

CULTISTS OF THE LOST

'Tis' a never-ending task to fight the agents of evil. Their forces can only be weakened, never destroyed. For light cannot exist without darkness...

Ancient Passage, Annals of Gede Vol. III

Fanatics and devout individuals believe that one day, Saint Terragnis and Madeera shall make their laws bend the world and bathe it in a veil of kindness. They trust this event shall reveal everyone's true colors, and that their lawful gods shall eradicate all evil from the world.

"Only extremists would defend those beliefs," would say the wiser minds. People with more calm personalities who understand the world is not black or white. For them, good and evil do not exist individually, life is an amalgam of both. Most followers of Gede believe this.

For experienced adventurers, the idea of a perfect world with no more demons and monsters to fight is stupid. They have seen enough to understand that this is impossible. The fight for the greater good never ends.

They are right. True evil lives in the hearts of criminal factions and powerful necromancers. Corrupted and strengthened by their mad beliefs, they bring physical representations of *The Lost* to the world of the living.

SEED OF EVIL

THE AUTHORITIES OF Mal, the capital, need external help. The city's history archive was wretchedly plundered. Agents of *The Lost* took over the underground compound and turned it into a laboratory of madness. They built a shrine to their faceless gods and summoned their power through it. They spawned a creature from hell, an *Avatar of The Lost*. Its mere presence was enough to alter the state of things within the archive.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

IT HAS BEEN a month since the agents of *The Lost* took over the archive. The fanatics hide in the newfound lair while their abominations approach the outskirts of the city and terrorize farmers, merchants, and travelers.

Good. The characters are hired to slay all enemies from the archive. The authorities care little about their methods as long as all threats are gone (80 gp, 7 XP).

Evil. The characters are agents of Shune, the Vile. They are hired by a mysterious necromancer via letter. They must capture the fanatic-created Avatar of The Lost and bring it to a safe location (120 gp, 10 XP).

Level 7 Adventure

► **Danger.** Risky. Check for a **Random Event** every 2 **crawling rounds** and after loud noises (3-in-6 chance).

► **Light.** Some areas have braziers with continual *light*; the rest are dark. All denizens are **dark-adapted**.

► **Evil Aura.** Clerics cast spells within the compound with disadvantage. All checks made by the characters to resist effects within the compound have disadvantage.

RANDOM EVENTS

d6	Details
1	Six animated armors fight the characters. The constructs have the sole task of stopping invaders.
2	A character must resist the evil here (DC 15 WIS). Treat as a <i>confusion</i> spell for 4 rounds. The victim may repeat the check at the start of their turn to end the effect.
3	A group of one mage and three cultists stumble upon the characters. The agents of <i>The Lost</i> fight to the death.
4	A heavy mist covers the entire dungeon for 4 crawling rounds . Visibility is reduced during this period.
5	A character steps on a pressure-sensitive plate hidden on the ground. A sharp pendulum blade swings from side to side dealing 2d8 damage (DC 15 DEX check for half damage). This event may occur multiple times.
6	The <i>Avatar of The Lost</i> appears before the characters. It disappears and returns to area 6 if reduced to half its HP.

1. ENTRANCE

The characters must take the main road south of the capital, travel for half a day, and deviate east for a few miles. The path leads straight to the archive (DC 11 WIS).

► **Encounter.** If the characters fail to track the place and follow the instructions given, they take twice as long to find the place, and a team of three **thugs**, two **cultists**, and two **fanatics of The Lost** intercept them.

