor but make boat traffic impossible. Some 20 miles down the road lies Waterford.

WATERFORD (AREA W)

When the PCs reach Waterford, read or paraphrase the following:

At the crest of a small rise in the path, the forest flanking the creek opens up. Amid the draping greenery, Murky Pond spreads its brackish and stagnant fingers. Ancient ruins of houses line the shore, and the remains of peaked roofs peer out of the water. Beside the water on one side is a small ruined tower. The surrounding forest is lush with life, yet silent. Somehow, Murky Pond seems lonely.

Oosah the ghost has succeeded in frightening away every creature in the vicinity.



OOSAH (EL 8)

Oosah is in area W6 when the party arrives, but if the PCs make a lot of noise—by fighting the fungi in the temple (area W2), poking around in the junk house (area W3), or the like—Oosah casts *undetectable alignment* on himself, then turns ethereal and shadows the group until he decides how to approach them.

Creature (EL 8): Oosah appears as a translucent locathah with intense, burning eyes. His misty outline gives the impression of a sunken, diseased frame, like that of a dried-out fish.

Oosah spent his whole life in search of power and knowledge. Various divinations led him to Waterford, where he passed himself off to the locals as a potion-brewer and visionary while seeking the great power that he knew was here. To maintain his cover, he occasionally cast a few protective spells over the tribe.

It had always been Oosah's intent to wrest control of the tribe from Quee when the time was right and rule a small aquatic fiefdom of his own. But after he discovered the true nature of Murky Pond and the presence of the elemental, Oosah set his aims even higher. He used *stone shape* to carve a path into Kinokuniya's tomb, hoping to find the ancient wizard's secrets. Instead, he died from a well-placed trap. When he rose again as a ghost, Oosah was delighted with the powers that his new form bestowed. He used them to explore the tomb and find out the general nature of the *binding* that held the elemental, although he was unable to discover the exact wording of the release clause. Currently, Oosah is puzzling out ways in which he might alter the *binding* to place Rchkh under his own control.

➤ **Oosah, Male Locathah Ghost Clr6 (no deity; against ethereal opponents):** CR 8; Medium Undead (aquatic; 5 ft. 0 in. tall); HD 8d12; hp 52; Init +2; Spd 10 ft., swim 60 ft., fly 30 ft. (perfect); AC 18, touch 12, flat-footed 16; BAB +5; Grap +4; Atk +5 melee (1d6–1, masterwork club); SA corrupting gaze, frightful moan, rebuke undead 5/day, spells; SQ manifestation, rejuvenation, turn resistance +4, undead traits; AL NE; SV Fort +8, Ref +4, Will +8; Str 8, Dex 14, Con —, Int 14, Wis 16, Cha 14.

Skills: Alchemy +4, Bluff +4, Concentration +5, Craft (book-binding) +4, Heal +4, Hide +9*, Knowledge (arcana) +7, Knowledge (nature) +6, Knowledge (the planes) +4, Listen +14*, Search +10*, Spellcraft +5, Spot +14*. **Feats:** Blind-Fight, Brew Potion, Skill Focus (Bluff).

See the *Monster Manual* page 212 for ghost special attacks and qualities. Note that the save DC is 16 for Oosah's frightful moan

and corrupting gaze abilities.

Cleric Spells Prepared (5/5/5/4; base save DC = 13 + spell level): 0—detect magic, guidance, mending, read magic, resistance; 1st—bane, comprehend languages, doom, sanctuary*, shield of faith; 2nd—augury, desecrate, detect thoughts*, hold person, undetectable alignment; 3rd—blindness/deafness, dispel magic, protection from elements, searing light.

*Domain spell. Domains: Knowledge (cast divinations at +1 caster level; all Knowledge skills are cleric class skills), Protection (protective ward 1/day).

Languages: Aquan, Common, Draconic.

Possessions: +1 large wooden shield (in area T1), masterwork club (in area T1), potions (in area W6b).

➤ **Oosah, Male Locathah Ghost Clr 6 (no deity; manifested; against material opponents):** CR 8; Medium Undead (aquatic, incorporeal; 5 ft. tall); HD 8d12; hp 52; Init +2; Spd fly 30 ft. (perfect); AC 17, touch 14, flat-footed 15; BAB +5; Grap +5; Atk —; SA corrupting gaze, frightful moan, rebuke undead 5/day, spells; SQ incorporeal subtype, manifestation, rejuvenation, turn resistance +4, undead traits; AL NE; SV Fort +8, Ref +4, Will +8; Str —, Dex 14, Con —, Int 14, Wis 16, Cha 14.

Skills*: Alchemy +4, Bluff +4, Concentration +5, Heal +4, Hide +10[†], Knowledge (arcana) +7, Knowledge (nature) +6, Knowledge (the planes) +4, Listen +14[‡], Search +10[‡], Spellcraft +5, Spot +14[‡]. Feats: Blind-Fight, Brew Potion, Skill Focus (Bluff).

*Includes –1 armor check penalty.

†Includes +8 racial bonus (ghost) to Hide, Listen, Search, and Spot checks.

Tactics: Once Oosah becomes aware of the PCs' presence, he follows them unobtrusively to assess their abilities. If they seem competent, or if he is detected, Oosah manifests and eagerly attempts to parley with them. Except where noted below, everything Oosah says during these negotiations is either an outright lie or a half-truth.

Oosah takes pains to portray himself as a simple knowledge seeker who has discovered something dangerous about the lake. (This statement is not an outright lie, but a successful Sense Motive check reveals that something about his story is not quite right.) If the PCs seem interested, the ghost readily provides information about the tomb's location and the *cone of cold* trap. He also reveals that the wizard who once lived in the caverns below the surface bound an elemental in the lake. All this information is true. Then, however, Oosah lies, explaining that he died trying to help his tribe and can't rest until the elemental is dealt with and Waterford is completely safe.

While he converses with the PCs, Oosah tries to pry as much information as possible out of them. He's particularly interested in what magic the characters have access to, and whether or not he could use that magic to control the elemental, although he does not reveal the reason behind his questions on that subject.