FANATIC OF THE LOST

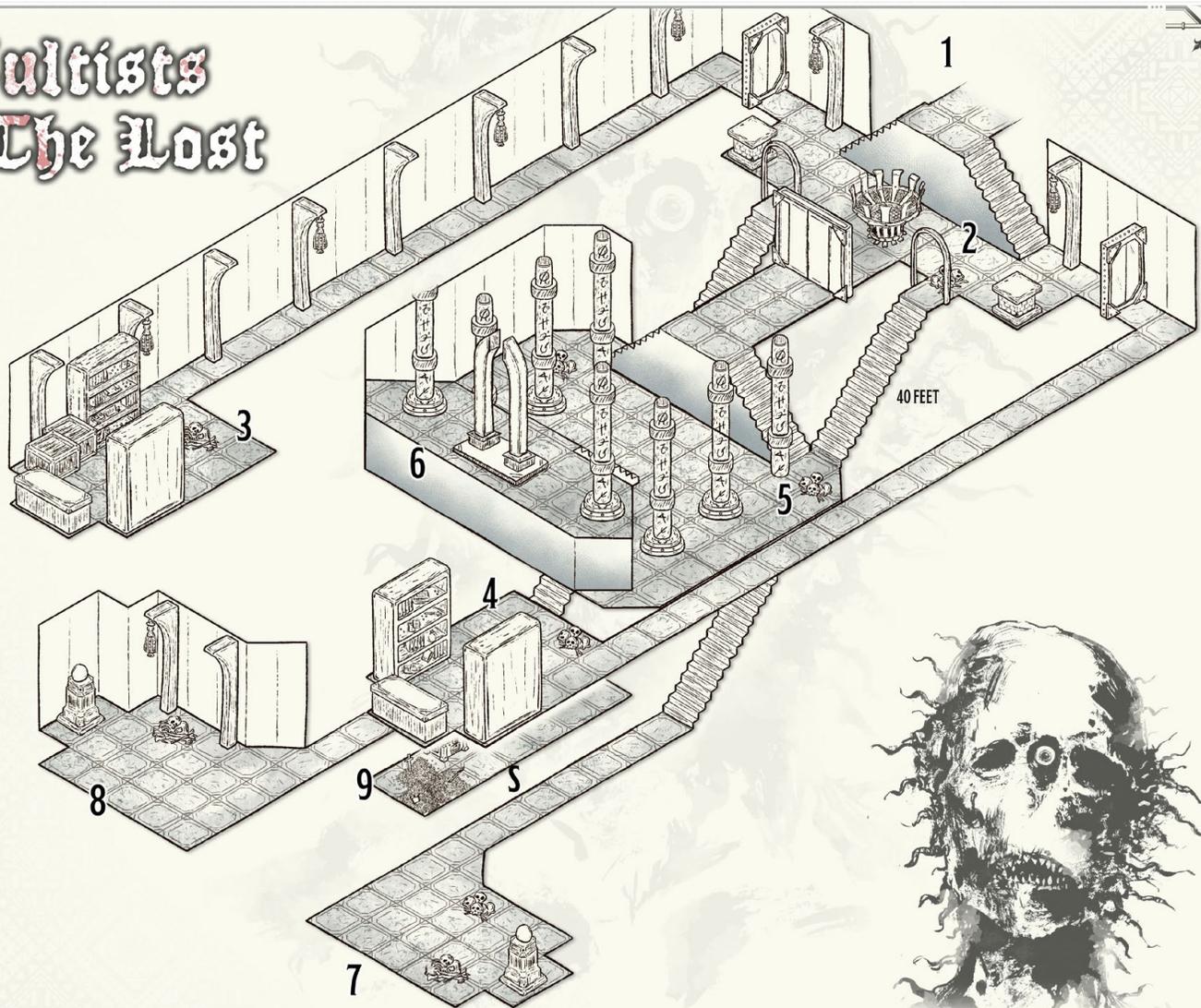
A mad zealot with a painted eye on their forehead.

AC 13, HP 13, ATK 1 dagger +3 (1d4) or 1 spell MV near **S +0, D +2, C +1, I +1, W +1, Ch +1, AL C, LV 3**

Fearless. Immune to **morale** checks.

Ray of The Lost (WIS spell). DC 12. Focus. Target is helplessly stupefied for the duration.

Cultists of The Lost



2. ENTRANCE HALL

The light of a large brazier illuminates this chamber. Light flickers as if fighting a force that smothers it.

There are five paths to take from here. Consider the following when the characters make a choice.

► **Double Door.** The shrine is off-limits. No spell or force shall budge this gate until the two power stones in areas 7 and 8 are removed from their spots.

► **Arches.** The crude-stone stairways descend 40 feet and reach the power stone chambers below.

► **East and West.** Unlike the central path, the characters may use tools to open the steel doors (DC 16 DEX). These corridors lead to the studies (areas 3 and 4).