When he is satisfied that he knows all he needs to about the party, Oosah tells the PCs that the best way to make sure the elemental never rises again is to find some way of putting the creature under his control. He insists that only an immortal creature such as

himself can guarantee the elemental's perpetual quiescence, and he promises to be a good caretaker. Of course, he really has every intention of using the elemental for his own benefit.

If they buy into this tale, Oosah helps the characters as long as he believes that they can help him. If he thinks they have outlasted their usefulness, he leads them to the tomb, hoping they will die there. He claims that he cannot go with them because he is unable to approach his own corpse. As soon as Oosah believes he is alone, he turns ethereal and begins tailing the party. A successful Knowledge (religion) or bardic knowledge check (DC 25) reveals that Oosah's claim about having to stay away from his corpse is untrue.

If at any point the PCs seem to be on the verge of discovering the real nature of the *binding*, or if they discuss freeing Rchkch, Oosah attacks. Under no circumstances does he allow anyone to free the elemental or reword the *binding* unless doing so obviously helps him. If he loses half of his hit points, Oosah becomes ethereal and returns to area W6. There he spontaneously casts *inflict* spells to cure himself and plots another strategy.

Development: Oosah doesn't know the exact wording of the *binding*, although he would like to discover it. In fact, Rchkch is commanded to remain in the lake "as long as there's a soul in Waterford." Currently, Oosah and the PCs are the only souls in Waterford. Rchkch is released if the PCs kill Oosah and then leave Waterford. (Even though he begins rejuvenating almost immediately, there is at least a moment when he does not truly exist as a "soul.") If this occurs, proceed with the "Leaving Waterford" section below. Note that Oosah going ethereal doesn't trigger Rchkch's release, since Oosah's soul is technically still in an ethereal version of Waterford. But while he rejuvenates, his soul is temporarily disincorporated and the *binding* can be lifted if the PCs then leave. Oosah's rejuvenation lasts for three days.

Ad-hoc XP Award: If the party defeats Oosah while in a flooded area of the tomb, add 25% to the experience award due to the difficulty of the encounter.

W1. RUINS

Crumbling stones draped with rotting timbers and lined with sawgrass mark a rectangle on the ground where the foundations of several structures once stood.

The ruins in these locations are broken-down houses of no use to the locathahs.

W2. TEMPLE (EL 5)

The limestone walls of this rectangular building are green with lichen. A remnant of a roof clings to the east wall, but the rest has fallen in. The west wall has collapsed.

This building once served as Waterford's inn, town hall, and temple. Within its remains, small ridges of stone indicate where walls once stood. Piles of junk—rusted metal chairs, detritus, animal droppings, and the like—lie in the corners. Yellow wildflowers and purple huckleberry coat the sunken flagstones on the "floor."

Creatures: After the locathahs fled, two predatory fungi arrived here.

➤ **Violet Fungi** (2): hp 17, 15; *Monster Manual* 93.

Tactics: Once they detect the presence of food (the characters), the fungi attack. If the PCs flee, the fungi pursue.

Development: A successful Search check (DC 20) made while examining the junk piles reveals the temple's holy symbol: a tarnished but intact obsidian symbol of Pelor (50 gp).

W3. JUNK HOUSE (EL 3)

This house stores the locathahs' junk and refuse. Structurally intact, the door is closed and wedged shut with a heavy log. It smells slightly of rotting vegetation. Recently, the house has become infected with the disease known as slimy doom. When the locathahs discovered the situation, they propped the log against the door to prevent entry. Moving the log requires a successful Strength check (DC 20).

The interior of the house is filled with piles of broken stone tools, torn nets, shattered pottery, and other refuse. There is nothing of value here, but anyone poking around attracts Oosah's attention and is exposed to slimy doom.

Slimy Doom: CR 3; incubation period 1 day (1d4 points of Con damage/1 point of Con drain); Fortitude save (DC 14) negates, see *DUNGEON MASTER'S Guide* 75.

W4. SUBMERGED HOUSES

The roofs of Waterford's half-submerged houses rise from the water like headstones in a cemetery. All the submerged huts are essentially identical. Each is a square structure approximately 20 feet on a side, and until recently, each housed one locathah family. A typical house contains several long rectangular stones (beds), rotting fish and seaweed packed in a stone case (the family's food supply), and decorative scrimshaw ornaments (worthless).

These dwellings are flooded to a depth of between 4 and 7 feet. Therefore, any character must succeed at a Swim check (DC 10) to move within them.

W5. QUEE'S PALACE (EL 4)

This house is twice the size of the others, and its roof is thatched with a shiny green material. Stacked stones line the window openings, and an oblong tan bag swings from a nail atop the door frame.

The shiny substance covering the roof is alligator skin—a symbol of leadership. The “bag” is actually a mummified ogre's head; Quee tacked it here years ago after she slaughtered the brute.

Despite its size (20 feet by 40 feet), Quee's palace isn't much different from the other houses. The single room contains six beds for the chieftain and her family, plus a stone locker containing a few worthless stone carvings and bone tools. The palace is flooded to a depth of 3 feet, so a Small PC must succeed at a Swim check (DC 10) to move around inside.

Creatures: After Oosah killed a few locathahs with his corrupting gaze, he went on to slay two vipers. Then he dumped

the bodies here and animated them.

➤ **Large Zombies (Large Snakes)** (2): hp 29 each; *Monster Manual* 192.

➤ **Medium-Size Zombies (Locathah)** (6): hp 16 each; *Monster Manual* 191.

Tactics: Oosah tries to steer any battle on land to this house. The zombies attack when the first PC enters. All battles here are subject to the rules described in the “Fighting in the Water” sidebar.

W6. THE ARMORY

Decades ago, this circular stockade served as Waterford's defensive post. The limestone wall is 7 feet tall, except where it has crumbled away to form an entrance to area W6a.

◆ **Limestone Wall:** 6 in. thick; Hardness 5; hp 10; break DC 10; Climb DC 5.

When Oosah moved into town, the armory became his lair. The structure connects with the submerged caverns where the locathahs raised their young, and where Oosah made an entryway into Kinokuniya's tomb.

W6A. THE WAITING AREA

Blocks of stone lie heaped around the crumbled entryway. Rocks and leaves lie in piles within the 20-foot-diameter circle formed by the ruined, ivy-covered walls. In the center of the circle sits a hut built of mud and sticks. To the east, stone stairs descend into the earth.

Oosah prepared both his potions and his plans here. If the PCs have not already attracted Oosah's attention, they encounter him here.

➤ **Oosah, Male Locathah Ghost Clr6:** See “Oosah” for complete statistics.

W6B. COOKING HUT

This hut measures approximately 10 feet by 5 feet. A large iron tripod and pot stand over a 2-foot-deep depression filled with old cinders in the middle of its single chamber. The mud-and-stick walls taper to a small hole in the ceiling. Numerous clay bottles sit atop two small caskets against the back wall.

This hut was Oosah's home. The opening in the roof, 7 feet overhead, allows smoke from the cookfire to escape. One casket contains potion brewing materials; the other contains herbal ingredients and rare teas worth 75 gp. The pot is empty, but the bottles are filled with potions.

Treasure: Four *potions of cure light wounds*, two *potions of cure moderate wounds*, and a *potion of neutralize poison*. (If the party lacks the means to breathe underwater, replace the *potions of cure light wounds* with *potions of water breathing* that Oosah was making to sell.)

W6C. STAIRS

Only the top 3 feet of this staircase is above water, and the cavern to which it provides access is completely flooded. The



PCs need some means of water breathing to explore this area or the rest of Waterford.

The only furnishings in the cave are a few low stone beds for attendants watching over the eggs in the nursery (area W6d).

W6D. NURSERY

Thick, red strands of protoplasm float through the water in this 20-foot by 30-foot cavern, following a slight current that flows through the room. Small crevices in the north and south walls run the length of the cavern floor. In the northeastern corner, one such crevice widens into a small passageway.

The current flowing through this cave results from an underground river that passes through this chamber on its way to feed Murky Pond. The red strands are locathah eggs.

Oosah used several castings of *stone shape* to make a 3-foot-tall passageway in the north wall. This corridor stretches 10 feet and ends at area T1.

THE SOGGY TOMB OF KINOKUNIYA (AREA T)

Kinokuniya built his home beneath Waterford soon after he saved the town from drought. His abode could have been far more grandiose if Kinokuniya had bothered to make it so. As it was, he simply made a comfortable space, set a few traps, and placed one great guardian on watch: the legendary kobold Retiss-Abbas, doomed to act as a guardian of his enemy's tomb.

DUNGEON FEATURES

Totally submerged areas are subject to the combat restrictions detailed in the "Fighting in the Water" sidebar. Any area flooded to a depth of 3 feet imposes combat restrictions only to Small creatures; Medium creatures move at half speed.

There is no natural lighting in Kinokuniya's Tomb. All ceilings are 15 feet high unless noted otherwise. A slight current moves through areas T1, T2, T6, and T7.

T1. ICE WALL (EL 6)

An underground cavern extends into the distance from this area. A slight current causes the water to flow toward the tunnel in the west wall. About 20 feet ahead, a ragged white wall blocks the cavern. A humanoid shape forms a dark pattern within the wall.

The river is 5 feet deep. The white wall is made of ice, and the shape within it is Oosah's entombed corpse. Oosah died after triggering the *cone of cold* trap (see below), which is still active. The underground river is slightly warmer than the ice, so it has melted openings between the ice wall and the cavern.

PCs hacking through the ice to get to the other side or to free the corpse trigger the trap. If the trap is disabled, the PCs can safely exhume Oosah by dealing 30 points of damage to the wall. The corpse still holds Oosah's masterwork club and +1 large wooden shield.

❖ **Ice Wall:** 20 in. thick; Hardness 0 (takes double damage from fire attacks); hp 60; break DC 32.

Trap: When a creature larger than Tiny passes below the

point marked 1 on the map (directly above the ice wall), a *cone of cold* is triggered. Kinokuniya modified the spell slightly so that the effect drains heat from both its victim and the surrounding water. Thus, the spell both deals damage and transforms the water within the spell range to ice, entombing the victim. The trap can be avoided by using *stone shape* or a similar spell to make a corridor around the trap, or through the use of spells such as *teleport*, *dimension door*, and the like. Characters can also use *transmute rock to mud* and *soften earth and stone* to dig their way around the trap.

➤ **Cone of Cold Trap:** CR 6; proximity trigger; automatic reset; Reflex save (DC 17) avoids; spell effect (*cone of cold*—9d6 points of cold damage to all within a 10-ft.-radius—plus entombment); victims are immobilized beneath 2d6 inches of ice; death by asphyxiation occurs after creatures' breath runs out; see the *DUNGEON MASTER's Guide*, page 85; Search (DC 30), Disable Device (DC 30). *Note:* The ice can be removed from around a character by dealing it 3 points of damage per inch of thickness.

T2. GUARDED NODE (EL 6)

This water in this cavern is 15 feet deep. It appears to be an extension of the previous cavern—a rough, natural cave extending into watery darkness.

Trap: Kinokuniya set a monster summoning trap in a tiny node within the cave wall to stop trespassers. It triggers as soon as any creature comes within 20 feet.

➤ **Summon Monster V Trap:** CR 6; proximity trigger; automatic reset (24 hours); spell effect (*summon monster V* spell summons two juvenile tojanidas); Search (DC 30); Disable Device (DC 30).

Creatures: When the first party member passes the node, two juvenile tojanidas materialize and attack.

➤ **Tojanidas, Juvenile (2):** hp 19 each; *Monster Manual* 177.

Tactics: The tojanidas release their ink clouds before attacking, since their Blind-Fight feats helps them negotiate such conditions. Thereafter, one tojanida mounts a frontal assault while the other attempts to flank. A tojanida reduced to less than 0 hit points returns to the Elemental Plane of Water. The trap cannot summon such a creature again for 24 hours.

T3. KINOKUNIYA'S SANCTUM (EL 5)

The PCs break free of the surface of the water as they mount the stairs. Areas T3, T4, and T5 once served as Kinokuniya's rooms and workspace. Many of the items he left here have been destroyed.