► **Encounter.** While the characters investigate and take a minute to decide where to go, two **wraiths** materialize from the stone niches in the room. The undead spirits pass through the brazier and bathe the room in darkness before attacking. The undead spirits fight until slain.

3. EAST STUDY

The presence of the *Avatar of The Lost* brings decay and death to everything around it. The once impeccable libraries and shelves are now rotten and destroyed.

Maggots slither over almost every surface in this room. It all reeks of death and putrefaction. A person's body lies on the desk. Blood is everywhere.

► **Blood Suckers.** If the characters stay in this room to investigate, they are attacked by six **giant leeches** that attempt to ambush the intruders (DC 10 WIS check).

4. WEST STUDY

Two **thugs**, three **bandits**, and two **fanatics of The Lost** have their guard down and may be surprised (DC 13 DEX). On a fail, the enemies become aware of the characters' presence and attempt to ambush them instead.

► **Trap.** Poison darts fly and hit all creatures in the corridor when they cross it (1d8 damage). The heroes may disarm the trap if they spot it first (DC 14 WIS).

5. MAIN HALL

Eight rune-inscribed columns in arranged symmetrical flank the otherworldly, glimmering shrine on the 10-foot-tall dais at the far end of the chamber.

The runes in the columns glow with an eerie blue. The characters cannot surprise the enemies in this area (see below). Opening the gates makes them all aware.

6. SHRINE OF THE LOST

The shrine is a view from another world. Bone and sinew fused in a horrible, inhuman permutation of hatred and fear. From it, a creature detaches itself with clumsy movements but a determined pace.

The characters' main objective is here. They must destroy the representation of The Lost or capture it (see **Adventure Hooks**). Either way, it shall not be easy.

► **Encounter.** The **Avatar of The Lost** is not alone. Two **fanatics of The Lost**, two **cultists**, and three **thugs** fight together. The cultists do their best to defend the avatar as it represents everything they believe in.

► **Magic Siphoning.** Besides the aura that affects spells within the compound (see **Evil Aura** above), any spell cast within 20 feet from the shrine has a 2-in-6 chance of being siphoned by the *Avatar of The Lost*. This counts as the spell being cast, but it is considered lost. Every time the avatar absorbs a spell, it regains 5 hit points.

7. EAST POWERSTONE

The atmosphere becomes heavier. The closer to the power stone, the more a feeling of uneasiness and despair pervades the area. The small alcove at the room's end holds a pitch-black, obsidian orb.

This area is protected by two **thugs** and three **fanatics of The Lost**. The cultists were tasked with defending these artifacts with their lives. They fiercely fight until slain.

8. WEST POWERSTONE

This area is identical to its counterpart (area 7) but there are no cultists here. When the characters arrive here, the *Avatar of The Lost* appears (**Random Event 6**).

AVATAR OF THE LOST

A humanoid yet alien face and figure. Two empty eye-sockets but a central eye in place of a nose. A hideous representation and a mockery of what life is.

AC 16, HP 43, ATK 2 slams +7 (1d6 + drain) or 1 gaze, **MV** near **S +3, D +2, C +2, I +1, W +2, Ch +2, LV 9**

Drain. 1d4 temporary WIS damage. A target reduced to 0 WIS this way forfeits its soul to *The Lost*.

Gaze. The avatar's central eye hypnotizes a target. DC 13 CHA or target is helplessly stupefied for 2 rounds.



9. TREASURE CHAMBER

The characters find this hidden room if they notice the brick button that, when pushed, causes an entire section of the corridor to slide inward (DC 16 WIS).

► **Treasure (12 XP).** The characters obtain 150 gp in assorted coinage and valuable gold and silver items. They also find a *sword of the ancients*, a *staff of ord*, and a *pearl of power*. By the looks of it, not even the capital's authorities knew of this chamber's existence.

DEVELOPMENT

► **Removing Evil.** The characters remove the power stones from their pedestals and gain access to the shrine. They defeat the cultists and the *Avatar of The Lost*. Without the monster, the archive's evil is gone and a cleric may spend a day cleansing the place for good.

► **Capturing Evil.** It is not easy, but using magic, force, and their brains, the heroes come up with a way to immobilize the *Avatar of The Lost*. The party delivers it to their obscure employer. The necromancer creates an army of these abominations. What have they done...?