Water covers much of this 50-foot-square room. Hunks of wrecked furniture stand sentinel all around. A quartet of tarnished brass chairs stands in a circle at the center of the room. Shelves along the south wall are full of knickknacks coated in a green grime. Tattered and moldy tapestries, two of which flank a stone door, cover the west wall.

This chamber, now flooded to a depth of 3 feet, was once a dining room for Kinokuniya's few guests (usually extradimensional spellcasters with whom he wanted to converse). The table around which the chairs once stood has decayed to nothing.

The knickknacks are mundane and all ruined.

Creatures: The brass chairs, which are under the influence of *permanent animate object* spells, have been instructed to attack anyone in this room who is not Kinokuniya. The chairs do not attack PCs who are on the stairs or otherwise not in the room.

➤ **Animated Brass Chairs (4):** hp 5 each; speed 50 ft.; *Monster Manual* 17.

Tactics: As mindless creatures, the chairs display no particular strategy.

Development: This room holds little of interest. The locked door to the library is difficult to open even after unlocking due to the deep water on either side of it.

➤ **Stone Door:** 5 in. thick; Hardness 8; hp 60; break DC 28; Open Lock DC 25.

T4. LIBRARY

The walls of this 30-foot by 40-foot room have been carved into bookshelves. The hundreds of tomes crammed into them have completely decayed. The books on the east wall have fallen into the water covering the floor, forming a lump of detritus. A massive stone desk, carved from the wall itself, stands against the south wall.

This room is flooded to a depth of 3 feet. Most of the books crumble at the merest touch. The stone desk has two drawers that Kinokuniya secured with *arcane lock* spells (caster level 17th). To date, this precaution has protected the contents from water damage. Each drawer can be opened with a *knock* or *dispel magic* spell. The tops of the drawers are a few inches below the waterline; water floods in when the drawers are opened, but the contents will not be damaged if they are removed immediately. The first drawer holds a bone scroll case containing a scroll of *fly* and a scroll of *bull's strength*. The second drawer contains 500 gp in a leather pouch.

T5. LABORATORY

A mural on the north wall of this 40-foot-square room depicts great interlocking circles against a black background. White lines, numbers, and symbols are scattered across the diagram. On the floor in the southwest corner is a circle, 10 feet in diameter, stained in purple. A massive stone table, covered with instruments, stands in the northeast corner. This room is not flooded.

Kinokuniya used this room for summonings and research. The mural is a diagram explaining the relationship between the various planes of existence. Its meaning can be deduced with a successful Knowledge (the planes) check (DC 15).

A successful Search check (DC 20) reveals a series of symbols and notes scratched in the left corner of the mural. These marks are the key to solving the basic mystery of the lake. A second successful Knowledge (arcana) check (DC 20) or Knowledge (the planes) check (DC 15) made while examining these scratchings reveals that the creator of the mural made the lake

level rise by summoning an elemental from the Elemental Plane of Water to Murky Pond, leaving a tiny opening through which the elemental could draw water from that plane, and using a *binding* spell to hold it here and keep it from abusing or escaping through the tiny portal. This information serves to corroborate Oosah's story.

The table is covered with old but still intact alchemical equipment. Together the salvageable items weigh about 40 pounds and make up an alchemist's lab. The same Search check also turns up the **Treasure**. Searching the wall behind the table (Search, DC 15) reveals a small, inset shelf that holds Kinokuniya's diary.

Scanning the diary takes 1 hour and reveals the same information as the mural. Reading the entire book or making a successful Search check (DC 25) takes 3 hours and reveals the exact wording of the *binding*—namely that Kinokuniya required the elemental to remain “as long as a soul remains in Waterford.” It further describes how Kinokuniya promised that he would invite more water creatures to the lake to provide company for the creature, whose name is Rchkch. In his diary, Kinokuniya admits that he never intended to live up to this promise.

With a successful Knowledge (arcana) check (DC 20) or Knowledge (the planes) check (DC 15), a character can also deduce from the diary that Kinokuniya inscribed a second *binding* spell onto his golden goblet, so that he wouldn't lose it. This spell would allow him to end, renew, or reword the *binding* spell should the need ever arise. The goblet in question currently lies at the bottom of the underground river (area T7). For notes on its use and abuse, see “Solving the Dilemmas,” below.

Also of interest is the last line written in the diary, which reads, “The great sphere will be my final resting place, and I have also set over it a guardian. He will guard me, and my sphere shall guard him.” This line refers to area T8.

Treasure: An unlabeled jar containing two ounces of *sovereign glue* (with the requisite ounce of *oil of slipperiness*) lies forgotten amid the debris of the laboratory table.

T6. MAIN CAVERN

The river runs through this natural cavern to a depth of 10 feet, and the ceiling rises 45 feet overhead. A successful Swim check (DC 10) allows a character to move forward at normal speed.

Once the PCs are within sighting distance of area T7, read or paraphrase the following:

Ahead, a bizarre vision rises from the river—a globe at least 25 feet high that burns with dim phosphorescence. It seems geometrically perfect, although the lowest part of it is hidden beneath the surface of the river.

The globe is a customized *wall of force* made *permanent*; it functions just like the *wall of force* spell except for its size and shape.

T7. BENEATH THE DOME

In fact, the globe is not a perfect sphere; there is an opening at its nadir, 5 feet below the river's surface. A steel pole set in the cavern floor extends up through this opening, rising 20 feet

before ending at a platform (area T8). Climbing the pole requires a successful Climb check (DC 20). Climbing along the underside of the platform is easier (Climb, DC 15) because of the supporting girders there.

On the cavern floor near the pole lie several items that Retiss-Abbas kicked off the platform in a fit of pique when he arrived two hundred years ago (see area T8, below). Only belatedly did the kobold leader realize that once the items were in the water, he could no longer get to them. Successful Search checks at the DCs given below reveal the following items half buried in cave mud:

- **DC 15:** A golden goblet with a *binding* spell inscribed upon it. This item is the goblet mentioned in Kinokuniya's diary (area T5). See the “Solving the Dilemmas” section below for information on its use. Once the spell has been read from it, the goblet is still worth 100 gp.

- **DC 20:** A pile of golden weights and measures (250 gp total)

- **DC 25:** A moss-encrusted but still functional *phylactery* of *faithfulness*.

Unless the PCs have slain Oosah's ghost, he might still be following them ethereally as they search the river bottom. The ghost knows about the goblet, and he would have recovered it before now if he had been able to move physical objects. As it is, he must wait for others to remove it from the mud. If the PCs uncover the goblet, Oosah casts *detect thoughts* to find out what the PCs are thinking about it. If they decide to use it, Oosah either attacks them or attempts to lure them to their doom—perhaps by encouraging them to ascend to the bier (area T8).

T8. THE BIER (EL 9)

This circular steel platform measures about 15 feet in diameter. A 10-foot-wide gap stretches between the platform edge and the dim walls of the sphere. At the north end of the platform stands a rectangular chunk of black marble, roughly 5 feet tall and 7 feet wide, covered in carvings.

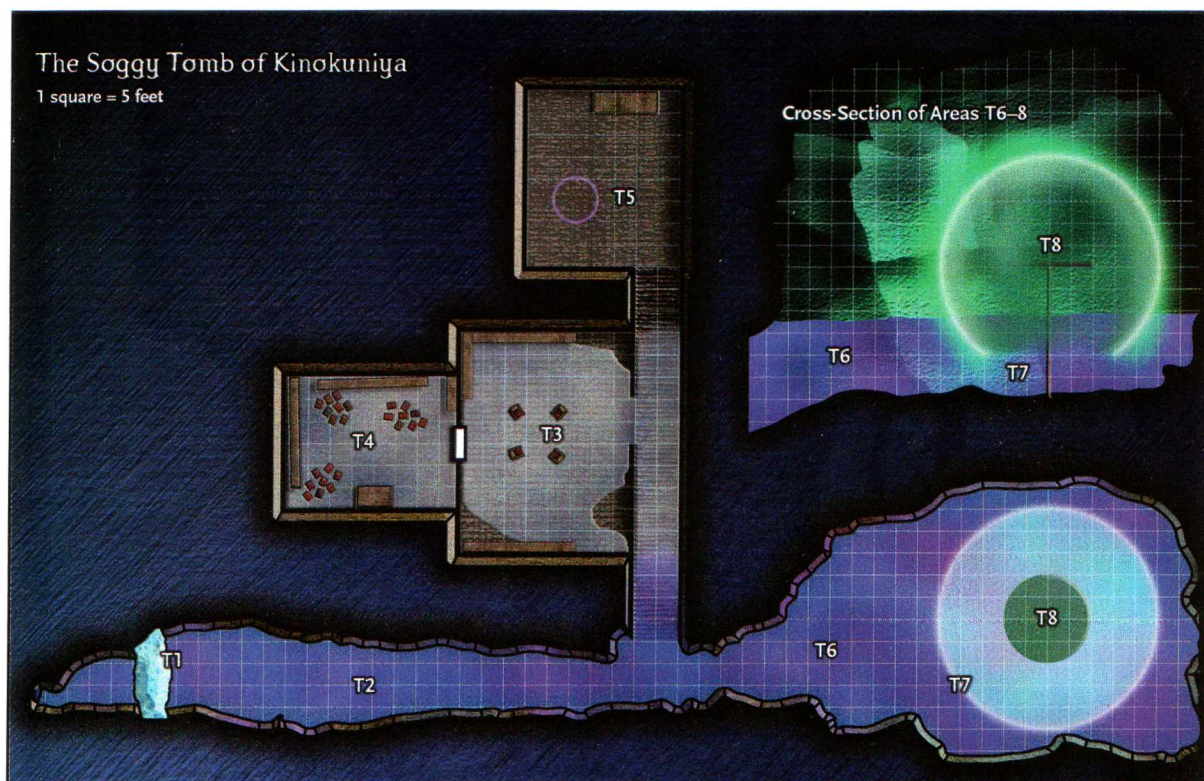
The marble chunk is the sarcophagus of Kinokuniya. It is a remarkable work of art, obviously carved from a single stone. The sarcophagus lid is covered with the holy symbols of a host of chaotic and neutral deities, which have successfully kept Retiss-Abbas away from the corpse of Kinokuniya for all these years. The sarcophagus lid can easily be moved aside to reveal a desiccated human corpse in rotted robes, wearing a delicate headband of silver studded with aquamarine. This item is the *headband* of Kinokuniya (see below).

Creature: The lone resident of the platform is a shriveled, 3-foot-tall, scaly monstrosity with glowing red eyes. This creature is the legendary Retiss-Abbas, the kobold leader who terrorized the gnomes of Spate's Grove.

Retiss-Abbas was born centuries ago in a far-off land. Though he was among the strongest kobolds ever born, he was eventually captured and slain by a school of necromancers. They later used a *create greater undead* spell to raise him as a vampire, hoping to add a powerful ally to their undead army. But Retiss-Abbas escaped and eventually found his way to Spate's Grove.

The Soggy Tomb of Kinokuniya

1 square = 5 feet



There, he built a kobold empire and terrorized other humanoids in the region. Shortly before he died of old age, Kinokuniya placed a *teleportation circle* spell where Retiss-Abbas would be sure to stumble upon it. Sure enough, the vampire teleported onto the platform just before the wizard breathed his last. The only way out is over the stream below, and since vampires cannot cross running water, Retiss-Abbas was stuck here. Over the last two hundred years, he has howled his anguish to the uncaring water, sought vainly for a magical solution, and sat on the platform, playing dice and slowly losing his mind.

➤ **Retiss-Abbas, Male Kobold Vampire Rgr6/Sor1:** CR 9; Small Undead (reptilian; 3 ft. 4 in.); HD 7d12; hp 45; Init +8; Spd 30 ft.; AC 22, touch 15, flat-footed 18; BAB +6; Grap +7; Atk +12 melee (1d4+7, slam), or +11/+6 melee (1d6+6/19–20, +1 *short sword*) and +11 melee (1d4+2/19–20, masterwork dagger), or +11 ranged (1d8/19–20, light crossbow); SA blood drain, children of the night, create spawn, domination, energy drain, favored enemies (gnomes +2, humans +1), spells, two-weapon fighting ability; SQ alternate form, darkvision 60 ft., DR 15/+1, fast healing 5, gaseous form, light sensitivity –1, resistances (cold 20, electricity 20), spider climb, turn resistance +4, undead traits; AL CE; SV Fort +5, Ref +8, Will +8; Str 21, Dex 19, Con –, Int 13, Wis 15, Cha 19.

Skills: Bluff +12*, Concentration +8, Craft (trapmaking) +5†, Hide +16*, Intuit Direction +6, Listen +15*, Move Silently +16*, Profession (mining) +3†, Search +17*, Sense Motive +10*, Spellcraft +6, Spot +15*, Use Rope +8, Wilderness Lore +9. **Feats:** Alertness, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Leadership, Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack, Track.

*Includes +8 racial bonus (vampire) to Bluff, Hide, Listen,

Move Silently, Search, Sense Motive, and Spot checks.

†Includes +2 racial bonus (kobold) to Craft (trapmaking), Profession (mining), and Search checks.

Ranger Spells Prepared (2; base save DC = 12 + spell level): 1st—*magic fang*, *resist elements*.

Sorcerer Spells Known (5/4; base save DC = 14 + spell level): 0—*daze*, *ghost sound*, *prestidigitation*, *read magic*; 1st—*grease*, *sleep*.

See the *Monster Manual* page 221 for vampire special attacks and qualities. Note that the save DC for Retiss-Abbas's domination and energy drain abilities is 17. Retiss-Abbas cannot use his children of the night ability here because there aren't any such creatures around to summon.

Tactics: If the vampire does not notice the PCs coming, he is sitting in the center of the platform when they arrive, playing at dice. If he senses intruders, he becomes gaseous and reveals himself after the party has climbed to the platform. If not attacked, Retiss-Abbas introduces himself in dramatic fashion and attempts to parley with the PCs in hopes of gaining release from his prison. If he discovers they can't (or won't) help him, he attacks.

The vampire's first combat action is to cast *grease* on the edges of the platform, hoping to send unwary PCs tumbling down. (A fall puts a character back in the water at area T7 but deals no damage.) Thereafter, Retiss-Abbas attacks gnomes and spellcasters first. He hasn't the sanity to realize that his *domination* power would be useful, but if he's badly hurt, he might remember it. If reduced to 5 or fewer hit points, Retiss-Abbas becomes gaseous and floats above the characters while he takes advantage of his fast healing before rejoining combat.

Retiss-Abbas cannot come within 5 feet of Kinokuniya's sarcophagus because of the holy symbols inscribed on it. If the



characters gather around the sarcophagus and make ranged attacks against Retiss-Abbas, he can respond only with his *domination* ability. The sarcophagus provides three-quarters cover to characters who hide behind it.

Unlike most vampires, Retiss-Abbas has no coffin to which he can return. (Since there's no daylight in the cavern, he is able to stay awake perpetually.) When reduced to 0 hit points, he assumes gaseous form and floats above the platform for several hours before dissipating forever.

‡ **Headband of Kinokuniya (cursed item):** This headband of intellect +2 requires its wearer to make a Will save (DC 20) each week it is worn. Failure shifts the character's alignment one step toward chaotic neutral (the law component disappears first). This item has no effect on a wearer who is already chaotic neutral and is not considered cursed in such a case. The alignment change can be altered only by a *wish* spell or similar effect. A wearer wishing to remove the headband must make a successful Will save (DC 20) to do so. Once the wearer becomes chaotic neutral, he or she can remove the headband freely, although the alignment change is permanent. The headband is otherwise identical to a headband of intellect +2.

SOLVING THE DILEMMAS

Ultimately, the PCs' mission is to make Waterford safe for the locathahs so that they can return to their homes. To succeed, they must deal with both Oosah and Rchkch in some manner. Party decisions could potentially change Murky Pond forever.

OOSAH

As long as Oosah remains in or near Murky Pond, Quee and her tribe will not return, and the ghost refuses to leave of his own free will. Reducing the ghost to 0 hp does no good because he rejuvenates in three days. Such an action also has the potential to release Rchkch if the PCs then leave (see "Leaving Waterford," below). However, since it was Oosah's obsession with controlling the elemental that led him to return as a ghost, he can be laid to rest by removing any chance he might have for success. If Rchkch is released, or a new *binding* spell is enacted in such a way as to prevent Oosah from gaining control of the elemental, Oosah's spirit departs forever.

Ad-hoc XP Award: Give the PCs a 1,000 XP story award if they put Oosah's spirit permanently to rest.

RCHKCH

If the PCs fail to realize the true nature of the lake, they might head back to Waterford without doing anything about Rchkch. If they simply leave after reducing Oosah to 0 hit points and do not alter the *binding*, Rchkch is released. If that situation occurs, proceed with "Leaving Waterford," below.

If the characters do learn that a sentient being lurks in Murky Pond, they have several options. If they have retrieved the *binding* goblet, they can alter or rearrange the wording of the *binding* spell. Activating the spell on the goblet works exactly like activating an arcane scroll. If the caster is not of sufficient level to cast *binding*, he or she must make a successful caster level check (DC 19) to cast the spell. A caster who fails must attempt a Will save (DC 22); failing this check means the char-

acter using the goblet suffers a mishap (see the *DUNGEON MASTER's Guide*, page 203).

A PC who successfully casts the *binding* spell must immediately state the new release trigger (since the caster level is 18th, Rchkch receives no saving throw). The trigger should satisfy all conditions found in the *Player's Handbook*, page 179. The new trigger must have some chance of coming to pass, but it can't be too easy to fulfill or the elemental will escape.

If desired, the characters can instead use their own magic to rearrange the conditions of Rchkch's stay on the Material Plane. A 5th-level party probably does not have access to *binding* spells, but one of the characters might possess a scroll bearing that spell. *Geas*, *charm monster*, and other Enchantment spells could provide a stopgap solution.

The PCs can also choose to leave the situation exactly as it is, if they are careful not to empty the town while they retrieve the locathahs.

Alternatively, the party can try to communicate with Rchkch and find out what he wants. Anyone who can speak Aquan can talk to him without magical aid; otherwise the characters must use a *tongues* spell or other magical effect. A *detect thoughts* or similar spell reveals only a terrible loneliness and sadness. Characters who manage to communicate with Rchkch learn that he wants to be free (see "Leaving Waterford" for more information on Rchkch's state of mind).

LEAVING WATERFORD (EL 5)

As the PCs leave the town, but while they are still within sight of it, read or paraphrase the following if the *binding* is unaltered and they are the last "souls" to leave Waterford:

A shudder ripples through the air, accompanied by a smell similar to that of approaching rain. A great splashing and rumbling emanates from Murky Pond, then with the roar of a hundred waterfalls, the lake turns into an enormous whirlpool. The walls of the submerged houses crack and shudder, and water engulfs their walls and roofs. Trees, weeds, and stones tear away from the shore and disappear into the vortex. With a great wrenching sound, Murky Pond lifts itself into a tower of water, within which flicker two dull green globes.

Creature: Rchkch stands 16 feet high. He cannot venture more than 50 feet from the body of water into which he was summoned, but since Poverty Creek flows out of Murky Pond, Rchkch can travel freely up and down the river.

The elemental is overjoyed at his release. He thanks the party, speaking in gurgling Aquan that sounds like the crash of glacier ice into the sea. Rchkch has waited two hundred years, and his patience has worn extremely thin.

If the PCs treat Rchkch with respect and deference, they can reason with him. But Rchkch is extremely dim (Int 5) and can't understand advanced concepts, especially those involving time. If the PCs can immediately produce other sentient aquatic creatures for Rchkch to commune with, the elemental agrees to remain, at least for a while. If they cannot, Rchkch departs

unless convinced (via a successful Diplomacy check) to wait for the party to return with the locathahs. If the PCs become belligerent, Rchkch attacks.

➤ **Rchkch, Large Water Elemental:** hp 68; *Monster Manual* 84.

Tactics: If Rchkch engages the characters, he fights for 3 rounds at most before departing for his home plane. He has no intention of killing them; he only wants to teach them a lesson. If reduced to half his hit points before 3 rounds, he leaves earlier.

Ad-hoc XP Award: If the PCs part with Rchkch on amicable terms, they should receive experience points as if they had defeated him in battle. If Rchkch departs, the connection between the pond and the Elemental Plane of Water is severed and the shoreline of Murky Pond retreats by 5 feet.

CONCLUSION

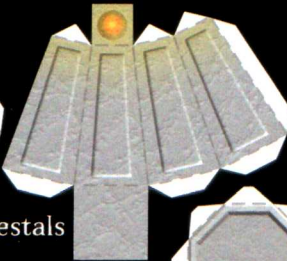
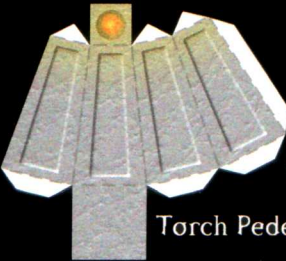
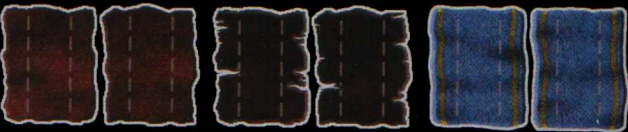
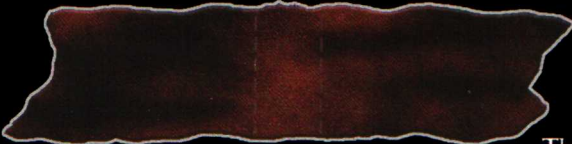
If the PCs lay Oosah's ghost to rest, the locathahs return to Waterford. However, if the water level in the lake has fallen, Waterford is no longer as hospitable to the tribe as it once was. The tribe prepares to find another home, treating the PCs brusquely and paying them no honor.

If Rchkch is still there, bound or not, the locathahs move back into Waterford. Quee offers the PCs her *spined shield* in gratitude, provided that they have treated the tribe with respect and not resorted to violence. If Rchkch is free and waiting for them, the locathahs are a little worried at first, but they soon grow accustomed to their odd neighbor. Rchkch finds the locathahs delightful company and agrees to stay of his own volition.

As soon as the locathahs leave the mill, the residents of Spate's Grove throw a banquet to honor the PCs. Czen, Harvest, and Tollie give the PCs their promised reward. Tollie's offer of a share in next year's harvest can be almost anything you wish it to be, and this particular windfall can arrive at any future time that the PCs need some cash.

If Oosah has not been put to rest, and the locathahs have not been defeated, the standoff in Spate's Grove continues. The situation at the mill becomes permanent, and soon the locathahs are accepted as a fact of life. Waterford has no choice but to allow the occupation and lose most of its shipping business because of it. Over the next several months, many families move out, and the town becomes poorer. A few townsfolk might blame the PCs and plot revenge against them. Ω

Adam Jortner is a freelance writer and playwright living in Virginia. His plays have been produced in New York, Boston, Louisville, and St. Louis. "Fish Story" is his first RPG publication.



Torch Pedestals

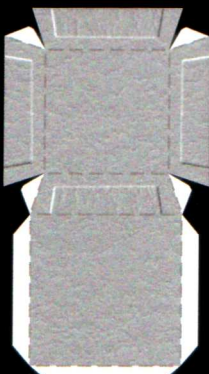
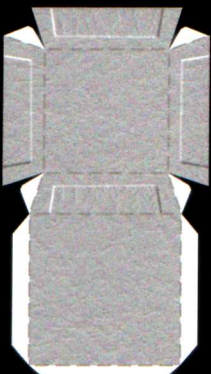
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Throne Draperies



Armrest Covers

Throne Step



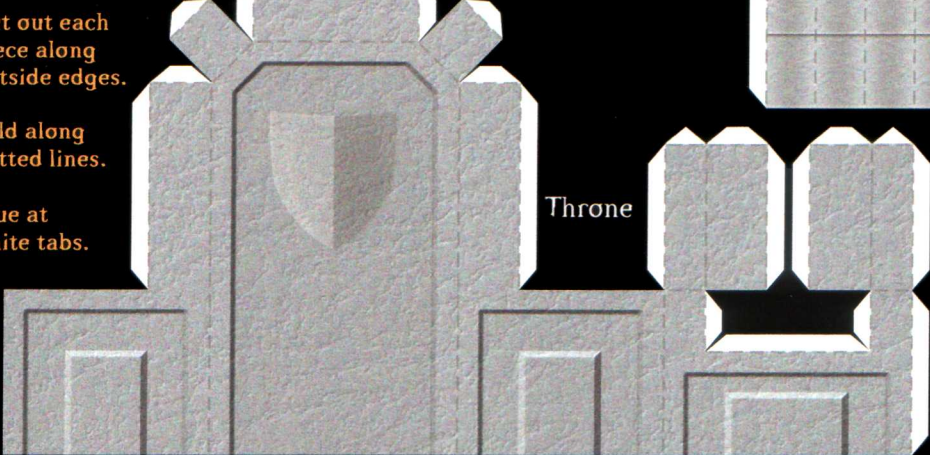
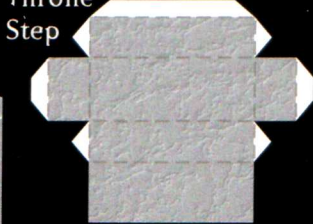
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Column Base

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Glue at white tabs.



Throne

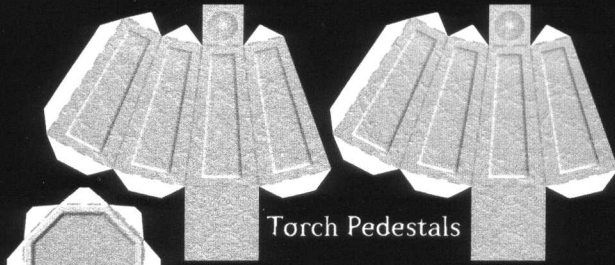


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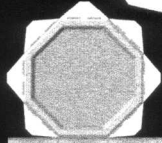
Credits

Artwork by Christopher West
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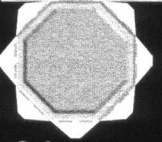
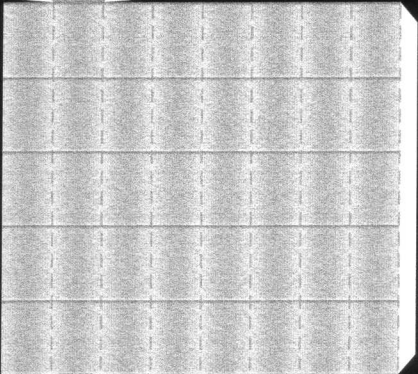
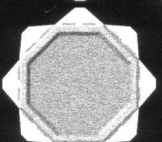
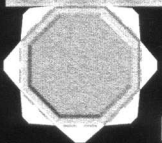
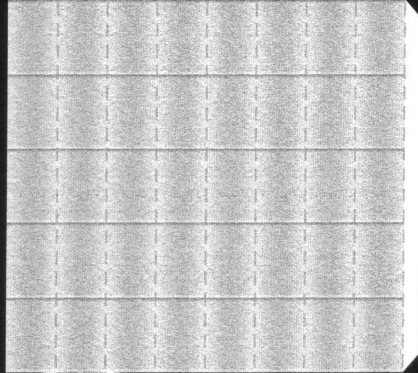
DUNGEON DRESSING—SET #1 THRONE ROOM



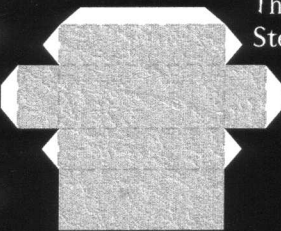
Torch Pedestals



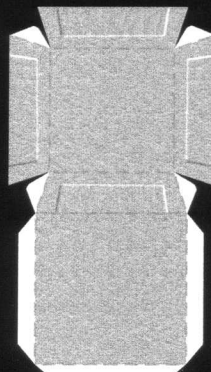
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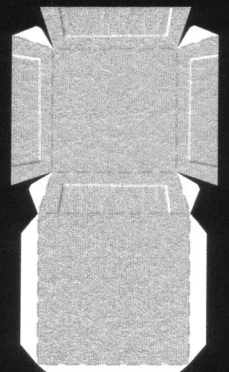
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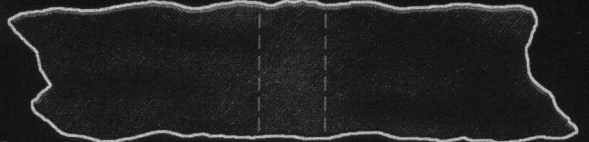
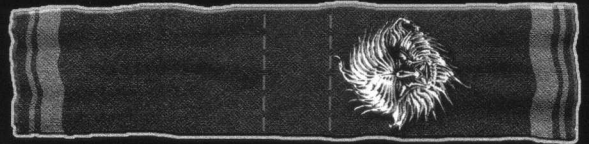
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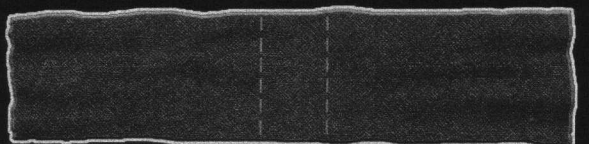
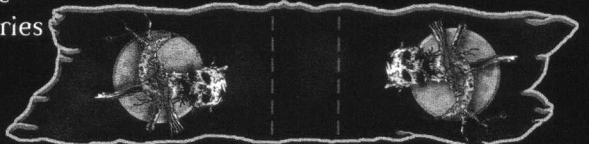
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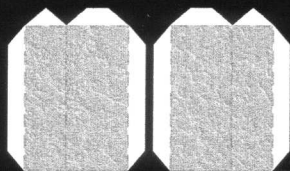
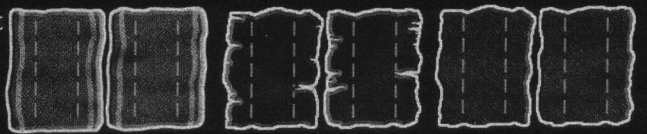
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Throne Draperies



Armrest Covers



Throne



...coming
soon!

Polyhedron 158